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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. This material is intended for persons over the age of 18 only.



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BIG, BEAUTIFUL AND TRANSSEXUAL

by E.B. Stevenson

One

Having been born into Bel-Air high society, I was expected to be one of the handsome, debonair boys of one of the wealthiest parts of Southern California. When I was younger, however, I was diagnosed with an attention deficit disorder. I was also a bit of an unruly character at times. I decided not to join in the family business; I chose to pursue a career as a photographer instead. I worked my way through college as a fashion model.

My father, Eric Stephen Burton, had made his fortune in real estate and entertainment. My mother, Karen Marie Court Burton, came from a well-to-do family; her mother made her fortune in the world of fashion. I was born Elton James Burton, the fifth of six children and the second youngest son.

My two older brothers, Eric and Kevin, followed my father into the family real estate business; they own ten luxury hotels throughout the West and two nightclubs in Los Angeles. Eric and Kevin attended a boarding school in Palm Springs; they would come home on the weekends. That's the same school my kid brother, Keith, was attending.

My two older sisters, Emily and Kate, went to an all-girls school in Beverly Hills. Emily went on to become an interior designer; Kate became a dress designer. On the other hand, my parents paid for the best tutors in the state for my education; I graduated from high school when I was seventeen. I went on to college and study photographic art; I graduated before I turned twenty-one.

It was a warm Saturday afternoon in early June. I was

twenty-four years old, a freelance photographer in Los Angeles for the past two years, working between modeling assignments. My family did not know I was modeling fashions for the larger woman while I wasn't behind the camera. Ever since I was two years old, I knew I should have been a girl. I put on Emily's Christmas dress when I was three years old. Emily, three years older than me, and Kate, a year and a half older, encouraged me to dress in their old dresses. As time went on, I would dress as a girl as often as I could while my parents and brothers were away from home. By the time I was eighteen, I could fit into a size 22W dress, 12D in women's shoes, and double extra large lingerie. At six feet, I was rather tall for a young woman, but average height for a young man. I had just received a job offer as a photographer for a top modeling agency in New York. That afternoon, I was looking over my modeling portfolio when my father came into my bedroom.

"Elton, could we have a talk?" he asked me.

"I can't see why not," I replied.

"I've heard that you've been offered a job in New York. Are you going to accept it?"

"I'm planning to accept the offer. I have to inform Ms. Astor by Tuesday."

"Your mother and I have been wondering about one thing. Those pictures you have been looking over. Is this of a young lady you're seeing behind our backs?"

"As a matter of fact, the pictures are of me. I've been keeping something from you and Mom for the last five years. I've been modeling women's clothes; more specifically, clothes for the larger woman." My mother came into the room just as I finished explaining the pictures to him. "Elton, I know you've been closer to your sisters than you've been to your brothers. You've been more effeminate in recent years. Do you feel more like a man or a woman?" she asked me.

"As a matter of fact, I've been feeling more like a woman lately. You probably know I've been seeing Dr. Anderson for therapy sessions the past few years. She told me that I am a woman trapped in a man's body," I replied.

"Elton, I've been talking about this with our lawyers, and I think you should accept the job in New York. They have authorized me to give you your trust fund, which we have built for you since you were born, and I'm prepared to sign the title to our apartment in Manhattan over to you. I know you want to live a different life from your brothers and sisters; if you decide to go through with the transition and surgery that will make you a woman, your mother and I will be very supportive. We're prepared to give you anything you need. Your sisters are very supportive of this as well; your brothers will take some time to get used to the possibility of having another sister in the family," my father added.

I got on the phone to Ms. Astor and told her that I was accepting the job. I also told her I would be in New York within a week. I checked the nest egg my parents gave me, and it amounted to \$20 million. I spent that Sunday afternoon packing up all my dresses, lingerie and wigs, as well as a week's worth of male attire and my worldly goods, into my Cadillac. Early that Monday morning, I would leave my parents' mansion in Beverly Hills, and head to New York to begin a new life.

I drove all day on Monday to Albuquerque, where I checked

into a hotel for the night. I decided not to splurge on a hotel room; I simply went to a nearby diner for dinner and relaxed in my hotel room. I departed from Albuquerque on Tuesday morning and drove all day to Oklahoma City. I stayed overnight on Tuesday in Oklahoma City before starting out for St. Louis on Wednesday morning. I made it to St. Louis late in the afternoon and checked into a hotel close to the transgender-friendly areas. I did a little shopping that evening; I needed a few more nighties and a couple of dresses for my new life as a woman. After an overnight stay, I left St. Louis on Thursday morning; I arrived during the late afternoon hours in Pittsburgh, where I would spend another night. After an overnight stay in Pittsburgh, I began the final leg of my journey to New York. I arrived in New York late in the afternoon, pulling into the parking lot of the apartment building I would be moving into.

I pressed the button to get a parking lot attendant. "May I help you?" he said in his New Jersey accent.

"The name is Burton. I'm a new resident in your building," I replied.

"Burton, Burton...here we are! You're in Apartment 424," he added.

I drove into the garage where I parked my car in the middle of three spaces marked for my new apartment. I remember spending many a summer in New York with my parents; all the times I used to window-shop for feminine fashions with my mother, all the sporting events I went to with my parents and the fashion shows I went to with my sisters. The apartment is the size of a small house in the suburbs and has three bedrooms. The place was already furnished; the pictures and other wall decorations came from my parents and their ancestors. This would be the place where I would begin a new life.

I had a bellhop's portable rack waiting for me at the entrance to the elevator; I walked over to get it to unload the trunk of my car. I put all of my boxes and bags on it and gently rolled the load of my personal effects toward the elevator. When the elevator door opened, I hauled my load into the elevator with me and took it to the fourth floor. My new apartment would be overlooking Greenwich Village, where my new workplace would be.

I already had a phone message waiting for me when I stepped into the apartment. "Elton, this is Dr. Anderson in Beverly Hills. I knew you were moving to New York, so I placed a call to Dr. Decker. She's a good friend of mine from my days at U.S.C. She's looking forward to meeting with you about your transition." I wrote down the phone number and put it in my portfolio.

I spent the weekend settling into my new apartment. I took great care to hang up my dresses, skirts, blouses and pants in the closet of the master bedroom. That took me the entire morning on Saturday. The afternoon was spent putting my lingerie and sleepwear into the dresser drawers, the makeup into the bathroom and setting up my jewelry boxes on the dresser. I went out to a nightclub Saturday night and saw a female impersonator show. I spent Sunday setting up the kitchen and putting my compact disc collection on the upper two shelves of my book case. I was finally settled in by late Sunday afternoon; I spent a little time on the balcony outside the apartment, taking in the view before the sun went down.

It was late Sunday night that the phone rang. "Hello?" I asked. It was my mother on the other end. "Are you settled in?" she asked me.

"I finished settling in this afternoon," I replied.

"When do you start your new job?"

"Tomorrow morning; I have to be at the studio at ten o'clock."

"Did you get the message from Dr. Anderson?"

"I did. I'm planning to call Dr. Decker before I leave for work."

"You're going to receive some papers this week. It's about your name change."

"I've decided to call myself Elissa June."

"If you had been a girl, I would have named you June. Elissa is a beautiful name, too. When you get these papers, sign them and send them back to our lawyers."

"I know it's late; thanks for calling me."

"I'm glad you made it to New York in one piece. You have a new life ahead of you."

After I hung up the phone, I took a bath before I put on a pair of canary yellow panties and a matching nightgown. Before I went to bed, I did my laundry. Just after ten o'clock, I went to bed for the first time in several months in women's attire.

<u>Two</u>

When I woke up at seven-thirty the next morning, I went to get my cameras and lenses ready for my first day at my new job. I prepared myself two sliced oranges and a cup of hot tea for breakfast. Around eight-thirty, I selected a red button-down shirt, khaki slacks, a pair of ankle-high socks and a pair of white sneakers, along with a white pair of G-string panties. I took a quick shower before I put on my panties, socks, sneakers and pants. Just after nine o'clock, I called Dr. Decker. I would have my first appointment at four o'clock Friday afternoon. When I got my shirt on, I picked up my camera bag from the couch in the living room and set out for the studio. I left for the studio in a taxi at nine-fifteen; I arrived at the studio at nine-thirty.

When I got there, I was greeted by a tall, slender, brunette-haired woman in a white floral print sundress and white flats. "Welcome to Astor Photography. May I help you?" she asked me.

"Ms. Astor is expecting me. My name is Elton Burton," I replied.

"It's a pleasure to meet you. I'm Rachel Nellis; I'm not only a receptionist, but I also do a bit of modeling here", she added.

"I'm the new photographer," I informed her.

I waited twenty-five minutes before Ms. Astor emerged from the door leading to the studio. She was in her late fifties, but looked no older than forty. She was five-eight, average build, with shoulder-length medium brown hair and wearing a lavender summer dress. "Elton Burton?" she asked me.

"I'm Elton Burton," I replied.

"I'm very pleased to meet you. My name is Vanessa Astor," she added before she shook my hand. I got up and followed her to her office. When we sat down, I gave her my portfolio.

"I'd take it this is all your work, Mr. Burton," Vanessa said.

"This is my photographic work. I worked not only with models, but I also took some scenic pictures," I added.

"Your work is so beautiful, especially the picture you took of Mount Whitney."

"I was twenty miles away when I took the picture."

"This model is absolutely beautiful. She looks very familiar."

"Her name is Laura Milton; she was on loan to the Los Angeles agency I was under contract to at the time I took this picture two years ago."

"Could we look at the other portfolio?"

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"Yes, you may."
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She looked at the second portfolio, and was in awe at what she saw. "The girl in the ball gown, the girl in the wedding gown, the girl in the pantsuit; are they the same girl?" she asked me.

"All of these girls are me. I modeled fashions for the larger woman to earn extra money," I replied.

"I also have paperwork indicating that you're planning to transition from man to woman. I will allow you to come to work as a woman just as soon as your Real Life Test is approved."

"I'll be working as a man, but living at home as a woman in the meantime."

"Your work is amazing. Your first assignment will be with a model; she went through what you're getting ready to go through. Her name is Stephanie; this is her first assignment since she had her operation five months ago. She's being made over for the shoot; Studio Four is set up for you." It was around ten-thirty that I walked over to Studio Four, where I set up my cameras. Out came a young woman, five-eleven, with a slender build and shoulder-length auburn hair. She was in a peach-colored party dress and matching satin high heels. "Elton, I'm Stephanie Burrell," she told me.

"It's a pleasure to meet you. Shall we start our shoot?" I asked her.

"Let's get this show on the road."

Over the next half hour, I would take over a hundred pictures of Stephanie. She had the poses and facial expressions down to a science; I was encouraged to get her to give a seductive look for my camera. She went back to the dressing room after the first part of the shoot, emerging fifteen minutes later in a white lace bustier, matching panties, lace-top stockings and high heels, carrying a parasol. I took some pictures with her carrying the parasol, and some without the parasol. The second part of the shoot wrapped up forty-five minutes later; she went back to her dressing room, emerging twenty minutes later in a pink ball gown. I was encouraged to take pictures of her with the skirt of her gown hiked to show her left leg, flashing a seductive smile. When we finished the third part of the shoot, she changed into a red pantsuit so we could go have lunch.

We sat down in the dining room at the studio; Vanessa had lunch catered. Stephanie selected a garden salad. I also went for the garden salad, but with a grilled chicken sandwich. We both filled our glasses with unsweetened iced tea before finding a table.

"I hear that you're getting ready to transition," Stephanie said as soon as we sat down. "You heard right. I'm preparing to transition from man to woman. I thought New York would be the perfect place to do it," I told her.

"Where are you from?" she asked me.

"I'm from Beverly Hills, California. I grew up in a wealthy family; my father made his fortune in real estate. I didn't want to be in the family business; I wanted to live life independently of my family. My two older brothers are in the family business; my kid brother is preparing to enter the business. I was closer to my two older sisters than I was to my two older brothers. Just a few months ago, I was diagnosed with gender identity disorder. My parents are supportive of my transition; they're looking forward to having a third daughter. I plan to change my name to Elissa when I start living full-time as a woman, hopefully in a few months," I replied.

"I'm from Kirkwood, Missouri. My parents gave me the name Jeffrey when I was born; I'm an only child. I'm a late manifestation case; I didn't realize I should have been a girl until I was eleven years old; I first put on one of my mother's dresses when I was twelve. I grew up in a middle class neighborhood; I worked mainly in offices as an administrative assistant after I graduated from high school. I started building my portfolio when I was in my twenties; it was when I got diagnosed with gender identity disorder when I was discovered by another model. I came to New York five years ago to not only work as a model, but also to transition from man to woman. I mainly modeled bridal and formal fashions during my transition; I adopted the name Stephanie when I started modeling; I went with my mother to Montreal when I had my operation five months ago. This is the first session since having my gender surgically reassigned," Stephanie explained.

"So, what will I be going through?" I asked her.

"When you get approved for the transition, the first thing you will start is the hormone therapy. You will be given female hormones; you will develop female breasts, your hips and buttocks will become wider. For at least a year, you will undergo the Real Life Test, in which you will be living, working and dressing full-time as a woman so there are no doubts as to your ability to socially and emotionally function in your new role. If you have successfully adapted to life as a woman, then you will be recommended for gender reassignment surgery. This will involve the removal of most of your male genitalia; the skin will be used to line your vagina. I'm glad I had the operation; my body is now in sync with my mind," she explained.

Once we finished lunch, Stephanie returned to the dressing room to change into a floral print summer dress. She had a whole bunch of different poses in mind; we had fun on this portion of the shoot. When we finished that part, it was getting close to four o'clock. The last portion of the shoot had Stephanie in a curve-hugging wedding gown with a short veil. Stephanie's favorite pose was with her blusher over her face, looking at her bouquet. When the shoot was finally over, Stephanie changed back into her pantsuit; we went to Vanessa's office to look at the pictures I took.

"Elton, you handle the camera very well. These pictures of Stephanie are absolutely flawless. Stephanie did a great job with these poses; she shows her feminine beauty flawlessly, especially for her first session since she had her sex surgically reassigned. Several of my clients are looking for photos to include in their advertising and magazine spreads; I'm sure we can be able to sell several of these. Make sure you make ten copies of the photos from this shoot, and put them on my desk before you leave tonight," she explained.

"What else do you need?" I asked her.

"We forgot to show you to your new office. Each photographer has his or her own office; you have two computers with huge high-definition screens to look at your work," Vanessa informed me before she directed me and Stephanie down the hall to my new office. While it had windows with a view of Manhattan, the shades were closed while I looked at my photographic work. I was given the key to my new office, walked in and sat down. I looked at the office for a moment before I started the computer on my new desk. When I signed in, I was able to get the pictures transferred from my laptop computer to the computer I switched on in the office. I made ten copies of the pictures I took with Stephanie. When I set them on Vanessa's desk shortly after six o'clock, I was headed back for the apartment. I changed from my male attire into a pink shirt dress, relaxing with some Celtic music before I changed into a white camisole and turned in for the night.

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