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## Plantation Days, Bordello Nights

# By William Kincaid

Dr. Michael Brooke, the curator at the Parker Plantation Historic Site and Museum located on the banks of the James in Virginia, couldn't make sense of the package of the applicant that he was about to interview. Susanna A. Hairston applied for the job of costumed docent at the main plantation house, a highly desirable position in which the girl portrayed an ante-bellum Southern belle in all her glory. Typically the applicant's packages looked like they were applying for a Miss America Pageant, complete with head shots, full body shots, modeling history, and an extensive list of community and school leadership positions. Miss Hairston had none of that, only an elegantly composed cover letter, and a resume that indicated that she had been home schooled and accepted for this coming school year on a full scholarship to William and Mary. She had to have something going for her, and Dr. Brooke was curious to meet the applicant.

Ten minutes later, a quiet knocking was heard on the door to the office and Dr. Brooke cheerfully ordered the person to come in. Miss Hairston was a cute blonde, 5'6", slender, and demurely dressed in a long blue skirt, black flats, a white blouse with a princess collar, a pearl necklace, small pearl earrings, and a blue headband that matched her skirt. She appeared nervous and timid, but had a hopeful smile on her face.

"She has potential," Dr. Brooke thought to himself. "So Miss Hairston, what brings you here to P2HSM?"

Miss Hairston looked puzzled for a second, then her smile broadened in recognition of the informal designation of the historic site. She gave an extensive history of the plantation, said she loved history, and would welcome the opportunity to work with someone as respected as Dr. Brooke.

"At least she did some actual independent research," Dr. Brooke thought. "Usually the girls expect to dazzle me with their looks and wardrobe."

"So, what do you know about my writings?"

Miss Hairston looked nervous again, stumbled on her words, then answered, "I read your book on the Second Battle of Parker Plantation when I was applying for the docent position but honestly, I disagree with your account of Colonel Davis's counterattack." Susanna felt immediately that she had put her foot in her mouth, "I'm sorry."

Colonel Francis Davis was the youthful regimental commander of the 75th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry and had led a successful counterattack against the charging Confederates after the Union line had collapsed and was on the verge of being driven into the James River. At the climax of the battle, with victory won, Colonel Davis and his Sergeant Major, Donovan Buckley, both holding the regimental colors, disappeared in a red mist when an exploding shell from a Confederate cannon burst in their midst. Both would posthumously be awarded the Medal of Honor. A painting immortalizing the two men was prominently featured in Dr. Brooke's office, and their medals were on display in the museum.

Rather than being affronted, Dr. Brooke laughed. "This girl absolutely can't lie." He smiled at Susanna, "Don't apologize. So

why do you think that, Miss Hairston?"

Still frightened, Susanna knew she had to state her case intelligently. "Well, nobody from the 75<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts wrote anything officially about the attack because the Colonel was dead but accounts from four other regiments all say they participated. I don't believe them. I think they were all just trying to get a share of the glory. I think you rely on them too much because it was all you had."

Dr. Brooke laughed again, "Very interesting theory, it's too bad we can't ask Colonel Davis." He was definitely warming to Susanna.

Susanna smiled broadly. "Yes it is."

"So, Susanna, can you tell me about your full ride to William and Mary? That is very impressive. You know I went there as an undergrad."

Susanna's expression again changed from cheerful to fearful. She hesitated, but then visibly steeled her resolve.

"It's a scholarship awarded to transgendered students."

Dr. Brooke took the revelation in stride, without breaking his smile. "That explains everything," he thought to himself, and looked at Susanna with greater scrutiny. "Her hands are slightly bigger than normal for a girl but will look perfectly delicate with lace gloves. Otherwise it looks like her transition has proceeded very well. She's a jewel in the rough and a brave young lady."

"I'm sorry."

"Quit apologizing and don't you worry about it all. That is for me to worry about. I am thoroughly impressed. There is one thing though." "Yes?"

"You don't have a deep enough Southern accent and what we do here is present an idealized, sanitized interpretation of history for the masses, just like Colonial Williamsburg down the road. Agree with it or not, that's how we survive and it does introduce people to their historic past. I want you to go home and in the next two days watch Gone With the Wind, Jezebel, Steel Magnolias, Forrest Gump, and Fried Green Tomatoes as often as you can. Call me back Wednesday night with a voice laced with mint juleps in the moonlight and you have the job. Then come by Friday to get your dresses sized. It was a true pleasure meeting you Susanna."

Susanna was breathless driving her RAV-4 with the College of William and Mary decal on her way back to her dormitory in Williamsburg. She had a single room in the gender neutral dorm for summer school, and was hoping to get a head start on her freshman year. Now she was on the verge of getting a job, a job as a girl.

Tim had approached his parents prior to the start of his junior year of high school and told them of his desire to be a girl. Rather than the expected drama, his parents were profoundly hurt, but quietly took in the news and requested that they talk to him the following day after they had time to process it. The next day, Tim's mother said she would cut back her hours as a partner in a high profile Arlington-based law firm so that she could home school Tim in order to give him a safe environment. Tim's parents scheduled appointments with therapists, and soon enough Tim was taking estrogen to develop womanly curves, although he was still rather slender. Tim's parents had one additional request, the right to re-christen their new daughter as Susanna Augusta

Hairston.

The home schooling had given Susanna a much needed cocoon to transition. Susanna was a natural introvert, however, and her isolation and new identity made her shy and apprehensive around people. Hopefully, though, this new job would help her come out of her shell.

"So, Dr. Brooke, have you selected somebody for the docent position yet? I had Mrs. Brown on the phone and she is hoping you will choose her daughter, Catherine," George Butler, the Chief Executive Officer asked.

Dr. Brooke's boss, George Butler, was an incredible ass. He still referred to him in all formality as Dr. Brooke even though they had worked together for ten years. "Yes, I have, Susanna Hairston."

"But, isn't she the...?"

"The what, George? The shemale? The tranny? The chick with a dick? Yes, and she is also an intelligent and charming young woman who will be a great asset to the site, especially with all the archives that have just been dumped in our lap. You know better than to start with me about the transgendered issue. Plus, I am tired of having these divas every summer coming to work late or drunk or not at all, not lifting a finger to help, fucking in the antique beds, and thinking that they are all going to be the next Vivien Leigh. It's Miss Susanna Hairston for the season, get used to it."

"Fine, I will call Mrs. Brown and make up some exalted title for the Independence Day Dance which I will offer to her daughter. You don't know how hard I work." Dr. Brooke knew how hard his boss worked for two hours a day. Originally from a rough neighborhood in Philadelphia, Dr. Brooke had earned a Harvard PhD in historical preservation and carried an impressive resume of renovation projects in America and Europe. He loved working in Europe where nobody really cared that he was African-American, and had participated in restoration work at Versailles, Rome and Florence. His wife, however, missed America, so Dr. Brooke moved her and their son Eugene back to the states and took a position at the Parker Plantation on the James River.

What he found was a crumbling manor house and land overgrown with trees and brush, while the extensive Civil War fortifications were disappearing from sight. After years of labor the P2HSM was a viable attraction, but Dr. Brooke knew that it had far greater potential, a potential that his boss George Butler failed to realize.

The following Thursday, Susanna stepped into her dressing room, smiled and pinched herself. "Could this be real? Am I actually going to be a Southern belle?"

Susanna had been a very modest dresser, never wanting to call attention to herself, but now she would be all dolled up and in the public eye. She couldn't wait to get dressed and removed her slacks and polo shirt, then stripped entirely naked, except for her joy.

The museum had a laminated notebook that instructed the prospective Scarlett O'Hara's on how to master their attire. Susanna first put on a pair of silk bloomers, covering her dangling cock, which she felt was now of very little consequence. Regardless, she never had to worry about bulging in this

costume. Next she pulled on her white silk stockings with garters that made her legs look truly inviting. Susanna then stepped into her white high-heeled boots, stringing the laces through the numerous eyelets until they were secure. She then eyed the corset with dread. Dr. Brooke told her that fashionable young ladies could be cinched down to eighteen inches but to do that Susanna would need a rib removed. She positioned the corset around her midsection, exhaled, and tightened the laces.

"The price of Nineteenth Century beauty," she joked to herself after she caught her breath.

The hoop skirt came next; Susanna felt positively alluring in her state of undress. "Maybe someday a man could see me like this," she mused.

The dress was stunning, white silk with purple bows and trim, with a matching sun bonnet, and white gloves. Almost finished, Susanna noticed a gift wrapped in antique-style paper and a gold ribbon with the name Susanna written by a quill pen on an attached note card. She unwrapped the gift, and the present took her breath away. It was an antique lace cameo choker.

She looked at the interior of the note; it was from Dr. Brooke. "I am sure you will entirely justify my confidence. Believe in yourself."

Susanna then selected a parasol to match her dress, twirled it, and posed in the mirror until she noticed the clock on the wall. She was running late.

Susanna hurried from her dressing room but she absolutely had to see Dr. Brooke first. She knocked and entered his office, glowing with enthusiasm. Susanna was positively giddy.

"Dr. Brooke, I would like to thank you so much."

The curator smiled, "You will be terrific. Just remember, it takes a few tours to get your groove."

"Thank you. Thank you."

Susanna skipped along the paved walkway from the museum building which housed the administrative offices and dressing rooms, past the tents and artillery caissons and field pieces of the Civil War encampment to the restored stately manor for which she was now responsible. She opened the door, did a walk-through to verify all the furnishings were in good condition, logged the temperature and humidity,, then waited on the porch for the 10:00 tour.

The group assembled on the steps, two Asian couples, and a family of five on their way to Virginia Beach. Twirling her parasol, Susanna greeted her first tour group with a voice laced with mint juleps in the moonlight. "Good morning y'all. I am Miss Susanna Augusta Hairston of the Parker Plantation. Please make yourself welcome in our lovely home. I will be delighted to answer any questions that you may have."

Eight tours later, Susanna walked back to the museum building in a warm spring evening. The birds sang and the fireflies blinked. Susanna was never happier in her life, she thought to herself as she changed into her slacks and polo shirt and headed back towards Williamsburg.

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Each day for two weeks, Susanna couldn't wait to get to work, thrilled at the prospect of wearing a new dress and feeling more and more alluring each day. When people failed to appear, she would pore through the boxes of archival material that Dr. Brooke had given her to study. The boxes contained collections of old tintypes and newer photos, numerous letters, business receipts, and newspaper accounts.

One set of letters, strung together in a worn, faded, red ribbon particularly caught Susanna's attention. The letters were from Missy Hawkins, a slave who had lived on the plantation during the Civil War, but had learned to read and write after the war. Dating from the 1870s and 1880s, the letters constantly referred to the girls who worked for Ms. Hawkins in the house and to unnamed gentlemen callers, as they were euphemistically referred. The Parker Plantation was a bordello.

Not sure of her theory, Susanna researched the history of the site, looking for corroborating evidence. The Parkers abandoned the site in 1862 after McClellan's army landed on the Peninsula at Fortress Monroe, leaving the manor under the care of Hawkins. The enterprising and intelligent slave apparently then converted the building to a bordello that served both the Confederate and Union armies. Hawkins continued her enterprise for the next thirty years, recruiting girls from the local colleges, and some from even the finest local families to work for her. At her death, over forty ladies aged from their teens to their fifties honored her at the funeral, giving Hawkins a massive tomb with a marble sarcophagus and a triumphant angel.

The Parker Plantation actually was a bordello and fashionable young ladies worked there as whores for wealthy gentlemen. The thought teased Susanna, intriguing her as she conducted tours through its many rooms, or leaned against the porch railing enjoying the surroundings. She tried to imagine herself as one of the whores, waiting in the parlor like a beautiful ornament,

flirting with a handsome stranger, then giving herself over in wanton fury in the privacy of her bedroom. Susanna's budding lust became a distraction when a handsome man appeared for a tour; she occasionally would stumble on her words, but in a charming way that made her even more endearing to her public.

Living a cloistered, protective life had inhibited Susanna's libido, but now she felt it flowing ever faster, as a river that had been flooded beyond its banks with recent snowmelt. She had to do something. Susanna knew of an adult novelty shop nearby that she had never considered going to in the past. Nice girls didn't do that. But the current carrying her psyche in its grip was not nice and demanded an outlet.

As if it had a mind of its own, the RAV-4 drove to the store one night after work, leaving Susanna sitting frightened in the parking lot. "What if my teacher or somebody I know is in there? What if the FBI keeps tabs on the customers? What if a local news crew is doing an expose on the shoppers? What if the cashiers look on me like a pervert?"

Susanna drove away but in ten minutes found herself back in the parking lot in tears. She let out a deep breath and entered the store as if she was walking to her execution. A heavily tattooed and pierced girl of about twenty gave her a cheerful greeting.

"Is there anything I can help you with?"

"Oh no, just looking, but thanks."

The front of the store had lingerie on the racks and in boxes and Susanna perused the selections, becoming aroused at the thought of donning some of the ensembles. Susanna, however, had an objective, and eventually walked into the room containing what she sought.

Butt plugs and dildoes filled the shelves and counters in the smaller room, intimidating Susanna with the myriad of selections and the massive sizes. She finally selected a mid-sized butt plug, and walked to the cashier and her impending doom.

"You are going to need some lubricant for that, you know."

"Oh."

"Yep. Unless you want to kill yourself. Here, try this, and use a lot of it." The girl handed Susanna a tube of clear gel.

"Have a great night," the sales girl chirped, "but I know you will."

The sales girl was wrong. Susanna did not indulge that night. She brought her discreetly wrapped brown paper bag to work the next day. Stripping nude, she lubricated the plug and placed it on a chair. She positioned herself over the butt plug and squatted down. Susanna felt a sharp, burning pain, which quickly subsided into an overwhelming pleasure. With the plug impaling her and emanating pulses of lust throughout her body, Susanna struggled to remain coherent enough to dress herself for work.

The day was one of tortuous pleasure. Susanna's body shuddered, her eyes bulged, her breath escaped, and her cock constantly released underneath her hoop skirt as she attempted to escort the tour groups through the house. Her historical knowledge became jumbled and confused when she answered the guest's questions: "Yes, George Washington fought here against the English and the Russians; yes, John Smith married Pocahontas in the home; yes, Thomas Jefferson spent a month drafting the Declaration of Independence here; and yes, Bigfoot

was regularly viewed on the property since the 1600s."

Susanna closed up the plantation house and shamefully made her way back to the museum. As she passed the woods on part of the old battlefield, her spine went cold with dread. She felt like she was being watched and ran the quarter-mile back to the museum as fast as she could in a hoop skirt, corset, high heeled boots, impaled on a butt plug.

Two pairs of spectral eyes observed the young lady's panicky flight back to the safety of the museum. One pair of eyes was brown, kind, strong, but sad. The other set of eyes could flash as green as the Emerald Isle from whence they came and were perpetually laughing.

"Can you believe, Colonel, that they just kicked us out of Heaven?" Sergeant-Major Donovan Buckley rhetorically asked. "Me and the missus were tying one on, and I smelled a fight brewing."

"You have gotten in a fight every night that you have been in Heaven since 1864. I guess that is an Irishman's idea of Heaven. But I am happy that your wife came to you upon her demise."

"It's not a big thing, Colonel. I met her right outside the pearly gate while I was chatting with Pete. I saw her and told her, 'I have been waiting for you for fifty years, now make like a good woman and forget about those other husbands you had. Get me a beer and be prepared for some Buckley loving.' How could a lady of quality resist? And you, dear Colonel, is your idea of Heaven studying in the library for a degree you can never obtain and working as a lackey in Justice Holmes's law firm?"

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes had once been Lieutenant Holmes of the 20<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry and a friend of

Colonel Davis until the latter was killed in action at the Second Battle of Parker Plantation.

"To believe that lawyers still practice law in Heaven, and that there is work to keep them all busy."

"People complain about lawyers until they need us. Besides we did help you and your wife obtain that home overlooking the ocean."

"Many thanks, Colonel. So what do we do now that we are walking among mortal men again?"

"I want to see what has changed since that explosion."

"I know what hasn't changed now that I am back on earth, my ears can't stop ringing."

The two Union army phantoms waited for nightfall, enjoying the chirp of crickets and the soft glow of the sky at sunset. They then walked along the trail until they came to the Civil War encampment.

"I wish our equipment looked so neat and tidy, Colonel. I guess they are trying to represent a non-fighting unit with all these clean white canvas tents and soft army blankets."

"Who would pay money to see us as we really were, Sergeant-Major? We were a group of filthy, half-starved vagabonds and thieves."

The pair walked around the historic site for over an hour, marveling at the sleek and shiny horseless carriages with the rubber wheels that left the asphalted marshaling yard at impossibly high speeds. The specters even saw the pretty blonde girl drive away. She looked much calmer than before. Finally, the two phantom soldiers came upon an ivy-covered brick wall with

an iron gate and a United States flag flying inside the enclosure. The two phantoms instinctively knew what lay inside and felt compelled to climb the wall. On the other side lay rows of weathered white tombstones, many with familiar names, names forgotten for 150 years but now remembered, and two tombstones with names that were horrifyingly familiar.

"I didn't think they would find enough of us to bury."

That night, while the dead soldiers lay sleeping on the damp leaves, they felt something they had not felt in 150 years. They felt cold.

Wearing a deep blue dress to match her eyes and going bareheaded, Susanna walked to the plantation house the next morning. She did not feel the same dread as she had the night before. Occasionally, she would feel bursts of anxiety that she attributed to hormonal imbalances as the estrogen fought to win mastery over the testosterone. Last night was probably one of these episodes.

Susanna sweated in her dress, vigorously fanning herself while she stood on the porch waiting for her first group. She decided that she would go for a run that night after work as the evening promised to be beautiful and she would work up a sweat. The girl needed to clear her mind after yesterday's debauchery.

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