



*Reluctant Press* presents:

# My Secretary, My Boss

Annie Warren



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A 'HER TV' E-BOOK

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# MY SECRETARY, MY BOSS

**By Annie Warren**

## **Chapter 1: In the Beginning**

To be born into privilege is to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth. I don't remember anything in my mouth other than the nipple of a baby bottle; however, memories from that time tend to be rather dim and unreliable. Maybe I teethed on a silver spoon? Whatever the case, I was born into privilege but I did not know when I was young.

My mother and father were the founders and co-CEO's of the prestigious firm of Able, Acton, and Fritch. Since mother did not want to upstage father in any way, there was only one Acton in the company name. Prestigious, it was also an excellent money maker. Thus, I was born into a very well-to-do household. I wanted for nothing as I grew up.

I did not attend any private schools, academies, or stuff like that. My parents had decided early on that public schooling would be better for building my character, whatever that is.

In the public schools, I participated in the rough and tumble life of a student. However, I was markedly somewhat below average on the physical side. That seemed to carry over to academia, which means that my 'below average' also characterised my academic performance. I just could not get enthused about the subjects. Oh I learned what they were throwing at me; it just was not challenging me and I did not have that much interest in it.

I did not have the competitive edge that both father and mother had. In spite of all they did to motivate me and get me going! I ended up very passive and not as aggressive as they wanted me to be.

My high school years were also far from outstanding. Oh, I managed to pass all of my subjects with no problems; I'm smart enough to do that, but I did it with what could be characterised as middling grades. I was neither a slouch nor a star student.

With my diminutive size, I did not participate in any sport I did not have to. It is no fun being run over by your mates! That occurred frequently enough that participating in sports was not an option that I would consider.

It was during this time that my parents bought out Able and Fritch. Since the original name carried so much prestige, they kept it as-is. The company continued to prosper, thank goodness.

On graduating, due to my less than stellar grades, I did not go to any of the prestigious institutions of higher learning my parents had always hoped I'd attend. But, I did attend an adequate college where I did managed to hang in long enough to earn an MBA. I just did not have the drive to compete, to succeed. I had just enough to complete but not enough to compete. And so I became a member of the "higher degreed" club, not that it mattered, especially to me!

It was during my "advanced schooling" period that my father succumbed to a fatal heart attack, leaving the company in my Mother's more-than-capable hands. Mum was now alone to handle the company. Father had been a driving force while Mum was much more laid back. Nonetheless, she managed the company quite successfully without driving herself to an early death.

Thus I graduated with my MBA. However, I was, uh... what can I say? disinclined to go out and—God Forbid— get a job. That would be too much like, yuck! work! I moved back home with Mum unto my old room. I was again living at home, strange as that may seem for a grown man, one with a Masters degree, no less. Mum did not say anything; my old room was still there more or less as I had left it. The only difference was that I was now older but, perhaps, no wiser. You may be forgiven for applying the term 'manchild' to me at this point.

## **Chapter 2: To Work, Sort Of**

As I said, I was disinclined to work. This lazing around at home did not go unobserved by Mum who, while displeased, still did not say anything. This does not mean that she didn't do anything. She finally stopped and talked with me. I told her my desire was not to slave away at some menial job, MBA or not, nor to end up dead of a heart attack like father had.

Since she was in sole charge of her own company, she "gave" me a job and insisted that I go to work, promising it would not be menial. I think she nay have been hoping I'd pick

up some of the competitive edge that Dad had. I reasoned that taking on this job would be better than sitting on my hands at home; so, I agreed to take it. Mum had not come to the point of saying, "take it or find some other job somewhere else...or get out". I had the feeling, though, that that kind of ultimatum was not far below the surface of what she was saying.

I donned a suit, letting my shoulder-length mop of hair flow over my shoulders and down my back. I kept my hair clean so it actually looked good, well, to me at least. True to her nature, Mum had not said a thing about my hair since I had kept reasonable care of it, but she did look at it with obvious disapproval. I had been given the suit for graduation. It had hung in my closet, looking lonely, since then. Looking in my mirror, I noticed that I looked somewhat like a young, longhaired boy in a grown-up man's suit, just like I had at graduation, But that did not bother me. I was going to acquiesce to Mum's wishes. She had actually given me another of these suits in a different color and texture. I think it had been a not too subtle hint as to what I was supposed to wear when I was job hunting. Mum giving me a job at the company firm meant that I would be spared that indignity...for now at least.

Well, she had given me this position, but I'm afraid I looked at it more like playing a game rather than actually doing any serious work. So, on this first day of my new job we left together.

I was duly installed in her company. As promised, it was not some menial, bottom-level type of position as I had originally feared; rather, I was given an office, a secretary, and a title: Vice President. There was, however, no explanation of what exactly I was V.P. of. I settled in, starting by brushing off my desk, which obviously had not been used for some time. I asked my secretary for a cup of coffee and just like that, I was the newest VP of Able, Acton, and Fritch. Another Acton had arrived, albeit unheralded and, of course, unannounced.

My secretary brought me my coffee. I sat back and surveyed my office. It was not a spacious realm, but was large enough for a good-sized desk, several chairs, a book case, even a private bathroom... all the comforts of home except for a kitchen. Before the day was out, my secretary brought in a package. It proved to be a project. Apparently, I was expect to actually produce some results. I thought to my self as I looked into it, Ugh! This is too much like work. I had agreed! I was an Acton and I was apparently expected to act like an Acton, whether I liked it or not.

Thus it started. I did get things to do, some relatively simple projects. I did them, well sort of. As you may well guess, my work was without enthusiasm. I did not plow into the projects given me with zeal and fervor, instead attempting to do them at lightning speed, even if meant doing them half-heartedly.

As you can no doubt also predict, these projects easily blew apart. I just couldn't get my mind into working on them. So, even though they were relatively simple, I made the mistakes in them. Some of them thus failed outright as a result! To be quite honest, my

Mum should have fired me after about two weeks on the job, but I think she was trying to save embarrassment to the family and hoping that I'd straighten out on my own.

The secretaries were quite efficient and secretarial as well as well-dressed and good-looking! Although most of my 'projects' (if such menial tasks could be called that) were beyond them with their basic, secretarial skills, to cover my backside, I usually managed to blame them for the failures that lead to the multiple blow-ups!

And, the predictable result? No, no, no! I wasn't canned. As you might have guessed, the secretaries were reassigned after an explanation of my shortcomings. Again, my mother was covering up for me behind the scenes. I did not see any of them again, as far as I can remember. Once they were gone from my sight, I didn't even remember any of their names.

Once a project was clear of my desk, another one showed up, usually accompanied by a new secretary. If I didn't bother to learn their names, they could all bring me my morning cup of coffee.

### **Chapter 3: Yet another one, Carol this time**

In hindsight, I'd say that Mum was exceptionally tolerant when it came to my foibles and blame-placing. Even a loving, tolerant mother has her limits. After 4 or 5 project failures accompanied by an equivalent 4 or 5 secretaries passing through my office, Carol was assigned to me, or was it the other way around? She was definitely not like the others, though like them she was quite pretty, had an excellent figure, and dressed well to show it all off. In some way I couldn't put my finger on, she somehow did not look all that secretarial. She did not chew gum like my previous secretaries had. She was neither flighty nor overly serious. She was, well, different in hard-to-define ways.

When she stood before me with the new project in hand that first time, I looked her over. She was about an inch or two taller than me. She was wearing, I assumed, very high heels. I could not see them as her skirt was fairly full and knee-length, not a shorter length like most of our secretaries wore... another difference.

Like me, she had red hair that looked like it was her natural color. This was in contrast to the coloring of some of the secretaries I had had which was obviously either dyed or bleached. Hers was well-coifed, much curlier than mine. Her smile was marvellous and not forced as most of the other secretaries had. It was almost as if she already knew me, though that notion was silly. We had never met, so she couldn't know me.

One last selling point, if I were buying, was that like me, she had green eyes. She made for a very pretty package indeed!

After introducing herself, she mentioned something about the content of the project she had brought me. This was most unusual for a secretary to know, much less to comment on.

In some way, she was not as secretarial as the others had been; she seemed to actually have a head on her shoulders. Above and beyond just knowing her way around a computer keyboard, she could apparently also think for herself.

If all that wasn't enough to recommend her, each morning she also made me, not a cup, but a pot of good, fresh, rich coffee. I had become addicted to coffee at university. My other secretaries had had no problem with periodically getting me a cup from the break room when I asked, but they had steadfastly refused when it came to brewing me a pot. "Sorry, that's not part of my job description" was the usual response, said without a smile. But with Carol, I was supplied with as much as I could drink all day long, without having to ask. She did not go to the break room to get just a single cup like the others had but preferred to brew a fresh, full pot each day. I was not about to argue with her about that one! She did not mention—and I did not find out until much later—that each and every pot was "doctored" with an additive, as you shall see.

Carol had actually read my current project and when I started on it, she actually made suggestions. She seemed to get into it and worked like none of the other secretaries had. They would not have touched my project other than doing what I asked of them to do, like typing letters and such. But to read one, much less comprehend it, was apparently beyond their intellectual capacities (or job descriptions). On top of all that, Carol's suggestions were good, solid suggestions that made sense to me. Had Providence dropped her on Earth to prevent me from being embarrassed at my family's company? It certainly seemed so. She was everything I could have asked for in a secretary, and more so.

The result was that this project did not blow up but went to a successful completion. This also happened again with the next three projects. Each new project was a bit longer and more involved than the previous ones, but were still of a relatively simple nature. I even began to consult with her as I began each new project, something that it would never have crossed my mind to do with any of my previous secretaries. Carol's help was becoming invaluable. Although I wanted to believe that I had become more competent in my job on my own, I knew in my heart of hearts that it was Carol who was preventing me from screwing up as I had at my previous jobs. She was what stood between me and disgrace in my mother's eyes.

After seeing her actions on the previous projects, I finally had to look further into her background. I sought out her file from Personnel and found to my surprise that she also had an MBA and from a good university, a better one than mine. How, I asked myself, did she get a position as my secretary? It seemed to me to be a classic case of over-qualification.

When I confronted her about this and asked her why she took a secretarial position in my office, she just smiled one of her soft, lovely smiles, replying simply that it was because I held the position that she desired.

We both laughed at that. No more was said. Like so many other things regarding my (still unspecified) V.P. position, I filed it away somewhere in the back of my head. I wasn't

entirely sure if she meant her remark to be taken seriously or as a joke, but I didn't spend too much time worrying about that. I supposed she did have the qualifications, but so what? She was working for me as my secretary. I decided that I could make use of her education and her mind without any compunction. I suppose it may have been unethical on my part, but the credit for each successful completion of each project went to me, so my scruples just got bent a little. Hey, I was the one with "V.P." on my door, right? For all her schooling and competence, at the end of the day, she was just a secretary.

I started working even more closely with her, trying to take advantage of her knowledge and background. It wasn't like trying to learn anything new, though I inevitably did. I just wanted to use her knowledge to my advantage. Unscrupulous perhaps, but nothing that millions of other bosses haven't done in the past. Besides, I had a reputation to uphold as an Acton.

## Chapter 4: Things start to change

It was definitely not hard working close to her; she was cute, well-coifed, always well-dressed, nicely perfumed, and she had excellent taste. Her dresses and skirts weren't sexy; she usually wore plain, above-the-knee skirts, not miniskirts. She wore nice tops with them or a dress showing her femininity without pushing it. I was appreciative but did not make her uncomfortable, as far as I knew. It did not take long before we were comfortably on a first name basis; I'd never been one for formalities. Yes, I suppose I was using her, but she was my employee and I did legitimately like her on some level.

It was about this time that my chest started to become sensitive and itch. It was a weird feeling, not unpleasant but not what I would call normal. These feelings did not seem to want to go away. It was like an itch you can scratch but the scratching did not seem to diminish the itching. It was somewhat deeper than a simple rash or insect bite. There were also no marks or whatever like you would expect with a rash. Like I said, it was actually kind of pleasant. It seemed to occur equally in both nipples. An odd sensation for a man to experience, it was like something you'd expect to occur to a pre-teen girl, although that didn't cross my mind initially.

Finally, Carol saw me unconsciously rubbing my chest and asked if anything was wrong. I mentioned to her the sensitivity in my nipples, wondering what it was or where it came from. She smiled that wonderful smile of hers and reassured me that it was most likely nothing to worry about. She had heard of others having the same problem.

She said that it might be due to my clothes. Her next move was to pull a measuring tape out of her purse and to measure me, taking copious notes for some reason. She was quite thorough, measuring me from neck to toe (including, of all things, my shoe size) and many, many places in between, as if these measurements had anything to do with my itching. She put her notes into her purse, then said that she'd see what she could do to alleviate the "itch."

It is of note that she did not suggest I see a doctor. Although my problem was irksome, I did not think of seeing one either. Like most men, I had never liked doctors much less



doctor visits. In the past, when I felt ill, I 'dealt' with it by ignoring it and waiting for the discomfort to pass.

Finally, a day or so later, she greeted me in the morning with my usual pot of coffee, and indicated that she had got me some substitute clothing as a treatment for my chest itch. She told me that she had done some research on my condition. Yes, other men had experience something similar and it was usually caused by an allergy to their clothing. After saying that, she gave me some nondescript, flat, cardboard boxes. I opened the top one and pulled back some tissue paper within. I was greeted by the view of several lacy nylon camisoles along with some white nylon shirts that I just knew were blouses. They had buttons on the wrong side, they were translucent and all that. I put the box back down and opened another one, only to be greeted by more camisoles and blouses, but this time in soft, pastel colours.

I looked briefly at them, then went to the first box and lifted out the top tank-top garment and a blouse and lay them out on the desk. While she looked on, I pulled out the rest of the items, making two piles of nylon clothing. Under the bottom one, beneath all of the other items in the box, were some sort of heavy cords in loops, closed off with some sort of sliders. She said I should wear the camis and shirts under my suit coat, no one would notice any difference. The cords, she explained, were string-type ties since regular ties just would not fit with these "shirts."

I picked up one of the shirt-like garments, held it up, and looked it over; as I said, it was obviously a blouse. It was white, short-sleeved, with a male cut collar, and like the camis it was also quite soft, probably made out of nylon. I had always liked short sleeves, so they were like versions of my old cotton shirts. The buttons, however, closed right over left. It was, without any doubt, a blouse.

"Carol, this is not a shirt; it's a blouse."

"I looked but couldn't not find any men's shirts that would be light enough on your chest. Go ahead, put on one of the camis and put the 'shirt' on over it. I think you will find that the itch will go away, or at the very least, it will be greatly reduced."

I looked at her incredulously but took off my jacket. Then I picked up a white cami and blouse and went into my private bath just off my office. I doffed my shirt, tie, and undershirt and put on the cami. Over it, I put on one of my new "shirts." They were so soft and sensuous that I felt them and rubbed them on my body for a bit. They definitely felt a lot nicer than my shirt could ever be! I felt strange about what I was doing, but there was a sensuousness to these clothes that I found attractive, despite the fact that they were obviously intended for a woman, which I most assuredly wasn't.

As she had stated, they immediately eased the itching problem. I found that I could also clearly see my new cami visible in silhouette under my new shirt. It almost looked like an undershirt except that where the cami touched my blouse, you could see hints of the lace on the cami.

When I came back out and mentioned the obvious femininity of my shirt and cami to her, she told me to simply wear my jacket to cover them. When I put my jacket back on, shirt and cami were indeed covered, unless you looked closely. Who does that, though? No one, unless there is a reason, and I wasn't about to give anyone a reason.

Of course, with the wider neck of my new shirts, as she had cautioned, my regimental ties would no longer be appropriate. They wouldn't even fit. I tried the one I had taken off and indeed, it did look odd with my new wardrobe. Before accepting this change in my clothing, I looked into the company's dress code. Yes, string ties were acceptable; Carol had indeed hit upon what looked (and felt) like a solution to my itching problem.

All of my regimental striped ties were replaced by these new string ties, those cord loops at the bottom of the box. Putting one on and adjusting the slider, I realized immediately that it definitely had a much more comfortable fit and feel than the conventional, diagonally-striped ties. I had never really liked the conventional ties that had up to now been an integral part of my job uniform. Now, they were to be no more! Those strangulating pieces of cloth were useless; you couldn't even wipe your mouth with them at meal-time. Here I had been handed a solution, a more comfortable solution!

The camis and my new "shirts" became my standard wear at the office and at home. Mum said very little, but I know she did not miss a thing, especially when I took off my jacket on arriving home, displaying clearly to her my new blouse and its underlying cami-sole. I'm sure she could see traces of lace). In fact, she even got me some more camis and blouses. No words were spoken on the matter, but it was obvious that she agreed with my new clothing options that I had chosen. Or had they been chosen for me?

## Chapter 5: Comes A Big Project

After having finally completing a fair number of smaller projects successfully, in came a really big project that looked like it was real. The others we had completed seemed to have been mere tokens by comparison. Finally, I was being treated like a real Vice-president of the company. About time!

Well, without me saying anything, Carol almost immediately took it over. Since I really didn't have that much to do with it, I had to admire her drive as well as her intelligence. She apparently had a lot more of the competitive drive than I did, a lot more.

It was clear early on that this project needed space so she simply took over the large desk in my office. Thus it was that I suddenly became second banana in my own office. I was unceremoniously exiled to her smaller work desk, the one just outside my office, you know, the secretary's desk? That, too, was where my coffee was moved, along with my ubiquitous brief case. Not that it ever had anything of consequence in it anyway; it was just part of my standard office uniform. It was something I needed as a prop to play Vice-president. In retrospect, that was what I had been doing up to this point: playing Vice-president, like a child might do. I may have looked like a V.P. to an observer, but that was all show. I certainly hadn't acted like one.

I just sort of potted about, occasionally looking over Carol's shoulder, making suggestions, watching what she was doing. I actually managed to do some work on the project too—accent on "some"—but I tended to let things ride and let her do the real work as long as she was willing and I didn't have to. I'm afraid that my function was more as a consultant to her instead of the other way around. My role at that point was more to keep

out of her way as opposed to muscling in on the action. Then, one day, she approached me and gave me an assignment, part of which involved a letter.

At the time I was sipping my coffee at “my desk” in the outer office when she came out of the (my former) inner office. She handed me an audio tape from the Dictaphone machine on my former desk and asked me to type up the letter on it. I looked askance at her but told her that I’d do it. In school I had taken a few business classes, so I could type reasonably well, but it had been some times since I had done any appreciable amount of typing. As a V.P., even if of the “play” variety, I wasn’t expected to do much manual labor, so I was a bit rusty. I felt guilty about letting Carol take the lead on this project, though, so I agreed to take a whack at it.

I took the tape, put it in the Dictaphone player machine on her desk. I had a problem getting it to play even after I figured out how to turn it on and how to plug in the ear-phones. The trouble was not with the player but with the tape player’s foot switch. That is the switch that starts and stops the machine so that you do not have to constantly rewind and replay the tape. It simply did not want to work for me.

When I went in and told her of my problem, she put her Dictaphone on hold; she was apparently dictating another letter even though I still hadn’t even gotten the first one done. She smiled at me, came out of my office, sat (at her original chair), then thrust her foot forward over the switch for me to see.

She looked at me, still smiling, and said, “See? It is made specifically for a high-heeled shoes, like mine. Just arch your foot and you should be able to get it to work for you. In the meantime, I have two more tapes that need to be done. Should I get some new shoes for you?”

I don’t know why, but I mumbled an agreement since I wanted to cut the hassle with the tape player’s foot switch. Besides, she already had my sizes. I had seen this in her accuracy in getting camis and blouses for me. They had fit perfectly! For some reason, it did not occur to me to replace that switch rather than alter my footwear.

For the rest of that morning, if I arched my foot, I could indeed get the Dictaphone to work, but this quickly became tiring for my poor feet. I had to constantly switch feet in an attempt to balance the stresses.

## **Chapter 6: New Footwear for Work**

After lunch that afternoon, she showed up with a shoe box. When she opened it, I could see that it held a pair of women’s high-heeled shoes. They were black, new and quite shiny, with heels that were about 3 inches high. When I first saw them, they seemed even taller, impossibly taller, especially in respect to my feet! The heel was slender but not spiked and had a hard rubber tip instead of the metal tip that I associated with spiked high heels. The toe top in front appeared as if it would to end just behind my toes, thus showing a lot of the top of the wearer’s bare foot. They were absolutely nothing like my lace-up oxfords. In retrospect, that was, of course, the intention.

I had a simple and somewhat automatic reaction. “I can’t wear those!”