



Reluctant Press presents:

Mannquin For Life

Norman Way



ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. HAIGHT

A YOUNG ADULT TV' E-BOOK

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Mannequin For Life

by Norman Way

My father died in Desert Storm when I was a baby. My mother struggled for a short time before moving back to the Midwest to be near her parents. She finally gave up about a year later and killed herself. The court decided to place me with her parents who farmed just outside of Des Moines, Iowa.

With no memory of my real parents, I grew up in their care.

Henry and Marion were honest, thrifty, hard-working people who believed in self-discipline and the work ethic. I began helping out on the farm at an early age and was no stranger to hard work by the time I entered school.

When Henry dropped over dead of a heart attack while working in the fields, Marion decided to sell and move to the city. She found work in a discount store and made a good life for us.

I did well in school and enjoyed the challenge of the academics as well as athletic competition. At 5' 6" and 145 lbs., I was too small for contact sports but I excelled with the swimming team, lettering in my freshman year. We didn't get much respect from the guys who played combative sports like football and hockey but the school was quite pleased when we went to the state finals and placed third in my first year.

I turned sixteen in May. In short order, I completed my Drivers Education and got my license. With Marion's help, I purchased a used car and then got a full-time job for the summer at J.J. Anderson's department store. If things worked out, I might be kept on part-time during the school year, though there were restrictions because of my age.

Jacob and Joshua Anderson founded the J.J. ANDERSON COMPANY in the late 1800's. In the beginning they sold dry goods and hardware. They offered quality goods and credit terms for the working class at a time when credit wasn't always available. By the end of the Second World War, the company had dropped its hardware line and concentrated on selling quality but moderately priced clothing. The founders' sons, John, Jo-

seph and James continued the family tradition by expanding the chain to twenty-five stores.

In the late 1980's, the effect of the competition from larger discount chains and the flood of cheap imported goods forced the company to re-organize and downsize their operations. Half of the stores were closed and the product line was reduced. Fewer brands were offered and the high-priced as well as the budget end of their merchandise were dropped. With only twelve stores and a much smaller inventory, they were still able to offer quality clothing but at affordable prices for the average working people of the area.

Through the Nineties, business continued to decline but not in a rapid fashion. It was slowly being reduced by the big box stores and cutthroat pricing. The grandchildren of the founders could see the handwriting on the wall and it wasn't long before rumors were flying about a possible sale to a larger chain.

I worked hard that first summer. I applied myself and was given a raise after three months. I spent most of my time unpacking merchandise, pricing and tagging it and putting it out on the floor where it was needed. In addition, after night stocking, I would clean the restrooms, floors and windows. Once a month the floors were waxed and polished. I got along well with everyone and was respected for my hard work.

By the time I started my sophomore year, I was well versed in all my responsibilities and except for an initial meeting each night with the supervisor, my work was no longer monitored closely. With my hours cut back because of school, I was not part of the day-to-day operations so buyout rumors caught up with me only occasionally.

Normally, during the first weekend in November, we would be getting in Christmas merchandise and decorations. It was then I learned that the axe had finally fallen. We had been bought out by a West Coast chain of Women's clothing stores. Exact details were not available but corporate reps would be visiting each store and talking with employees.

Losing your job is bad enough but it happening at this time of year made it worse. Many employees had families to support. I could get by working part-time until I was finished with school, though I wasn't sure if there would be a place for me in a women's clothing store. We would all be in the dark for the time being, so everyone kept working and hoped for the best.

There would be no merchandise shipments until the entire old inventory was sold out. This meant, of course, no holiday stuff. There would be an immediate markdown of fifty per cent on all merchandise. Slower moving inventory would be shipped to other stores where it was selling better. Final markdowns would take place the week of Christmas and then whatever was left would be packed up and shipped to a warehouse to be auctioned off. Company reps would be in to see us the weekend before Christmas and we would be notified of our status.

The closeout sale was heavily advertised and the response was overwhelming, to say the least. We were pretty well cleaned out by the end of the next two weeks. Following the Thanksgiving holidays, I helped box up and ship the remaining inventory to the warehouse. The meeting had been moved up to the first weekend in December and we would be informed about the store's status and who would be let go.

I arrived at the store for the 9 AM meeting to find the new owners looking over the building and making notes on their clipboards. Once the meeting was called to order, we all gathered around the front cashier's area and listened with interest as the corporate rep began to speak. The woman in charge was tall and thin with a short hairstyle. She appeared to have a permanent scowl on her face. She was dressed in a black pantsuit and flat shoes. She wore no makeup and spoke with a sharp clear voice.

"Good morning. I will be brief. This buyout will enable our company to expand here in the Midwest. With the stores cleaned out, you will all be laid off for several months. During that time, the store will be re-configured to suit our needs. You will be called in for an interview when we are ready to hire and if you are brought on board, you will make things ready for the new product line and stock the new inventory when it arrives. We don't anticipate any delays, so stay close to the phone. Most of you will be eligible for unemployment benefits until then. Thank you and good day."

The meeting broke up and we all went home. I found many part-time jobs in the want ads but I needed more of a permanent part-time job to go with my schooling so I didn't apply for them.

Just after New Years Day, I got a phone call to report for an interview at the store on a Saturday afternoon. I was a little nervous. If this was a women's department store, what would they want with me? I walked in the front door and was amazed at what had been done.

The old store had several cashier counters in the front and they were still there but the rest of the store had a much different look. The old store had a large main aisle running the full length of the main floor with men's clothing and shoes on the right hand side and women's clothing and shoes on the left.

At the rear of the store there was a side exit on the right and a stairway on the left that led to a balcony with children's clothes and shoes. Straight ahead at the rear were the two restrooms on either side of the large double doors that led to the back loading area and the employee lounge.

All the fixtures had been removed and new ones were put in place. Also, the walls were painted a delicate pink color with white trim. The floor tiles were pink and white and had been highly polished. The right side had areas marked off with tape indicating a large section for lingerie and a slightly smaller one for shoes. A beauty shop and wig salon was next to the rear exit. The entire left side was marked off for clothing. The balcony at the rear had a banner reading "Formal/Bridal."

I turned left and walked up the stairs of the front balcony which had housed the offices of the old store. At the top of the stairs, I stopped at the front desk and introduced myself.

"Good morning. I am Danny Weston. I have a 2 PM appointment to see Ms. LaRue."

The receptionist looked at her appointment book, and then gave me a big smile.

"Have a seat Danny. She will be with you shortly."

I sat down while she buzzed Ms. LaRue on the phone. "Your 2 PM is here."

I was still trying to figure out the playful smile she had on her face when Ms. LaRue walked up to me and extended her hand.

"I'm pleased to meet you Danny. Please come back to my office."

I followed her along the corridor to the manager's office.

"Please sit down," she said as she closed the door.

I took my seat in the chair opposite her desk.

She sat down and glanced at the folder in front of her.

"You have been highly recommended by the former owners and I would be very pleased to have you join us. There will, however, be some changes in the things you will be required to do for us. Is that understood?"

"I understand that this is a different type of store but exactly what would my new duties be?"

"First, you will be responsible for general cleaning and upkeep the same as you have always done. Second, you will be handling only some of the merchandise, making sure it is tagged, priced and properly displayed. Third, there will be other assorted duties as assigned and I use that term as an all-inclusive one to cover miscellaneous things. There will also be the occasional once-in-a-blue-moon jobs that may surface. Is that clear?"

"Yes it is. What would my hours be? I have school, you know, and I have to work around my class schedule as well as my swim meets which begin shortly."

"I understand. You will keep us apprised of your class schedule and the dates of your swim team's matches. This will enable us to schedule you for work well in advance so I won't have to be concerned about you missing any school function as well as keeping you here when we need you. Do you have a copy of your schedules with you?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact I do".

I opened my case and handed her a photocopy of the information she needed.

"Excellent. It's good to see you are well prepared. I like that. We expect the same job performance from you that the previous owners did. Be certain you understand that we will deal with incompetence or insubordination in a harsh manner. If you have any questions about how something is to be done, don't hesitate to ask. Once tasks are assigned, go do them. I like people who know how to get things done quickly and properly. Do you have any other questions?"

"No."

"Good. Thank you for coming in. I will mail you your work schedule in a few days. I'm glad to have you on board and I'm looking forward to working with you. You'll be getting the same wage as you were making before. In about ninety days you will be eligible for a raise. Have a nice day."

I stood up and shook her hand. She followed me out to the main office where she handed my file to the receptionist. As I left, I noticed that quizzical smile on the receptionist's face again. Almost like she knew something that I didn't.

When I got back home, I found a police officer waiting for me. Marion had been killed in a car-jacking incident at the mall. She had been shot through the head and had died in-

stantly. Her assailant drove off. At the next intersection he slammed into a cement truck and was killed.

I drove down to the morgue to identify the body, then called a nearby funeral home to make the arrangements. I didn't have time to grieve or feel sorry for myself. I knew I had to go ahead and make the best of things.

A local attorney who had helped Marion with the sale of the farm agreed to help me with the estate. After the funeral, I closed out her savings and checking accounts and deposited everything into my checking account.

Her safety deposit box had the title to our small two-bedroom condo and her car. The insurance company gave me a check for the totaled car. Her life insurance policy was small but it would cover the funeral and burial costs. We didn't know many people and except for a few of Marion's co-workers at the discount store and Ms. LaRue, no one else came to pay their respects.

After the funeral, I packed up Marion's clothes and donated them to a local charity. There were no relatives to notify and few bills to pay. I had the power and phone bills changed over to my name as well as the title to the condo.

Because of my age and the fact that there were no relatives, my attorney convinced the judge to continue to let me live on my own, for which I was very grateful.

The letter from Ms. LaRue arrived a week after everything had been settled. I opened it up and read the letter of hire and the enclosed work schedule. I would begin work the next Saturday.

I had just got caught up with the schoolwork I had missed during the funeral and now I could start work again. I wanted to keep busy. Finances were not an immediate problem but in two years I wanted to attend college and I would need more than the savings I had and my earnings from the store to be able to pay for the cost of a good education.

That first weekend, I finished assembling some storage units and also a few small counters. The racks for the clothing were next; after assembly I moved them out on the main floor. New cash registers were installed and the office received new furniture as well as new computer terminals. After cutting up the shipping cartons, I cleaned up the loading area, then swept the main floors.

I was quite surprised to find myself the only male employee from the old store. In fact I was the only male employee, period.

The next day, I assembled and set up the beauty shop chairs and merchandise counters in their proper places. I put together some shelving units for the wig salon and installed several mirrors as well.

I worked two nights during the week unpacking and storing the beauty shop and wig salon supplies in their respective cabinets. I found myself feeling a bit uncomfortable having to learn where to store cosmetic supplies as well as the wig care products. I had no idea of the amount of things a woman uses to look nice but I learned fast and there were very few things Ms. LaRue found out of place.

That Saturday, a large shipment of clothing came in. I stocked the shoe department first. While I was doing that, two of the new girls stocked the lingerie department. The next day we all stocked the dresses and skirts in the clothing section.

I worked quickly and Ms. LaRue was quite pleased at having the store completely stocked and ready for opening two weeks early. She found everything to be where it was supposed to be and without any pricing errors. After a complete walk through of the main store, she checked the beauty shop and the adjoining wig salon.

"Everything looks great. The only thing remaining is the stock for the formal wear shop on the upstairs balcony. That should arrive sometime this week. Have a good night."

I headed for the time clock to punch out. When I got in the back room, several of the younger girls were giggling and laughing about something but they shut up quickly when I arrived. I punched out and wished everyone a good week.

As I walked out the back door, the laughing began again. I couldn't imagine what they found so amusing. I wasn't paranoid or anything but I almost got the feeling that something was going on that I wasn't aware of. I couldn't quite put my finger on it. Maybe it had something to do with my being the only male in the store. Or perhaps the idea of a male working in a feminine environment and having to learn about make-up, wig care and the proper way to display women's clothing, shoes, and lingerie had given them reason to laugh at me. Anyhow I couldn't let it bother me. I needed this job and would do whatever it took to remain in Ms. LaRue's good graces. Little did I realize exactly how dedicated I would have to become or how soon I would be tested.

That Friday night when I reported for work at 6 PM, I was immediately summoned to Ms. LaRue's office. After punching in, I walked up the front stairs. The door was open but I knocked anyway.

She looked up from her paperwork and smiled at me.

"Come in, Danny. I'm in a bit of a jam to say the least. As you know, the formal apparel arrived this week and is being displayed on the rear balcony. Only the prom dresses are in, the bridal fashions won't arrive for another month. We are having a preview showing of our prom fashions in a window display this weekend and one of the girls who would be modeling the dresses has called in sick. I know this is quite an imposition but I need your help desperately. You have a pretty face, almost girlish, if you don't mind my saying so, and a slight build. I need you to wear several different styles of prom dresses and sit with the other girls in the window display from nine to noon and one to five both tomorrow and Sunday. I will pay you double your hourly rate if you will help me."

"Well, I don't know. I'm afraid I've never done anything like this and..."

"Nonsense! You'll do fine. My assistants will help you with everything you need. All you have to do is look pretty and smile. Throughout the day you will have to change into several different outfits and you will get a break for lunch. NOW I MUST EMPHASISE THAT I REALLY NEED YOUR HELP. WILL YOU DO THIS FOR ME?"

Judging by the look on her face, I could scarcely refuse.

"Yes, I will."

“Splendid. You will report to the beauty salon. They will help you get ready for tomorrow. Do exactly what they tell you. Remember, it’s just as if their instructions came from me”

“Yes Miss LaRue, I will.”

As I got up and left her office, I wondered what was in store for me now.

When I entered the beauty salon, the manager, a short, stout woman named Madge, was checking out a customer. None of the other beauticians were there which surprised me since Friday night was usually busier than this. After the woman left, I introduced myself. Madge greeted me with a big smile on her face.

“Oh yes, Danny! Step over here to the middle of the floor. Ms. LaRue said you’d been in. This won’t take very long.”

She opened one of the drawers and removed a measuring tape, a clipboard, and a pen.

“Stand still with your feet a little apart and hold your arms out straight.”

I did so and she measured from the middle of my back to my wrist, then my chest, waist, hips and then across the palm of my hand. As she jotted down the figures from each measurement she kept saying “Yes, yes, you will be perfect for this.

“Sit in this chair and remove one shoe and sock. Then stand up on this measuring scale.”

I did so and she jotted down my shoe size.

“Good. Now sit still.”

She placed a nylon wig cap over my hair, then she measured my head from ear to ear, front to back followed by the circumference. After jotting the figures down on her clipboard, she looked closely at my face. Again she smiled and wrote something additional down.

“Okay, I guess that about does it. Put your sock and shoe on. Report to the loading area where Jean is waiting for you.” As I left, she picked up the phone. I heard her telling Jean to use a “ten wide,” then I was out the door.

When I got to the rear of the loading area where Jean was standing, I saw several pairs of high heel shoes on the floor next to a folding chair.

“Sit here and take off your shoes and socks”

After I did so, Jean handed me a pair of knee-high nylon stockings.

“Put these on and then try on those black pumps.”

I put the stockings on and slipped my right foot into one of the shoes. It was a tight fit.

“Try a half size longer.”

I took off the ten wide and slipped on the ten and a half wide. My foot slid in easily.

“Good. Now put the other one on and walk over here.”

I followed her over to the wall where an eight-foot section of a metal conveyor had been set up. To say I felt a little silly wobbling in those three-inch heels while dressed in my work clothes would be an understatement.

"Tomorrow you will be sitting with three other models in the window but you will be dressing back here and must walk to the front of the store, enter the small corridor to the left of the main door and climb three steps and take your place at the far end of the window display. You must do this in a ladylike, professional way. No slipups! Understood?"

"Yes, Jean"

"Okay. Now watch me."

She slipped a black purse over her arm and stepped up on the conveyor. I watched her walk to the front of the machine and turn it on. After adjusting the speed, she placed one hand on her hip and began walking a model's walk. It looked so easy and effortless.

"Get the picture?" she asked.

"Yes, I think so."

"Good. Now it's your turn."

She shut the machine off and stepped down, handing me the purse. I slipped it over my arm and stepped on the machine. She turned it on and I began walking. After she corrected me several times, I finally got it right and continued to walk as she directed me to.

Several minutes went by; when she was satisfied that I was following her direction precisely, she set the timer on the control panel and sat down to read a magazine.

I began to have doubts about this. The money was too good to pass up. I could only hope that no one at school would find out about it. I knew I would never hear the end of it. Shortly, the timer went off and Jean shut the machine down.

"Okay. You did pretty well, all things considered. Tomorrow morning, take a hot bath and shave before coming to work...and I mean shave everything! Now put your regular socks and shoes on and you can go. Ms.Larue said you can have the rest of the night off with pay. Report to Madge at the beauty shop promptly at 8 AM tomorrow morning and don't be late!"

"I won't," I said as I walked out the door.

That night I tried to watch television but nothing seemed to hold my interest. I wanted to do a good job for my employer, yet it did seem rather odd they couldn't find a girl to fit in on short notice. Two of the girls I worked with were certainly pretty enough to do the job, why weren't they asked? In any case I was locked into being a girl model for the next two days at twice my regular wage so that wasn't so bad.

The images of the way the girls had looked at me when I began working there were hard to suppress from my mind. How Madge had smirked and smiled when she measured me as well as the way Jean had delighted in teaching me the professional way a lady model walks and acts when she is on the runway. I couldn't help but think there might be something else going on here that I didn't know about.

Nothing particularly sinister of course, just a bit unusual. I couldn't quite figure it out so I didn't think any more about it and went to bed.

I slept well and felt refreshed when the alarm went off at seven. I took a hot bath and shaved my legs up to my groin, then my arms and finally my face. I had very little body hair to begin with and I had always used clippers to keep my body shorn for the swim

meets. My skin felt tight and a little raw but I had managed to accomplish this task without any cuts.

I dressed and drove to work. I walked through the side door at 7:45 and went to the loading area to punch in. Madge walked in.

"I'm glad you're early. Punch in and come with me."

I punched in and followed her to the beauty shop. She handed me a paper bag.

"Put your clothes and shoes in here. Put on the stuff on the chair, and hurry up."

She stepped outside the shop.

I disrobed and placed my clothes and shoes in the bag. I picked up the garment on the chair and found it to be a woman's foundation garment. It was a strapless spandex body brief. I stepped into it and pulled it up. It seemed to be too small.

"Madge, it fits real tight. I think it's the wrong size."

Madge walked in and looked at me.

"No it's fine. It's supposed to fit like that." She opened a drawer and removed two breast forms and filled the cups.

"Look's good. I guessed right this time. Your legs look great, you won't need the wax. Put this on."

She handed me a pair of pantyhose.

I rolled up the right stocking and slipped it over my foot and brought it about halfway up and then did the left. Next, I pulled it up the rest of the way and smoothed the garment up to my waist.

"You got great legs, kiddo, too bad you're a boy! Now sit over here."

I took the seat she pointed at. She plucked a few stray hairs around my eyebrows and then applied eye shadow, eyeliner and mascara. Next she brushed my cheeks with rouge. After outlining my lips with a pencil, she filled them in with a thick coating of bright red lipstick.

After clipping a pair of four-inch dangling earrings to my ears and a single strand pearl necklace and bracelet in place, she stepped back to admire her handiwork as the three other girls walked in.

"Be with you in a minute, girls. I'm almost done here."

Madge directed them to the other chairs, then she opened a package of press-on nails. After picking the correct size, she put them over my short fingernails. The nylon wig cap was placed over my head and a black wig was fitted into place. A red satin bow was pinned just above where the bangs fell down over my forehead.

"Okay. Stand up."

She walked over to the door and removed a red satin sheath dress from its hanger. She unzipped the back and held it out to me. I stepped inside and put my arms through it as she zipped it up the back.

"Wow!" exclaimed one of the girls, "you look fabulous!"

“Yes he does,” said Madge.

“Now get into your pumps.”

She placed the shoes in front of me and I put them on.

“Sit down until I finish with the other girls, and don’t forget to smooth your dress with your hand before you sit down.”

The girls giggled as I did so. The girls were already dressed and in about twenty minutes, Madge had finished their makeup.

“Okay girls. It’s almost nine. Showtime! Jackie, you will lead, Shirley, you will be next. The two of you will sit to the right as you enter the window display. Danny, you will be third and Betty you will be fourth. You two will sit to the left when you go in. At ten and eleven, you will all come back here and change to another style. From twelve to one, you will have lunch. After lunch, you will change and again at two, three, and four. At five, you will be through for the day and you can go home. Are there any questions?”

There were none.

“Good! Go to it! “Oops! Wait a minute, Danny!”

I turned and Madge handed me a matching red satin clutch purse. I felt very flustered as the girls burst out laughing.

“That’s okay Danny,” laughed Betty. “More than one girl has forgotten her purse!”

I let the comment slide. I wasn’t a girl and I resented the crack but for the money, I could put up with this sort of thing for two days.

We walked out onto the floor and headed towards the front door. It was just after nine and the doors had been opened to let in some early shoppers. We received some admiring glances from two young men as they entered the store with their girlfriends.

“Careful, Danny, I think they have their eyes on you!” Jackie said as we walked along.

The girls couldn’t hold back their giggles. We walked through the corridor entrance to the stairs leading to the window. Shirley turned back to me.

“Don’t forget to pick up your skirt when you step up the stairs, we don’t want you to trip!”

With my free hand, I pulled my skirt up and ascended the steps, turned left and took my seat. I even remembered to smooth my skirt as Madge had instructed.

There were white signs in front of us with the name of the brand of dresses we were wearing as well as the sale prices. There were a few people walking the streets but it was early and more would be coming soon. I kept silent while the girls discussed fashion, make-up and of course their boyfriends.

Promptly at ten, Jean opened the door.

“Let’s go, girls! Madge has a changing area set up in the back room.”

We all got up and filed out. As we walked back to the loading area, there were many admiring glances, particularly from the older women and the two men who had seen us

when they walked in at the opening. Once in the back room, Madge directed the girls to one side and me to the other.

“Turn around,” she said.

When I did so, she unzipped my dress and I stepped out of it. After putting it on a hanger, she replaced it on the rack, picked out another style and removed it from the hanger and unzipped it.

“Face me.”

I turned around again and held out my arms. I pulled the dress over me. This dress was bright red satin from the waist up and light red chiffon from the waist to my knees. She zipped me up and gave me my purse.

“Okay, back to the window.”

Jean had just finished zipping the last of the other three girls up. I took my place in line and we began our walk back to the front window. As we neared the front of the building, I saw Ms. LaRue standing at her office window overlooking the store’s main floor. I hoped she was happy with the job I was doing.

I took my place in the window again and waited out the second hour. More people stopped by and looked at us as it got closer to the lunch hour. We changed again at eleven. My third outfit was another red satin sheath, this time a strapless one. I was afraid I wouldn’t be able to keep it up but the breast forms held everything in place nicely.

Finally, it was noon and we could break for lunch. Once in the back room, I took off the dress and Madge handed me a pink chiffon robe and a pair of pink scuffs.

“Put these on and join us at the lunch table.”

The lunch table had six places. Madge, Jean and I sat on one side and the three girls sat across from us. At each place was a small salad, a diet soft drink and a plastic fork. I was hungrier than I thought and could probably have eaten two of those salads but I said nothing. While the women chatted about designs, hairstyle and makeup, I kept quiet. I was daydreaming of 5 PM Sunday when this would all be over. Madge interrupted my thoughts.

“It’s time to get back to work, girls!”

I followed her back to where I would change and removed my pink chiffon robe and scuffs.

My first style of the afternoon was a black, floor-length, sleeveless chiffon dress with matching over-the-elbow gloves, handbag and black leather pumps. After zipping me up and checking the hem length, Madge re-applied some blusher and freshened up my lipstick.

“Okay. You’re all set.”

I took my place in line and we walked to the front of the store again.

The afternoon brought more people to the window and in the store. Most of the women had their daughters with them, anticipating they would be asked to the prom in May.

The 2 PM change had me in a black satin knee-length dress. The 3 PM change, a black, floor-length, satin sheath and the final change at 4 PM into a flirty black chiffon mini-dress all went without a hitch.

Finally, 5 PM came and we walked back to the rear of the store. Madge motioned me into the beauty shop while the other three girls headed for the back room.

"Sit down."

I did so and she quickly removed all the make-up, my bracelet, necklace and the press-on nails. Next came the bow, wig and nylon wig cap.

"Stand up and slip off those pumps."

After I did that, she quickly unzipped the dress and I pulled it over my head. She put the dress on a hanger and picked up the shoes.

"Take off your lingerie and get dressed."

I slid the pantyhose off and struggled out of the spandex briefer. I put my own clothes and shoes back on, then placed the feminine garments in the paper bag. Madge returned from the back room.

"You're done for the day. Be back tomorrow at eight-thirty sharp and we'll do this again. By the way, as you probably know Ms. LaRue was watching from the office window and she said to tell you she is quite pleased with the job you did today. We really do appreciate your willingness to help us out. Have a good night!"

I walked out of the store and drove home. It was difficult to describe how I felt. I had just spent an entire day enveloped in femininity. I had to admit that I enjoyed the way the sheer pantyhose felt on the smooth shaven skin of my legs. There was something to be said for the feel of satin and chiffon on my body as well.

I ate a light supper and watched some TV. I was quite surprised to see a short segment about the store and its prom preview with Ms. LaRue describing the dresses on display. Sure enough, there was a short clip of the four of us walking the length of the store. I didn't recall seeing any cameras but I must say I certainly looked good. There was no way you could tell I was not one of the girls!

Sunday morning, I was up at seven and took another long hot soaking bath. Just to be on the safe side, I shaved my legs and face again. I dressed and ate a light breakfast. After reading the Sunday paper, I drove to work.

I punched in at 7:45 and Madge beckoned me to the beauty salon.

"It's the same as yesterday. Put your clothes in the bottom drawer and put on the items in the bag. I'll be back shortly."

I undressed and, after putting my clothes in the drawer, opened the bag. I struggled again with the spandex briefer; after adjusting the plastic breast forms, I put on the pantyhose. With both hands, I smoothed the hose up one leg and then the other making sure there were no wrinkles. I sat down and was thumbing through a magazine when Madge returned.

She looked closely at my face and then my legs.