



Reluctant Press presents:

Asian Beauty

Briana Vermont



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID McKINLEY

A 'HER TV' E-BOOK

Copyright © 2007, Reluctant Press - All Rights Reserved

Reluctant Press TG Publishers

This story is a work of fiction. Any similarity to persons living or dead is entirely coincidental. All situations and events herein presented are fictional, and intended only for the enjoyment of the reader. Neither the author nor the publisher advocate engaging in or attempting to imitate any of the activities or behaviors portrayed.

Persons seeking gender reassignment surgery, hormone therapy or any other medical and/or body-altering process should seek the counsel of a qualified therapist who follows the Benjamin Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorder.

Protect Professional Fiction on the Internet!

We need *your* help! We want to keep providing our readers with low cost, professional quality fiction on the Internet. We spend thousands of dollars to edit, illustrate and typeset *each story*. It is important, therefore, that everyone works to help keep professional fiction alive on the Net.

This story is protected by US and International copyright law, and is owned exclusively by Reluctant Press, which retains exclusive rights to publish these materials. The civil penalties for copyright infringement can be severe, including substantial monetary damages, injunctive relief, and liability for attorneys' fees incurred in prosecuting a case. If a court determines that the infringement was committed willfully, statutory damages of up to \$100,000 for each copyright infringed can be awarded. Even if not found to be acting willfully, a defendant can still be held liable for statutory damages of \$500 to \$20,000 for each copyright infringed. **These penalties apply even if money was not charged.** In addition, criminal penalties may be imposed if someone willfully infringes a copyrighted work for commercial advantage or private financial gain. This crime is punishable by up to five years imprisonment, up to \$250,000 in fines, or both. State civil damages and criminal penalties vary from state to state and country to country, but are always severe.

The best way to keep professional illustrated fiction available on the Internet is to do **YOUR** part to protect the author's and publisher's copyright. *You can be part of the solution.* Encourage others to purchase our stories. Never share the access rights you've purchased. *You* make the continued availability of TG fiction on the Internet possible. Thank you for your cooperation!

Asian Beauty

By Briana Vermont

Chapter 1

Danny Porter strolled through the hallways of the airport, following the signs that would lead him to International Arrivals. He had already been to Receiving, where he had signed for his employer's crates of equipment, and supervised the airport staff as they loaded it all in the truck. Now he had to meet his boss, who was dealing with a group of new arrivals from overseas.

He smiled as he walked. He just couldn't believe his luck! He'd been looking for a job, and this had just fallen into his lap. It wasn't perfect; for one thing, he'd had to go through a security check, with fingerprinting at the police station and everything, and that had been a hassle. For another, the job was very short term; it would only last another couple of weeks. But none of that really mattered to Danny, as the fringe benefits were more than worth it. You'll know what I mean when I tell you, Danny was working for a beauty pageant. He'd already seen a couple of the girls by the pool, and the rest of the day's work hadn't seemed like work at all.

Danny was also being practical, though. After all, he had nothing on his resume at this point. With this job, he could start to expand the Work Experience section. With a good reference letter, he could find a good job. He was making great contacts as well. You never know, this position might just lead to something permanent!

The Arrivals gate came into view as he turned the corner. It only took a few moments to find his boss, sitting alone on a plastic bench. Danny hurried over to her.

"Miss D'Algado! Everything arrived; I've checked it all off the list. All the equipment is on the truck, on its way to the hotel."

Miss D'Algado barely moved. She just sat there, slumped forward in her seat, with a look of total defeat on her face. Danny sat down beside her.

"Miss D'Algado? I said, the equipment arrived. It's going to the hotel."

"Great," she replied, but she didn't sound like she meant it. "We should go. Maybe we can catch them before they unload it. They can send it all back."

Danny looked around. "Where are the contestants?" he asked.

Miss D'Algado ignored the question. "This was my last chance," she said with a heavy sigh. "I used to run major pageants, nationally televised pageants. I was a contestant for Miss America at one time, did you know that? Ten years later, I was organizing it. Then somehow, things just slipped away from me. This was my last chance, this crappy contest for a corporate sponsor. At least it was a step up from the 'Little Miss Scranton' pageant I ran in the spring. But now even this has fallen apart. I'll probably never work again."

"Miss D'Algado," Danny began, "What's happened? Where are the contestants?"

For the first time, Miss D'Algado seemed to recognize Danny's presence. She looked him in the eyes and said, "Do you mean the group from this plane, or all the others? Let's see, there were the two who got married and never showed up. One of them married the guy she sat next to on the plane. Then there were the five girls from South America. They had a stopover in LA, where they met a planeload of guys going to a body builder competition. Nobody's seen any of them since. Or how about the one who actually made it all the way to the hotel, then broke her nose in the revolving door? Another showed up, eight and a half months pregnant. I was ready to use her, too, except she went into labour this morning. Most of the others had better offers, better things to do."

Danny listened patiently. Finally he had to ask, "So what about this group? There were supposed to be five contestants on the flight from Hong Kong."

Miss D'Algado laughed, as if to avoid crying. "The entire flight has been quarantined, for the bird flu. Can you believe my luck? Somebody coughed on the sixteen-hour flight, so they quarantined the entire plane."

"You still have all the contestants at the hotel," Danny suggested.

"There are only four contestants!" she shouted back at him. "Don't you get it? One Swede, one South African, and two Canadians! You can't have a competition with only four contestants, and you sure can't have an international competition with all white contestants. Face it, it's over. All that's left for me to do is face the sponsors, and tell them their money is gone. Then they can get on with the task of suing me into bankruptcy."

Danny thought it over as they sat quietly on the bench. "Look," he finally said. "You have four contestants, right? Why don't you just go ahead with the pageant, but tell everyone these are the finalists? That the preliminary competition was held somewhere international, like, I don't know, Milan, and the finals are to be held here?"

Miss D'Algado thought about this. "The sponsors will know it's a lie," she said.

"Yes, but they'll also know you're saving their necks. They won't say a word."

Miss D'Algado started to perk up a bit, but she still saw too many flaws. "I like this idea, but still, four contestants just isn't enough. Even after the second round of competition, you always have five competitors."

"So that's not so bad. All we need to do is find one more girl. How hard can that be?"

"We only have one hour to find her," she replied, but her earlier despondency had passed. Miss D'Algado was thinking through the possibilities. "We're supposed to have our first photo shoot in the hotel at 2:00. If we only had more time."

"We don't really need a beauty contestant, do we? If we could just get someone to stand in for the photo, that would give you a couple more days to find a contestant. With some dark glasses and makeup, almost anyone would do. We should be able to find a girl somewhere that you could use."

Miss D'Algado thought hard. "We can hardly just go grabbing some girl off the street though, can we? We need someone who'll work with us, someone that we can trust. And I don't know anyone in town."

The two sat on the bench and thought. They were close to a solution, but they were running out of time. For the first time, Miss D'Algado noticed the suitcases and garment bags Danny had brought with him from Receiving.

"What are all these?" she asked.

"Oh," replied Danny. "They were with the equipment in the Receiving area. Everything else was in crates, and these certainly weren't on the list, but the airport staff insisted they were ours. I brought them out here to see what you thought."

Miss D'Algado picked up a case and opened it. Danny did the same.

"This one's got some girl's clothes in it," said Danny as he closed the case.

"This one has wigs, shoes, purses..." said Miss D'Algado. She closed hers as well. "I was told one of the girls lost her luggage. These must belong to her."

"I'll arrange to have it sent to her in quarantine," said Danny. "I'll be back in a few minutes, and we can decide what to do about another contestant."

Miss D'Algado took a good look at Danny as he stood to pick up the bags. "Wait, don't do that just yet," she said before she even realized it. "Here, let me have two of those, you get the others. Follow me," she commanded.

Miss D'Algado was back in charge. She had a plan, that much was obvious to Danny. Whatever she had in mind, he knew it would save the pageant. Danny followed where he was led.

Eventually she stopped outside a door. Miss D'Algado poked her head into the room beyond, then beckoned to Danny. "Okay, bring the cases in here."

"Um," Danny hesitated. "Miss D'Algado, I can't go in there. That's the women's wash-room."

"No, it's the women's shower. This airport has a lot of people on short stopovers, not long enough to go to a hotel, but long enough to get cleaned up between long flights. I've

checked, there's no one in here. Come on." She disappeared beyond the door. Danny took a quick peek, then followed.

Miss D'Algado had one of the suitcases open on the counter, and was looking through it. She seemed to find what she was looking for, because she closed the lid and turned to Danny. "Come on," she said, leading him into one of the shower stalls.

"Miss D'Algado, please, what are we doing here?"

"Danny, you're a nice looking boy. Small, not very muscular, but with cute, delicate features. You could almost be described as pretty."

"Thank you, I guess," he answered. "Look, Miss D'Algado, we should be looking for another contestant."

Miss D'Algado held up her hands, displaying the black bra and panties she found in the suitcase. "These are for you. Take off your clothes and put on the panties, then I'll help you with the bra." She handed him the panties, then left him to change in the shower stall.

Danny looked at the panties in shock. "There's no way this will work," he called to her through the shower stall door. "I can't be in a beauty pageant! Anyone with half a brain will figure it out."

"You don't have to be in the pageant. We just need someone to stand in for today, like you said. That gives me a couple of days to find a girl for the pageant."

Danny still couldn't do it. "You need someone more international. I'll just be another white contestant," he tried.

"No you won't. All these wigs are long, black hair," she replied as she looked through another case. "You're going to be an Asian beauty. Now hurry up and get undressed, we don't have much time."

Danny was out of objections, and realized time was short. He took off his clothes and put on the panties. They were cut all wrong for him, of course, and felt horribly confining compared to his usual boxers. He opened the door and called to Miss D'Algado. "You see, this is not going to work."

Miss D'Algado grabbed his clothes from him before he could object. She tossed his clothes in a heap under the counter, then helped him into the black bra.

"Next, you're going to have to shave your legs," she told him.

"No!" he replied forcefully. "No, no, uh-uh, no way. That is not going to happen."

"Be reasonable," she said. "Your legs are hairy, people will certainly notice."

Danny thought. "What if I wear pantyhose? That should cover it, right?"

Miss D'Algado thought it over. "Okay, give it a try."

Danny put on the pantyhose she handed him. The hair on his legs was clearly visible through the nylon. "I'm sorry Danny, but you just have to shave."

Danny thought furiously. There must be some way out. "Fishnet!" he yelled at her. "Fishnet stockings, over the pantyhose, that should hide it, right?"

Miss D'Algado laughed. "Danny, you really do come through in a crisis. You are the best assistant I've ever had. If we get through this, there is going to be a nice bonus in your final pay." She looked through another case, and found there was indeed a new pair of fishnet stockings. Danny looked pleased at her recognition of his contribution. That is, until she handed him the stockings. "Now put these on."

With the fishnet over the regular pantyhose, the hair on Danny's legs was masked completely. By the time he had the stockings on, Miss D'Algado had found a dress for him to wear.

"Not shaving your legs has saved us some time, and believe me, we need it," she told him. She held out the dress and said, "Now just step into this."

Danny looked at the dress. It was white with black polka dots, strapless with a lacy crinoline to hold out the skirt, and a big, black bow on the back.

"You can't be serious?" he said. "Doesn't she have a pair of pants? And once I have a sleeveless dress on, you're going to ask me to shave my armpits!"

"You're supposed to be a beauty pageant contestant. This dress would look beautiful standing in the corner by itself. Believe me, this is the dress you want to wear. And if you're so worried about your precious body hair, there's a pretty summer jacket you can wear over top – you won't have to shave anything."

Danny stepped into the dress, and Miss D'Algado zipped it up the back, hooking the eyelet at the top. It was a perfect fit. She took a couple of pairs of pantyhose, balled them up, and stuffed them into his bra.



“Come over to the mirror,” she commanded. Danny followed obediently, and sat down in one of the swiveling chairs. Miss D’Algado sat in another, and picked up one of the bottles she had arranged on the counter. She shook a little of the contents onto her fingers, then began dabbing it on Danny’s face.

“This is foundation,” she explained. It’s going to darken your complexion, so you’ll look more Asian. It’ll also smooth out your skin tone, make you look more like a beauty contestant.”

Miss D’Algado worked quickly with the various bottles and tubes. Within a few minutes she had finished his eyes with eyeliner, mascara, and eye shadow. “You have beautiful green eyes. Very unusual for an Asian girl. An Asian girl with jade eyes is considered very lucky.”

She added some rouge to his cheeks, and coloured his lips with a bright, red lipstick. Then she powdered his face with a large, puffy brush to set his makeup.

“Perfect,” she said. “I’m really starting to believe we can pull this off. Just a couple more things...” With that, she took the razor that was hidden in her hand, and used it to take all the hair showing from Danny’s cleavage.

“Hey!” he yelled at her. However, he sat still while she worked, knowing better than to move quickly while someone had a razor pointed at his chest. When she was done, she quickly shaped his eyebrows.

“Don’t worry about this,” she said, seeing his look of dismay. “Most men need to have their eyebrows shaped a little. Believe me, you’ll like what I’ve done when you see it.”

Danny was almost finished. He turned to face himself in the mirror as Miss D’Algado stood and found one of the long, black wigs in the suitcase.

Danny really did look pretty, even without the wig. “I don’t look particularly Asian, though,” he said.

“How about now?” she asked as she arranged the wig.

Danny couldn’t believe what he saw in the mirror. He would never have guessed that the girl he saw was really a boy, him! “But still, I don’t have an Asian face,” he said.

“Okay, try these,” said Miss D’Algado as she handed him a large pair of sunglasses. “And finally, we have this wide-brimmed sun hat,” she said as she added the hat to his ensemble.

Miss D’Algado turned him from the mirror (with some difficulty, as he didn’t want to stop looking at himself). She helped him into a pair of strap-on heels, then helped him to stand. With some difficulty, he took his first steps.

“It’s really not that difficult,” she told him. Just find your balance, remember to stand straight, and glide, one foot in front of the other. Heel, toe, heel, toe. Keep your arms and hands loose. Now here’s a purse, with everything you need. Pick up those bags, and follow me.”

Danny picked up two of the suitcases, and followed Miss D’Algado out the door and into the hallway. He didn’t have time to think about what he was doing. He also didn’t have time to notice his clothes still balled up underneath the counter.

Danny struggled in the heels, with the heavy bags as he tried to keep up with Miss D'Algado. "So what are we going to do when people hear me speak?" he asked. "You can't disguise my voice, and it's not at all feminine."

"Just don't speak," she advised as they continued quickly down the hall. "You're shy, and from China, and don't speak much English. Just smile, and nod a lot." She looked at him and added, "Start smiling. Now."

Danny smiled, and nodded. "What if they speak to me in Chinese?"

"Then, I, I'm not sure."

The two women arrived at their destination, the limousine stand. They stood silently in line for a few moments. "Not China," said Danny.

"Hmm?" questioned Miss D'Algado.

"I'm not from China. It has to be somewhere smaller. Too many people speak Chinese."

"So then, what do you suggest?"

"Ngong Lai," answered Danny. "It's a small island nation in the South China Sea, south-east of Hong Kong. Population seven million, with its own language, historically cut off from the mainland but recently industrialized."

"Wow," said Miss D'Algado. "We also need to have a name for you."

"Tse," said Danny. "Kimmy Tse," he added.

They moved forward slowly, as limousines arrived to take the people in line away to their destinations. "Alright, Kimmy Tse. Any particular reason for that name?"

"Tse is like Smith in Ngong Lai. Fourteen percent of the population is named Tse, almost a million people."

"Really?" said Miss D'Algado. "I didn't know that. And you know all this because..."

Danny blushed. "I did a project on Ngong Lai once. Grade seven, Social Studies." Then he added, "The primary occupations are farming and fishing. They've had a small manufacturing sector since the 1980s."

"Oh." The line moved forward, and the ladies reached the front. "And why Kimmy?" she had to ask.

Danny blushed even harder. "Kimmy was a girl I knew in grade three. I kind of had a crush on her."

Miss D'Algado smiled. "Oh, Kimmy. You are so cute. I have a feeling we're going to learn a lot about you this week."

The limousine had arrived, and the driver was standing nearby, so Danny simply smiled and nodded. The driver picked up the bags effortlessly, and lifted them into the trunk. Then he held Danny's hand and helped him into the rear seat, making sure his billowing skirts weren't caught as he closed the door. Miss D'Algado got into the seat next to him.

“Kimmy,” said Miss D’Algado as they pulled away from the curb. “There’s a red bottle in your purse, do you think you could get it for me?”

Danny searched his purse, and found the bottle. “Thank you, dear. Now, give me your hand.” Miss D’Algado took the top off the bottle, then held Danny’s hand in hers. “We have half an hour till we reach the hotel. Just enough time to paint your nails.”

Chapter 2

The limousine pulled up to the hotel. A doorman opened the limo door for Danny, and held his hand as he stepped out. Danny was careful to keep his knees together and not let the crinoline flip up his skirt, as Miss D’Algado had instructed him. A flash immediately went off in his face causing Danny to fall back, landing on the seat of the limo, his crinoline flipping up his skirt. By this time Miss D’Algado had arrived from the other side. “Kimmy, I warned you there would be a photographer, didn’t I?”

The doorman assisted Danny one more time, and once again a flash went off, but this time he was prepared and simply smiled. The driver brought his cases and garment bags to the curb, where a porter took them. Danny smoothed his dress as he stood by the curb, and adjusted his sun hat.

“Hi, I’m Matthew Whitman,” said a well-dressed man as he approached Danny.

“Mr. Whitman,” said Miss D’Algado. “This is Kimmy Tse, the competitor from Ngong Lai. I expect you’ve already read her dossier and viewed her portfolio,” she lied.

“Yes, of course,” he replied. “Very impressive, but your photos are not nearly as lovely as you are in person. Did you have a good flight, Miss Tse?”

Danny simply smiled nervously and nodded. His attempts to look down and away made him appear shy, and totally adorable.

“Kimmy and I have been having a lovely conversation in the limousine, isn’t that right, dear?” said Miss D’Algado. “Poor dear doesn’t speak much English,” she said as an aside to Mr. Whitman. “I think she understands a bit, though.” Then she turned to Danny. “Kimmy, this is Mr. Whitman, he represents the pageant’s corporate sponsor.”

Danny held out his hand to Mr. Whitman, who took it firmly in his own before turning it over and kissing it. Danny could have died, he was so embarrassed. He turned a bright red as he looked away shyly.

“Miss D’Algado,” said Mr. Whitman. “Why don’t you take care of Kimmy’s bags, and get her registered in the hotel. The other contestants are ready for the photo shoot. I’ll take care of Miss Tse.”

Mr. Whitman placed his arm firmly around Danny’s shoulders, then steered him into the hotel and through the lobby. Danny looked back over his shoulder, hoping for help from Miss D’Algado, but there would be none. Miss D’Algado simply shrugged her shoulders helplessly, and walked away to the check-in counter.

“Kimmy, can I call you Kimmy?” asked Mr. Whitman. Danny smiled and nodded. “Thank you, and you can call me Matthew.”

When Danny still said nothing, Mr. Whitman asked, “Do you speak any English at all, Kimmy?”

Danny hesitated, not sure just what to do, then smiled, and nodded. “I see. And if I said that tonight you and I will be naked between the sheets in my room, you’d be very happy about that, wouldn’t you?”

Danny stopped, really unsure. Mr. Whitman looked at him, waiting for a reply. Danny smiled as best he could, and nodded.

“That’s my girl. You know, I think I just remembered a phrase from the international language. It’s called a kiss...”

Mr. Whitman placed one arm around Danny’s back, and another around the back of his neck, then leaned in toward his lips.

“Mr. Whitman, is this one of the contestants?” said a man who appeared around the corner, breaking the moment none too soon from Danny’s point of view. “About time, too. The other girls have been waiting at the pool for an hour. Other guests are anxious to use the pool, and it’s starting to get ugly out there. Come on, the pool’s this way.”

The man led them toward the back of the hotel. Mr. Whitman held Danny back for just a moment, long enough to touch a finger to Danny’s lips and say, “Later.” Danny couldn’t work up a smile this time, but he nodded.

The scene at the pool was chaotic. Danny was led past a group of guests, mostly parents and children, waiting to use the pool. The hotel staff was trying to explain that the pool had been reserved for this photo shoot. However, there isn’t much you can say to an angry parent with upset children who simply want to get into the pool. Danny felt sorry for everyone involved.

Danny was led over to stand with the other four contestants. They were no happier than anyone else, having spent an hour in the hot sun, wearing dresses, heels, and pantyhose. “Everyone, this is Kimmy. Kimmy, this is everyone. We’ll be right with you.”

Danny was left alone with the other girls. Only one even bothered to welcome him. Danny smiled and nodded.

“Why are we wearing dresses in the pool shot, that’s what I want to know. Where are we going to take the swimwear shots, the dining room?” said one. “Hey you,” she shouted at the photographer. “We’re going to put on bikinis, it’s too hot out here for this.” Danny’s stomach started to hurt.

“Please,” said the harried photographer. “We’re just about ready, and there’s no time for a costume change. Please just wait here, one more minute.” A documentary photographer captured everything on film.

“I just need to take a couple of photos, then I can change back to my own clothes,” Danny thought to himself. “Miss D’Algado will have bought her couple of days, and I can help her to find a real contestant.” Danny was having trouble breathing.

As he waited for the photographer to finish setting up, Danny looked around at the other competitors. The tall, blonde Swedish girl in particular caught his attention. The way she filled out her dress, she was the odds-on favourite to win, he thought to himself. Danny looked down at his own cleavage. Yep, no contest.

"Okay," said the photographer. "I'm told this is everyone, so let's get started. Ladies, could you please line up beside the pool. You, sweetheart, you're in the middle, you on the end. And all smiling, face this way..."

If Danny thought it would be over with just a couple of pictures, he was very wrong. They took dozens of shots, and every shot was carefully composed. "Kneel down, fingers in the water, look up, pout now, you're blowing kisses, show me a sexy look, that's the one..."

Everything took much longer than anyone had anticipated, and it was more than an hour before they were finished. Danny was dripping with sweat, wearing his jacket, dress, panty hose and fishnet stockings, high heels, a long, black wig, and hat on top of it all. The other girls were not much better off. When they were finally released, the other girls disappeared into the hotel in a second.

No one was quite so relieved, though, as the other hotel guests. They had been waiting outside the pool gates for nearly two hours. Even though most of the fathers were okay with this (they were more than happy to watch the photo shoot), the mothers were frazzled. The kids forgot all about the wait, though, as they were finally allowed to run and jump into the water. The video photographer stayed a while longer to get some shots of the playful chaos.

"But Mom, they said we could go in now. Everyone else is in the pool, Mom!"

"I have to go back to the room for just one minute. Don't you dare go in that pool until I get back! You hear me, Jimmy, don't you dare!" The boy crossed his arms and stared angrily at his mother's retreating back.

"Poor kid," thought Danny as he walked past the scene. He forgot all about it though, as he spotted Miss D'Algado.

"Miss D'Algado," he whispered as he ran up to her. "Everything went perfectly. But I really need to change into my own clothes now. Is there somewhere I can go?" And quickly, he thought to himself, before Mr. Whitman has a chance to make another pass at me.

"Yes, I was watching. Thank you Danny, you did wonderfully. I've rented a room for Kimmy Tse where you can go and rest for a while. I'll have to see what I can do about clothes for you, though. I think we forgot your clothes at the airport."

Danny was only half-listening, though. He was looking back at the pool. The patio was busy with parents, who were inflating pool toys and organizing towels and lounge chairs. The pool was filled with at least a dozen kids, laughing, screaming, and splashing, and one just floating. No one was watching him; his mother had gone back to their room. Danny kicked off his heels, and ran back to the pool.

Danny dove into the crystal clear water, his sun hat flying away, sunglasses lost as he broke the surface and swam. Everyone at the pool stopped to see what this crazy beauty

was up to. They only stopped laughing when they saw her lift the boy, and place him carefully on the side of the pool. Danny remained half in the water, his hair dripping down his face as he tried to revive the child. Fortunately it didn't take long, as a few breaths caused him to choke and recover.

Jimmy's mother arrived just in time to act hysterical, shaking him, yelling, and hugging him. Two fathers reached down to grab Danny by the arms, and lifted the soggy saviour to the side of the pool. Everyone applauded for this beautiful girl, as Miss D'Algado wrapped one of the hotel towels around her shoulders, then escorted her away.

The video photographer looked at his camera. A lead story on the 6:00 news sure wouldn't hurt his career any.

Chapter 3

"Mr. Whitman, I just don't think this is a good idea. It's publicity, yes, but not good publicity. I mean, a child almost drowned." Miss D'Algado tried desperately to talk Mr. Whitman out of his plan.

"I disagree. This is exactly what this pageant needs. This is the first good break we've had, and you know we've had plenty of bad breaks. Do you know, That clip has made it to the networks, and is going to show nationwide tonight? It was beautiful, the way she dove in, picture perfect. That girl is gorgeous, even soaking wet. The press conference is set for 8:00 p.m., and I don't care what she has to say, even if it's nothing at all. You just make sure she's there, looking gorgeous. Understood?"

"Yes, Mr. Whitman." Miss D'Algado looked at the phone; he had already hung up.

Miss D'Algado considered her options. There really weren't any, but it still took a good five minutes to decide. Finally she reached into the desk and pulled out the copy of the local yellow pages supplied by the hotel.

"Let's see," she said to herself as she flipped through the pages. "Trans-lation, trans-missions, trans-portation, where are the v's? Oh here we are..."

Miss D'Algado wrote down the number, then took a couple of deep breaths to calm herself. "Oh, Danny," she said aloud, "I'm so sorry about this." Then she dialed the number.

"Hello, is this 'Wild Boys'? I assume your service is discreet? I have a client in need of your full-body makeover, and it needs to be done quickly. He needs to be ready by 8:00 tonight. Can you come to the Realmente-Povero Hotel, room 762, immediately if possible? Thank you, you're a life saver! Let me tell you what I need..."

Danny towed his hair dry, and wandered out of the bathroom into his hotel suite. It felt so good to be out of those restrictive clothes, with all that makeup washed off his face. Danny swore to himself that as long as he lived, he was never going to wear women's clothing again. He still didn't have any of his own clothes, but the hotel had supplied a plush bathrobe for him to wear. Danny slipped into the robe and sat on the bed to relax for a moment, when the phone rang.

"Hello?" he answered cautiously. He didn't know if the caller expected to find a man or a woman in this room.

"Danny, how are you feeling now? How's the suite?"

"Miss D'Algado!" he replied. "I'm so glad it's you. The room is beautiful. I've just had a shower, and I'm feeling much better. I really need to get my clothes, though. As soon as I have something to wear, I can come straight back to work."

"Danny, I just want you to know, you did a great job today. You really saved me, and I appreciate it so much. I really mean that, Danny."

"Well, Thank you, Miss D'Algado. Speaking of clothes, it looks like someone unpacked all these bags we brought from the airport. The closet is filled with dresses, the dresser is full of women's underwear, and the wigs are all set out on the desk. I'm thinking, the girl who this belongs to should have it back. If you like, I can repack everything, so we can send it to her. You know, so I have something useful to do while I'm trapped in this room. While I still don't have any clothes?"

"Don't worry about that," he was told. "Just leave everything as it is. I'm told that none of the girls in quarantine has been given any of her things. Everything they need is being supplied by the CDC, and right now they're only allowed to wear paper dresses."

"Oh, okay. That's alright then, I guess."

"Listen Danny. As I said, you did a great job. You were perfect, you saved my job, and you saved the pageant. The thing is, the job's not over." Miss D'Algado paused for a moment. She didn't know how to tell him he needed to be a contestant one more time. "I need you to work tonight," she finally said. "I need you to continue with the job you've been doing. There's going to be a press conference tonight, and you have to be there. You understand what I'm saying, don't you?"

Danny didn't understand what she was saying, but he didn't know that. "Yes, of course. I want to get back to work."

"I'm so relieved to hear you say that," Miss D'Algado told him. "I was really worried, after everything you went through today, that you might just refuse and quit. I mean, I know it wasn't easy being a girl..."

"Please don't mention it again," said Danny, really meaning it. He really wanted to forget the whole thing had ever happened. "It was unusual, but the job description was to do whatever you needed. I just want to get back to work, doing exactly that. Now, if you could do something about my clothes..."

"Excellent!" Miss D'Algado exclaimed. "Now we have a few things to take care of. The press conference is at 8:00 tonight, and I'll need you here by 7:00. But first, I've arranged to have someone come to your room. Just do whatever they ask, then come meet me when you're finished."

"Miss D'Algado, I don't have any clothes! I'm wearing a bathrobe; I can't work with anyone this way."

“Believe me, Danny, that’s not a problem. Just let them in, and they’ll tell you what to do. And thank you for being so understanding. There aren’t many men who would be so willing to help, under the circumstances.”

“Sure, no problem,” said Danny, slightly confused.

“Someone will be at your door soon. Goodbye Danny, you really are a very pretty girl.”

Danny stared at the receiver for a moment after Miss D’Algado had hung up. He set it down, and sat back on the bed to wait.

It didn’t take long. It was only about fifteen minutes later when someone rapped loudly on Danny’s door. Danny opened the door to a huge blonde woman, carrying a large case in one hand and an even larger rectangle in the other, he had no idea what it was. Danny just stepped back as she pushed her way past him.

“Oh this is nice,” she said in a voice as large as she was. “I haven’t been in these suites before. Where should I set up? Is this okay here?”

Danny just stared as she opened the rectangle, setting it up as a table in the middle of the room.

“Okay now, Sweetie. Let’s get a look at you. Oh my, you’re perfect. Great build. You should see the gorillas I usually have to work with. All hairy backs, and shoulders, and jaws. But you, you’re just a cute little thing. This is going to be a lot of fun!”

The woman turned to the large case, opened it, and started pulling out items. She stacked a number of things on the desk, then turned back to Danny.

“Okay, let’s get started.” She waited expectantly.

Danny was still in shock from the woman’s entrance, her size, her voice, and the strange things she said. He stood with his mouth open a while longer until he said, “Started with what?”

“Come on, Cutie. Hop up on the table, and lie down.” Danny climbed onto the table. “That’s right, don’t be so nervous, you look like a deer in the headlights! Lie down on your stomach, sweetie.”

The woman arranged Danny on the table, then slipped his robe off his shoulders. Just as he thought he might have to run for his life, she began rubbing his shoulders with her large, strong hands.

“You are so tense! Settle down, most people enjoy this part.”

Danny thought that maybe he was beginning to understand. “Is this, like, a massage?”

“Very good! Yes, it’s very much like a massage. It’s a little something I do that I like to call ... a massage!”

“Oh, I see! You’re a masseuse!”

“Among so many other things,” she told him. “And today, we get to try them all. So what’s your name, kitten?” She pulled his robe right off his back, and tossed it onto the bed.

“Danny,” he told her.

“Hi, Danny. Nice to meet you, I’m Lucy. What I actually meant, though, was what’s your femme name? The name you use when you’re a girl?” She took a bottle of oil, and began spreading it, rubbing it into his back.

Danny blushed. “Oh, Miss D’Algado told you about that, did she? I called myself Kimmy. Kimmy Tse.”

“That’s a pretty name,” she said, spreading the lotion down his legs. “She said you were supposed to be Asian.”

Danny laughed softly as he truly began to relax. “It wasn’t easy, believe me. I had no idea what I was doing half the time. I was so afraid someone would spot me, and then what would I do?”

“Well, no need to worry about that any more. You can relax with me on the case.”

“Hmmm,” said Danny dreamily. “That body oil feels nice.”

“Do you like that?” said Lucy. “It’s got a depilatory in it.”

“Depilatory? What is that?”

“It’s for your body hair,” Lucy explained as she continued to rub in the lotion. “This one is new. Most products can’t tell the difference between hair and skin, so you have to remove it after only a few minutes. This one can’t harm your skin, so you can leave it on and it just keeps working. In fact, they’ve added an estrogen base to the oil that’s actually great for your skin. It soaks in, making it softer and smoother. Accentuates your fatty tissues, giving you a great physique. And at the same time, it’s getting right down to the roots of your hair. Okay, time for you to roll over.”

“Um...” Danny was hesitant.

“Oh, don’t be shy. I’ve seen one before, you know!”

“It’s not just that,” said Danny. He rolled over, keeping his hands over his chest. “You see, I had to shave the top half of my chest earlier. It looks, silly. It looks like I’m wearing a fur bikini top.”

“Really? Let’s see,” Lucy said as she pulled his hands away. “Oh, you silly baby. Don’t worry, I can fix that for you. We’ll even it out for you and you’ll look great.”

“You can do that, really?”

“Oh sure, easy. You just relax, and leave the driving to me.” Lucy rubbed the oil over his chest, removing the rest of the hair.

Danny just lay back with his eyes closed, relaxing completely. Lucy continued to work on his arms and legs, until he didn’t have a single hair left on his body.

“Okay, Cutie. I just need to ask, is it okay if I massage your face and neck with the oil?”

“Oh, yes please,” said Danny from his relaxed stupor.

Lucy rubbed the oil into his beard, removing it. “And your eyebrows. It looks like someone’s been shaping them a bit. I can use the oil on them as well, or would you rather I finished shaping them with tweezers?”

“No, no tweezers. My eyebrows are fine.”

"Yes, they are fine, the oil will do a good job on them. And after the oil we'll be able to do so much more with them." Lucy massaged his eyebrows, removing them completely as Danny nearly fell asleep.

Lucy continued to work, sponging away the matted hair from all over Danny's body with a damp cloth. "Okay now, ready to try something new?" she asked as she took what looked like a spray can from the items on the desk.

"Why, what have you got in mind?" Danny asked.

"You are far too white; I'm going to give you an all-over tan. This will give your skin a light, bronzy colour. The perfect colouring for an Asian goddess. Now keep your eyes closed, and stay still."

Danny fell asleep as Lucy continued to apply the skin colour.

"Princess? Sleeping Beauty, it's time to wake up. I know you're tired, but it's time to go to work." Danny opened his eyes, and saw Lucy smiling down at him.

"Sweetie, Miss D'Algado told me you had to be downstairs by 7:00. It's already after seven. You were so pretty, sound asleep there, I didn't want to wake you. But now you'd better get ready to go."

Danny sat up straight and swung his legs over the table. "How did it get so late? Where are my clothes?"

"I chose an outfit for you from the closet, I hope you don't mind. It's on the bed," Lucy told him.

Danny jumped off the table and crossed over to the bed. He stared for a moment, horrified at what he saw.

"This is another dress. Didn't Miss D'Algado send up my clothes?"

"No," answered Lucy. "I'm sorry, I didn't know there was a special outfit. I can find another dress for you from the closet, but you have to get ready now. She needs you right away."

"She needs me to help her get ready for the press conference," said Danny.

"There's no time to find her and get something else. Do you want this dress, or should I choose another one from the closet?"

Danny struggled for a moment, but finally said, "Okay, I guess I have to wear the dress." He picked up the pair of black panties laid out on the bed and began to step into them.

"Wait!" said Lucy. She picked up something off the bed that Danny didn't recognize. It seemed to be made of a black, silky cloth, with a black belt and laces. "This is a very tight dress, and you don't want to show through. I brought this for you."

Before he could say a thing, Lucy slipped a tube of black silk over Danny's ... male part. She pulled a couple of ribbons to tighten it, then passed it back between his legs and pulled. She then fastened it to the belt around the back.

Danny was so shocked, he could hardly move. Lucy had to finish dressing him almost single-handed. She helped him into his panties, then sheer panty hose. She lifted his arms

to help him into his strapless bra. The dress was a medium blue, stretchy velour tube dress, which Lucy pulled him into and straightened. Finally she arranged his long, black wig, and fitted him into a pair of 3-inch heels.

“Okay, Kitten, here’s your purse. It’s show time!”

“I can’t do this again!” Danny finally managed to say. “I can’t even speak when I’m outside like this. I just have to smile, and nod, and agree to any ridiculous thing anyone says to me.”

“Oh! I forgot. I can fix that,” said Lucy, looking in her magic case once more. “Here, try this. Have you ever used an inhaler? Just put the tube in your mouth, then breathe deeply as you push here. Try it.”

Danny did as he was told. “Now what?” he asked.

“It takes a few seconds. Have you ever breathed helium, to give yourself a high, squeaky voice? This is like that, but not so squeaky, and it lasts for a few hours. You should be good for the rest of the evening, as long as you’re home by midnight, Pumpkin. It coats your vocal chords, soaking into them and tightening them slightly. It has an estrogen base, so the more you use it, the longer it will last. By the end of the week you should only need it once a day.”

“Estrogen? Like in the oil?” asked Danny, in a voice as pretty as his face. “Hey, it works!”

“Yes, that reminds me.” Lucy handed him two more containers out of the case. “This is estrogen cream, rub it on your chest every night before bed, and these are estrogen pills. Take two now to give your body a jump start, then one a day with breakfast.”

Danny took a juice from the mini bar, and used it to swallow the pills. Looking at the bottle he asked, “What are they? Like a vitamin?”

“Yes, Kitten, they’re like the best vitamin you could ever give your body. Now pick up your purse and let’s go!”

Miss D’Algado was pacing frantically when Danny finally arrived. “Miss D’Algado, I’m so sorry,” Danny apologized. “I know I’m late, but I fell asleep, and then I couldn’t find anything to wear. I hope this is okay.”

Miss D’Algado was stunned. “Yes, Kimmy. This is perfect. You’re perfect! Even your voice, it’s lovely.” She shook herself slightly, then got back to business. “It’s 7:30 already, and you still need makeup. Come in here.”

Danny was led into a small room, where a middle-aged woman sat at a desk littered with cosmetics. “Kimmy Tse, this is Mrs. Barrow. She is our makeup artist for the pageant. Mrs. Barrow, Kimmy needs an Asian look, and she needs it by 8:00.”

“Sit down, Kimmy,” said Mrs. Barrow, indicating the seat next to her. “This shouldn’t be too difficult, seeing how you are Asian.” Then she looked more closely. “No, you aren’t are you?” She turned to Miss D’Algado. “Don’t worry, she’ll be gorgeous.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Barrow. You’re a lifesaver. And Kimmy, thank you so much for agreeing to this. For what it’s worth, you are a stunningly beautiful girl,” said Miss D’Algado as she left the room.

Mrs. Barrow worked furiously on Danny. Cleanser, foundation, so many powders and brushes and tubes that Danny couldn't keep up. He only remembered one cryptic comment: "I guess we have a clean slate for eyebrows. I'll just draw them in with a provocative arch."

"Could we please hurry? Miss D'Algado needed me to help set up for the conference almost an hour ago."

"Nearly done, and, there! Beautiful."

"Thank you," said Danny, gathering his purse as he stood to leave. "I really need to go help Miss D'Algado now." But just at that moment, Mr. Whitman entered the room.

"Kimmy, there you are. Come with me," he said as he took Danny's hand. He led him down a corridor, stopping at the entrance to a large conference room.

"Don't worry about a thing, Kimmy," he reassured her. "If you get nervous, just remember, you and I have a date tonight in my room," he said with a wink. Danny just smiled grimly, and nodded. Mr. Whitman opened the door, and led him into the press conference.

Danny tried to sit in the first empty seat they passed, but Mr. Whitman held tight to his arm, leading him forward. He tried to sit in several other empty seats as well, but Mr. Whitman guided him all the way to the front, where the two stood side-by-side at the microphone.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the press, I'd like to introduce you to Kimmy Tse. Kimmy is here as a contestant in our beauty pageant, all the way from Nong Lie. Did I pronounce that right, Kimmy?"

Danny was scared out of his wits. He didn't know why he was there. All he could think to say was, "My name is Kimmy Tse. I am from Ngong Lai." Flash bulbs went off in his face repeatedly.

"Kimmy," asked one of the journalists. "Can you tell us what happened today, in your own words?"

Flash bulbs continued to pop, making it hard to think. What exactly was it they wanted to know about today? "I went to the airport..."

Everyone in the room laughed. "I think," said Mr. Whitman, "they don't want you to go back that far. Everyone's more interested in what happened at the pool." When Danny didn't respond, Mr. Whitman continued. "Miss Tse's English may not be up to the task of a press conference. Perhaps I could tell you what happened to the boy..."

"I'm so sorry!" Danny cried out.

"Excuse me," asked the journalist, "but what do you mean? What are you sorry about?"

"That boy, his name is Jimmy, he almost drowned. I'm so sorry it happened. I was so scared when I saw him, I never thought such a thing could happen. It was just that, no one else seemed to notice, and I had to do something. I was never so relieved as the moment he began breathing again. I'm just so, so sorry it happened." Danny was close to tears. Mr.

Whitman just stared at him open-mouthed, wondering where this torrent of English had come from.

"You have nothing to be sorry for," said a female journalist. "You saved his life. Everyone is here because you're a hero." The normally impartial press applauded for the beautiful and courageous woman of the hour.

"Thank you," he said when the crowd allowed him a chance to speak, "but it isn't true. I'm very happy for Jimmy and his family, but please don't tell people that I'm a hero."

After another short round of applause, a reporter stood. "Kimmy, what do you think your chances are in the pageant?"

Danny cringed. "I can't be in the pageant." This caused a commotion throughout the room. "The other contestants are such beautiful girls," Danny tried to explain over the noise. "They all deserve to win so much more than I do."

Mr. Whitman grabbed the microphone back. He calmed down the audience as he said, "I think there may have been some misunderstanding. I assure you, Miss Tse is going to appear in the pageant. She has earned the right to be here. She is a beautiful, talented, and courageous young woman, and I am proud to have her compete in this pageant, this Friday night, Thank you, that is all!"

Mr. Whitman took her by the arm, and escorted her quickly out a back door, to a chorus of "Just one more question..." from the reporters. When they were alone, he turned her to face him.

"You speak English?" he asked.

Kimmy smiled apologetically, and nodded.

"I said, you speak English?" he said more forcefully.

"Yes," answered Kimmy, "I speak English." Then, just to emphasize, she added "Fluently."

"So why haven't you said anything before? What's with all the smiling and nodding?"

"I'm a beauty contestant. Smiling is what we do. And, I guess, sometimes I'm shy."

"So, you understood everything I've said to you?" he asked sheepishly.

Kimmy blushed, a bright shade of red. "I guess that's a yes. Look, Kimmy, I'm very sorry. That's not who I am. I like you, okay? But I don't expect you to go to bed with me tonight. Unless, you want to?"

Kimmy just stared at him. "Okay, that looks like a no. You see, you don't need to speak English."

This made Kimmy smile, and she laughed. "Kimmy, have you had dinner yet?"

She thought about this. Actually, she hadn't had anything to eat all day. "No, but Mr. Whitman..."

"I told, you, call me Matthew. And there is no way to answer 'no' to this question. So I want you to simply smile, and nod, okay? Kimmy, would you like to join me for dinner?"