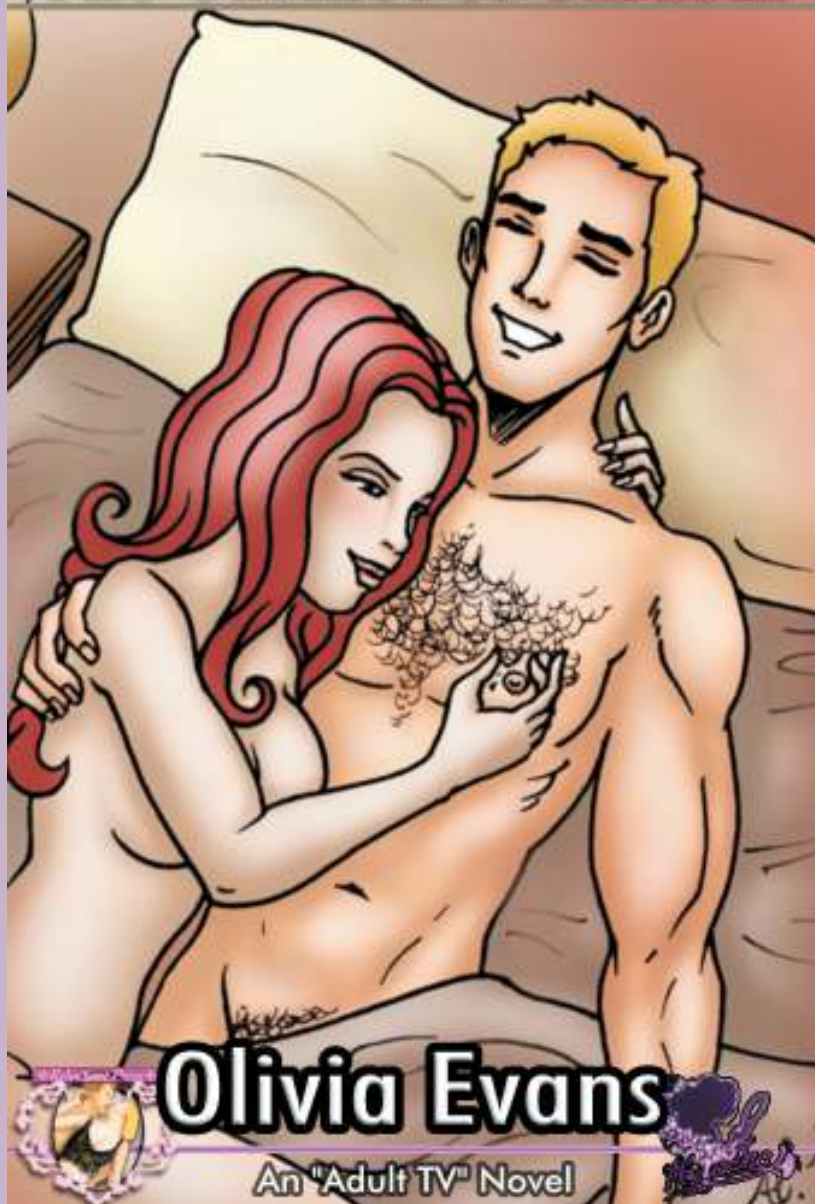


# The Cabinet of Cardoni



**Olivia Evans**

An "Adult TV" Novel

## **Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers**

This story (including all images) is a work of fiction. Any similarity to persons living or dead is entirely coincidental. All situations and events herein presented are fictional, and intended only for the enjoyment of the reader. Neither the author nor the publisher advocate engaging in or attempting to imitate any of the activities or behaviors portrayed.

Persons seeking gender reassignment surgery, hormone therapy or any other medical and/or body-altering process should seek the counsel of a qualified therapist who follows the Benjamin Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorder. This material is intended for persons over the age of 18 only.



Copyright © 2025

Published by Reluctant Press  
in association with Mags, Inc.  
All Rights Reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotes contained within a critical review.

For information address  
Mags Inc/Reluctant Press  
4645 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 101  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403  
USA

Call toll free (800) 359-2116

[reluctantpress.com](http://reluctantpress.com) & [magsinc.com](http://magsinc.com)

# New Authors Wanted!

**M**ags, Inc and Reluctant Press are looking for new authors who want to write exciting TG, crossdressing or sissy TV fiction.

**S**tories should be in Word or Rich Text format, and around 24,000 to 30,000 words in length. Reluctant Press also prints some shorter stories in the 19,000 to 24,000 word range.

**I**f you think you have what it takes, this could be your opportunity to see your name in print on a real book, commercially published, and get paid for it.

## Contact

**magsinc@pacbell.net, reluctantpress@gmail.com - or call 800-359-2116 to get started.**

### **BE THE FIRST TO KNOW**

**Our monthly newsletter can keep you in the know. It's free, and you can cancel at any time! We'd love to see you there... Just send your name and address to Mags Inc/Reluctant Press, 4645 Van Nuys Blvd, Suite 101, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403 USA - or call 800-359-2116 and leave a message to be included our free newsletter.**

# The Cabinet of Cardoni

by Olivia Evans

Carol didn't open the certified letter for nearly three weeks after it arrived.

Why should she? She knew exactly what was in it. The final decree to Lester's divorce from her. Now it was official, she was no longer Mrs. Lester N. Hancock, although in truth she hadn't been that for nearly a year before he had filed.

The District Court's seal at the head of the decree brought back the painful memory of the judge's decision. It was as if it had been yesterday.

There was, she knew, nothing that she could do about it. His mind was made up and nothing short of murder could change it.

*Murder.*

She hadn't quite reached that stage, at least not yet.

If only she hadn't signed that damned prenuptial agreement all this wouldn't have happened. Well, the divorce might have, but at least she would have been able to keep the house and have custody of her children!

Damn that agreement and double damn that bastard, soon to be ex-husband of hers, Lester!

"Mrs. Marks, are you sure there's nothing that I can do to fight this?" Carol asked her lawyer, a tired looking woman wearing a slightly rumpled pants suit.

Linda Marks looked at one of the crude handmade carvings in the old wooden bench. A small part of her mind wondered if "Bill" still loved "Sue". Probably not, this was the divorce court after all. She chose her words carefully before answering.

"No, nothing. I'm sorry Carol, who ever drew this agreement up for your husband, was a master at it. As good of a lawyer as I am, and I am good, I can't find any loopholes in it. I'm sorry, but Lester gets it all. The house, the kids and everything else, including an injunction against ever using the name Hancock."

She paused as Carol wiped a tear from her eye.

"As if I wanted to use that name after all of this," Carol said bitterly, pausing as her soon to be ex-husband walked by with his lawyer.

Both men were wearing self satisfied and smug looks on their faces. There was no question in their minds who the winner in this divorce would be.

Their attitude made Carol furious.

Carol started to rise from the bench, intent in having it out with Lester, right here in the courthouse hallway.

Mrs. Marks quickly grabbed her arm and held it tightly, forcing her to remain seated.

“Carol, don’t! Don’t give them any more ammunition to work with.” She warned. Carol settled back reluctantly.

“I suppose you’re right.” Carol sighed. “Even though hitting him would give me great personal satisfaction, it wouldn’t solve a thing. Besides...”

Carol’s remark was interrupted by the bailiff as he came through the heavy oak doors of the court room. He looked at the petite defendant and her taller lawyer sitting on the bench, and nodded as though he knew that the women would be sitting there. Even the most casual observer could tell that he was bored with what he was doing.

“Mrs. Hancock, Mrs. Marks, the judge is ready to resume the proceedings,” he announced in a voice that sounded as bored as he looked.

The women looked at each other and rose as though they were one. Just before they entered the courtroom, Mrs. Marks gave her client a quick hug and a reassuring smile.

“Well, now,” the judge began as everyone settled back into their chairs. “I have reviewed the prenuptial agreement and have even gone into consultation with several of my colleagues. This is a most remarkable document.”

He looked at Lester’s lawyer and smiled begrudgingly.

“I have never seen anything like this before, it’s one of the most brilliant pieces of legal work I’ve ever encountered. You should be congratulated....”

Lester's lawyer, a thin middle-aged man with three separate law degrees behind his name beamed at the judge's compliment. The agreement was one of the first that he had written after he had passed his bar. His beaming turned to a frown as the judge continued.

"... What I would like to do however, is take you outside and horse whip you until you can't see straight!"

"Your honor!" Lester's lawyer shouted as he leaped to his feet. "I protest!"

"Sit down and shut up, Mr. Johnson! Or I'll hold you in contempt of court!" the Judge snapped back at him. He looked vaguely disappointed when the lawyer promptly sat. The judge and the lawyer glared at each other for a few seconds, before the judge turned to Carol.

"Mrs. Hancock, did you receive or ask for the advise of a lawyer when you signed this?" he asked.

"Yes, your honor. Bill... Mr. Johnson, my husband's attorney told me what it meant," Carol said sadly, barely able to contain the tears that had been flowing off and on from her ever since her husband of twenty years filed for the divorce.

"I see," the Judge mused aloud. He glared at Johnson again and struck the gavel hard against the bench top. "Mr. Johnson, I find you in contempt of court. I sentence you to thirty days."

Johnson leaped up again, anger distorting his face.

"What contempt? I haven't done anything."

"Care to try for another thirty days? Sit down!" the Judge commanded. "I'm charging you with contempt

for violation of the conflict-of-interest rule. Advising this woman that it was all right to sign the agreement you wrote yourself was despicable.”

Mrs. Marks chose this instant to interrupt the judge. She was enjoying the exchange between the Judge and her counterpart. Thirty days was too good for him in her estimation, but all that was happening was to prolong Carol’s agony.

“Your honor, I think that we can all agree, except for possibly Mr. Johnson and Mr. Hancock, that he should be locked up for at least a year for what he did. But our main interest now is what can we do to void it?”

“Unless Mr. Hancock wishes to rescind it, nothing,” the Judge said, turning to look expectantly at Lester.

Everyone followed the Judge’s gaze toward Lester Hancock and waited for him to answer. Lester pursed his lips and paused for a long second, looking as though he was considering it.

“No,” he said flatly.

It was the only word that he had uttered during the entire proceedings. In the spectator’s section behind Lester and his lawyer, a young and very attractive blonde giggled.

Carol knew without turning around, that the giggle was from Lester’s new girl friend, Betty. She also knew that the blonde was already sleeping in what just a few weeks ago had been her bed.

**-0-0-0-**

“I’m sorry, Carol, we tried. Even Judge Green was in your corner. That agreement was just too damned

good,” Mrs. Marks said as she opened the door to her car. “Of course we’ll appeal. There’s got to be a way to break that... that abomination!”

She paused and looked at Carol sympathetically.

“I couldn’t believe it when Lester demanded the keys to your car before you left the courtroom. The way he was acting, I’m surprised that he didn’t demand the clothes you’re wearing.”

“That’s only because they wouldn’t fit his blonde bimbo’s fat ass, or over his equally fat head.” Carol chuckled softly before her face grew hard. “Don’t bother appealing, except for the custody of the kids, there’s nothing that I want from that bastard. Nothing.”

Carol was tired of the whole mess. Even though he had been the one that had been unfaithful, Lester and his lawyer had made her feel cheap and dirty throughout the proceedings. The only thing she wanted to do now was to find someplace quiet to stay and have a long hot bath.

“Can I drop you off somewhere?” Mrs. Marks asked, trying to help her client and old friend as much as she could.

Carol looked up at the overcast sky. It seemed to match her mood.

“I would appreciate that. Unless it’s too far out of your way?”

“Where to Carol?” She asked, smiling sadly. Right now, she was willing to take her friend to the next county, if it would help.

“Home, Linda. I want to go home to my mother.”

**-0-0-0-**

It had taken her nearly a year to get over the worst part of the hurt. She didn't mind not getting the house, not as long as her mother would allow her to remain at home until she got back on her feet.

She missed nothing of material value that she and Lester had accumulated during their twenty years of marriage. Like many divorcees before her, she was shocked to learn that she had no credit established.

Nor because of the agreement, could she establish any using Lester's existing credit, despite the fact that she had been the one who had managed the money and paid all the bills.

She missed almost nothing, except for the three children she had borne him.

She wondered if she would ever get over the terrible ache in her heart over the denial of visitation rights with her own children.

She crumpled the copy of the court's decree and threw it into the fireplace. She watched as the edges turned brown and smoldered, turning away before the fire consumed what little had been left to remind her of her previous life.

**-0-0-0-**

"Carol, you've got to get over the fact that Lester has taken everything. You've got to start a life of your own. You've taken the first step by adopting my maiden name of Fox, now it's time to start facing the world again," her mother said, as she watched her daughter throw the envelope into the fireplace.

Carol shook her head and walked away, still too overwrought to do anything but cry.

Mrs. Smith was worried about her daughter. She had always been small and delicate looking even as a child. Now at nearly forty years old, the 5'3" Carol looked even tinier.

The bitter divorce had hit her hard, causing a sudden increase of appetite and for a very short while, some heavy drinking. The combination resulted in a weight gain of nearly forty pounds and requiring a new wardrobe in a few short months.

Without warning, her body rebelled and her mood flopped in the other direction, she lost her appetite and considerable weight. When she recovered her senses and started eating again she had dropped to less than 85 pounds and was just now starting to regain her weight.

Gray hair was starting to appear with greater frequency in her beautiful chestnut hair and at slightly over 98 pounds she was at her lowest weight since she had reached puberty.

"I know, Mother." Carol sighed. "I know. But what can I do? I don't have any skills other than being a wife and mother and those won't get me a job. And I can't go on living off of you forever."

"And why not? I can afford it," Carol's mother asked almost indignantly. She had decided to change her tactics in her efforts to get her daughter out of the house and back to living her life.

"I supported you and your sisters for half my life after your father died. I see no reason why I shouldn't continue with you."

Carol looked at her mother sharply. Her father's insurance had been the main income to the family af-

ter he died, but that was immaterial, her mother had kept the family together. Despite the inaccuracy, it still had been a low blow.

“I’m sorry. It’s not that I’m not grateful, its just that I can’t continue to sit around and do nothing.”

The older woman sighed. She knew her daughter was right, a few more months of Carol feeling sorry for herself would result in a woman who was old and bitter beyond her years.

She was too young for that, and so was Carol!

“Alright then! If you won’t let me support you, then the least you can do is let me set you up in business,” she said, playing her last card.

“Business? Doing what?” Carol asked suddenly interested.

“Well, you’ve always liked old things, antiques, haven’t you?”

Carol nodded. Hunting down and refinishing antiques had always been one of her favorite pastimes.

“Well, I read in the paper that the little second hand store on Third Street is for sale. I think that I can manage the down payment, and maybe three months of payments. After that you’re on your own.”

Carol didn’t hesitate. “That’s a deal!”

**-0-0-0-**

That decision had been made nearly five years ago. Carol had a real struggle getting the business off the ground. After the first three payments her mother had told Carol that she could no longer subsidize the business.

Carol had figuratively tightened the belt around her 23 inch waist, hitched up her size 5 jeans and worked a little harder. Slowly the antique part of the second hand store grew and became the “gravy” to the slow but reliable second hand “meat and potatoes” part.

As she had gotten deeper into the needs and desires of her customers, she realized that she would have to specialize in either one era or one type of furniture. She finally decided on furniture made in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Furniture that was relatively easy to find and generally in good condition, and most importantly, currently in demand.

Her greatest find came when she bought, sight unseen, the entire estate of the granddaughter of a little known turn of the century magician. The purchase would be one that would change her life forever, although she didn't know it at the time.

“Bruce, move that chest over by the workbench for me will you,” Carol asked her part time helper, Bruce Simmons.

Bruce tilted the tall ornate magician's prop and slid a hand truck under it. Holding on to the top with one hand and the handle of the hand truck with the other, he leaned back and easily balanced the heavy chest on the cart's two wheels.

“Any place particular, Carol?”

Carol pretended to study the chest, it was only a few inches shorter than the 6'4" Bruce Simmons. She was really watching the tall, handsome and muscular young man. Half her age, he was one of the most beautiful men she had ever seen.

She thought of him as “beautiful” because that was the only way she could describe him. He WAS

beautiful, especially his eyes. They were deep liquid brown that almost matched his dark brown, nearly black, hair. Dark hair and eye coloring that belied his Scandinavian heritage.

“Carol?” Bruce asked again, thinking that she hadn’t heard him.

She mentally shook herself and pointed to spot a few feet away from her workbench. She wanted it close to her tools if she had to do any repairs to the old chest. It looked in good shape, but closer inspection may prove otherwise. Hopefully it would require nothing more than a good careful cleaning.

Bruce rolled the object to the spot indicated and gently eased it to the floor.

“Will you need me for anything else, Carol? My girl friend and I were going to look for wedding rings tonight after work and I’d like to leave early to clean up.”

“Sure, go ahead, all I’m going to do this weekend is go through that trunk of papers anyway. I’m not going to even think about doing any restoration until Monday,” Carol said cheerfully. “Maryann won’t need you for deliveries this weekend, so you can have Saturday off too if you want.”

“Gee, thanks. I appreciate that. Bridgit and I can spend the weekend looking for an apartment.”

“When is the wedding?” Carol asked, this was only the second time Bruce had mentioned it.

“Well,” Bruce began, wiping his forehead with a big red bandanna. “Bridgit’s due date isn’t for another three months, and we want to get married before she gets too uncomfortable, so it will probably be before the end of the month.”

“Well, be sure to let me know, I’ve got a beautiful sterling silver tea set to give you as a wedding gift.”

“You do?” Bruce asked, surprised. “Which one?” Bruce blushed, realizing how the question must have sounded. “I mean uh,…”

Carol laughed, sensing his embarrassment.

“It’s the one that Bridgit liked the first time you brought her into the shop to introduce her to me. She liked it so much that I figured it would make a great wedding present. So I removed it from the sales room to save it for you.”

“You did? Bridgit and I both liked it. I was saving my money to buy it for her myself. You had a price tag of \$2500 on it, and I’d saved almost half when it disappeared. I thought it had been sold.”

“Nope, saved it for you two. Use the money to take a really good honeymoon.” Carol remembered Bridgit’s “delicate” condition. “Although you may want to wait until after the baby is born to go on it.”

She laughed lightly.

“It might be more fun that way.”

Bruce grinned and slid the toe of one shoe along the floor in an exaggerated “Aw shucks” motion.

Carol had embarrassed the big youth.

Carol matched his grin. In spite of the fact that the young couple’s living arrangements would have been unheard of when she had been their age, she wished she and Lester had done exactly the same thing. It might have saved a lot of heartbreak.

If only...

“...Carol?”

She looked up at Bruce at the sound of his voice. His concerned look on his face brought her out of the self incriminating “if only I had...” mood she was starting to fall into.

“I’m sorry.” she apologized, silently thanking him. “What did you say?”

“I said that I’m going to take off now, unless you have...”

Carol waved him away.

“Go on, get out of here. Go home to your bride-to-be and enjoy the rest of the weekend.”

He smiled his thanks, turned and walked briskly out of the open double doors of the storeroom to the parking lot behind the store.

Carol leaned against the magician’s cabinet and watched him walk out the door and to his new “tricked out” pickup. For about the thousandth time since she had hired Bruce, she admired his build.

As large as he was, well over six feet with shoulders fully half as wide as he was tall, he moved with surprising graceful movements, almost like a cat.

She thought about Bridgit’s condition.

“Like a big old horny tomcat. Here, kitty, kitty, come service mommy,” she said, laughing softly to herself.

She watched the highly polished bright red truck drive carefully out of the parking lot and onto the street. *If he babies Bridgit like he does that truck, she’ll be one happy girl*, Carol thought to herself.

She turned to the magician's trunk of old papers, before the familiar ache of desire started. Opening the trunk and setting aside an old fashioned collapsible top hat, she removed a thick accountant's journal that had been used as a diary by the magician.

She took the journal to a corner of the workroom that she had set aside as a break area for herself and the staff. She had furnished it with "treasures" she had found and had decided to keep.

Curled up in a huge old leather Morris chair she refused to sell and using a Tiffany floor lamp to read by, Carol settled in and opened the journal of the turn of the century magician.

Cardoni the great with a lower case "g", as he had billed himself, had been a small time magician who, no matter how hard he tried, or how elaborate his illusions had been, could never seem to make it to the big time.

He did manage to make a fairly good living at his trade, as testified by the size of the estate that he had left his granddaughter, however.

Carol studied an early photograph of a young Cardoni in his stage costume.

She was amused to note that there hadn't been very many changes in the magician's costume design over the years. She wondered if there had been a rabbit in the top hat he was wearing. Probably not, she decided, the rabbit in the hat trick would have been too simple for the great Cardoni.

Yet, maybe not. The keynote of his act was the "disappearing girl in the closet" trick. It had been an old trick even then. Cardoni managed to work what was then a new variation on the trick, instead of dis-

appearing, he “changed” himself into a beautiful woman.

Of course, in reality the girl was hidden in a concealed compartment in the back of the closet. They traded places, and “poof” he was now a “she”.

The girl would walk around the stage for a few minutes smile, wave, show a shapely leg or two, titillating the Victorian audience and then step back into the closet.

A few seconds later out would pop the great Cardoni.

A standard, well liked illusion and one of the most poorly kept secrets of how it worked in the trade. That may have been one of it’s charms, everyone knew how it worked. The fun was in trying to catch the magician as he made the substitution.

When he was successful, everyone pretended to be mystified.

*It seemed to be the highlight of his act, no wonder he never made the big time, Carol mused.*

Carol glanced up at the old Regulator clock ticking faithfully on the wall. It was nearly closing time. Reluctantly she shut the journal, since she had nothing planned for the evening, she decided to take the beautifully handwritten book home and finish it there.

It was a funny and interesting narration of a not too good magician. Carol felt that he had missed his real calling in life, he should have been a writer.

She slipped the heavy leather bound journal into her canvas carryall that she used as a briefcase, slung it over her shoulder and went into the front part of the store.

Maryann was busy with a late customer.

It looked like the young energetic redhead was well on her way to selling an ordinary turn of the century headboard. Other than the nice hand carvings there was nothing exceptional about it. It had remained unsold for several months, now it looked like Maryann was finally going to unload it.

Carol motioned to Maryann, using a circular wave to let Maryann know that she was going home.

Maryann nodded and continued in her sales pitch.

Carol had developed a strong set of habits after she bought the store. Because she had sunk nearly all of the small amount of her own money (and a lot of her mother's) into the business, she rarely had any disposable funds left over for entertainment. Knowing that she had to do something besides working she had taken up aerobics and jogging.

She found that the exercise had been just what she was missing in her life. Besides improving her already good figure, she had even managed to make friends with several of the young unmarried women in her apartment complex. At first they had jogged as a group.

The sight of six women, mostly young and one middle aged, herself, jogging through the park was impressive.

Especially when one of the girls, Wanda, who had been a military "brat", convinced them that they should jog in formation. After a few weeks of formation jogging, other joggers would stop and stare in open mouthed amazement as the small squad of women, jogging in military cadence, zipped past them.

Slowly over the last three years, the others dropped out one by one as they got married or moved out of the apartment complex.

Now there was only Carol and Wanda who regularly went out.

Carol had been delayed by traffic on the way home and had to hurry to change into her jogging clothes before Wanda knocked on her door. She tossed the canvas bag on the kitchen table and kicked her loafers off. By the time she had reached the bedroom she had removed her blouse and was unzipping her jeans.

She couldn't resist looking at her figure in the full length mirror. Wearing only her teal colored bra and bikini panties, she turned in profile. Giving her tight flat stomach a gentle slap she smiled to herself.

"Forty five years old, three kids and an ex-husband, and you still wear a perfect size 5 and look great in a bikini. Not bad, not bad at all." She said to her reflection.

Carol pulled on a pair of black bike shorts and carefully smoothed them out. They fit like a second skin.

She normally didn't wear them to jog in, usually preferring a pair of more conventional shorts, or on very cold days, sweat pants. But today was Saturday, the day David Stein, one of the few bachelors who jogged in the complex, joined them in their run. While there could never be anything between them, Carol always like to look her best for David.

A matching tight cropped tank top joined the shorts and she was ready to go. Carol had just finished tying the laces on her shoes when she heard a knock on the door.

“Wanda. Come on in.” Carol said stepping back for her friend to pass her. “Where’s David?”

“Hi, short stuff. Dave’s working overtime and can’t make it,” Wanda announced, using the nickname she had given Carol.

It had been a natural nickname for Wanda to give to Carol. Wanda towered over her petite friend by a good 5 inches and out weighed her by nearly forty pounds. Standing next to the much taller and larger Wanda, Carol looked and sometimes felt like a little porcelain doll.

“Short stuff, humph,” Carol snorted as she looked up at her friend. “I can out run you and your long legs any day!”

“Only if I run backwards, with one leg tied behind my back!” Wanda shot back.

Both women laughed at the old joke.

“One of these days, I’m going to have to find another insult for you.” Wanda sighed. “Of course, as cheerful as you are, you’d probably take it as a compliment.”

“You got it.” Carol grinned.

She really liked the younger woman, and had ever since she had first met her. Carol considered Wanda one of her best friends. She locked the apartment door and the two women half walked, half jogged rapidly down the stairs.

“Well, what’s new with you?” Carol asked Wanda as they completed their warm up stretches. “Harry propose yet?”

“No, I don’t think the dumb lug is ever going to get the hint. Sometimes I think that Susie had the right

idea.” Susie had been one of the joggers that had dropped out to get married.

“Forget to take your pill and get pregnant, you mean?” Carol smiled. “Believe me Wanda, you don’t want to get him that way. Besides, even though I love kids, I know from personal experience that being pregnant isn’t all that much fun.”

“You’ve been pregnant?” Wanda asked surprised. “I never knew that. I knew that you were married once, but I didn’t know that you had any kids.”

“I don’t now,” Carol said flatly as they jogged around the corner and into the park. It was still painful to think of the children.

“I’m sorry,” Wanda apologized, and was silent for a minute. “Do you want to talk about it? I mean, going through the death of a child must be terrible.”

“Oh, they’re still alive, at least as far as I know,” Carol replied.

“But I thought..,” Wanda stammered. She pulled her smaller friend to a stop. “Now, you’ve got to tell me what happened.”

“Its simple, I lost custody of them in the divorce.” Carol said calmly, almost matter of fact. “My ‘ex’ took me for everything that we had, everything, including the kids.”

Wanda motioned to a bench, concerned about her friend.

“Carol, I want to hear all about this. Why don’t we call off jogging tonight and just sit and talk.”

Carol hesitated then shrugged her shoulders. *Maybe talking it out with a friend would help heal the deep wounds she still carried.* “Okay, why not.”

They sat on the bench until long after dark.

Carol sat quietly telling Wanda of how happily she had been, married to Lester, and how she had thought everything was fine, until the day the “other woman” appeared. She told her what had happened during the divorce proceedings, and the discovery of the agreement.

Wanda took Carol’s tiny hands in her own.

“Jezzus honey, I’m so sorry. He was a real bastard wasn’t he?” It was more of a statement than a question.

“No, that’s the sad part. He’s really not that bad of a person. No, I blame the whole thing on that blonde bimbo that seduced him and took him away from me.”

“You know, sometimes I wished that I was a man. I think that I would go around and even a few scores for some women I know, including myself,” Wanda swore bitterly.

Carol looked up at her friend in surprise. She had no idea that she disliked men so much. She wondered what had caused it.

“I can relate to that,” Carol said. “But before we change into big hairy men, I think that we should probably quit wearing dresses.”

Wanda laughed. “Sounds reasonable I guess. But that would be the second thing I would do.”

“The second? What would be the first?” Carol asked.

“Throw away all my tampons, of course!” Wanda said seriously.

Carol laughed. “That sounds reasonable.”

“The next thing that I would do would be to find a cute little girl, like you, and screw her until her eye-balls crossed. And if you were a man instead of me, I’d let you do the same thing to me. Hrumph!” Wanda mugged, giving a creditable imitation of Oliver Hardy’s famous “there’s another fine mess!” expression.

Carol was laughing all the way home. She couldn’t imagine what it would be like to never have to worry about a period again. It seemed like she had been enduring periods forever. *Except for when she had been pregnant of course*, she corrected herself.

Even though she hadn’t really worked up a sweat, Carol stripped off her clothes and hopped into the shower. While she shaved her legs she thought about what she would do if by some bit of magic she could turn into a man.

It was inconceivable to even think about making love to another woman.

*Of course if she were a man, then it wouldn’t be another woman after all, would it?* she reasoned.

She was still thinking about it as she slipped into her favorite sleepwear, an extra large man’s t-shirt that fell nearly to her knees, over her head and went to bed.

She had taken the journal of “the great Cardoni” to bed with her, intending to read it before she went to sleep.

She picked up the autobiography at the point she had left off, Cardoni had just bought the disappearing closet illusion.

“... the closet will become the focal point of my new act. Or will, once I learn how to control it. My last try ended up looking pretty horrible. But having seen it work, I know that all it takes a little practice.”

The next few entries concerned his one night stands in a number of vaudeville theaters scattered through out the mid- west.

Carol felt sorry for him, the way he described it, it was a very hard life.

The next entry was about the closet again. He had apparently mastered how to control it, and he seemed to have found himself a partner. A girl he named “Pandora of the Box”.

*Interesting name, full of Freudian meaning,* Carol thought. She wondered what Pandora’s real name was, Cardoni failed to make any mention of it.

She continued to read.

“...and when Pandora stepped out, the audience actually gasped in surprise. They were as amazed as I had been when I first saw the trick. They would be even more amazed if they knew how it’s really done. But if they did, it wouldn’t be ‘magic’ anymore. I just hope that I don’t have any problems with Pandora. She seems like a nice person, but she scares me sometimes with the strange ideas she keeps coming up with.”

Carol skimmed the next few pages to find out if Cardoni had recorded what Pandora’s strange ideas had been. The only other entry that referred to Pandora was the rather cryptic entry. “...Pandora went out tonight. She had dinner and went dancing with Alan Albert, the saxophone player in the band. I had fun, more than I’ve had in a long time. I think I like Pandora.”