



Reluctant Press presents:

Musical Genius

Briana Vermont



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID McKINLEY

A 'HER TV' E-BOOK

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Reluctant Press TG Publishers

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Musical Genius

By Briana Vermont

Illustrations by David McKinley

Chapter 1

The end of university is the beginning of a new stage in life. It's a transition to a whole new world. For almost twenty years you've been studying, learning all you can about the world around you. For four years, you've studied your particular area of interest. Now it's finally time to leave the classes and studying behind. It's time to enter the world, and to find a place for you in it. With a twenty-year running start, you finally make that leap. There's just one catch: you have to get a job.

It wasn't that Christopher Collins didn't want a job. On the contrary, he had always known what he wanted to do. His passion had always been music, but he realized that becoming a professional musician took as much luck as it did skill. He had never been particularly lucky. So he had studied music, but he realized that was not enough. He had seen too many people study for years, expecting to land a dream job, only to find themselves unemployable anywhere except Clown Burgers.

Christopher didn't want that to happen to him. So in addition to a music degree, he made sure that he graduated with a teaching certificate. No matter what else happened, the world would always need teachers. And with a music degree to back that up, he should be able to find a position easily. Christopher wanted nothing more than to pass his love of music on to a new generation.

That was his plan. It had seemed perfect, up until graduation. That had been four months ago. His résumés had sparked some interest, and he had some interviews with schools around town, but somehow he never got the job. Now the schools had been open

for a month, and had their teaching staff in place. No one seemed interested in his offers of private instruction either. Christopher's life plan had been seriously derailed.

Christopher sat in his empty apartment and considered his situation. He had some serious thinking to do. Unfortunately, he couldn't even do this. Someone in the apartment next door was playing his guitar at top volume. Christopher had sold most of his furniture, and the music echoed through the empty rooms. He pounded on the wall for the fifth time.

Finally, he couldn't stand it any more. Christopher left his apartment, walked down the hall and pounded on the door of his noisy neighbor. He wasn't in a mood to ask nicely either; this guy was going to turn down the music or step outside.

The door opened, and Christopher looked up into the face of his neighbor. It didn't bother him that the guy was taller, a lot taller, than he was. Christopher was used to that; at five foot six, most guys were taller than he was. No, what shook Christopher was the fact that the guy next door was actually the girl next door. And not just any girl; he could say without a doubt that this was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. She had the face of an angel, and was wearing a camisole with very short shorts that revealed a body and legs to die for. Christopher's plans for a confrontation had to be rethought quickly.

Christopher just stood there, staring and unable to speak. Eventually the girl said, "Yah? What's your problem?" Christopher was not the type of person she had to spend time on. He was short, and not particularly good looking. In fact, he had a sort of greasy, unkempt look to him that was distinctly unappealing.

Christopher snapped out of his trance, and found himself able to speak again. "Oh! Hi. I live next door. I was just wondering, do, you ..."

His voice trailed off as the second and third most beautiful girls he had ever seen joined the first. In actual fact, they were all probably tied for first place; he didn't really want to have to choose at this moment. One was wearing a very small T-shirt and shorts, the other a bikini top and short skirt. Christopher lost the ability to speak again. He seemed to have no ability to form coherent thoughts at all.

"Do I what?" the girl said in a surly manner.

"Do, you, what?" said Christopher.

"Look, asshole," said the girl. "We're busy, okay? We don't have all night. If you want something, spit it out."

When Christopher continued to stare, but now with a confused look on his face, the girl tried again. "I live next door, I was just wondering, do you ...?" she said in a perfect impersonation of Christopher's unique, nasally voice.

Christopher suddenly remembered. "Oh! Hi. I do live next door. I was just wondering, do you think you could keep the music down?"

The girl got the sweetest, most apologetic look on her face and said, "Oh, now why didn't you just say so?" Then she dropped the act, looked at Christopher as if he were something she'd found on the bottom of her shoe and said, "No. Goodbye, asshole."

The girl stepped back into the apartment and slammed the door in Christopher's face. Fortunately, her sudden rudeness brought Christopher back to his senses, and he stuck his foot in the opening. So she was one of those girls who thought being beautiful meant she could do or say anything to anyone. Well, he wasn't going to let her get away with it this time.

"Just a minute," he yelled at her. "I live in this building. I pay my rent. And I'm entitled to a little quiet."

The girl looked at him, sizing him up. The she asked, "You live next door?"

"That's right," he told her.

"Then you don't pay rent. You're two months behind, and you're probably not going to be around much longer."

Christopher was completely flustered by her comment. After stammering a few moments, he eventually managed to say, "Who told you that?"

The girl smiled down at him. "The superintendent talks," she said.

Christopher realized she had no reason to do anything he asked. Still, he said, "Look, it's a reasonable request. Just turn down the music."

"It's not like we have a stereo on or something," she said. "We're a band, and we're practicing for a gig this weekend."

Christopher glared back, insulted. "I know the difference between live music and a stereo," he shot back. "I'm a trained musician myself. And I know that you don't have to practice at full volume. This is a one-bedroom apartment, not a concert hall."

Something Christopher said seemed to get the girl's attention. She stopped arguing, and stepped back. For a moment, she seemed to be looking him over, appraising him. Eventually she said, "You're a musician?"

"Yes," said Christopher, not sure if he should still be arguing or not.

"So what instrument do you play?" she asked.

Christopher thought about this a moment. He was never sure how to answer this question. Finally he said, "All of them."

The beautiful girl snorted. "What do you mean, all of them?" she asked.

"All of them," Christopher answered.

"Saxophone? Trombone? Flute?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"Xylophone? Harmonica?" she tried.

"I can play any instrument," he said again.

"So you can play a bass guitar?" she said. The two girls behind her looked at each other oddly.

"Sure," answered Christopher.

The girl looked at her two friends. The three appeared to have a silent conversation, conducted with their eyes alone. After her two friends shrugged their shoulders, the girl turned back to Christopher.

“Look, I’m really sorry,” she said with sugary sweetness and an apologetic smile. “We really got off on the wrong foot. We’re neighbors; of course I’ll turn down the music for you.”

“Oh, well, thank you,” said Christopher, suddenly wondering what had happened.

“I’m Sandra, by the way,” the girl told him as she offered her hand. “These are my friends, Ashley, and Natalie.”

Christopher accepted her hand. “Sandra, nice to meet you. My name is Christopher.”

“Christopher, what a great name!” she said, and smiled at him. “I’ve always loved that name. Look, Christopher, we were just going to take a break. Why don’t you come in and have a beer with us?” Sandra wandered off in the direction of the kitchen.

“No, thanks,” he replied, watching Sandra’s shoulder-length blonde hair swing across her shoulders, her hips swiveling as she walked away. “That’s not necessary, but thank you for the offer.”

“Don’t be silly,” said Ashley as she and Natalie took his hands and led him into the living room. “We were rude. Sit right here.”

The two girls sat him on the couch, then they sat on either side facing him. Sandra returned with a beer and handed it to Christopher. He was never very good at drinking; maybe it was his small size, but alcohol seemed to go straight to his head.

“Thank you, thank you very much,” said Christopher. Sandra sat on the floor at his feet and smiled up at him. He could see right down her top if he wasn’t careful. The tiny blue dots on her bra were almost hypnotic.

The three girls talked with Christopher while he finished his beer, asking him about his musical experience and laughing at all his stories (even the ones that weren’t funny).

“So Christopher,” said Sandra, “if you’re so talented, why don’t you play something for us?” She indicated the musical instruments in the middle of the room.

Christopher rose unsteadily, and crossed over to the keyboard. Without sitting, he played a few bars of Bach’s Cantata No. 147, all signs of any drunkenness gone as the music flowed from his fingers.

The three girls smiled, and applauded enthusiastically. Then Sandra gushed, “That was so good! Do you play other styles? Like, can you play rock and roll? And you said you could play bass guitar,” she added, indicating the bass sitting in the corner.

Christopher picked up the bass guitar and placed the strap around his shoulders. He played a few chord progressions, then followed this with an amazing bass riff. The girls were sincerely impressed, and they applauded and shouted their appreciation.

“Christopher, that was amazing!” said Sandra, actually meaning it this time. “I think I told you before, we’re a band. I play lead guitar and vocals, Ashley is keyboard and backup vocals, and Natalie is on drums.”

"You'll have to tell me where you're playing," said Christopher. "I'd like to come see you."

"Well," said Sandra, turning just slightly sad and pouting her lower lip, "you see, the thing is, we're supposed to play at this club downtown on Saturday, but we may have to cancel."

"Yes," said Ashley as she turned on the sad routine. "We had a bass guitar player, but she quit on us."

"Got pregnant, got married, moved away," said Natalie. "That old story."

"But Christopher," said Sandra, suddenly brightening, "you're such a fantastic musician! How would you like to join the band? It would be such a big favor to us!"

Christopher really wanted to help these girls, but he just wasn't sure if he could. "I don't know," he said. "I'm an instructor, not a performer. I'm not good with crowds."

"Don't worry about crowds," said Natalie. "We never get that many people."

"It's a paying job, too," Sandra added with a look at Natalie. "Not much, only \$100, but I know you can use the money," she said, thinking of his overdue rent. "Only for a couple of shows, until we find a replacement. It would be such a big help to us!"

"Yes, but still," Christopher said with some hesitation.

"Don't make up your mind right now," Sandra told him. "Sit in with us and play a couple of songs. Stay right here, I have the music for bass guitar in the next room."

"Oh, I don't need it," said Christopher. "Let's see, it goes something like this..."

Christopher reached over to the piano, and with one hand played the opening to the band's song. "Then I figure the bass line would come in with something like this," he said as he improvised on the bass guitar.

The three girls just stared at Christopher. "Okay, now that was spooky," said Ashley.

"How do you know our song?" asked Natalie.

"I told you, I heard it all through the wall," Christopher told them.

"Yes, but you *learned* it through the wall? Well enough that you can play it back, and improvise a bass line?" asked Sandra.

"Sure," said Christopher. "It's catchy," he added.

The three girls had a quick, wordless conversation with their eyes. The vote was unanimous.

"Now you have got to join us!" said Sandra. All three moved in close to Christopher. They jumped up and down enthusiastically, saying "Please?" until he relented.

"Alright," he laughed, "I'll do it! I'll play with you!"

"Oh, thank you Christopher, you're the best!" enthused Sandra. She magically pulled another beer from somewhere and handed it to him. Christopher took a drink from the bottle.

“Christopher, you play great, and I really think you’re going to fit in so well,” said Sandra. She waited until he had finished another swig from the beer. “There’s just one more thing you’ll need to know. You see, we’re a girl band.”

“Yes, I noticed,” laughed Christopher. The beer was starting to loosen him up.

“The name of the band is ‘Pritee Gurlz’, and our hook is that we’re all, well, pretty girls,” added Ashley.

“You don’t have to tell me,” Christopher laughed again. “I noticed the moment you opened the door.”

“The thing is,” said Sandra, “if you’re going to be one of the Pritee Gurlz, you’re going to have to be, a pretty girl.”

Christopher was in the middle of another swig, but he put the bottle down as he thought about this. The look on his face said that he didn’t quite understand what she had said, or at least he hoped he didn’t.

“You wouldn’t have to do much,” Sandra assured him. “We’ll put a little makeup on you, you can wear a skirt and stand at the back. No one will even notice you. Just let your hair down from that ponytail and you’ll look great.”

“No, no, that’s crazy,” said Christopher, feeling awfully drunk but fully understanding what they were saying now. “You can have a guy, playing bass. That’s me, the guy playing bass.”

“I’m sorry, Christopher,” said Sandra, “but we’re billed as an all-girl band. That’s who we are, and that’s who we want to be.”

“Well, now you’re an all-girl band with one guy!” he yelled.

“Look,” said Sandra, all pretense of the nice girl-next-door gone, “You’ve been in the band for two minutes, and already you’re trying to change things! Let me tell you, this is my band, and we run things my way. Get it?”

“Change things?” he stammered. “I don’t want to change anything, I want to leave it all the way it is!”

“Please, Christopher?” tried Ashley and Natalie. They poured on the cute little girl act as they stroked his arms and said, “We really want you in the band. It’ll be fun!”

“I’ll tell you what,” said Sandra. “We can pay you \$150, because of the extra effort for you.”

“I won’t do it. It’s degrading,” said Christopher.

Sandra was silent for a moment. The smile dropped completely from her face, and she stared icicles at Christopher. When she finally spoke, she let into him with everything she had.

“Degrading?” she yelled. “You little shit. You think it’s degrading to be a girl? You think you’re better than us, just because we’re girls?”

“That’s not what I said,” Christopher tried to explain.

“All this time, you’ve been looking at us – and we’ve seen you, don’t think we haven’t – staring at our chests and legs and hair, and we let you because we thought you were a nice guy. But all the time you were thinking you were better than us!”

“It’s not true,” Christopher tried to say.

“Please Christopher,” said Natalie, pulling him aside. “Just try it Sandra’s way. It’ll work out, you’ll see.”

The good-guy, bad-guy routine was starting to work on Christopher. ‘All I have to do is say yes,’ he thought to himself, ‘then everyone will be happy again.’ After all, how bad could it be to spend time with these three, beautiful girls?

He was about to agree, and looked up at the girls’ hopeful, expectant faces. He saw them in their sexy outfits ... and suddenly realized they didn’t just want him to join them, they wanted him to look just like them! There was no way he could do this!

“No, no way. I won’t do it. And if I don’t play, you’ll just have to cancel.” Christopher started walking toward the door.

“We won’t cancel,” said Sandra. “It’s only a bass player, we can go on without one.”

Christopher opened the door and stepped into the hallway. “Then good luck to you,” he yelled. “And keep the noise down!”

Christopher slammed the door and walked back to his own apartment. He fumbled with the keys, just a little drunk and having some difficulty. He didn’t notice that someone had followed him down the hall until he felt the touch of a hand on his arm. Startled, he turned to face the other person. “Oh, it’s you. What do you want?”

“Same as always,” said the superintendent. “The rent is long overdue. You’ve got to come up with some money.”

I still haven’t found a job, but I have some leads. I just need some more time.”

“Well, you don’t have any more time. The landlord told me to get you out if you don’t pay up. I’m sorry, boy, but you’re going to have to move out tomorrow.”

This sobered up Christopher immediately. Without even thinking he said, “No, wait. I’ve got a job, this Saturday. It’s not full time, just temporary, but I can pay you on Monday, I promise.”

The superintendent looked at Christopher for a while. Finally he shook his head and said, “I can’t believe I’m doing this. But you’re a good kid, and no one should hold it against you just because you’re having some bad luck. This job of yours better be on the level, and I better see some of that back rent on Monday morning!”

“It is, and you will,” Christopher told him.

The super looked at Christopher again, then shook his head. He wandered down the hallway, and left through the stairwell.

Christopher thought about what he had to do. He took a deep breath, then went back to Sandra’s apartment and knocked on the door.

“Well, look who’s here,” said Sandra as she opened the door. “Are you here to tell us more about why we should feel humiliated to be girls?”

"No," said Christopher. "I just wondered if you changed your mind?"

"Sorry," replied Sandra as she leaned against the door. "We have our artistic vision."

"I'll do it," said Christopher quietly.

"Sorry, what did you say?" asked Sandra. She honestly couldn't hear him, he spoke so softly.

"I said I'll do it," Christopher said a bit louder.

"You'll dress like I tell you, wear your hair and makeup as I say, no argument?" she demanded.

"Yes, no argument," Christopher replied.

"Well okay," said Sandra. "Welcome to the band!" Sandra let him in the door, and closed it behind him. "Ladies, look who's back! Christopher's in the band. We were just going to rehearse, go get your bass. I think there's still half a beer over there for you."

Christopher finished the beer. He was going to need it.

Chapter 2

The next day started like any other for Christopher. He slept in late, since he had nowhere to go. To get ready for the day, all he had to do was run a comb through his hair and tie it back. He didn't even need to get dressed – he had slept in his clothes. He rinsed his mouth with some water from the bathroom, then left the apartment.

He had a bit of a hangover from the night before. He wasn't used to drinking; he hadn't been able to afford it for some time. It took him a couple of hours to walk it off. He had a regular routine where he would check all the posters he had placed around the neighborhood, to see if anyone had taken any of his address labels, or if anyone had defaced the posters. When this happened he had to replace them.

There was a local youth unemployment center a few blocks away that was a big help. Technically, he was a bit old for the center. They allowed him to use their facilities anyway, though. They generally weren't all that busy, and Christopher looked as young as any of the teenagers who came in anyway.

Christopher would spend a couple of hours at the center every day. They had a photocopier that he used to replace his posters at 5 cents a sheet. He used their phone to make calls, since his had been disconnected. And they sometimes had leads for him to follow on prospective jobs.

By noon, he had usually done everything he could. Then he would return to his apartment, and wait to see if anyone followed up on the address labels. If no one showed up, the afternoons would pass very slowly. Usually no one showed up.

Sandra had told him the band would get together at her apartment to practice every night this week. The other girls would get there around seven o'clock, but she would stop by Christopher's apartment at six to help him get ready. Somehow, having this to dread made the afternoon go more slowly than usual. At six o'clock, there was a knock on the door.

“Shit, Christopher,” said Sandra as she pushed past him and took a look at the empty apartment. “I like what you’ve done with the place. Very Spartan.” She dropped the blouse and skirt she had brought with her on one of the two wooden chairs in the room, and stretched out on the other. She was wearing a tube top and a pair of shorts that were even smaller than the ones from the previous night.

“Yes, very funny,” said Christopher without humor. “Let’s just get this over with,” he said as he reached for the clothes.

“Like hell,” said Sandra, slapping his hand away as she got a good look at him. “These are my own clothes, and you’re not touching them like that. Jeez, what the hell’s wrong with you? You haven’t even shaved, and you need a shower bad. Get going. And don’t forget to wash your hair.”

Christopher went into the bathroom, and removed his clothes. He shaved his face, and showered, and washed his hair as he had been told. All the while, Sandra explored his apartment, calling insults to him.

Sandra looked through the kitchen, noting the distinct lack of anything edible. “You know there’s nothing in your fridge except for an empty pickle jar?” she called to him. “So why didn’t you just throw it away?”

“I don’t know,” he called back. “The refrigerator just looked so empty.”

“So basically, you don’t eat?” she asked as she entered the bathroom.

“Hey!” he yelled, covering himself with his towel. “Get out! A little privacy, please?”

“Don’t get all excited, I’m not going to rape you,” she said. “I’m just exchanging these,” she said, indicating the pair of clean underpants she found in his room, “for these,” she said, picking up his old clothes off the floor.

Christopher watched her leave with his clothes. “You expect me to come out there wearing nothing but my underwear?” he asked.

Sandra turned and stared at him. “You are such an idiot,” she finally said. “Yes, come out in your underwear. I’ll dress you out here.” Then she took a good look at him. “Wow, you’re really thin. This not eating is really working for you. Keep it up.”

Christopher put on his underwear, in case she decided to come back. Then he finished toweling his hair dry, and ran a comb through it. Reluctantly, he went out to his living room, where Sandra was arranging her things. She turned and looked him up and down.

“What the hell did you wash your hair with?” she asked.

“Soap,” he replied.

Sandra shook her head, unable to come up with anything to say that could possibly express her disdain. “Okay, just put on these pantyhose.”

Christopher took the pantyhose, and attempted to step into them.

“Oh, my, God,” said Sandra. “You don’t have a single clue, do you? That’s not how you put on pantyhose. Just sit down, you idiot.”

“I’m sorry, this is all kind of new to me,” Christopher shot back.

Sandra showed him how to roll the pantyhose down to the toe, then stick his foot in, and roll it back up his leg. Christopher then rolled up the other side, stuck his toe to the bottom, and began rolling it up his other leg. There was a knock at the door.

“Damn it, always when you’re in the middle of something,” said Sandra as she walked over and opened the front door.

Christopher was sitting on a wooden chair, in the middle of an empty room, almost naked except for a pair of pantyhose tying his right ankle to his left knee. He couldn’t even walk, let alone run as he wanted. Yet somehow, he managed to hop, fall, and roll into the kitchen before Sandra got the door open.

“Yes?” Sandra asked the middle-aged woman at the door.

“I’m looking for Christopher Collins,” she said. “He gives music lessons, is this the right place? My daughter would like to take guitar lessons.”

Sandra turned around, and seeing the empty chair, turned back to the woman and said, “He’s not here right now.”

The woman looked past Sandra at the apartment, empty except for two wooden chairs and a small pile of clothes. “Maybe I’ll come back another time,” she said as she turned to leave.

“Get a phone number, and he’ll get back to her tomorrow,” Christopher called from his hiding place in the kitchen.

“No thank you, that’s not necessary. Thank you, goodbye,” said the woman as she hurried away down the hall.

“That’s just great. That could have been a paying client, and you had to scare her away,” said Christopher as he crawled back into the living room.

“What the hell’s the matter with you, are you nuts?” yelled Sandra. “You’re going to run your pantyhose.”

Christopher climbed off the floor and onto the chair, then finished adjusting his pantyhose.

Sandra got him to stand, and helped him into the blouse. It was black, with long sleeves to cover the hair on his arms. She helped him do up the buttons, as they were backwards to what he was used to, and since he fumbled with them pathetically. Then she helped him step into the short black skirt, and did up the belt for him.

“Excellent, you’re really starting to look like something now,” she told him as she pulled out her makeup kit.

“You know why you don’t have any clients, don’t you?” she asked as she applied some foundation over his beard. “You’re a creepy little guy, with a squeaky voice living in a disturbingly empty apartment. Would you leave *your* children with you?”

“I didn’t agree to let you insult me,” he said.

“Insult you?” said Sandra with a snort. “I’m not insulting you, I’m helping you. And boy, do you need help.”

Sandra did a quick job on Christopher's eyes, applying some eye shadow, liner, and mascara. A little lipstick and he was ready.

"Here are your shoes. Get them on, and let's take a look at you." She handed him a pair of sandals with three-inch heels. He fumbled with the straps until Sandra gave in and did them up for him. Then he stood, and walked to the bathroom for a look at himself.

"Pretty impressive, if I do say so myself," said Sandra, admiring her handiwork. Christopher had to agree. He did look like a girl, although maybe not as pretty as Sandra and the rest of the band. But, in the shadows at the back of the stage, he should be okay. "Come on, the others will be arriving soon," Sandra told him.

"Oh wait," he said. "I don't have any pockets. Where do I put my keys?"

"Just give them to me," Sandra told him. "We'll get you a purse at my place."

They left Christopher's apartment, and walked the short distance down the hall to Sandra's. It was almost seven o'clock; the others would show up any time now. Christopher paced awkwardly and self-consciously.

"You need to learn how to walk. You look like a horse the way you clomp around," said Sandra helpfully.

"Do you think you could maybe stop insulting me, please?" asked Christopher.

"You're such a baby," said Sandra.

Ashley and Natalie arrived together, at a little past seven. They were both wearing halter-tops and Capri pants, but Natalie in orange and Ashley in lime green. Christopher would have liked to admire them, but it seemed everyone wanted to look at his outfit instead.

At first, they were excited and complimentary. But it didn't take long for them to look more closely, and start spotting problems.

"She looks good," said Natalie, "but you can already see beard showing through under the foundation."

"And the hair on her legs really shows through her pantyhose," added Ashley.

"She's totally flat-chested, didn't you even give her a bra?"

"I can see chest hair sticking out of her blouse."

"What did you do to her hair? It's totally flat and lifeless."

"Her eyebrows need some serious shaping."

"I see what you mean," said Sandra. "I thought we could get away with just a few minor changes, but I didn't realize how bad she would be to start. I can see that tomorrow, I'll have to give her a serious makeover."

"Hey!" said Christopher. "Can we please stop with all the 'she' and 'her' talk? I'm still a guy!"

"No," said Sandra. "That was my mistake today. From now on, no more half-measures. From now on when you're with us, you are a girl. You'll act like one of the

girls, and we'll treat you like one of the girls." She thought for a moment and asked, "Does anyone ever call you Chris?"

"Sometimes," he answered. "But I prefer Christopher."

"Then from now on, your name is Chrissy. And tomorrow, you get the full treatment."

"Don't worry, Chrissy," said Ashley as she took her aside. "Sandra takes a little getting used to, but I can tell she already thinks of you as one of the Pritee Gurlz."

With that, the girls got down to business, and rehearsed their act.

Sandra showed up at Chrissy's apartment at four o'clock the next afternoon. "Hey, Chrissy," she said. "You ready to get started? I've been shopping, and I can't wait to try some of these things out!"

"Hi Sandra," Chrissy greeted her at the door. "You're early, I wasn't expecting you for a couple of hours. I was just going to shave."

"Then it's a good thing I got here. You're not going to shave today. And I'm early because we have a lot of work to do. We'll be lucky if we finish by the time the other girls get here. Now get into the bathroom, and strip to your shorts."

Chrissy knew better than to protest. He took Sandra at her word – yesterday Sandra told him to act like a girl, and he would be treated like a girl. Sandra was a lot nicer to girls, so being treated like one was a good thing. He just kept thinking, "Only a few more days of this, I'll get paid, I can pay off some rent and keep my apartment." Chrissy went into the bathroom, and stripped down to his briefs.

"So you don't want me to shave?" Chrissy asked, slightly incredulous, as Sandra joined him in the bathroom.

"That's right," Sandra told him. I have something better. She reached into a plastic bag, and pulled out what looked like a can of shaving cream. Sandra shook the can, and sprayed some into her hand. Then she bent down, and tried to put the cream on Chrissy's legs.

"Hey, whoa! Slow down!" yelled Chrissy. "There's no way I'm letting you shave my legs!"

"Would you just relax?" Sandra told him. "I'm not going to shave your legs, and this isn't shaving cream. It's a depilatory." Chrissy calmed down, and allowed Sandra to spread the cream up and down his legs.

"I was on the Internet today," Sandra explained. "I looked up some drag websites to see what they do about their hair problems. It recommended this stuff. It's called, 'Hair Today'. Here, take some and start spreading it over your beard." Sandra sprayed a small amount into Chrissy's hand, and he began spreading it over his face, on his cheeks and chin, and under his nose.

"So what does it do?" Chrissy wanted to know. He looked into the mirror, making sure his face was coated thoroughly and evenly.

"Do you realize you even have hair on your toes?" said Sandra as she finished off the first leg, now covered completely from Chrissy's hip to his toes. Sandra sprayed some more into her hand, and started spreading it down Chrissy's other leg.

"It lightens the hair, and thins it," Sandra explained. "Then it just sort-of dissolves and falls out."

Chrissy jumped away from Sandra. "What do you mean, it falls out? I don't want it to fall out!"

"Damn it, Chrissy, you almost kicked me! It's just hair, who the hell cares? It grows back."

"I don't want people to see my legs hairless!" Chrissy yelled.

"So who ever sees them anyway? You wear pants all day, don't you? Don't be such a baby girl."

"People see my face," Chrissy tried, realizing he had just covered his own face with the cream.

"So what? You shave your face anyway. So are you going to let me do the second leg now, or are you so stubborn that you want to keep the hair on one leg only?"

Chrissy relented. Sandra continued applying the cream up and down the second leg, all the way to the toes.

Chrissy turned around, so that Sandra could finish off the back of his legs. Sandra stood when she was finished, and rubbed her hands over Chrissy's back. The back rub felt nice, so Chrissy let her continue.

"This will be better," Sandra told him. "We'll get rid of this back hair too."

"What!" shouted Chrissy. "You put that stuff on my back? Without asking?"

"Settle down, it's just back hair," Sandra said. "It's gross, have you ever seen it? Trust me, you want to get rid of it." Sandra finished rubbing the cream all over Chrissy's back, then had Chrissy turn around.

"You forgot to do your throat when you did your face," Sandra reminded him. "Here, let me get it for you." Sandra put a little more cream in her hand, and applied it to Chrissy's throat. Chrissy looked up to make it easier for her. This also made it easier for Sandra to sneak some onto Chrissy's chest.

"Hey, no!" said Chrissy, covering his chest with his arms and backing away from Sandra. "That's my chest hair. Mine, understand? I'm keeping it."

"Are you sure?" tried Sandra. "Guys with smooth chests look so sexy," she said seductively, as she tried to rub her cream-covered hands over Chrissy's chest.

"You're thinking of muscular guys," said Chrissy, fending her off. "Guys like me, we need the hair."

"Okay," said Sandra, giving up and looking resigned. I wouldn't ask if I didn't think it was absolutely necessary, so no one would spot you on stage as a guy, but I understand. I know, none of this is easy for you." She thought for a moment, then said, "I tell you what, I could pay you \$150, to compensate you for your trouble."

"You're already paying me \$150," Chrissy told her.

"I am? Damn, let me think," said Sandra. She thought for a minute, doing some math in her head.

“Okay, I can pay you \$200, if you let me finish your chest. I know you need the money. And it’s in your own best interest; you don’t want anyone to find out you’re not a girl.”

Chrissy thought it over. He actually owed a lot more than \$200, and had been worried that \$150 wouldn’t be enough to keep the apartment. \$200 would be better, and Sandra had a point about not wanting to be caught dressed as a girl.

“Okay, go ahead,” he relented.

“Excellent!” said Sandra. “You are going to look so good,” she said as she spread the cream all over Chrissy’s chest and belly. Then she grabbed Chrissy’s arm, and spread cream all up and down.

“Fine, go ahead, get it all,” Chrissy said in resignation as he raised his arms. Sandra spread the cream up and down both arms, including Chrissy’s armpits.

When Sandra finally finished, Chrissy looked ridiculous. He was covered in cream from his cheeks to his toes.

“Now wait right here,” said Sandra as she rinsed her hands. “I need something from my apartment. I’ll be right back.”

“What should I do?” said Chrissy from beneath all the foam.

“I don’t know, just work the cream in, rub it around. Give it a chance to work.”

And then she left. For over half an hour Chrissy waited, standing naked and cream-covered, trapped in his own bathroom. He rubbed the cream into his skin, as Sandra had told him. He had a lot of time, and managed to do his entire body twice, feeling his own hair swirling around as it dissolved and fell out.

When Sandra finally returned, Chrissy was just a little put out. “Where have you been all this time?”

“Just next door. I got a few things for you. Why’ve you still got the cream on?”

“You didn’t tell me I could take it off!” said Chrissy.

“What am I, your mother? Do I have to tell you everything? Just get in the shower and wash it all off. It should have worked really well after all this time. And here, these are for you. ‘Country Garden’ shampoo for oily hair. After you get the cream off, wash your hair, twice, then use the cream rinse.” Then she repeated for emphasis, “Twice! And don’t forget the cream rinse!”

“Okay, I get it. I’m not a child,” Chrissy said as he stepped into the shower. Sandra left to give him some privacy.

The cream had worked incredibly well. Chrissy watched as the stream of water from the shower head washed away the cream, along with every hair from his body. He finished with soap, making sure the cream was completely gone. Then he washed his hair, twice, using the Country Garden scented shampoo. The floral scent was a nice change from the fumes given off by the ‘Hair Today’ cream. Then he finished with the Country Garden cream rinse and conditioner.