



Reluctant Press presents:

A Lady For Life

Norman Way



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MISTY MALVEAUX

A 'NEW WOMAN' E-BOOK

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A LADY FOR LIFE

By Norman Way

Foster homes aren't always what they seem. The general public has this notion that once a child is removed from a broken home or when an infant is put up for adoption that they are now in a safe, secure environment and will have a "good" upbringing.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Even with the best of intentions, "the system" doesn't always do right by the child. Overloaded social workers trying to manage their caseloads spend little time going beyond outward appearances when they visit a child in their new surroundings.

I was adopted as a baby and was put in my second foster home when I was a toddler. Parents are fond of telling a grown child when they relate an experience from early childhood that "you were too young to remember that." Unfortunately, very young children have a sense of what is going on around them even though they may not comprehend the significance of it. Even babies in the crib know the sound of anger or hostility compared to the soothing sounds of an attentive parent.

My earliest recollection is of playing on the floor with a toy dump truck. My stepfather was seated in his big chair reading his newspaper and taking occasionally swigs from a brown bottle. I pushed the truck aside and reached for my sisters doll and began straightening its dress.

The next thing I knew the doll was sailing out of my hands across the room and my step father's angry face was next to mine as his huge finger poked me in the chest.

"Boys don't play with dolls, only girls do. Boys play with trucks."

He pushed the truck back into my hands as he sat back down and resumed reading his paper.

I was terrified. I had no idea I had done anything wrong. I still remember the strong medicine-like odor on his breath and the serious look on his face.

For Christmas that year I got a baseball, glove and bat while my sister got a hairbrush set and mirror. We both got clothes. I got a pair of jeans and some shirts while she got a frilly white blouse and some pink ankle socks. I was very envious of her because I just loved that blouse and wanted to wear pink socks like hers too.

My parents were going out for a New Year's Eve party and I remember standing at the bedroom door watching my mother put on her makeup. She was wearing a slip and I remember walking over to her and touching the garment as she applied her lipstick. She pushed my hand away and told me to go back to the living room as the sitter would be here soon.

The slip felt soft and slippery. The smells from the open container of body powder and her perfume bottle excited me. I wondered why boys weren't allowed to have such sweet-smelling things or wear clothes that felt nice and soft as my mother's slip instead of the jeans and t-shirts I had to wear.

I always liked the pretty dresses my sister wore on Sunday to church. I felt uncomfortable in my suit, tie and oxfords. I wanted my own dresses in the worst way. When my sister had her ears pierced at the beauty shop after a perm, I wanted mine done too but I knew better than to ask.

Apparently there were two parts to the world I was growing up in, one for boys and one for girls.

I didn't understand why everything I liked were the things my mother and sister had and everything I disliked were the things my dad and I had. I felt strangely out of place in my "boy world."

I started school and found the same world existed there. Girls acted a certain way and boys did too. They were exact opposites. The worst punishment a boy could endure was to be told to go sit "with the girls."

I liked baseball and was a better than average player. Coaches often criticized a boy for "throwing like a girl" until he had enough practice and learned to throw the "right way."

I was smaller than most of my classmates and I learned right away that if someone pushes you, you push back or you would be a target the rest of your life. After being jostled in the rest room a couple of times by one of the older boys, I sidestepped him the next time, tripped him, grabbed his hair and banged his head against the sink.

Several days later I was sitting in the principal's office with my mother and dad. My dad stuck up for me because I had defended myself. I was not punished either at school or at home for what had happened.

That summer I was awakened one night by a loud bang and then my mother's scream. I found my mom in on the kitchen floor with a knife in her chest and a small revolver close by. My father was lying close to her with a red stain in the middle of his undershirt. A neighbor called the police before I could and soon my sister and I were taken from the house.

Within a week we were separated and placed in different homes. For the rest of that summer, I had occasional nightmares. Numerous sessions with a counselor helped me to get over the events of that night and the nightmares ceased.

My third foster home was far different. My adoptive parents were both teachers and they had one daughter who was two years older than I was.

I was in a different part of the city and when school started, I had to fit in again. My athletic ability helped me get some respect from the older boys. I disliked gym class but once again, being the smallest, I was occasionally a target. This time the wise guy lost a few of his front teeth and I wasn't bothered again.

I still found myself admiring the way girls dressed or fixed their hair. At home, my new parents would go grocery shopping on Friday night; I would sneak in to my mother's room and fondle her lingerie. I would open different bottles of her perfume and smell each one. Once, I held up a lipstick and imagined myself wearing it.

If my stepsister went along with them, I would go into her room. Although she was bigger than I was, I would try on her panties and stockings. I got very excited doing this and soon I was brave enough to try on her blouses, skirts and dresses. I was always careful about putting things back the way I found them.

There was something about the way I felt when I was dressed in her clothes. I felt at peace, like I really belonged in a dress or skirt. I would put on a pair of high heels and practice walking back and forth from the living room to the bedroom with a purse over my arm.

I tried to mimic the way the girls on TV acted. I imagined myself to be one of them and continued to play my little games without anyone ever finding out. I liked imitating the women in the advertisements as they extolled the virtues of the refrigerator, car, or makeup that was being sold.

That spring I gave up baseball and started tennis. Both my step-parents were avid tennis players and I enjoyed pleasing them with my abilities. I would begin my freshmen year of high school in the Fall and the tennis coach had already spoken with my step-dad about my trying out for the team.

The Fourth of July weekend brought us some new neighbors. Dennis and Marie Williams were partners in their own health food store. Their daughter Sybil was two years older than I was. In addition to being nearly six feet tall, she was also a strikingly beautiful girl who was an excellent tennis player as well.

I would watch her at the public courts where my parents took my step sister and me to play. I loved to watch her move on the court. A stunning girl, she was lithe and muscular but not in a masculine way. She was cat-like on the court with a smashing backhand.

She always wore a tennis dress; sometimes the skirt would flare up and I would catch a glimpse of her pink ruffled panties. I ached to wear panties and a dress like hers. Even more, I wanted to be held by her in those muscular arms. It was a strange way to think about a relationship and I had no means of explaining the way I felt.

The Williams' backyard had been converted into a grass tennis court so Sybil could get in plenty of practice at home when a court wasn't available elsewhere. I went over a couple of times and she beat me easily, almost if she was using me for exercise or a warm up until she could face some real competition this Fall when school started again.

We'd finish a set and then sip some lemonade together. She had a funny way of looking at me sometimes. I wasn't sure what it meant but I felt very relaxed in her company. She made me feel both wanted and secure. I had gotten to know and trust her as a friend.

She called me Friday night of the last weekend in July.

"I'm in a bit of a jam, Stephen," she said. Could you come over for a few minutes?"

"Sure," I replied. After hanging up the phone, I dashed across the street.

She answered the door right away and I followed her into the living room.

"I have a doubles match on Saturday and my partner twisted her ankle. I needed somebody to fill in but none of my girlfriends are free. I know this is a bit of an imposition and I hope you won't take this the wrong way but if you didn't have any plans for tomorrow, would you be willing to help me out? I have a smaller tennis dress you could wear as well as one of my mom's wigs. You have a very pretty face and no one will ever know, I swear!"

I thought I must be dreaming. I was sitting close to her on the davenport. Looking up into those big brown eyes, I could hardly refuse.

"I guess it would be okay, as long as no one finds out who I really am."

Her face broke into a wide grin.

"Super!" she exclaimed. "Come with me and we'll get started!"

I followed her into the bedroom. On the bed there were several pairs of bras and panties, as well as two tennis dresses.

"I'll be just outside the door. You get undressed and try on the panties first. Come out when you find the pair that fits the best."

She stepped out of the room and I undressed. The second pair I tried on fit perfectly. The pink tricot panties had four rows of white ruffles in the back. To say they felt wonderful against my skin was an understatement. I opened the door and she walked back in.

"Ooh!" she cried. "Those fit you just right! Now let's get you fitted for the bra."

The second bra fit better than the first and she placed two foam inserts in the cups. After adjusting the straps, she stood back and looked me over.

"Perfect!" she announced. "Now let's try on the dress."

She unzipped the tennis dress and held it up by the hem. I slipped it on and turned around. She pulled the dress down and zipped me up. I turned around again and she was all smiles once more.

"I can't believe how good you look. Step over here and look at yourself."

I walked over to the closet door and stared at my reflection in the full-length mirror. I had a hard time believing it myself. She unzipped me and pulled the dress over my head.

"Take off the lingerie and get dressed. I'll wait in the living room."

She walked out and closed the door. I reached behind me and unhooked the bra. I slid the panties off and placed them next to the bra on the bed. When I put my cotton briefs and T-shirt back on, I felt much different. I put on my jeans, cotton socks and sneakers. I

had felt so good in the lingerie and dress. Now I had to go back to being me again. I walked out to the living room where Sybil was waiting for me.

"Be here at nine am tomorrow and I will help you get ready. Tell your folks we are going to play tennis, they won't suspect a thing."

"Okay," I answered.

"Oh, here, I almost forgot!"

She handed me a disposable razor.

"Tonight after a hot soak in the tub, shave your legs and underarms. Be real careful not to cut yourself. Band-aids won't look good on a girl's legs!"

I nodded as she grinned at me again.

"I'll be careful," I said as I left.

That night as I lay soaking in the tub I thought about what the next day would bring. I scrubbed myself thoroughly. Then, using some of my dad's shaving gel, I lathered and shaved my legs very carefully. I didn't have much body hair to begin with but did my arms, chest and underarms anyway.

I let the water out of the tub and dried myself. I rinsed the razor off and washed the hairs that remained in the tub down the drain. I placed the razor in a tissue and set it on top of the medicine cabinet out of sight.

I rubbed some of my mom's hand lotion on my body and it relieved the stinging sensation of the close shave. I put on my pajamas and went to bed. How sensuous it would have been to be able to wear a nightgown to bed instead of my cotton pajamas, I thought.

The next morning, I shaved my face for the first time, even though there was very little peach fuzz to shave. I wrapped the razor back in the tissue and tossed it in the waste basket. After getting dressed, I ate breakfast and watched the morning news on TV.

About a quarter to nine, I picked up my racket and walked over to Sybil's house.

She opened the door and let me in. She was wearing her tennis dress and I followed her back to the bedroom. She stepped out and I undressed.

I put on the bra and panties, then I let her back in. She helped me get into the dress and zipped me up. I put on a pair of pink cotton socks and then my own tennis shoes.

"Sit at the vanity now and I will fit you with the wig," she instructed.

I sat down and after putting a nylon wig cap over my brown hair she adjusted the blonde wig in place.

"Tilt your face up a little and close your eyes please," she asked.

I did so. She combed part of the wig down over my forehead to form bangs and then pinned a pink bow just above the bangs.

"Open your mouth wide," she asked.

I opened my eyes to see her with a lipstick in her hand.

"Wait a minute," I said. "I don't think I should be wearing any makeup, it was just supposed to be a dress for the day I thought and..."

“SHUT UP!” she yelled at me. “Just do as I say.”

I was surprised at the commanding tone of her voice. I said nothing further as I opened my mouth wide. She pressed the tube of lipstick on my lips and gave it a generous coat of pink creamy lipstick. She then pressed the tube once on each cheek. With her finger in circular motions, she smoothed the makeup to give me a rosy “blush” look. When she finished, she put the makeup back on the vanity and stood up.

“Now look at your self in the mirror,” she said.

I looked at the reflection of a very pretty young girl staring back at me from the vanity mirror.

“You are really something! They are going to love you at the club! Since your name is Stephen Allen Wright I will introduce you as Stephanie Alice Wright. You will be my neighbor’s niece visiting from Portland, Oregon.”

I nodded without speaking. She handed me my racket.

“Let’s get going. Our first match is at ten-thirty and it’s a quarter to ten now.”

I got up from the vanity. She placed the makeup items in a small white purse and gave it to me.

I slipped the chain over my left shoulder like I had seen her do and with my racket in my right hand, I followed her out to the garage.

“When you get in the minivan or sit down anywhere, remember to smooth your skirt with one hand like this.”

I watched her open the door of the van on the driver’s side, setting her purse and racket down first and then getting in. With a sweep of her right hand, she smoothed her skirt and then sat down. I walked around the other side and did the same thing.

“That’s good,” she commented as she pushed the remote for the garage door. “Just keep doing what I tell you and everything will be OK.”

She started the engine and shifted into reverse as the door opened. She backed out and stopped briefly in front of my house as the garage door closed. I was afraid someone in the house might see us. She shifted again and we sped off.

She drove fast. I was terrified of her getting us into an accident and being taken to the hospital in girl clothes. The panties felt *so* good though. I glanced at myself in the side mirror. I liked the way I looked just as I had when I first saw my reflection in the mirror the night before. Now with a wig and makeup, I not only looked like a girl, I *felt* like a girl!

We arrived at the club and Sybil parked the van.

“Remember to straighten your dress when you get out. Walk a little slower, with smaller steps. Stay behind me and follow my lead. When you speak, speak in a softer voice” she admonished.

I felt I was being controlled. She was taking charge of everything and for now, I could only do what she instructed me to do until this day was over.

We checked in and waited our turn to play. Once play started, we made a terrific team and we won our games easily. At the break, I followed her into the locker room.

“Remember now, after you use the john, wash your hands and apply fresh lipstick.”

I nodded again as we walked through the doors that were labeled “Women only.”

I placed my racket on a table and walked to the commodes. I turned around and closed the door. My heart was pounding furiously. I was afraid I would be caught and my little secret would be out. I put my purse on the hook, pulled the dress up, slid my panties down and sat down to pee.

Around me there was a lot of laughter and frivolity. I was surprised at the vulgarity of some of these so called “ladies.” The conversation seemed to be centered around men, sex and penis size.

When I finished, I pulled my panties up and smoothed my dress. I slipped my purse over my shoulder and walked over to the sink. I washed my hands and opened my purse. I applied more of the bright pink lipstick and pressed my lips together.

Sybil stood next to me and when she finished washing, I followed her out to the patio.

“Remember when the food and drinks come to take small bites and chew slowly,” she instructed.

We ordered salads and diet soft drinks. While we ate, some of her friends came over and she introduced me. I found it easy to be Stephanie and felt very comfortable in my feminine role.

After lunch, we waited for our turn in the afternoon tournament. The competition was much tougher and we finished third. We had played hard and though Sybil wasn’t happy about the finish, she said nothing on the way home.

Back home, she sat me in front of the vanity and showed me how to remove the makeup with face cream. She placed the wig back on the stand and I removed the nylon wig cap. I saw myself as a boy in a tennis dress.

She unzipped me and I pulled the dress over my head. She put the dress on a hangar while I unhooked my bra. She stepped out as I removed my tennis shoes, pink socks, then slid my panties down. I got dressed in my male clothing and walked to the living room.

“Thanks so much for helping me out, Stephanie, I mean Stephen. I really appreciate it. You are a good player and make a terrific girlfriend too!” she laughed.

I smiled good-naturedly and left.

That night I thought about what the day had been like. I enjoyed being accepted as a girl and liked being with Sybil. I felt safe with her. She was an intelligent young woman as well as a fine athlete.

I wondered what kind of relationship this might lead to. I was very attracted to her but not in the normal male-female way. There was something about this that I found quite puzzling but certainly enjoyable nonetheless.

August passed uneventfully. Although we would see each other on the tennis courts and I would go over to her house occasionally to play her in her backyard, she never mentioned my short stint as her doubles partner.

My step-parents had not planned anything special for Labor Day Weekend. Three days of orientation the previous week had the school ready for its first week of classes. The weather were stormy Friday and Saturday so we would barbecue on Sunday.

I saw Sybil talking with my stepsister Sandy early Friday evening. When she came back in the house, she had a funny smirk on her face when she looked at me. The phone rang shortly after seven pm that night. It was Sybil and she was frantic.

"You gotta help me out!" she screamed into the phone. "I'm really desperate!"

"What's wrong?" I asked, wondering what would make her so upset.

"My cousin is getting married at two pm tomorrow. The flower girl and one of the other bridesmaids have gotten sick with food poisoning. I am going to fill in for the bridesmaid and I need you to be the flower girl. I have everything here but you have to come over now to fit the dress. Can you please, please help me?"

I thought about saying no. I really wanted to, but she was a good friend and neighbor. She was definitely in a pickle and I wanted to help her out. I hesitated momentarily, but then agreed to do it.

"Oh, thank you so much! Come over right away so I can fit the dress you will be wearing."

She sounded very relieved. I walked across the street and she opened the door before I could knock.

"I really appreciate this. Come with me and we will get you fitted."

I followed her back to the bedroom again. I undressed and put on the bra and panties while she waited outside. I let her back in and she opened the closet door.

"This is a petti-slip," she announced. "You put this on first under the dress to flare out the bottom half."

She held it up by the hem and I slipped it over my head. After she adjusted the straps, she removed the flower girl's dress from its hanger and unzipped it. The pink chiffon felt good as I put it on. She zipped me up and began putting pins here and there where the dress had to be adjusted. When she finished, she stood back and looked me over.

"Walk out to the living room and back so I can see how you look when you walk," she instructed.

I did so and when I returned, she was grinning broadly.

"That should do it. Try on these Mary Jane shoes and see if they fit."

She handed me a pair of pink patent leather shoes with a strap across the instep. I tried them on and they were a bit tight.

"That's OK," she assured me. "It's only for one day anyway."

I slipped them off. She unzipped me and helped me out of the dress and petti-slip. She left the room and I got dressed to go home.

"Don't forget to shave when you bathe tonight. You want to be girly smooth to look your best!" she said with a grin. "My parents will leave from work to go to the wedding so we will be here alone when you get here at ten tomorrow."

I took a hot soak that night and with one of my Dad's disposable razors and his shaving gel made sure my body was totally hair free.

I told my stepparents Sybil had invited me to a wedding and I would be back late. They never questioned me. Sandy had that same sly smirk on her face as she looked up from the book she was reading.

I left just before ten and went over to Sybil's house. In the bedroom, I undressed and put on the pink padded bra, panties and pink ankle socks. She came in and helped me with the petti-slip and dress. I put on the shoes and fastened the strap.

"Looks like I sewed everything just right. The dress looks like it was made for you. Now sit at the vanity."

I remembered to smooth my dress as I sat down in front of the mirror. I put on the wig cap and she adjusted the wig and clipped the bow above the bangs. She applied my lipstick, blusher and then quite unexpectedly gave me a squirt of perfume behind each ear.

"Why did you do that?" I asked.

"I want you to smell girly as well as look girly," she answered. "Now put on your gloves."

The pink wrist-length gloves were a tight squeeze but I managed to get them on.

"Wait in the living room while I get dressed," she ordered.

I walked out and sat on the sofa and waited. A half-hour went by and then she walked in the living room wearing a gorgeous yellow bridesmaid's dress, matching pumps, gloves and hairpiece.

"Zip me please," she asked as she turned.

I stood up, zipped up the dress and secured the clasp at the top. Her matching pumps had three-inch heels and combined with her six-foot height made her tower over me by about a foot. She picked up her matching purse and car keys.

"Okay we're all set. Now remember to act ladylike and feminine. When we get to the church, we will be told where to be and what to do, so don't worry about the ceremony."

Again I said nothing and just nodded as she turned and I followed her out to the car.

We arrived at the church. Sybil's cousin looked resplendent in her white satin gown. Her face brightened as we walked in and the other bridesmaids smiled as they saw me walking towards them.

After the ceremony was explained, we all took our places. Mark, the boy who was the ring bearer, took his place next to me as one of the bridesmaids handed me a basket of rose petals to hold during the ceremony and then toss in the path of the newly married couple as they walked back up the aisle. The ceremony began and everything went according to plan.

After pictures were taken, Sybil took me to the reception and dinner. Members of the family stopped by our table to thank Sybil and me for subbing for the two sick girls. I received many compliments on my dress and the way I looked. Everyone had a great time

and I enjoyed the fun atmosphere of the happy occasion. Sybil took me back to her house before the dance began.

"I am so glad you were able to help out," she said as she unzipped my dress. "I hate to take all this off, you look so pretty when you are dressed and made up."

I said nothing as I pulled the petti-slip over my head while she put the dress on its hanger. She stepped out and I took off my shoes, socks and lingerie. I got dressed and she returned to help me remove my makeup and wig.

"There, you're all set," she said as she wiped the last of the lipstick off.

"I can still smell the perfume," I complained.

She went into the bathroom and returned with a bottle of her father's aftershave. She dribbled a small amount into my open hands and I splashed some on my face and neck.

"That should take care of it," she said as she capped the bottle and returned it to the bathroom shelf.

"I have to get back for the dance, thanks again!" she said as she headed for the garage.

I went home and as I walked past my stepsister Sandy on the way upstairs, she stopped.

"You smell like perfume!" she said.

"No, Sybil gave me some of her dad's aftershave to wear to the wedding," I countered.

"That's awfully sweet aftershave. If I was a guy, I sure wouldn't wear it."

I didn't answer as I continued my way upstairs.

I read for awhile but couldn't seem to concentrate on the story. I kept thinking about how enjoyable it was to be made up and dressed in feminine finery. I thought about the way the chiffon dress and nylon tricot panties felt on my smooth skin. I was so safe and secure in my pink cocoon of femininity. I was very relaxed, without a care in the world. I wondered if girls felt that way too. Or was it just me?

School started again and I got into the routine of classes and homework. I had no trouble maintaining a B average. I wasn't overly fond of any particular subject except I did enjoy writing stories and was encouraged by my English teacher to work on the school paper next year.

Time flies when you're busy. With classes, homework and tennis, the school year went by quickly. I passed my exams and would be a sophomore next Fall. I would still dress in my sister's things when the family was away and wished what little body hair I had would not have grown back. I very much longed for the bonds of femininity and found some solace in surfing the net for information about my feelings.

I was still too young to work but the local newspaper had reprinted a short story I had published in the school newspaper and I received a hundred dollars for it. It was the first money I had ever earned and along with my parents' encouragement, I began to seriously consider a career in creative writing or journalism.