

SWAPPING MATES

By Katrina Susan Henderson



ILLUSTRATED BY BRIAN DUKEHART

A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL

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SWAPPING MATES

BY KATRINA SUSAN HENDERSON

1. Background to Trouble

Assistant Professor Ray Clark had just sat down at the desk in the small closet laughingly called his office when the phone rang. He placed his brief case and the papers he had to correct on the desk. Only after they were safely on the desk did he choose to answer the phone.

“Clark here. It's your dime, shoot,” he answered sitting down in a shabby office chair.

“Hi, Ray. This is Vanessa, your wife,” began the soft feminine voice on the phone.

“Yeah, what's up?” Ray asked, a little perturbed at the interruption in his carefully planned schedule.

“You know that little matter we discussed last night concerning your performance in bed?” she replied.

“Yes, dear. What do you wish to say on the matter?” Ray countered getting up and closing the door to his office while still on the phone.

“I've made an appointment with Dr. Bledsol for us to get some counseling concerning our marriage,” Vanessa said after a brief pause.

“Now, look Vanessa. I only agreed to discuss the matter, not to go to therapy concerning it. Besides, I've got a lot of work to do with finals coming up next week,” he answered setting down again.

“More important than our marriage?” she exclaimed harshly.

“That's not what I meant. . .,” began Ray quickly.

“What exactly did you mean?” Vanessa asked icily.

“I only meant that it would be difficult to get away from work right now, that's all,” he said delicately.

“It's either now or never, Ray. I've had several talks with Dr. Bledsol about our problems and she says it's time for us to either join together more solidly, or go our separate ways. If you really want to save our marriage, you'll be there. The appointment is for six o'clock tomorrow evening. Good-by,” she concluded promptly hanging up on him.

Ray sat there in stunned silence for a time. It was difficult to believe that Vanessa would go this far to prove her point. It was true that his bedroom performance had never been very good no matter how hard he tried. No matter what he did, it seemed that Vanessa never came to orgasm. She seemed to have such a hang up that she had

started seeing Dr. Eva Bledsol, a psychologist. Now it appeared, that she wanted to drag Ray into it. Ray just shook his head, he knew that there was nothing wrong with him.

Ray ran his left hand through his thinning black hair and began to scan the papers in front of him. He marked listlessly with his red pencil and dutifully wrote down the results in his grade book. He worked until late in the evening and then left his office to begin his slow progression home.

He locked the door to his office and exited the Science building. He walked into the instructors' parking lot and got in his small white Escort. He drove away from the college and out into the night. He drove downtown and parked his car at Diemen's Bar and Grill. He entered the diner and sat down at his usual place in the first window seat. As he got settled, a large black waitress came over to him.

"Good evening, Professor Clark. Your usual?" she asked casually.

"Yeah, Franny," he replied staring out the window.

"Okay," she replied walking away.

Ray sat lost in thought as what to do. Their marriage had started out so well. He and Vanessa had known each other since college. He remembered how his sister, Deborah, had introduced her new roommate, Vanessa, to Frank, Ray's roommate, and himself. Courtship had proceeded rapidly from that point on and soon Ray and Vanessa had a double wedding with Frank and Ray's sister, Deborah. He remembered how they had even honeymooned all together in Cancun. That was a honeymoon to remember, even though, as Ray thought about it a bit, he seemed to have spent more time with Frank than Vanessa.

Ray's musings were interrupted by Franny who said, "Here we are, Professor. Chili cheeseburger, a mega fry, a side salad with Caesar salad dressing and a bottle of Jack Daniels and a shot glass."

"Thanks, Franny. You're an angel," he replied reaching for the food.

"If you don't mind me asking, professor, why are you in here every night?" Franny asked curiously.

"Well, Franny, it's like this. Vanessa and I haven't been getting on, if you catch my drift," Ray explained while dumping some salt on his fries.

"I see. When was the last time you two got horizontal?" Franny probed.

"Two months ago. After that, she didn't want to bother," he answered pouring himself a shot of the Jack.

"Two months! What about your needs?" she asked in disbelief.

Ray just shrugged his shoulders and replied, "I don't feel like discussing this further, Franny."

"I understand, Professor," she answered getting up from the booth.

"Yeah. Thanks, Franny," he replied slamming the shot down his throat.

Ray finished his meal and half of the Jack Daniels there in the booth. He was so sloshed that Bill, the owner of the bar called him a cab. Bill helped Ray into the cab, gave the cabby the route to take and paid the cabby out of Ray's billfold. The cab drove for about half an hour and arrived in front of Ray's suburban home.

The cabby helped Ray out to the sidewalk and then drove off.

Ray reeled slightly as he stumbled into the white picket fence in front of him. He remember in about the same instant, that it was his sister and brother-in-laws house. His house was just over to the left of it, but he was too embarrassed to go home and face Vanessa.. Better his sister than his wife! He proceeded to stagger up her sidewalk and soon came to her front door. Hesitantly, he reached up and rang the doorbell.

After the fifth try, the door opened, and framed in the doorway was Ray's sister, Deborah. She was wearing a tee shirt and jeans with a pair of old tennis shoes. Her black hair, which she had in a short tomboy style, was almost as short as his. Her eyes were the same blue as his and it was quite obvious that they were brother and sister as they both were nearly identical.

"Well, well. What have we here? It appears to be a crossbreed between a drunk and my brother," she said acidly.

"I'm sorry about this, Deb. I don't know what came over me. Can I stay here, tonight? I don't want Vanessa to see me like this," he said leaning against the door jam.

"You don't mind showing me though, do you?"

"Please, sis," he pleaded.

"all right. You can stay in the guest room for tonight. Come with me and I'll help you to bed. In the morning, I'll wake you early so you can get in before Vanessa wakes up," replied Deborah helping him inside.

"Thanks, sis. This means a lot to me," Ray replied.

"Sure, Ray. Lean on me," she ordered.

Ray was thankful for the support and leaned on his sister. It had always been strange between them when growing up, he reflected. Instead of him defending his older sister, she was always defending him. She always had been a tomboy and had never owned a pair of silk panties in her life. She preferred her clothes to have a boyish cut and only the plainest of cotton underthings. Make-up was a thing she hated to put on and only did so on special occasions. Even now, her clothes were stained, her hair uncombed, her breath smelled and her house was a wreck. Ray, however, was too drunk to appreciate any of this.

Together, they managed to get to the guest room of her house and she brought him inside. Deborah managed to get Ray into the small bathroom when he began to retch. He got sick all over himself and even soiled his underpants.

Deborah snorted with disgust and said, "You can't sleep here like that, and your clothes will need to be washed before they can be worn again, if ever. You go ahead and take them off."

"I can't," mumbled Ray lying on the floor.

"all right, I'll take care of you like I always do," she replied entering the bathroom.

She first went over and turned on the bath. When the water had gotten nice and warm, she then came over to her brother who was moaning on the floor. She undressed him, tossed his clothes into a garbage bag and then helped him into the bath.

Ray became more alert as he entered the bath. The water in the bath was light and foamy, scented with the smell of freshly cut roses. The water was soothing on his skin and soon he had dozed off in the nice warm soft bath.

After he had soaked for an hour, Deborah came back in and said, "Are you feeling better?"

Ray just nodded his head and began to slowly emerge from the tub. Deborah got out one of her large towel sheets and wrapped her brother up in it and vigorously dried him. She then drained the bath and carried him into the bedroom proper, propping him on the edge of the bed.

"I got some bed clothes for you. Let me help you on with these. Just sit here and let Deb take care of you," she ordered.

Ray was in no condition to argue and soon found himself wearing a pair of her underwear and one of her nightgowns.

She tucked Ray into bed and soon, he was fast asleep.

Ray awoke totally disoriented with a hangover to boot and an annoying shaking of his shoulder. Slowly he opened his eyes to see Deborah shaking him awake. He yawned slightly and sat up in bed.

"I'm awake already. What happened?" he asked as he came awake.

"What do you mean, what happened? You're the one who got so stinking drunk that you couldn't make your way home!" exclaimed Deborah.

"Yeah, sorry about that. What time is it?" asked Ray pulling back the covers and setting at the edge of the bed.

"5:00 A.M. Time for you to go home and get ready for work," she replied.

Ray suddenly noticed what he was wearing and asked sheepishly, "Where are my clothes, Deb?"

Deborah looked concerned and answered, "I'm sorry. They're ruined. I'll see if I can't find you something to wear from here to your house."

"Thanks, Deb. Is it all right if I freshen up a bit before I head out?" questioned Ray.

"Certainly. Just put my panties and my nightgown in the clothes hamper. You can shave if you like," replied Deborah as she exited the room.

"Okay, sis," answered Ray going into the bathroom.

There, he quickly got out of the nightgown and panties, placing them in the hamper as he had been asked. He then ran some hot water in the basin and opened up the

medicine cabinet. There he found some Lady shavers and some Ladies shaving gel. He thought for a moment about asking Deb for some more masculine shaving articles, but realized that to get them, she might disturb her husband Frank.

Frank was the Vice President of Marketing for Medi-Tech Industries and was often out of town up at the main plant in Rochester. This weekend, however, he was on a break from traveling and was no doubt in and fast asleep enjoying his weekend off.

Frank had a good temper on him, especially when his sleep was disturbed, or so at least Deb had told him. He just reached for the Ladies shaving gel and got busy cleaning off his facial hair. He made quick work of it, and soon it was all off. His skin felt smoother than it had since he was a teen and he smelt of strawberries and bananas. He followed that up with some Ladies antiperspirant. Just then, he heard the door to the bedroom open and footsteps approach the bathroom door.

“Ray, here are some clothes you can wear,” said Deb sliding the clothes into the bathroom.

Ray looked down at the pile of clothes and promptly was embarrassed. There, on top of the pile were a lacy bra and panty set, a pair of black pumps, a pair of black stirrup pants, a package of knee-high pantyhose and a silky blouse with large flowers on it.

“What gives, sis? These are your clothes!” exclaimed Ray in disbelief.

“Well, they're the only ones here that will fit you. You'd never fit into Frank's things. Besides, it is only a quick run through the backyard to your house and in the dawn's early light, who'd notice. Don't be difficult, little one,” she taunted.

“all right, Deb. You'd better be right about that,” he replied as he reached for the pile.

“I'll be right back,” she said as she left him again.

He was shaking as he reached for the pile and pulled the lacy panties off the top. They were so pretty and soft that he had a hard time believing that his sister never wore such things. He recognized the bra and panty set though. It was the set that he and Vanessa had gotten Deborah for her honeymoon. Ray reached down and pulled the panties up his sparsely haired legs. They felt wonderful on, so silky smooth and so unrestricting. Ray was erect for the first time in months with just the thought of these beautiful things.

He strapped the bra about his hairy chest and proceeded to put on the rest of the garb in quick succession. After he had finished, Deborah walked into the bedroom.

“Well, don't we look sweet. You look better in those things than I ever did,” Deborah teased.

“Cute, sis. I'd better get across. Each second I delay, the more I risk being detected,” replied Ray slipping on the pumps.

“You are quite correct. Come on, I'll let you out the back,” she replied leading him into the kitchen.

When they got to the kitchen, Deborah said, "Just keep these things over there with you. I'll pick them up later."

"Thanks, Deb. You're a swell sister," Ray replied with a smile.

"Just get a move on, sweet cheeks. I'll see you later to pick the clothes up," she smiled back.

"Right," he answered as he went out the kitchen door.

Ray quickly moved away from the house and out into the backyard of his sister's home. He had forgotten how large it was. He looked back at the house and saw the kitchen light go out and the bedroom light come on shortly thereafter. He moved across the yard and approached the gate that connected the backyard to the short neutral zone between it and the homes in the back. Ray opened the back gate and stepped into the well lit neutral zone. He swiftly went along till he came to the gate in back of his own backyard. He quickly entered his own backyard with a sigh of relief. Shaking his head in wonder, he walked up to the back door and entered the house.

Ray quickly went to the guest bedroom, where he had been sleeping since his and Vanessa's falling out, and quickly got out of Deborah's clothes. He shoved them into an empty drawer in the extra upright chest and proceeded to dress himself in his normal casual clothes. He put on some aftershave to cover his perfumed smell and put on some masculine deodorant. Satisfied to be safely male again, he went down to the kitchen and began to fix breakfast. After a bit, the door to the kitchen opened and Vanessa walked in.

"Morning, Ray," she said as she smoothed her long blonde hair back.

"Morning, Vanessa. I hope you slept well," Ray replied trying not to wince at the pounding in his temples.

"Fine. Breakfast?" she asked.

"Sure. Flapjacks with butter," he replied dishing her out some.

"Thanks," she replied.

"No problem," Ray answered cooking himself a couple.

After that, the conversation dragged and soon Ray had enough. He got up from the table, put his dishes in the sink, and waved good-bye to Vanessa, who didn't even return it. In a huff, he slammed the front door and caught a ride from one of his neighbors to Diemen's to pick up his car.

After Ray had been gone for an hour, there was a knock on the back door and Vanessa answered it. There, standing in the doorway in her usual masculine cut attire was Deborah.

"Well, what did Frank say?" asked Vanessa anxiously.

"He's in favor of it, tentatively. They have a golf match today, and he'll make his final discussion before your appointment with Dr. Bledsol. I think it looks good. Did you see him?" replied Deborah.

“Sure did, I couldn't believe it. He looks just like you. With a bit of work, he might pass,” said Vanessa.

“And if he does?” asked Deborah with a leer in her eyes.

“Then we will be in business,” answered Vanessa putting her arms around Deborah's neck.

“Yes, business,” replied Deborah putting her arms around Vanessa and kissing her sweetly with a French kiss.

2. Soul Searching

Ray was happy when the half day ended. He handed in his final test to the testing center and told them to administer it and record the results like usual. He then proceeded to Diemen's Bar and Grill for a rendezvous with Frank for their monthly golf match. When he arrived, Frank was already on his third brew and had polished off a pile of megafries.

“Hey, Ray. Good to see you. Have a seat with me,” said Frank, motioning Ray to the other side of the booth.

“Don't mind if I do. Franny get me my regular, but with a beer this time!” shouted Ray.

“Sure thing, Professor,” replied Franny from behind the counter.

“What's this I hear about you and Vanessa seeing the shrink?” asked Frank.

“Well, we've been having a few marital problems recently and Vanessa seems to think this lady shrink can help,” said Ray, looking into the eyes of his oldest friend.

“Know what you mean,” he replied taking another long pull on his beer. “Don't tell me Deb and you are having problems!” exclaimed Ray in disbelief.

“I'm afraid so, Ray. Now, don't get me wrong. You're sister is a fine person, but I'm afraid the spark has gone out of our relationship,” he answered.

Franny brought Ray his food and his beer and a silence hung over them.

Here Ray was with best friend and brother-in-law and both were having problems in their relationships. Ray was so flabbergasted, it took him five minutes to regain his voice.

“What do you mean, Frank?” asked Ray.

“It's like this, Ray. Remember when you introduced me to your sister. She was a little tomboyish, but I figured that would eventually fade,” started Frank.

“But it hasn't,” interrupted Ray taking a pull on his beer.

“Yeah. Finish stuffing your face, the golf course awaits us,” replied Frank jovially.

“Yeah, right,” answered Ray who began consuming with glee.

After they had finished lunch, they went out onto the golf course and teed off. After the front nine were finished, both Ray and Frank were bushed. They walked back to the clubhouse and went down to the lounge. There, they found that they practically

had the lounge all to themselves, so they ordered a pitcher of beer and sat down at one of the window booths.

“So tell me, Ray, what is the problem between you and Vanessa?” asked Frank in a concerned voice.

“I don't know, Frank. It just seems that I don't excite her anymore. It used to be so great with her assuming an aggressive role in our lovemaking. I was never very good at being the aggressive partner and that seems to be our problem,” stated Ray pouring himself a beer.

“Interesting, Deborah and I have the opposite problem. Instead of her being the passive partner, she wants to be the aggressor all the time. I'm sorry. I just can't handle that, Ray. I like being the aggressive partner and I want a passive mate,” he replied settling back in his seat.

“Do you know, Dr. Bledsol?” asked Ray.

“Yeah. She's Deb's shrink as well. It seems that all our problems have really snow-balled since our ladies started seeing her,” said Frank sipping on his beer.

“You really think she is the cause of it all?”

“Don't really know. Only met the lady once. She came over to our house for a joint marriage counseling,” replied Frank.

“Holy, shit! We're supposed to have one of those tonight at six!” exclaimed Ray.

“If we hurry those last nine holes along, you should be able to make it,” said Frank chugging his last beer.

“Right,” answered Ray briskly downing the last of the beer from the pitcher.

Ray managed to get home shortly before Dr. Bledsol arrived. Vanessa was dressed in a very feminine pink sun dress with lace trim and red sequins. She didn't even acknowledge him as he entered and he felt a chill come over him. It was like they were strangers again and Ray didn't know how to set things right.

Ray ran into the guest bedroom and changed out of his smelly golf clothes. He took a quick shower and shave, liberally using his aftershave and cologne. He put on one of his best black three piece suits and joined his wife in the living room.

“You look good, Vanessa,” Ray ventured.

“Thank you,” she replied archly.

“Welcome,” muttered Ray in reply picking up the newspaper.

After reading for half an hour, the doorbell rang. Ray looked down irritably from his paper. He had just gotten to the sports page and was anxious to see the football scores. The bell rang again and Vanessa showed no sign of budging from her seat. Her hands lay in her lap and she stared vacantly at the sitcom on the television. After the third ring, Ray gave up and went to open the door.

Upon opening the door, he saw a fiery red haired woman who was half a head taller than he was. Ray realized that she would be almost as tall as Frank without her heels which made her a good six feet tall.

“Dr. Ray Clark, I presume,” she said flashing him a bright smile.

“Dr. Eva Bledsol, I presume. Come on in, Vanessa is in the living room,” replied Ray holding the door open for her.

“Thank you. You seem to have good manners at least,” she answered.

“Yes, well. May I take your coat?”

“Certainly, hon,” she replied slipping out of her fur coat.

Ray caught it in his arms and put it in the hall closet. They then entered the living room, and Vanessa showed the first signs of life that evening.

“Thank you for coming, Doctor,” said Vanessa shaking hands with Dr. Bledsol.

“No problem at all, Vanessa. I met your husband at the door,” she replied sitting down on the love seat.

Ray reached for the remote and turned off the television. Vanessa remained seated on the sofa, while he sat down in his big arm chair.

Dr. Bledsol got out a small tape recorder from her purse and set it up next to her. She inserted a blank tape and turned the unit on.

“June 2. Tonight is the first joint consultation between my client, Mrs. Vanessa Clark and her husband, Dr. Ray Clark. We will follow standard procedure with me first talking to Mrs. Clark alone, then Dr. Clark alone and then both together in an interactive format. Dr. Clark, will you please leave us for an hour?” began Dr. Bledsol.

“Certainly, I'll go see Frank for a bit,” replied Ray getting up and leaving.

Ray went out the back and was soon knocking on Frank's back door.

“Come on in, it's open,” came Frank's voice from inside the house.

Ray opened the door to the kitchen and entered. The place was disaster area! There were piles of week old dishes in the sink, insects crawling around and the smell of rotted meat. Ray nearly gagged on the stench.

“Honey, please bring me a beer!” shouted Frank from the living room where the football game could be heard playing.

Ray just shook his head, reached into the refrigerator, plucked out a couple of beers and went into the living room.

He walked right up behind Frank and said, “Here's your beer, dear.”

Frank burst out laughing and replied, “Oh, it's you, Ray. Have a seat.”

“Thanks,” replied Ray moving aside a pile of papers.

“How's everything?” asked Frank opening his beer.

“Fine, I guess. Frank, is the kitchen always this bad?” asked Ray.

“Yeah, sorry about that. Your sister isn't much of a housekeeper and the dishes only seem to get done when I do them. That generally occurs only when I'm out of utensils, pans or containers,” he replied.

“It's disgusting in there, Frank. You have roaches crawling around and why haven't you changed out of your golfing clothes?” asked Ray leaning forward on the sofa.

“Hell, she hasn't done laundry in over a month and I'm out of clothes except for my business suit,” he muttered pulling on his beer.

“I'll tell you what. If you're willing to kill the roaches in the kitchen, I'll help you do the dishes during half time,” offered Ray.

“Why, that's really nice of you, Ray,” replied Frank looking at him wide eyed.

“Now, tell me where your laundry room is,” ordered Ray.

“Right in the main hall closet. You gonna do my laundry too?” asked Frank in disbelief.

“Well, I can't stay and finish it. I've got to go back in an hour, but I'll get you started,” replied Ray grabbing a clothes basket from the hall closet and proceeded to the bedroom and the hampers.

Ray gathered up all the clothes on the bedroom floor, the hall and emptied the clothes hampers. He then separated them and put the white clothes in first. He poured a generous amount of soap in, stopping to show Frank just how much to use. He then activated the washer, showing Frank how to operate the controls. Frank had a bit of a problem understanding why the clothes needed to be separated and Ray just groaned in disbelief.

Half time arrived and Ray and Frank tackled the dishes. Frank got out the insecticide and began spraying mercilessly.

Ray simply smashed them with a fly swatter that had obviously seen better days. After that, Ray ran some water in the sink for the dishes and liberally applied dish soap.

“Do you have something, I can wear to protect my suit?” asked Ray, rolling up his sleeves.

“There are some aprons in the cabinet. I'll get them,” replied Frank.

Frank went over to a cabinet and pulled out two aprons. One was very dirty and greasy, its white color now a dull yellow. The other one was still clean, but had flowers and lace on it.

Ray quickly recognized it as one of the wedding gifts his sister had received. Ray was puzzled as to why it was still clean after the past three years. It was like the apron had never even been worn.

Ray took the clean apron from Frank and said, “Uh, thanks Frank. I'll wash and you rinse, dry and put them away.”

“Okay, Ray,” replied Frank with a smile.

Ray gave a heavy sigh and began the dishes. It took all of half time to finish them and soon Frank was again anchored in front of his television. Ray looked at his watch and realized that Dr. Bledsol and Vanessa should be finishing up their session.

“Got to go, Frank. See you later,” said Ray heading for the kitchen.

“Yeah, later,” replied a distracted Frank.

Ray ran out the back way and soon entered his house once more through the kitchen.

“Is that you, Dr. Clark?” asked the voice of Dr. Bledsol.

“Yes, it is doctor,” Ray replied.

“Just a moment, I'm finishing up with Vanessa,” she replied.

“Yeah. I'll just wait here,” answered Ray.

After a few more minutes, Vanessa came into the kitchen and said, “You can go in now, Ray. I'll just wait in my room until she's ready to see us both.”

“Okay, Vanessa. I hope you know what you're doing,” replied Ray exiting the kitchen and entering the living room.

“Come in and lie down on the sofa, Dr. Clark,” said Dr. Bledsol inserting another tape in the recorder.

“all right, but off the record, is there any hope, Doctor?” asked Ray lying down on the couch.

“I don't know yet, Dr. Clark. Now here we go. Continuing report, I am now interviewing Dr. Ray Clark. Dr. Clark, how long have you and Vanessa been married?” asked Dr. Bledsol.

“Three years this past May,” answered Ray.

“Good honeymoon?” questioned Dr. Bledsol.

“Yeah, I thought it was pretty good. It was in Cancun,” he replied.

“Yes. I heard it was nice there. Why don't you have any children, Dr. Clark?” said Dr. Bledsol.

“Well, ” answered Ray warily. “I guess we're just not getting it on often enough and at the right time.”

“I see. Have you two consulted a physician?” asked Dr. Bledsol bluntly.

“Well, Doctor, we have not. I'm healthy and Vanessa's healthy. It seems to be more than a physical problem, Doc. I want to please my wife, but nothing I do seems to give her pleasure. She just lies there like a sack of beans and doesn't respond to any of my caresses,” Ray replied beginning to weep slightly.

Dr. Bledsol took a handkerchief out of her purse and handed it to Ray. In her eyes, there showed the light of compassion.

Ray took the cloth and dried his eyes.

“Well, it seems you do have your wife's best interest at heart. She seems to think you don't care, but I see that you are just feeling inadequate,” stated Dr. Bledsol.

“What do you mean, inadequate?” Ray asked in stunned disbelief.

“Well, Ray, it seems you feel inadequate to the task of pleasing your wife. You long to please, but can't seem to do it correctly for her. Do I read you correctly?” asked Dr. Bledsol.

“Yeah, Doc. She won't tell me what to do to please her and I've tried everything I can think of,” replied Ray.

“What will you do if the only way to please her is to set her free?” Dr. Bledsol questioned pointedly.

“I don't know, Doc. What should I do?” Ray wailed with tears streaming down his face.

“Well, I think I have enough to suggest a course of action. When you've dried your tears, I want you to bring Vanessa down so that we can all speak together,” answered Dr. Bledsol turning off her tape recorder.

It took a couple of minutes for Ray to regain his composure. He then handed the handkerchief back to Dr. Bledsol and went up the stairs to the second floor. Arriving outside the master bedroom, Ray knocked on the door.

Vanessa opened the door and the two of them came down the staircase together. Vanessa sat once more on the sofa and Ray in his chair.

Dr. Bledsol turned on her tape machine and said, “After interviewing both subjects, a course of action has become obvious. Vanessa, you state that Ray cares nothing about your happiness.”

“Yes. He's an egotistical stuck-up male chauvinist pig. He cares only about his own well-being,” spat out Vanessa.

“But your husband says that you won't communicate to him your wants and desires,” countered Dr. Bledsol.

“That may be so, but he can't satisfy my wants and desires,” replied Vanessa.

“But, Vanessa, honey. I'd do anything for you. You know that. Just tell me how to please you. I'll make every effort,” pleaded Ray.

“I don't know,” extemporized Vanessa.

Ray looked down and sighed heavily. Vanessa didn't seem to want him to help here. She was determined to shut him out of her mind and out of her life. What could he do to convince her of his sincerity. What could he do to please his wife?

After a few minutes, Dr. Bledsol said, “After weighing the evidence and your interviews, I think I have a solution. It is going to seem a little strange to you both, but here's what I want you two to do. Ray, you say you don't know what your wife wants and desires because she will not tell you.”

“That's right, Doctor,” replied Ray nodding his head.

“And you maintain that he can't help you. Is that right, Vanessa?” asked Dr. Bledsol.

“Yes. Not even if he actually wanted too, the pig,” snorted Vanessa in disgust.

“Right. Here's my solution. Ray, for tomorrow, you will do whatever Vanessa says. You will be her slave for a day. Vanessa, you will show Ray all of your wants and desires. If you two don't come to terms, I recommend a trial separation followed by divorce proceedings,” pronounced Dr. Bledsol as she turned off her tape recorder.

“Is there no other way, Doctor?” asked Ray with concern.

“What's a matter, Ray? Chicken of what I might do to you?” pressed Vanessa.

“There is no other way that I can see, Dr. Clark. Please be so good as to fetch my coat. My bill will be in the mail later on. Thank you for inviting me into your home,” said Dr. Bledsol rising to her feet.

Ray quickly got up, got her coat out of the closet and helped her on with it. She said good-bye to him at the door and got into her convertible and sped away. Ray closed the door as soon as her tail lights rounded the next block.

“See you in the morning, Ray. I'm going to show you exactly what I want and desire tomorrow,” grinned Vanessa wickedly as she mounted the stairs.

Dr. Ray Clark sat down in his large armchair with the television off and the paper abandoned to one side. Ray wondered exactly what had he gotten himself into this time.

3. Slave for a Day

Ray awoke early the next to find himself being shaken awake by Vanessa. Sunlight was just beginning to crest the bottom of the window sill and the sound of early morning birds filled the air. Ray opened his eyes to look at Vanessa. She was dressed in an all black leather outfit cut in a most revealing fashion. Around her neck, she wore a dog collar that had a tag hanging from it with her name engraved on it.

“Get up, slave,” she said motioning Ray to rise.

Ray got out from under the covers and sat on the edge of bed in his jockey shorts. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. His Vanessa was dressed in leather and seemed to be determined to treat him as the slave he'd agreed to be for Dr. Bledsol.

“Take those off,” said Vanessa pointing at Ray's shorts.

Ray stood up and quickly lowered them to the floor.

Even though, this was his wife, he still felt a little self conscious about standing in front of her fully nude. She casually walked around him as if to inspect him. When she came back around to the front, she was shaking her head in disapproval.

“This will never do. You're much too hairy, slave. I want you to go into the bathroom and run a nice bubble bath. I want you to wait for me there,” ordered Vanessa.

“Uh, okay,” muttered Ray.

“The proper response is, ‘Yes, Mistress’. Say it!,” commanded Vanessa.

“Yes, Mistress,” responded Ray sullenly.

“Smile when you say it!” exclaimed Vanessa slapping Ray.

Ray was too stunned for words. Even in all their fights, they had never struck one another. What had come over Vanessa? It seemed like she was someone completely different from the shy reserved girl he had married. Instead of arguing, as Ray very much wanted to do, he just smiled and went into the bathroom. There he ran a tub full of warm water and poured in a liberal amount of sweet smelling foam bathing gel. After he had finished, Vanessa closed the bathroom door behind them.

“Very good. Now stand there with your arms and legs spread,” ordered Vanessa pulling out an aerosol can from the medicine chest.

Ray complied and soon felt the coolness on his skin followed by a sharp stinging sensation. He wanted to move, but every time he did, Vanessa would tease him about being a little baby. Needled by her teasing, he stood there steadfast.

After he had stood there for ten minutes, Vanessa said, “That should be good enough. Now jump in the bath and scrub yourself down well. ”

“Yes, Mistress,” replied Ray stepping into the bath.

“Good. After you finish here, there will be some clothes for you to wear on the bed. I will be there to supervise,” stated Vanessa imperiously.

“Yes, Mistress,” replied Ray while he lowered himself into the water.

Vanessa turned and left the room, leaving Ray to his bath.

The water felt soft and foamy against Ray's skin which had begun to itch terribly. Ray grabbed a washcloth and began scrubbing himself vigorously. After a while, all the areas that Vanessa had used the stuff in the aerosol can on, stopped itching. Ray rose from the bath, his skin feeling soft and smelling of flowers.

Ray couldn't help wondering what Vanessa had in mind exactly. Was her want and desire to be a dominatrix?

Ray swallowed hard and began to towel himself dry. As he was drying himself, he discovered much to his dismay, that the hairs on his body were floating on the water in the bathtub. He realized, with a sinking feeling that Vanessa had used one of her depilatory foams on him and his body hair was gone as a result. He finished drying off, wrapped the towel around himself and stepped into the bedroom.

“Ah, here at last. Come over here, slave. These are the clothes you will wear for today as you perform your duties,” ordered Vanessa motioning Ray over to where she was.

Ray, mindful of his promise, walked over to her and looked at the clothes on the bed. He shook his head in total disbelief.

On the bed was a maid's outfit, complete from head to toe; a pair of black high heels, a black flowered lace bra and panty set and a long black wig.

Vanessa just smiled at the total effect she was having on Ray.

Unfortunately, this was lost on Ray in his embarrassment.

“How do you like them, slave?” asked Vanessa.

"I don't know what to say, Mistress," answered Ray hesitantly.

Vanessa grinned and replied, "Say that you like them."

Ray wet his lips and then said, "I like them, Mistress."

"Good, slave. Now, your Mistress wants to see her pretty slave in them, so put them on," ordered Vanessa.

Ray looked at her in a panic. She couldn't be serious to even suggest such a thing. First it was his sister, loaning him her clothes during his drunken escapade, and now it was Vanessa wanting him to don female garb. She had never even hinted about anything like this before.

"Vanessa, aren't you taking this a little too far?" asked Ray softly.

"Quiet, slave! The only response I will accept is 'Yes, Mistress.' Now say it!" shouted Vanessa clearly irritated by Ray's reluctance.

"Yes, Mistress."

"Good, slave. Put them on while I correct you," she ordered.

Ray gave in and began putting on the clothes. He started with the panties and was amazed to discover the cool silkiness of them against his hairless skin. They were so soft and sensual, that he found he was semi-erect.

He ignored Vanessa's cruel laugh and donned the bra next stuffing it with some cotton that Vanessa handed him after he had it on. He put on the rest of the maid's uniform and under Vanessa's instruction, applied make-up. After it was all said and done, he looked like a rather homely French maid. Ray was surprised to find he was a little disappointed that he didn't look better in the maid's outfit.

This would surely not set well with Vanessa.

"You're homely, slave," muttered Vanessa bitterly.

"Sorry, Mistress," replied Ray looking down in despair .

"Not to worry, slave. You'll improve with time. Here, let's get this wig on you. It should help," said Vanessa approaching Ray with the long black wig.

Ray sat on the edge of the bed as Vanessa shook the wig out and placed it on his head. She then secured it to his head with some bobby pins and proceeded to brush the wig. When Ray looked in the mirror, after Vanessa's efforts, he looked twenty times better. Hair was definitely the crowning glory.

"Much better. Don't you think so, slave?" asked Vanessa with a smug smile on her face.

"Yes, Mistress."

"Good, it's time to put you to work, my pretty maid. Today I am going to relax and you are going to clean house. I'll be in front of the television for most of the day and will expect you to bring me snacks and drinks anytime I call you. You will respond quickly and earnestly. You will be respectful and will curtsy to me, starting right now," stated Vanessa flashing him an angry look.

"Yes, Mistress," Ray replied stunned by this version of Vanessa.