

AS SWEET AS CANDY

By Patricia Smith



ILLUSTRATED BY CHAS

A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL

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AS SWEET AS CANDY

By Patricia Smith

It was a normal Wednesday morning just like any number of other Wednesday mornings. I got out of bed, slipped my feet into my mules and grabbed my robe as I headed down to the kitchen to make breakfast for myself and my father. As I passed by my father's bedroom, still pulling on my robe, I heard the ringing alarm clock suddenly silenced. I knew he was awake and getting up. He would have his shower first, then join me in the kitchen fully dressed while I still wore my semi-sheer nightie with the sheer robe that tied at the bodice and throat and the matching furry mules with two-inch heels. My father had liked to see me in pretty things for as long as I can remember so I liked to show off my sexy lingerie.

I brushed stray strands of my hair out of my face with one hand as I cracked another egg into the frying pan. Sunny side up was the way Dad liked his eggs. Accompanying them were crisp bacon strips and whole wheat toast dripping with too much melting butter. Several cups of strong, black and hot coffee would wash it all down.

Breakfast was on the table and I poured his coffee for him as he came into the kitchen and kissed my forehead in his usual fatherly manner. I liked the affection he showed me as it spoke louder of his love for me than any words he might mumble. Dad just wasn't a person who could speak his feelings freely. I sat across the table from him with a smile on my face and diluted my coffee with milk and sugar before daring to sip it. I munched quietly on my breakfast of a single slice of dry toast. I idly crossed my legs at the knees, casually pulling my robe across my bare legs as I reached for the Entertainment section of the newspaper Dad was looking through.

"I'll be late getting home tonight, Candy," he told me, wiping his hands and mouth on his napkin. "I'm hoping to pick up one of the girls at the office and take her out to dinner. If that doesn't happen, I'll be going out with the guys for a few drinks and some pool at Benny's place. Either way, I won't be home for dinner."

"All right, Dad," I replied, getting up to remove the used dishes to the sink for washing. "I'll have dinner before coming home from work then, and maybe go out or something myself this evening."

"Have fun," he told me as he got up from the table, drained the last drop of coffee from his third cup and headed for the door.

"If its not fun, there's no point in doing it, now is there?" It was a rhetorical question. "Hope you get lucky, Dad," I called after him.

Mom died a couple of years earlier so I saw no reason why Dad shouldn't be out trying to score with some woman his age at his office. Neither of us approved of May/December romances, so I knew that if he was skirt-chasing, it was with a woman his own age.

I was twenty-two years old, single and still living at home with my father. I didn't pay rent to Dad nor did I have to work as Mom's passing had left us pretty well off financially. I held a job as a clerk in the records department of a company that sold ladies fashions at wholesale prices. Most of my coworkers were women although all of the management were men. It was a family-owned and operated company.

After finishing the dishes, I went up to my room and stripped naked to take my shower. I washed my long brown hair first, then lathered up my body, before rinsing off and stepping from the shower stall. I towel-dried myself all over, then wrapped one towel around my body and the other around my head as I stepped back into my bedroom. There I dropped the towels to the floor so as to inspect my hair-free body in my full-length mirror.

I loved the feeling of being completely hairless so I had spent the previous evening engaged in my weekly ritual. I shaved my legs and underarms, then covered any hair below the neck with a depilatory cream. I gave it time to work, then showered it off cleanly. After an inspection, I found a few stray hairs so I had to reapply the depilatory and try once more. When that was done, I gave myself a pedicure and painted my toenails a bright shade of pink I had just bought.

Now to dress for work. Pink bikini panties were pulled up my legs and rested nicely about my hips. This day, I chose to wear a matching bra with the tiny A-cups which would hold my B-sized breasts in and flatten them out. I wrapped the matching garter belt about my waist and expertly fastened the hooks behind my back. I made adjustments to put it into place about my hips before dropping the garters inside the waistband of my panties and pulling them out the leg openings. Every time I put on my sheer nylon or silk stockings and fastened them to the garters, I thought about my mother buying my first bra and garter belt for me. I was only ten then; in the privacy of my room she showed me how to put them on properly. Then, like now, the bra, panty and garter belt were pink while my stockings were beige.

To my mind, there was nothing more sensually delightful than the feel of sheer nylon on my smooth, hairless legs, unless of course it was my silk stockings. Not even the snug grip of my bra on my chest or the pretty lace trim of my panties made me feel so utterly feminine and sexy. I inserted a feminine napkin into my panties to help keep me dry all day long, then used my feminine deodorant and unisex cologne. Next, I pulled on a lacy pink chemise over my head to cover my bra and panties.

My underwear was perfect as I prepared to complete my dressing for work. I sat on the edge of my bed and pulled a pair of brown socks onto my feet and up my calves. A man's yellow dress shirt went on over my pink chemise, though it did nothing to hide my undergarments. They were plainly visible through the shirt. I pulled on my male suit trousers, did up the front closing button and zipper. I threaded my man's belt through the loops and cinched the pants to match my own small waist.

Cuff links closed up the sleeves while a brown tie knotted neatly at my throat ensured that my neck was properly attired. I put on my vest and did up the buttons, then filled my pockets with the necessary male items from the top of my dresser. Brown dress shoes went onto my feet and the laces were tied neatly in a small bow.

Looking in my mirror, I pulled my long, damp hair back with my brush and tied it into a neat ponytail at the back of my neck. I took out the large loop earrings I liked to wear and reinserted the smaller loops that stylish men were allowed to have. I was a “gentleman” now, so the clear nail polish on my fingernails was not out of place.

I checked in the full-length mirror, turning this way and that to be certain that none of my feminine undergarments could be seen. If one knew what to look for and where to look, it was possible to see the outline of my garter belt tabs, but my suit jacket would cover that up.

I was down the stairs, out the door and moving down the street at an easy gait, heading for my bus. I waved to a couple of the neighbors as I passed and returned their pleasant greetings. It felt good to be walking in the bright summer sunshine as I headed off to work, my nylon-encased legs brushing against the coarse fabric of my suit pants.

As usual, I was about a half-hour early which was just the way I liked it. That way, I avoided the rush on the bus and the crowd of workers coming into the office all at once. Then, Robin would help me make the morning coffee and I’d take a look at the executives’ mail before anyone else could. It gave me a slight edge in doing my job. I doubt anyone else realized I was doing it.

Robin didn’t much care for me. I could tell this from her attitude toward me. I was much too short for her taste; she towered over me at almost six feet tall. I was a mere five foot, five inches tall. I didn’t have any interest in her other than work anyway. There were other women in the office whose company I enjoyed more. They were only friends to me as most of them were married.

And when the executives arrived for work, Robin was right there with their coffee and their morning mail and her regular complaints. “Brad was in too early again this morning. Can’t that midget come in on time for a change?”

This Wednesday morning was to see a change in the normal routine, though.

The morning was half-over and the office staff was just going for their coffee break when Mr. Coleman called me into his office. Robin had a big smile on her face; she hoped I was in for some trouble which she engineered for me. She was the kind of a person who wanted to advance, even over someone else’s dead or bleeding body. At least that’s the impression *I* got.

Mr. Coleman was the owner of the company which had been founded by his father; he currently sat as the chairman of the board. His oldest son, Craig, was the company’s president. His next son, Brian, was a vice-president. All three were present when I entered the office and shut the door.

“You know why we called you in here?” Mr. Coleman Senior asked me as he waved me to a chair.

“No sir,” I answered crisply.

“Did you know that Robin doesn’t like you coming in early every day?”

“Of course I know that. Is that why you called me in here?”

“No. Not even close. But, why *do* you come in so early every day?”

“If I timed it so that I arrived right on time, an accident on the road could make me late. Better to be early than late, I think.”

“I see you like to leave late, too,” Craig interjected.

“I’m not too fond of crowds. Leaving later means I don’t have to stand on the bus on my way home.”

“Our sales teams like you, Bradley. Do you know why?”

“I just do my job to the best of my ability.”

“We know. And, thanks to the job that you do so well, all of our sales teams have increased their sales and therefore their commissions have gone up. The company is doing better than ever before. We were able to trace our good fortune back to you.”

“I don’t think I’m to blame for all *that*,” I told them.

“Credit, not *blame*,” Craig corrected me.

“There are three other people in my department who work just as hard as I do. They should be sharing in any credit, too.”

“There are three other people in your department all right, but none of them work as hard as you do. They all arrive on time or late, they all take longer breaks than you do, they’re in the washrooms a lot of the time and they never stay later than they have to. Are there three *other* people we don’t know about?”

“Of course not. But they’ve been here longer than I have. Being at the bottom of the ladder, I get to do most of the work. Its only fair.”

“How long have you been here, Bradley?”

They knew the answer before I said it, I’m sure. “Three years, four months.”

“Do you realize you could increase your income by joining our sales team?” Brian asked me.

“Sure,” I responded. “But I like it where I am.”

“Sales could increase by a huge amount if you were on the team. We want to increase sales as much as we can. We realize, though, that the other sales people may not want to share their commissions with you. For you to be effective on one of the teams, you’d have to be in charge of it. We are prepared to offer you a promotion and a huge salary increase plus a share of the commissions your team earns. We believe you can do it, Bradley.”

“I’m sure I can, too,” I told them. “I’m just not sure I *want* to,” I added.

“Why not?” Mr. Coleman asked me directly.

“It would cause a lot of hard feelings with the other people working here. Robin already doesn’t like me just because I like to come in early. A promotion for me would just cause her to hate me even more. I can’t work with people in an environment like that.”

“That's understandable. Do you have a solution?”

“Possibly. But I have to think it out a bit more. Can I get back to you?”

“Certainly. Friday at noon, the four of us are going out for lunch together. You can tell us what you have in mind then.”

Well, Wednesday wasn't over yet, so I got back to work. It was always pleasant being at work with everyone thinking I was a normal kind of guy. Sitting at my desk, my legs crossed, I could feel the sensuality of my stockinged legs as the fabric of my pants leg brushed over the sheer nylon of my stockings. I enjoyed the thrill that came with wearing feminine underwear to work, even if it was under male clothing. Wearing a three-piece suit to work helped keep my secret from getting out. Like my bra which was a full size too small, the vest helped hide my more feminine attributes.

Right now I had to work on my plan. How to work at the new position successfully with a minimum of fuss from the other people in the company? It wasn't going to be easy.

I thought it out, then wrote down every idea I had before putting together my final strategy. It might work if I did it all just right. I had to be able to approach the people one-on-one with the full backing and support of management. Without that, all would be lost. And the most important person I could get onto my team would be Robin, the receptionist who didn't like me coming in so early.

Friday morning, I took my time getting ready for work. I was in no rush at all as I put on my bikini panties and smoothed a pair of seamed pantyhose up my still smooth and hairless legs. I decided to forego the pleasure of wearing a confining bra, opting for the luxury of only the sensuous satin and lace chemise. My unrestrained breasts stood out proud and full as I had to pull to get my shirt buttoned across the top of them. Even with the vest on, the bulge was a noticeable to my eye, but of course, *I* knew what to look for. The odds were that no one else would notice this on me. Well, Dad might, but certainly not anyone at work. They didn't look at me close enough.

I had an extra cup of coffee in the kitchen, then took my time getting down to the bus stop. My bus was arriving for the second time that morning when I got onto it.

“Running a little late this morning, aren't you?” the driver said to me as I paid my fare.

“I felt it was time for me to go in to the office late for a change,” I told him. “It bothers too many people that I'm always early all the time.”

“I take it you work for a bunch of fools,” he said in a matter-of-fact sort of way.

“Not really,” I answered. “It's more my coworkers.” I left it at that and moved further back to find a seat by a window.

Robin was shaking her finger at me as I came in the door one whole hour late. I just smiled at her and wished her a “Good morning.” I went to my area and, after hanging my jacket over the back of my chair, I went to the coffee stand and helped myself to a cup to drink at my desk.

The requests for information had been piling up. In my absence, the other girls finally got a chance to show their stuff to our employers. They were falling behind drastically.

“Get to work, Brad,” Grace told me. She was the senior girl in our area and she felt that gave her the right to assign tasks to everyone else.

I picked up the request sheet she was working on and saw it was for Carny Distributors. “We last sold to Carny in June of last year,” I told her off the top of my head. “We gave them ten percent below our normal selling price, extended terms to ninety days and eventually had to send a collection agency after them for not paying. Executive order number 869 was put on their file for all future orders. No discounts and everything was to be C.O.D.”

It helped to have a good memory in this job. The girls had enough work to keep them busy for several days, so I spent the rest of the morning catching them up. Had they gotten onto the requests as soon as they came in, they wouldn't be so far behind. The girls liked to come in right on time or a couple of minutes late, then gossip in the ladies washroom for about ten minutes before taking a cup of coffee to their desks. They usually started work half an hour late. Today, I was a good hour late for work.

At a few minutes before noon, I finished writing the report I had just put together for our West Coast sales team. I punched the transmit key and sent the copy to the mainframe from which the team could access it. There was very little paper going around the office anymore as “soft copy” was more permanent and less likely to be lost or damaged.

I stood up from my desk, removed my jacket from the back of my chair and put it on.

“Where do you think *you're* going?” Grace asked me in an ugly tone of voice. “We still have a lot to do here.”

“Well then, why don't you tell Brian, Craig and Craig Senior that you can't spare me right now, so they'll just have to do without me today.”

As if on cue, Craig Coleman Senior came by my desk and said, “Let's go, Mr. Anderson. Brian is bringing his car around to the front door for us.”

I looked to Grace and raised my eyebrows as if to say “go ahead and tell him.” Her mouth merely hung open so I hurried around the filing cabinet and followed Mr. Coleman out.

Brian and Craig took the front seats, leaving Craig Senior and me in the back seat. No business was discussed in the car as the men talked about their families, wives and kids. The ride to the restaurant was quick; although there was a lineup, we had reservations and got in and to our table without delay.

Drinks were ordered as menus were handed out. The talk was still about family and friends. Only once all the orders were in and the menus gone were we finally able to get down to business.

“So, Mr. Anderson,” the Senior began, “how do we get you onto our sales team?”

“The only way I can see is for me to create my own team,” I told them. “Right now you have five teams. Three cover regions of the United States. One covers Canada, the other one covers Mexico. Sales right now are at an all-time high.”

“We already know all that, Brad. How do we get you in there to improve things for us?”

“I have to be able to create my own team. We’ll move in to a problem area, solve it, teach the original team how to deal with our solution and let them maintain it as we move on to another problem somewhere else. We would have no permanent territory as we will only go into areas that our regular teams can't solve by themselves. This is a long-term strategy that may take a year or more before it shows results. Are you willing to give me that?”

“We will have to work it out Brad,” Craig Junior told me. “How big a team do you need?”

“As I have it figured right now, I can do it with just four of the girls in the office right now to start. If all goes well, and I believe it will, I can double that in a year or so. Doubling the team then should quadruple the sales.”

The food was delivered to the table. Everyone was quiet as they digested the information I had given to them and stuffed their faces. I had to watch my figure, so I only ordered the small chef's salad with no dressing and only ate a few bites. I picked at my salad as I watched the three others wolf down their steaks with all the trimmings. Only the bones, picked completely clean, were left on their plates when they were finished.

“Who do you want?” Craig senior asked me as their third round of drinks was delivered to the table.

“Robin, Rose, Sandy and Margot,” I told them.

“Robin doesn't like you, remember?” Brian said.

“Robin doesn't like me coming in to work so early, is all. I put sales and profits ahead of personal feelings. I'm certain she will, too. I need to approach these people one-on-one and talk to them with your full backing and support. I need at least one full year without interference from anyone, which will mean a separate office for us. I have to be in total control which means these girls will no longer have to answer to you or anyone else in the company. They only answer to the team or to me.”

“I find this intriguing, Bradley. You want us to invest five regular salaries for one full year on something there is no guarantee for a return on?”

“No, Mr. Coleman. I want you to invest five increased salaries plus stock on this gamble. That is exactly what it is, too. A gamble. I consider it a sure thing, though. Hey, you get to choose the problem areas we go to work in.”

“Why do you need such a long time?”

“I'm just giving us some leeway. There are a lot of things these girls have to learn and know before we can expect them to do these types of sales. If all goes well, you may see a profit within six months. If there are problems, we may have to replace some or all of the team. I'm just allowing for these occurrences, even though they may never appear.”

“When can you start?” Craig Junior asked me.

“As soon as possible. I made the girls very happy this morning when I came in late. I did that on purpose. They’re stewing right now because they know I went out for lunch with the three of you. Believe it or not, Robin is the key right now. If I can get her committed this afternoon, I can approach the rest of them next week. If I have to wait till Monday to approach Robin, we may have to forget the whole thing.”

“Fine. Get Miss Carson if you can,” Craig Senior told me. “We’ll know by Monday if we want to go ahead with this.”

“Whether or not we go ahead, she has to be able to keep the raise I offer her. I won't go ahead without that.”

“Why not? Why should *you* care whether or not she gets to keep the raise?” Brian asked.

“We are talking about my reputation here. If you are just out to ruin it, I can quit here and now. It'll save us all a lot of aggravation later on.”

“We'll go with the one raise if it falls through.” All three of them agreed to it.

I refused to ride back to the office with them unless I was allowed to drive the car. “What's the matter?” they all wanted to know. They had all been drinking and I wasn't going to risk my life because some guy felt he wasn't too drunk to drive. They let me drive and we got back safe and sound.

I had some research to do, so I took Craig Junior with me to the payroll department and pulled the files of the four women I wanted to work with. I couldn't have gotten the files on my own yet and I didn't want anyone there to know which ones I pulled off their computer. Payroll was done on a separate computer.

Craig Senior got the board room set up for five while Brian lined up Carol to cover Robin's position for the time I was going to need to talk to her. The setup was simple. Those three were at one end, Robin and I at the other end across the table from each other by the coffee pot.

Robin was really nervous when she came into the board room and found the four of us there. She probably assumed her plan to get around me had backfired as I was still there. She had been summoned by the boss, so she knew it was important. I wanted her at ease, so after I closed the door and held her chair for her, I offered her a cup of coffee. She refused.

We all took our places and Craig Senior began with his usual game. “Do you know why you have been called in here, Miss Carson?” he began.

“No games, Mr. Coleman,” I said looking directly at him.

“Sorry, Bradley. It’s force of habit that makes me do that. Miss Carson, we have just given Bradley Anderson enough power in this company to equal all three of us down here. He can hire, he can fire, he can give raises and he can reprimand. In a few minutes, he is going to order the three of us outside to guard the door so he can talk

to you in private.” It was a pretty big lie but it got the point across to her. “I hope you are smart enough to listen to him.”

I looked over to the three of them and nodded my head towards the door. Robin was watching as all three got up and left the room. We both heard them give orders that we were not to be disturbed except in the case of an extreme emergency, like if the building was on fire. The door closed behind them.

I poured myself a cup of coffee and again offered one to Robin. “Yeah, why not?” she replied. “I guess you're mad at me huh, Brad?”

“What makes you think *that*?” I asked her. I had my own games to play.

“Because I badmouthed you to them before,” she answered.

I put in my cream and sugar and replied. “I didn't know that. Did you tell lies about me?”

“No. I told them that you kept coming in early and that you bothered me doing that all the time.” She fixed her coffee, then we took our seats again.

“That's not badmouthing Robin and it's not lying. I have no reason to be upset with you and I'm not. I have a new position in the company with a lot of power. I know what you do here, I know how you do it and I want you to work with me. Can you do that? Can you put aside any problems you may have had with me and work with me honestly?”

“Doing what?” she wanted to know.

“Sales.” I replied. “Me, you and three others will make up a new sales team. We will work on the problems of the other five teams and turn them into profitable areas. As the team leader, I will have more power than any other team leader has or even those three who just left. As my second in command, you would have a lot of power, too. Money is also power.”

“How *much* money?”

“If you join me, I'll double your salary right now and you won't even have to go back to being a receptionist today. Carol can stay there until a permanent replacement can be decided upon. Can you work with me honestly at all times?”

“Do we have to have honesty all the time, Brad?”

“Yeah, I'm afraid so. Without it there really isn't any point going on.”

“And those three agreed to give me that much more money?”

“They don't have a clue what I am offering you. All they know is that its going to cost them a fortune until we start to turn a profit. When we do start the sales climbing, we get to share in all the profits with commissions. If we work at it, I estimate your gross income in the first year will be about one hundred thousand dollars. More than double that in the second year. So, can you work with me? Can you be honest with me? And do you want to get rich quick?”

“Yes, yes and HELL YES! When do we start?”