

Made A Lady



Blind Ruth



A "New Woman" Novel



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MADE A LADY

By Blind Ruth

AUNT CHARLOTTE

The small girl of seven or eight was struggling with her mother in the driveway where a car was parked. The mother tightly held onto the girl's hand, not letting go. With her other hand, she opened the rear door of the car. "Don't you dare let your Aunt Charlotte see you disobey your mother." She slammed the door shut, knowing the child could not get out for there was a child lock fitted on all the doors.

The mother climbed into the front of the car and drove off. In the rear, the child thought over the words said by her mother. Aunt Charlotte was a severe-looking woman who the last time she had been at her aunt's house, eyed her from top to bottom, not saying a word. She was rather fearful of her Aunt Charlotte. But she got on really well with her cousin Abigail, a girl of the same age as herself.

From past experience, the child knew it would be an hour or so before that house of her aunt's was reached. She thought it was eerie; one could be there for months and no one would know. The house suited the character of her Aunt Charlotte, a widow who lived with her daughter, Abigail.

While all these thoughts were going through the mind of the child, suddenly she was there. The red stone building loomed out of the mist in the woods. It was cold and damp as the child and her mother exited the car to enter the grand-looking house. After a short time, the door was opened and a tall woman appeared.

"Charlotte," the mother of the child said in a manner of awe.

The woman didn't answer and motioned with her hand for the mother and child to enter. She led them down a long marble-tiled passage to a large mahogany door. This opened to reveal the living room of the house. No words were said as the woman indicated with her hand for the mother to sit in a comfortable easy chair. The girl was left standing in front of the burning fire.

The woman was dressed in a long black skirt that came to her ankles where a pair of black ankle boots descended to the floor. The boots shone brightly as the fire flickered on them. A white button-up blouse with a high stiff neck collar revealed an ample bosom. A slender neck led to a full face with no makeup on, with the exception of some red lipstick that had been applied to her lips as a token to remind people that she was female. Her hair swept highly up on her head, reminding one of a coiffure from a hundred years ago. The only jewellery she wore was a triple pearl necklace, matching stud earrings, and a gold wedding ring.

"You've brought the child here at last for me to see, Stephanie," said the stern-looking woman.

"Yes, Charlotte."

"Well, don't just stand there. Take her coat off and let me see the girl in her dress."

"Yes of course, sister."

The mother, named Stephanie, rose, went to the child and unbuttoned the white fur coat and fur collar and placed it on the chair she had just vacated.

The girl stood there in a blue dress with sleeves that stopped at the elbow, white ankle socks, and Mary Jane shoes of black. She wore a multi-coloured necklace and no other jewellery. She was a round fresh faced girl with a mop of ginger curly hair that had a couple of white bows tied in it placed on either side of her head.

"Come here, girl," demanded the woman called Charlotte.

"I won't, I won't," said the child in rebellion, stamping a foot.

"Go to your aunt!" said her mother.

The girl stood her ground and moved not a muscle.

"I'm afraid the girl shows dissent to her mother, Stephanie."

The girl, facing her Aunt Charlotte in an outburst, said, "I'm not a girl and you're not my aunt."

"Did you hear that, Stephanie? Impudence. The little madam will have to be brought to ground and taught a lesson?" Aunt Charlotte rose and grabbed the girl.

"Look at you how ungrateful you are, your mother put you in these delightful clothes and all you do is complain." Charlotte looked round the room and saw what she was seeking.

“Hand me that hair brush, sister dear.”

Stephanie went over to an ivory-handled silver back hairbrush belonging to Charlotte’s daughter. It had been there since Charlotte had used it to brush out Abigail’s hair that morning. She handed it to her sister, somewhat afraid as to what it would be used for.

The girl quickly found herself over her aunt’s knee, facing the floor. Charlotte raised the dress to expose a pair of blue satin knickers.

“I never saw such beautiful underwear. This must have cost your mother a pretty penny. You don’t know how lucky you are. Maybe you’ll appreciate such fine things after I’m finished with you.”

Charlotte raised her hand, the hairbrush held firmly in it by the ivory handle, and brought the flat silver back of it smartly down on the girl’s buttocks’. Again she raised her hand and repeated the operation; this she did several times more. Sobs were heard coming from the girl. A wicked smile formed on the face of her aunt, but the mother’s expression was blank.

At last the chastisement ceased and Aunt Charlotte placed the dress back over the exposed bottom. But she wasn’t finished with the girl yet.

“You’ll get no supper, my girl, and locked in your room you’ll be.”

The girl tried to resist but the beating had taken too much out of her. Charlotte left the living room with the girl as her mother silently watched. Charlotte and the sobbing girl went down the corridor to the stairs that led to the upper floor. Once there, the sobbing girl was taken within a room. Her Aunt Charlotte roughly threw her on the bed there.

“Now you can think of how naughty a girl you are and apologise to your mother and me. You will have the whole night for that.” With that, Charlotte left the room. The girl heard the door shut and a key turning. She was locked in the room.

The girl was right; Charlotte wasn't her aunt and Stephanie wasn't her mother. She was her stepmother. And as she said, she wasn't even a girl!

Charlotte returned to the living room to discuss many matters with her sister, her elder sister. But to look at these two women, one would think it was the other way around.

Charlotte sat herself comfortably on the easy chair opposite her sister and smiled at her.

“Don't you think that went over well, Stephanie?”

“You didn't have to hit David so hard, did you, Charlotte?”

“What would you have done, Stephanie? Nothing? Well, we aren't going to get anywhere with an attitude like that, are we? And you can stop calling her David, I have decided that 'Hester' suits the role I have planned for her.”

“Hester is it, Charlotte? That sounds like something out of a Victorian melodrama. And how are you going to explain to Abigail that her cousin now wears girl's clothes?”

“I sometimes think you don't listen to what I say, Stephanie, we discussed this a while ago. That will all be explained to her when she comes back from her girlfriend's. You are going to have to do some of the dirty work as well.”

“I already have, Charlotte. Didn't I get him into that dress? Didn't I let his hair grow long and didn't I take him

to the hairdresser? David was furious when he saw his new hairdo by them it was too late to do anything. But somehow I got the frock on him and here we are, sister."

"Well, maybe I have been bit harsh with you. I do commend your choice of girl's clothes for her. You always were a nice dresser."

"You could do with some of that knowledge Charlotte for we don't see you often in a skirt and blouse."

"I will take up your offer of finding me dresses and skirts."

"Why the sudden interest in pretty dresses and skirts? It's so unlike you. Your companions are usually the ones that wear the beautiful dresses; Anyway, why do you have a skirt on right now anyway?"

"We are trying to put Hester in a female environment, aren't we? She must see nothing that would remind her of the male she once was. So dresses and skirts I will wear for now till our mission is complete," answered Charlotte.

"If it was anybody else, I would say they were mad but you are just the one who could pull it off."

"Thanks for your confidence. We each have our part to play and must support each other, sister dear."

"Yes, you are right again, Charlotte. I may disapprove at times but you know I am right behind you."

"I've been thinking; probably the best thing you ever did was marrying that widower, Tommy Weston."

"He had so much money and wanted a wife for one reason only, his baby son."

"And you hid your past very well. He never found you out, did he?"

"No. He thought I was the perfect mother for his son. But make no mistake, I did take care of David for I loved

the boy. I have to say I protected my past better than you, Charlotte. Weren't you caught in bed with the wife of your husband's best friend."

"Yes but it was all hushed up. When your husband is a member of Parliament, a scandal like that could well have brought the government down for their majority was thin."

"I remember Helen. We met at a constituency party dance. Her husband faced a good career in government. Some whispered he was a future Prime Minister."

"I'm afraid I ruined George's chances of that. for he was well in with hierarchy of the party. When word filtered through of his wife's infidelity, he was ruined, along with my own husband, James. But I will not take all the blame. Helen was as bad as me. We met at a party conference and we soon found our sexual needs and continued on from there for years. The night Helen and I were caught in the act so to speak there was a vital vote going on in Parliament. We the debate would go on to the morning but things didn't work out like that. George and James came back to the flat; they knew Helen and I got on well with each other but they didn't expect to find both of us in bed."

"Whatever happened to George and Helen, Charlotte?"

"For services to the party, George was given a title, Sir George and she is now Lady Helen. They live apart and go their separate ways. I have met Helen a few times since and we have been to bed for old times' sake. She doesn't hold it against me that she could have been First Lady."

COUSIN ABIGAIL

Charlotte's was interrupted by the tinkling of the outside door bell. It was her daughter Abigail who had been

brought back to the house by the mother of her girlfriend. "Thank you Amelia, that was nice of you. Do come in and have a cup of tea."

"That's kind of you, Charlotte, but I must rush. I have to go to a meeting of the Woman's Guild. Some other time perhaps."

Charlotte led her daughter to the living room. "Aunt Stephanie is here, darling."

The girl now named Hester was embraced by her aunt and received a kiss on the cheek.

"Did you have a good time at Margaret's?" asked her mother?

"Oh yes, Mummy. Mrs. Delmont is taking us all to the ballet next week."

"That's nice of her. I shall get you a pretty dress to wear for that."

"Oh thank you, Mummy, you are so good to me. Where is David?" Charlotte's daughter asked.

Charlotte glanced at her sister for a moment. "Come here, darling, and let me take your coat off." The girl did, letting her mother unbutton the blue fur coat with the fur collar, not dissimilar to that of her cousin.

Charlotte held her daughter closer to her. "Darling, you are a big girl now aren't you and you love your cousin, don't you?"

The girl nodded her head.

"There is something wrong with him, dear."

"Is David ill, Mummy?"

"Well I suppose you could say that but it is all in his head. You see, your cousin wants to wear girl's clothes but at times he feels ashamed to do so. Your aunt suggested he come here. "