

SAMANTHA'S WISH

By Sarah Carpenter



ILLUSTRATED BY VERONICA VINYL

A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL

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"SAMANTHA'S WISH"

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'THE OVERLORD AFFAIR'

Prologue:

"You pervert!" Her voice was a shrill scream. Linda wasn't taking the news well. "I thought you were just kinky, wearing woman's underwear all the time." Her face was getting redder, "Now I see you're just a sicko. A *freak!*"

Sam tried once more to explain, "I can't help the way I am. This all started when I was very young." He looked at her face, searching for some sign of understanding, "I'm not able to repress the feelings any more."

"Get out!" She stood up, "*Get out!* And take all that, *that stuff* with you." Linda had found "Samantha's" stash of clothes, her shoes and her wig. There was a make up kit on the table, and it wasn't Linda's. That's what she had confronted Sam with.

"What can I say?"

"To me? Nothing. From now on, you can do all your talking to my lawyer." She swept the cosmetics off the table with her arm. Gathering up her coat and purse, she said, "I want you to just disappear. My lawyer will tell you how much money I want." She looked at me with a cruel smile, "You give me any trouble, any grief, and I'll tell your boss. I'll tell your friends, even total strangers. I'll fix you, I may just tell all of them about you anyway!"

As she headed for the door, she said, "I want you and your...," she waved her arm in a sweeping gesture, "your crap out of this house in two hours. Or else!"

The door slammed behind him. And on a large part of Sam's life. He felt empty, defeated and lost. Deep down inside he knew he was female. Sam had started taking hormones about four months ago, and the effects were starting to show. There wasn't any easy way to break the news, and he knew Linda wouldn't accept the idea that 17 years of marriage were over. It hadn't been a bad marriage, though, due to some medical complications on Linda's part, they couldn't have children. Linda said she would never accept Sam as a woman. She'd ignored what he was doing for as long as she could.

Sam sighed, got up from the table and started picking his makeup up off the floor. Two hours for packing and apartment hunting didn't leave much extra time.

One hour and 43 minutes later, Sam stepped out into the spring sunshine, and took the first step down a new, unexplored, and just a little frightening road.

Since Sam and Linda separated a month ago, she'd been living full time as a woman in a low budget apartment in New York City, and working two jobs. Sam managed to use the medical benefits from her day job as a computer programmer to cover the counseling sessions for the break-up of the marriage, and transitioning on the job.

It was a rough month financially as well as emotionally, with the promise of many more to come. Luckily, Sam's savings toward her SRS remained undiscovered, although she only had about half of what she needed for the surgery. With the payment to Linda each month, plus all his other expenses, Sam didn't know if she would ever have enough.

The weather so far this summer had been very hot, and today was no exception. High temperature of 98, low temperature tonight in the high 80's. Sam's small, one bedroom apartment had two windows that open into an air shaft. The view through them was a solid brick wall about eight feet away. There was no air conditioning, and it was risky to leave the windows open, much less unlocked. The small fan struggled to move the hot, stale air around the room. She thought about going out to an air conditioned movie, but in this heat people get a little crazy; the streets aren't safe for a girl out by herself.

Sam stood in front of the open window in her darkened apartment, wearing just a long cotton T-shirt, her growing breasts making two mounds in the expanse of fabric. She looked down a little further, and saw something else making a mound. Sam couldn't wait to get rid of that. Her hips were beginning to widen, which meant that the skirts and slacks would fit better. She was excited that the hormones were finally kicking in.

She looked at the clock, its red numbers telling her it was after midnight. She thought to herself that she'd better turn in if she were going to get to work on time tomorrow. She took one last look at the small wedge of sky visible from the window and noticed one star seemed much brighter than all the others. It seemed to glow with a steady, intense white light, almost burning into her very soul.

Sam remembered a rhyme she knew as a small child: "Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight., I wish I may, I wish I might, have this wish I wish tonight." She thought that was how it went, anyway. Her wish tonight was the one that is probably said by thousands of people like her, every night: "*I wish I could live out the rest of my life as a woman.*"

Sam tore herself away, closed and locked the window, and crawled into bed. As she pulled the sheet over her legs and closed her eyes, the heat didn't seem as oppressive as before, and the bed was more comfortable than she remembered as she drifted off to sleep. The only sound was the fan murmuring in the background.

Sam woke up to what sounded like a thunderstorm. At first she was confused, her bed didn't feel right and her room seemed larger. The thunder claps came faster and faster, and suddenly the bed tossed her out onto the floor. Sam realized that she was hearing explosions. Her next thought was some kind of terrorist attack, but here? In

this neighborhood? A massive explosion rocked the entire building and an outside wall collapsed, tossing Sam and the bed out into the street. She found herself sitting in the street, amidst piles of brick and wood with chunks of plaster stuck to it.

Her arms were covered with cuts and scrapes, and there was blood on her legs, mixed in with dust and dirt from the destroyed building. Sam drew her nightgown around her and realized it wasn't the one she had put on when she went to bed.

As she looked around, the panic grew because she didn't recognize the buildings, or even the street. The cars were old fashioned and unrecognizable and, amid the destruction of the unfamiliar neighborhood, she saw what looked like a double decker bus under the wall of a partially collapsed building.

Then the ground shook with a tremendous explosion. The force tossed Sam into the air and she hit her head hard when she landed, a black wave washing over her. She dimly remembered being carried on a stretcher, being loaded into the back of an old ambulance, complete with unfamiliar sounding bells and sirens. The ambulance ride became a rocking, jostling, faint memory.

Sam awoke with a start. Nothing around her was the least bit familiar. She was in an old style iron hospital bed, with a wool blanket over her. There was an all pervasive smell of ether. The blanket had seen better days, as had everything around her. She had bandages on her knees, one foot, and her right arm was bandaged from wrist to elbow. But her head! My God but she couldn't remember a headache this bad. Sam's worst hangover was a church picnic compared to this. She put her hands gingerly to her head and felt what must have been miles of bandages wrapped around the top of her head, all the way down to her ears. A larger lump of bandage was at the back of her head where she'd struck it during the explosion. The throbbing was getting worse.

There were folding screens at each side of her bed, preventing her from seeing in either direction. Sam sat up, aware of the pounding in her head, and looked over the foot of the bed. She could tell that she was in a large room, with a doorway on the far wall, about 12 feet away. Through the door was a long, dimly lighted hallway, full of nurses in old fashioned starched white uniforms, and soldiers in uniforms like she saw in old photos her father showed her when she was a child. He had taken those during the Second World War.

The nurses were rushing everywhere, dodging soldiers who were carrying stretchers full of injured. The soldiers were setting the stretchers on the floor wherever there was room. Men in blood stained surgical gowns stopped to examine each, pointing out ones to be treated first. Occasionally, a blanket would be pulled over the top of one of the stretchers.

The panic Sam felt was getting out of control. Her mind was rejecting what her eyes saw and her imagination began to take over. This was a bad dream. No, it was a nightmare. Somehow she'd stumbled onto a movie set. But how? How did she get here? Better yet, *where was here?*

Sam started to climb out of bed and search for some answers, but the it was higher than she expected. As she slid out of the bed the room started to spin and she lost her balance. She fell to the floor wondering why someone decided to turn out all the lights.

When she woke up again, Sam was back in bed. Things around her were quieter. The hall was empty and she could see stark bare lights suspended by chains attached to the high arched ceiling. Sam looked out the window and saw it was night, the blackness dotted by an occasional lighted window from the other buildings on the street.

The screens around her bed were gone. She looked around slowly. In the bed next to her was a middle aged woman, her head was totally wrapped in bandages. Both her legs were suspended in a bizarre collection of pulleys, weights and ropes. The casts on each of her legs were red with blood.

“ello, dearie,” a voice said in a strong Cockney accent.

A woman of undetermined age stood at the end of her bed. She was about five feet tall, in a starched white nurses uniform and peaked cap. She advanced towards Sam with a glass thermometer at the ready. Plunging it into Sam's mouth she said, “Gave us all a scare last night, you did.”

She busied herself straightening the blankets and fluffing the pillows while the thermometer cooked. Finally she yanked the glass tube out. Sam tried to speak but her mouth and throat were so dry that only a squeaky croak came out. The nurse took a glass of water off the stand beside the bed and handed it to Sam. After a small sip, she tried again. “Thanks”. Sam took another sip. The water was warm, fuzzy, and wonderful, “Where am I?”

The nurse's name was ‘Miss Warren, R.N.’ according to the brass name tag neatly pinned to her uniform. She was severe in appearance, her brown hair streaked with gray, all done up in a bun at the back of her head. Her eyebrows were full and bushy, and she wore no makeup.

“You're in the 'ospital, dearie. 'ad a nasty bump on the 'ed, I 'ear tell.” Her eyes, in fact all of her looked exhausted. “It was a buzz bomb whut 'it your block. They say the 'ole street's gone. You and two others was pulled out, everyone else in the block's a goner.”

Sam drank some more water, thinking about what she'd been told. “Wait a minute.” She struggled to sit up. “What year is this?”

“Why, it's 1944, dearie.” Miss Warren straightened the blanket and checked the bandage on Sam's head. “Dr. Sinclair wondered if there'd be a loss o' memory, looks like 'e was right.”

There was movement at the end of the bed.

“Ah, awake are we?”

A tall, gray haired man, wearing a white surgical gown and hat, was standing at the foot of the bed. He untied the surgical mask from around his neck, and Miss Warren took it from it as if it were a priceless treasure. He picked up the chart hanging on the

iron footboard and moved around to the side of the bed, "Miss Warren, would you be kind enough to check on the patient in 27? Thank you."

"Oh, yes, right away, Doctor." Said nurse Warren, scurrying off with none of the fatigue she showed earlier.

After she'd left, the doctor moved closer to Sam, "How's the head?"

"I've got one hell of an Excedrin headache."

"Excedrin? I don't think I'm familiar with that kind of headache."

"Never mind."

"Well, I'll prescribe a headache powder for that after were finished here."

"Were am I?"

"In a hospital." he answered in a calm voice.

"*I can see that!*" She could tell how completely exhausted he was, and immediately regretted snapping at him.

Dr. Sinclair removed his wire framed glasses and wiped them on his gown.

"Tell me what you do remember. Let's start with your name." His tone was very gentle, "If you can."

"My name is....," Sam searched as hard as she could. There were memories flashing through her mind too fast to recall. Sam forced down the panic, and tried again, "My name is Samantha Taylor."

He looked at her carefully, assessing her answers, "Go on."

"The last thing I can remember was going to bed last night in New York City, and finding myself on my ass in the middle of a street I couldn't recognize, surrounded by rubble and debris this morning. Then, somehow, I wound up here."

He put his glasses on and stepped up to the head of the bed. Leaning forward, he said, "Let's have a look, shall we?" Carefully, he removed the bandage from around her head. "That's looking much better. The scar shouldn't even show once your hair grows back in. We had to shave a rather large patch to clean the cut up. Nasty blow. You had a major concussion."

"What year is this?"

"What year do you think it is?"

"I can't remember!" Sam was angry, and close to tears.

He sighed, "Actually," he removed his glasses and massaged his temples, "It's 1944. June the 2nd, to be precise." He put his glasses on again. "You're in a hospital in London, England. You were transported to the hospital by ambulance this morning. The entire block where you were found was destroyed by a German flying bomb about 0600 hours."

Chapter I

“How on earth did I get to London?”

“I haven't any idea. You are an American?”

She shook her head 'yes', making the room spin.

“I suggest that perhaps you might in some way be connected with the Allied effort here in England.” He took a last look at her head wound, “As for not knowing the year, I wouldn't worry, there's bound to be some disorientation with a concussion like the one you received. Yes, I think we can leave the bandages off.”

He got up from the bed and moved toward the doorway, “I'll recommend that you stay on for one more night, for observation. You seem to be coming along rather nicely.” He picked up the chart that hung on the foot of the bed and wrote some notes on it, “Then we'll move you out.”

He looked up from the chart and smiled grimly, “Have to make room for the next batch of casualties.” He hung up the chart on the foot of the bed, “I'll contact the Red Cross and your people in the Military. Perhaps they can track down something on you.”

Pausing at the door, he continued, “We'll have to find you some clothes to wear, although, I'm not really quite sure what type.” He looked at her thoughtfully, “Well, we can talk more about that in the morning. For now, get some rest if you can.”

“What about you?” Sam asked.

He turned and looked at Sam, tiredly.

“You said 'the next batch of casualties', are you sure there'll be more?”

Outside, the air raid sirens went off, along with the thunder of the anti-aircraft defenses.

“Inevitably. Do be careful if you try to get out of bed again,” he said, fatigue weighing heavily as he walked down the hall.

The staff moved quickly to pull the heavy blackout curtains over the windows. Before the last curtain was in position, Sam saw the searchlights piercing the night sky. anti-aircraft shells blossomed like photo flashbulbs in the night. Then the sound deepened in tone as the German bombs started exploding. After Miss Warren yanked the curtains across the window, she dropped a rumpled newspaper on the bed. “Ere you go, dearie. Two days old, but it'll 'elp.”

Later, from outside the hospital, Sam heard the sound of the ambulances arriving with the first load of people hurt in the bombing. She fell asleep listening to the sounds of more injured being brought in.

Sam awoke to find the sunlight streaming through the window. Her headache was much better, the headache powder seem to have worked. When she shook her head, the room didn't spin quite as much as last night.

There was a new patient in the bed next to her, watching her closely. Her left arm was in a cast from above her elbow to her wrist. Sam wondered briefly about the patient that was there last night.

“Good morning.” She had a low pitched voice, warm in tone with a pleasant British accent.

Sam said, “Good Morning.”

“A Yank, is it?” she asked, arching one eyebrow.

“I guess so, I can't seem to remember.”

“My name is Mary Nelson,” she smiled.

The smile lit up her whole face. She had shoulder length light brown hair, dark green eyes, and natural color in her cheeks and lips. Her cheek bones were high and wide set, and her jaw was strong without being too prominent. All in all, Sam found her disturbingly attractive.

Mary shifted her position in the bed, and grimaced as her arm bumped the side rail.

“Lower arm's broken in two places. Ambulance tipped over.” Mary settled down in the bed, and glanced at Sam, “On our way to pick up bombing victims, and I end up being one of the first ones brought in.”

“My name is Samantha Taylor. Call me Sam, please.” Sam sat up a little against the pillows, “I woke up in the middle of a bombed out building, wearing nothing but a nightgown, and I can't remember who or where I am, or how I got here.” Sam turned the back of her head towards Mary. “How does it look?”

“Four or five stitches looks like, quite a bump from the size of the shaved area.”

“Hate to interrupt, ladies,” Dr. Sinclair interrupted, “I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you two to leave. We have a pressing need for the beds.”

Nurse Warren was at the foot of Mary's bed, staring intently at her.

Sam spoke up, “I'll need my nightgown, it's all I have, unless I'm supposed to go out in this.” holding up the hospital sheet.

“Actually, I'm afraid your nightdress is a bit the worse for wear. We had to cut what was left of it off you when you were being treated.”

Sam wondered how many people were standing around her unconscious naked body after she was brought in. She blushed deeply.

“I understand your place of residence was destroyed?”

“So it seems.”

“Yes, well, I've asked the Red Cross to swing by and lend a hand. Ah, here we are now.”

A man and woman entered, each wearing a uniform with a Red Cross arm band. They were both carrying an arm load of clothing, both men's and women's, all of it olive drab colored. “Yes, thank you,” the doctor said, laying the clothing on the bed,

“Just wait outside, would you? In fact, I might ask all of you to step outside for a few moments, please? Thank you.”

When everyone had left the ward, Dr. Sinclair moved the screens in place between the beds, and drew the drapes over the windows. Sitting on the end of the bed, he said, “As I indicated last night, you caused quite a stir in surgery when you were brought in.”

“I can just imagine.”

“Your physical form is something of a departure from what one usually observes, if I may say so.” He paused, “I diagnosed your unusual physical attributes as a defect at birth. I myself have spent quite some time studying the androgynous members of our community, as well as those individuals throughout history.” He paused, giving Sam a chance to speak.

“I guess I should say thank you.” They looked at each other.

She continued, “I was, at birth, male. But as early as I could remember, I have always felt that deep inside, I was supposed to be female. This much I do remember.”

“I surmised as much. I've encountered a few individuals that expressed the same sentiments that you have. There is, as you can well understand, a certain reluctance to talk about such things.” Dr. Sinclair rose from the bed, fatigue evident in the set of his shoulders, “It goes without saying that some of my colleagues do not share these views. Nor for that matter, does a large segment of the general population.” He thought for a moment, “Take Miss Warren for example. Disgraceful behavior last night. Dreadful. Went on and on about how immoral and wicked you were. It was fortunate that she and I were the only people in the room when you were examined. I managed to get you cleaned up and covered before you were brought to the women's ward.” He paused again, “I hope you are not disturbed by my telling you this. It is important that you know, for your own safety.”

“I'm used to it. At least I think I am, anyway.” Sam sat up in bed, pulling the clothes around her, “I have vague memories of this type of thing. The situation you describe. I just can't see it clearly.”

“You will, in time. I'm sure of it.” He paused by the screen at the foot of the bed, “You two have something very much in common,” he nodded toward the bed next to Sam's. “Do be very, very careful, won't you? The both of you?” He walked down the hall, looking straight ahead. Sam watched until he was out of sight.

Sam wondered about the Doctor's last comment, as she examined the clothes from the Red Cross. She carefully climbed into a pair of baggy pants and a shirt. There was no underwear, men's or women's. The cuts and scrapes were healing well, to the point where the scabs would catch on any fabric that happened to brush too close. Like the pants for instance.

Nurse Warren appeared from behind the screen and said, “I 'eard whut you told the doctor, I was standing right outside, I was.” She had an odd look on her face, one that Sam found troubling. She turned and left abruptly.

There were three pairs of shoes, and Sam found the second pair fit reasonably well. No socks, of course, that would have been nice. When Sam looked up, Mary was standing there holding two wool jackets, also olive drab. Sam helped Mary put on one of the jackets over her broken arm.

“It's all settled, you're coming home with me.”

“I don't want to put you out.”

“Well, there's a war on, haven't you heard?” From outside, a single explosion occurred, making the windows rattle in the old building. “Besides, I'm there by myself, it'll be good to have someone to talk to.”

Sam and Mary went down the front steps of the hospital. Sam stopped at the bottom of the steps, and drew a deep breath. She looked back at the hospital, and noticed one wing was a pile of rubble.

“You all right?”

“Yes. It's just nice not to smell ether all the time.”

Together they laughed and walked to the Jeep. Sam gingerly eased in, and Mary climbed in on the right hand side. She deftly drove the Jeep one handed, occasionally using her knee to steer with while shifting gears with her good arm.

They set out through the war torn landscape of London. There were crews of ordinance people all over London, searching for unexploded bombs.

When they were about two blocks from the hospital, the air raid sirens started, and Constables were waving everyone into the Underground. They stopped all traffic, including the girls' Jeep. Sam and Mary were herded along with a hundred other people, just as a bomb went off half a block away. They stumbled down the stairs as quickly as possible.

The crowd was a mixture of soldiers, sailors, civilians, businessmen, three nuns, and even a member of parliament, complete with his wig. Two men among the crowd caught in the air-raid were German agents, and were supposed to meet with a soldier in the U.S. Army. Their names were Gunther and Newman. The larger of the two, Newman, was unhappy with the situation. He didn't care much for the idea of being killed by bombs from his own Air Force.

Down in the Underground, the sound of the bombs was only a dim booming, echoing down the train tunnels like the sound of a distant thunderstorm. Sam and Mary found a quiet, out of the way spot and sat down with their backs against a column. Occasionally, there would be a sprinkle of dust falling from the ceiling, as a bomb went off directly above. Whenever this happened, it got very quiet in the station. Two small children sat in their mothers' lap, each clutching one of her arms, their eyes large with fright. Sitting next to them was a businessman calmly reading a newspaper.

Sam and Mary sat in silence, not noticing the two men standing a few feet away. Soon the sound of the bombing faded, and the police started allowing people up the stairs to the street.

As the two agents moved toward the exit, the Private they were supposed to meet on the street above nervously paused to talk with them, and handed them an envelope, saying, "Here's the stuff on 'Overlord'."

Sam and Mary were walking toward the exit, and inadvertently stepped between the Private and the men. Newman looked annoyed, and shielded the exchange with his body, bumping Sam out of the way. The three men had a short heated exchange, and the Private was shoved.

The sound of a train entering the station covered the screams of the people who witnessed the soldier's unfortunate demise under the wheels of that same train. The two men looked on briefly, and then joined the crowd going up the stairs. Sam and Mary were too far up the stairs to know what had happened.

Chapter II

It had started to rain while Sam and Mary were in the Underground. Through the rain streaked windows of the Jeep, Sam saw areas of total devastation around London. But the people, almost without exception, had determined looks on their faces. Workmen were everywhere, clearing the damage, patching what they could save, and pulling down what was beyond repair.

“I live just out side of London; a small place my mum has- had.”

“Your mom?”

“She was killed when the hospital wing was hit last month.” Mary was quiet for a moment, “She was in the hospital for an appendectomy, of all things.” Mary paused for a moment more, “My younger sister was killed in a bombing about two years ago, and my father passed away in '37, so it's just me now.”

“Mary, I'm truly sorry.”

They drove in silence for a while. Driving was tricky, but Mary was doing a superb job of dodging piles of rubble in the streets, and avoiding craters and other bomb damage.

“It's a quiet neighborhood. You can rest there, and try to get your memory back.”

Sam marveled at the way she drove the Jeep, “Where'd you get the wheels?”

“Sorry?”

“The Jeep?”

“Oh,” Mary looked over at Sam, “I'm attached to a Military Liaison group. It takes quite a bit of effort to keep two huge armies working together.”

Sam noted that the scenery had changed from a downtown business district to a Late Victorian suburb; lots of charming little cottages and town houses.

“Here we are.”

Mary led the way up the walk to a small cottage, set back from the road. It had a magnificent thatched roof and window boxes full of flowers. The grounds were sprinkled with gardens and large shade trees. Once inside, Mary lit the gas fire in the grate to take the damp chill off the rooms. The front room was filled with wonderful antique Queen Anne style furniture, and white lace curtains behind the ever present blackout drapes. One wall was entirely taken up with shelves full of books and small glass figurines.

“Feel up to giving me a hand?”

Sam stood up, “Sure.”

Together they went upstairs, Mary explaining as they went, “This is my room, this one was Mum's, where you'll be while you're here. In there is the 'loo'.”

They continued down the hall to an alcove under the eave of the roof. Opening a small door, Mary, with Sam's help, dragged two boxes out of the closet, and pushed them down the hall to the room Sam would be using. Mary opened one of the boxes and paused for a moment, looking in.

“These were my sister's. When she was killed, I packed them away, but could not bare to part with them. I'm sure some of these will fit you, although much of it may be a bit out of style.” She pulled out a white silk blouse, “Not that there's much we can do about that, what with the war and all.”

Sam said, “I'm sure they'll be just fine.” She picked up the blouse and held it up to herself, “I can't thank you enough.”

Mary turned and walked to the door, “Dump them out on the bed and sort through them. After you've changed into something more comfortable, and more attractive than that Vaudeville outfit you have on, we'll have some tea downstairs.”

Sam thought she saw a hint of moisture in Mary's eyes as she turned to go.

Sam was in heaven. The smaller box contained the most amazing assortment of underwear she'd ever seen. Everything was either satin or silk. Real silk, *natural silk*. Most of it was white or ivory, although there were some pink and pale blue items mixed in with them, all of it with lots of lace and satin ribbons. There were several boned corsets that laced up the back, but Sam wasn't ready for those yet. A great many full slips, camisoles, some long half slips, and a beautiful white night gown and robe, made out of the most luxurious heavy silk, with a froth of lace on the bodice. There wasn't a bra like Sam was use to, but she did find some brasellettes that she could wear, and some *silk panties*. She hung the robe in the closet and folded the other clothes and put them in the wardrobe.

The other box contained clothing that spanned 20 years of fashion. Sam thought back to her ride in the Jeep, remembering that women wore a mixture of styles from the period between the two World Wars, so the clothes in the box would be acceptable in public. There couldn't be too much new clothing available now, anyway. In the bottom of the box were three pairs of real silk stockings. Ones with seams up the back. From somewhere in the recesses of Sam's memory, she remembered that you needed garters with these. Sam's hands shook as she fumbled with the buttons of her shirt.

When Sam entered the front room, she found Mary sitting in one of the wing back chairs by the fire, watching the flames. She was holding what appeared to be a photo album in her lap. She looked up, “You look lovely.”

“Thank you. My hair's a mess. There isn't a lot of it left to do anything with.”

“No, it looks fine.” Mary was looking intently at Sam.

“Is this all right?” Sam had chosen a heavy, white silk blouse with long sleeves. The sleeve length was perfect, and the neckline came up to her throat. She'd also chosen a mid length gray flannel skirt. Her legs were bare, the scrapes were still too fresh for anything to cover them. She still had the clunky black shoes from the hospital.

“That was my...,” she paused, “my sister Sally's favorite outfit.”

“I'll change it if it bothers you.”

“No, that’s quite all right; besides, you had no way of knowing.” She looked down at the photo album, “It just brought back some old memories.” She stood up, placed the album on a shelf and said, “That’s what we’re supposed to be doing for you.”

Sam sat down on the love seat. The silk slip rustled against the skirt, and both brushed against her legs. Sam felt more lighthearted and happy than at any time since her adventure began.

She said, “It seems like I’m always saying thank you.”

Mary poured some tea in a beautiful china cup and handed it to Sam, “Nonsense.” She smiled again like the first time in the hospital.

Sam felt butterflies in her stomach. The soft silk of the brasellette brushing against her breasts as she moved made her nipples harden and swell up. “You said in the Jeep that you were in some sort of liaison,” Sam said, trying to defuse the sexual tension building between them.

“Yes. I’m in an office at Whitehall.” Mary looked at Sam, “It’s all dreadfully dull.”

“I’m sure there’s more to it than that.”

“Women, even in uniform, aren’t aloud to do much more than shuffle papers,” Mary said with a trace of bitterness. She poured the last of the tea.

“Well, let’s see if we can’t discover more about you.”

Chapter III

Three people sat in a booth in the back of a pub located off a lonely alley in the East end of London. The leader of the group, a short woman named Greta Richter, was discussing plans with the two German agents. They spoke in low voices, despite the din of background noise in the pub.

“My instructions come directly from Abwehr Head Quarters. Admiral Canaris himself is directing this mission. We are to observe the British Intelligence Officer. She is closest to the Brigadier, and is our best chance to find out the date of the invasion of Europe.” She paused to look at each agent, “The information the American soldier gave us this morning was false. The Fuhrer is convinced the invasion will not be the coast of Normandy. We need the correct landing site, the date, and troop strength.”

“What of the American woman?” asked the smaller of the two men, Gunther, “Her appearance at the English Captain's house is a concern.” He looked around, “If she is an American agent, perhaps we should concentrate on her.”

Frau Richter continued, “Our people here in England and in America are attempting to find out about her. For the moment, we will follow orders, and focus on the English Captain.”

Newman, silent up to this point said, “Why not just grab one of the agents now. With all the bombing going on, the risk of disposing of the body would be small.” He paused, took a drink from his glass, and looked around, “There are new interrogation methods that have gotten very good results on some of the Resistance in France.”

Frau Richter reacted angrily to the suggestion, “*No!* Under no circumstances are you to do anything like this without direct orders from *Berlin.*” She glanced up, aware that her voice had risen, “*Do I make my self clear?*”

As the three prepared to leave she said, “Remember, follow and report. Do not attempt any action until further word. Our agents are installing a listening device in the Captain's house, and one in the Brigadier's office.” She turned to Newman, “You go to the bar, and stay for 10 minutes.” she turned to Gunther and said, “You and I will walk out together. We will meet again tomorrow.”

They left the pub together arm in arm, just another couple. Outside the Pub, an old woman, wrapped in an oversized ragged coat and scarf watched them as they left. They climbed into a car and drove off. The old woman hurried half a block to a phone box and made a call.

10 minutes later, Newman left, walking briskly in the other direction. He was glad he hadn't told their leader about eliminating the soldier in the Underground this morning.

Unnoticed in the grim, rainy evening, a shabbily dressed man followed, keeping about half a block behind Newman. They remained that way the entire walk to the rooming house where Newman was staying. Then the man that had been following Newman settled down in an ally to watch the house for the rest of the night.

Sam thought for a moment and said, "I don't have many memories before finding myself in the street, surrounded by pieces of blown up building. Everything is a mystery to me, even the year."

Mary drained her tea cup and looked at Sam, "What I'm about to say may be hard for you, but I want to share it with you," she paused, "I wasn't eavesdropping, I just happened to hear some of what Dr. Sinclair said about your 'birth defect'. I believe the word he used was androgynous."

Sam blushed, "This is beginning to sound like an inquisition."

"Not at all, it's only that, well I'm familiar with the term. There isn't much information available on the subject, but from what I know about it, you would have had considerable difficulty entering the military."

"You're correct, of course. It was kind of Dr. Sinclair to offer an explanation about my unusual attributes." Sam looked down at her blouse and skirt, "When I got dressed a little while ago, I knew just how and what to do. It was as if I'd been doing it all my life. Even though I was born a man, *inside* I new I was never a man. I've always been a woman. *I've always known.*" Sam rubbed the tops of her thighs lightly, feeling the material against her legs. "But beyond my name, and the fact I've been called some kind of freak, I just can't remember." Sam was close to tears. "And I don't understand any of this."

"I heard Dr. Sinclair mention something about the two of us having something in common. He was correct. I participated in a small study he was conducting some years ago." She got up and poured some sherry in a glass. She gestured to Sam, and Sam shook her head to decline.

Sitting down again, she continued, "The study dealt with people who felt they were born 'in the wrong body', if you will. They were born one sex, but should have been the other." She took a sip and looked down into the glass. "I was asked by Dr. Sinclair to participate because I was in the minority, being a woman who thought she should have been born a man. I never cared for dresses or skirts or frilly things, even as a child. I never liked playing with dolls. I don't feel right performing traditional female tasks, like sewing or needle work and the like." There was a slight note of bitterness in her voice, "Boarding school was absolute hell at times. My girl friends all sitting around talking about their handsome boyfriends, and what they did together when they were out on dates. It was all wrong. All backwards."

She paused, looking at nothing for a few moments. Flushing slightly, she said, "It was an all girls school, and I had a terrible crush on one of my class mates. It almost got us tossed out of school." She looked intently at Sam, "Does any of this make any sense to you?"

"Somehow it does. I don't know why, but what you've said sounds awfully familiar." Sam thought for a moment, "I feel I've said the same thing myself before, in some situation." She frowned, "It's like looking through a set of binoculars that can't be focused. I know that I was born a man, I have male genitals, after all. But I remember going to a small natural food store and buying some herbs that caused my body to as-

sume female physical characteristics. My breasts began to grow, and my hips got wider. My hair and facial features became softer. And when that happened, I was sure I was correcting a tragic mistake that happened at my birth. But beyond that, I don't know any more. Don't remember any more." Sam put her elbows on her knees, and held her head in her hands, "It's all so frustrating not to remember." Sam was close to tears again.

Mary said, "I would love to know more about those herbs you used to change your physical form." Mary imagined what it would be like to have masculine features. "Tell you what," Mary crossed to Sam and put her good arm around Sam's shoulders, hugging her to her chest, "let's have supper and get a good night's sleep. Tomorrow, we'll go into the village first thing in the morning, drive around, walk around, that sort of thing. Maybe you'll spot something that will jog your memory."

Sam nodded her head, not at all convinced. Together, they prepared supper, Sam helping the one armed Mary in her tiny kitchen. With her arm in a cast, Mary figured ways to work together, and they prepared boiled chicken and potatoes. Mary was able to find some canned peas in the cellar. The two sat and had a quiet supper, Mary talked more about her childhood, her parents, her life at school. Sam listened, but still there were no memories.

After supper, they cleaned up the kitchen, and each had a glass of dry sherry in front of the fire.

"Anything so far trigger any memories?"

"No," said Sam, feeling dejected.

"Well, it's late and it's been a long day," she stood up and smiled, "Lets go up to bed and get a fresh start tomorrow."

They went upstairs and Mary stood next to Sam for a moment, put her arm around her, and gave her a quick kiss on the cheek, "Sleep well."

Sam nodded and went into her own room. Mary stood at the door of her own room, watching for a moment.

Sam slowly undressed and put on the silk nightgown. The fabric felt like a soft cool breeze next to her bare skin. She slowly smoothed it against her, enjoying the sensation. She crawled into the high, four post bed. She lay there for a long time, watching the moon play tag with the clouds through her large window. The moonlight made a kaleidoscope of shadows across her bed that were just like the fragments of memories that floated through her mind.

A sleepless two hours later, Sam got out of bed and pulled her robe around her shoulders, She stood by the large window, watching the shadows of the clouds dance across the grounds. As Sam leaned against the window frame, she heard a sound behind her. Mary had come in and stood next to her.

"Hi," Sam said, without turning.

"Can't sleep?" Mary asked.

Sighing, she said, "I can't remember feeling more lost and alone. God, that's a silly thing to say, I can't remember *anything*."

Mary reached out and turned Sam around by her shoulders. Facing Mary, Sam took in just how lovely she looked in the soft moonlight. It wasn't just her green eyes, or the slight upturn of her nose, or the shape of her mouth that was slightly crooked. It was all of those things. Plus the nape of her neck. And maybe her ear lobes. Mary leaned close and kissed Sam lightly on the lips. Sam felt a rushing in her head and a fire in her loins. She returned the kiss, feeling like she was floating on a cloud in the night sky. She said, "There's something terribly exciting about you. I noticed it the first time I saw you, when we were in the hospital together."

Mary nuzzled Sam's ear and said, "There is something fascinating about you. It excites me in a way I can't describe." She traced the length of Sam's arm from the shoulder to her wrist with her fingertips. Sam was covered with goose bumps, and the butterflies in her stomach were as big as pigeons. Mary explored the folds of Sam's ear with her tongue. Sam's knees started to shake. She looked into Mary's eyes, and they knew what they felt, what they each needed, was okay.

They moved to the bed. Sam crawled in and took off her night gown. Mary stood looking at Sam for a moment, then removed her white linen night gown and climbed in next to Sam. Mary was breathtaking. Her breasts were high and ample, without being large enough to be affected by gravity. Her nipples were full and erect, and her skin was smooth and evenly colored.

Sam said, "I think I can remember what to do." She bent down and kissed Mary long and passionately on the mouth, their breasts brushing against each other, their hands roaming and exploring.



Outside in the street, about a block away, a pair of eyes had watched the two figures in the window.

Sam lay facing Mary, who was laying on her right side, the broken arm resting on her hip and waist. She ran her hand slowly down Mary's side, "How's your arm?"

Mary nodded her head, "It's fine", and carefully eased herself up and straddled herself across Sam. She slid her good hand slowly down Sam's breasts, across her stomach, down to her genitals, "God, how I wish I had one of these!" Mary caressed Sam's aroused member, "Such *power* and *domination*, such control."

Sam's fingers were tracing small circles on the insides of Mary's thighs. Mary shuddered as Sam slowly moved her hands up to the top of Mary's legs. As she gently probed the delicate folds of moist warm tissue, Sam said, "And I always wanted to have one of these."

Mary's voice became husky and ragged as she said, "What's say each of us have one, just for this evening." She moved herself slowly on Sam and said, "And this time, I get to be the one on top!"

"Can you manage O.K. with only one arm?"

She did.

Mary woke up alone in Sam's bed. She feared at first that Sam was upset about last night, or had difficulty accepting it. She threw on her robe and went downstairs. Half way down, she heard the radio playing the news, and could smell bacon and eggs cooking. She was tying a knot in the belt of her robe as she entered the small kitchen.

Sam looked up smiling, "I hope you don't mind."

"Not at all," Mary smiled back at Sam.

Sam's hair was disheveled, and there was a glow of color in her face that wasn't there yesterday. Sam pointed at the tea kettle, "Would you do the tea? I always mess it up."

Mary moved to the stove. "It rained last night, did you hear the thunder?"

"So that's what it was. I knew something went boom."

"No, silly! It really did."

Sam looked at her, "I suppose there was lightning too?"

"Well, yes." By now, Mary's eyes had a twinkle in them.

"Breakfast's ready."

They sat down at the tiny table and ate hungrily.

Mary said, "I think a great place to start would be the library. Lots of ideas, maybe some clues there."

Sam thought for a moment, "It's worth a try."