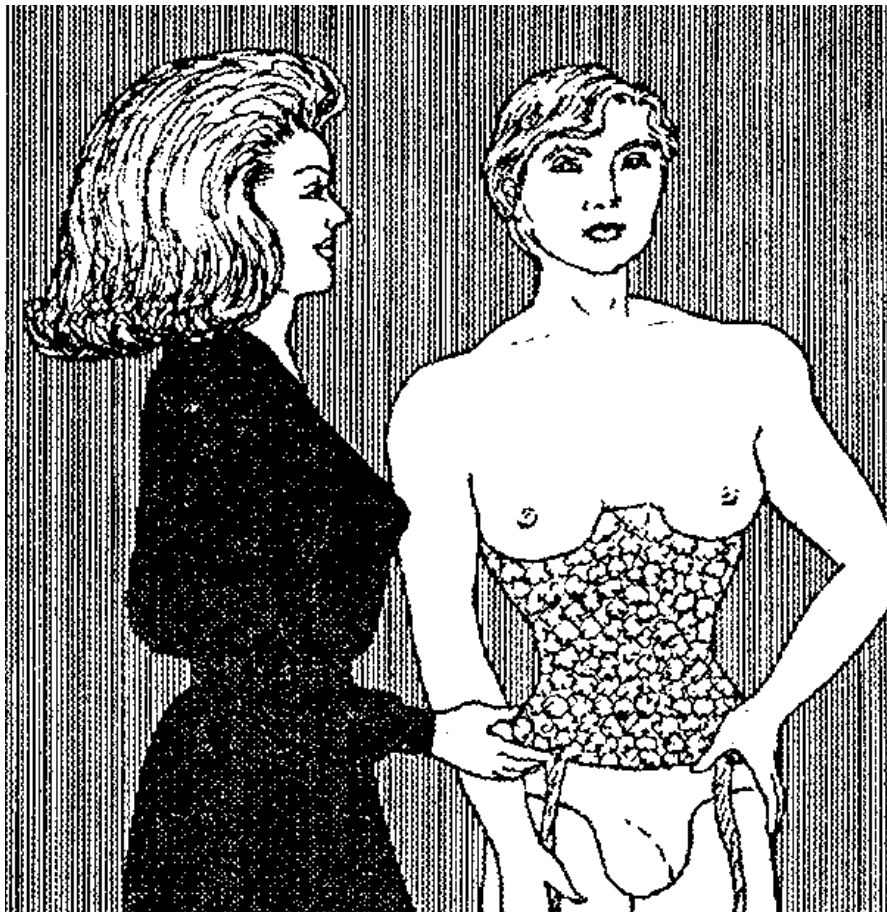


FATE

By Ellen Lee



ILLUSTRATED BY BRIAN DUKEHART

AN 'ADULT TV' NOVEL

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FATE

By ELLEN LEE

“FATE! A FINAL RESULT OR CONSEQUENCE...AN OUTCOME”

Linda came rushing through the door, with that excited look I love so much.

“Are you ready dear?” she said addressing me. “We don't want to be late for the festivities.”

She circled me with a critical eye.

“That dress needs a little something by way of a pin to trim it up.”

She got one from the jewelry box and pinned it just above my left breast. She stood back and took in the entire picture I made and smiled with satisfaction. Giving me a hug and a cheek to cheek kiss, she glowed, “You look beautiful and we will be very proud of you tonight as always.”

I walked over to the full length mirror and saw what appeared to be an attractive woman in her early twenties, though I was actually twenty eight.

She was wearing a simple black dress, trimmed by the pin Linda had installed, held in at her narrow waist by a black patent belt. Her hair and make up were perfect, and her sheer black stockings and black patent pumps completed the picture.

‘Yes,’ I thought, ‘I have come a long way.’

I grabbed my purse, donned a coat and we got into our waiting limo, to make our way down the mountain, as Marion joined us.

We were all good drivers but on occasions like this when we went somewhere together we always used our limo.

I smelled my perfume mingling with theirs, and looked at my hands with the perfectly sculptured crimson nails.

‘Every inch a woman,’ I thought and my mind drifted back to the beginning.

CHAPTER I: FATE...see what I mean.

I first met Linda Nash in Amesville at the funeral. I was there by invitation to eulogize the deceased. Tim Colby had been my closest friend and buddy, who had unfortunately been killed in a stupid shipboard accident. We were in the U.S. Navy. and our ship was in port at San Diego when it happened. His body was shipped back to Amesville for interment.

We were called Mutt and Jeff, after some comic strip characters by our shipmates, because of the difference in our height. He was six foot two while I was just five foot seven. We were just finishing our first hitch, when we decided civilian life was more attractive to us than sailing the Bounding Main. As I had no family we decided I would

accompany him home to his family's farm, which was about 20 miles from Amesville, where we would then formulate plans for our assault on the business world. His parents asked me to stay with them as long as I wished. We were all shattered over his death and knowing Tim and I were as close as brothers, his parents asked me to eulogize him at the funeral service. Thus I got emergency leave and arrived on the day of the funeral.

Tim and I had been a couple of swordsmen and after the girls at every stop our ship made. It was sort of a competition to see which us scored first and we both had our share of winning. I recalled how aggravated I was when I picked up a beautiful Asian girl in Singapore, only to find when I got to her room she was a boy/girl, very popular in Asia. I lied to Tim, never telling him what I had picked up.

'Any guy who wants to be a girl is nuts,' I thought.

How wrong could I be.

While having coffee after the service Mrs. Nash and Linda introduced themselves and complimented me on my eulogy.

I introduced myself as Frank Morrison, from Chicago, but I hadn't been there for four years. We talked for while and I kept looking at Linda who was a very attractive girl of about my age, 22. We found we had a lot in common. Her mother Mrs. Nash looked a very well preserved forty, more or less. Both dressed very smartly, so I wasn't surprised to find that Mrs. Nash owned a women's ready to wear shop. Little did I realize what an influence these women would eventually have on my life.

I told them about the plans Tim and I had and of our great hopes for the future. We were going to apply for sales jobs with the largest company in Amesville, Acme Manufacturing Co.

"Why that's where I work," Linda stated. "I'm assistant to the Director of Sales. Are you coming back to Amesville now that Tim is gone?"

"There's no reason to return here," I answered. "Tim had told me so much about Amesville I felt I was part of it. I had really wanted to start here anew and put down roots. But I guess that dream is over. Maybe I'll re-enlist for another hitch."

"Well," Linda said, "if you do come back and want me to I'll be happy to talk to my boss and set up an interview for you."

Mrs. Nash offered to give me a lift back to the bus depot in Amesville, but when we got to there my information as to the bus schedule was wrong. It had come and gone and the next one was due at 7 A.M. the following morning. They offered to put me up for the night, which I accepted gratefully. It would save me the cost of the motel and meals, and frankly I didn't want to spend a lonely evening in a strange town.

Their home was beautiful and well kept, and seemed much too big for their needs. All the rooms were large, and were warm and comfortable despite the raw November weather. They lit a fire in the fireplace, and offered me a drink. I took a beer.

In the ensuing conversation Linda told me of her job, and about her mother's shop.

I pretended I was interested, when my only interest was Linda, so I listened. Mrs. Nash was very proud of it and explained that she carried a full line of woman's clothing and was located in the only shopping center in town. It was so successful, that she had plans to expand and open more stores in different towns close by. Her excitement was catching and I too got enthusiastic. I decided she had what it would take to be a great success, and I told her so. Again, little did I know I too, would be a part of that success.

There was no Mr. Nash, he evidently took off shortly after Linda was born, and eventually Mrs. Nash divorced him. Linda was an only child, and Mrs. Nash was the provider and sole support until Linda got her job at Acme three years ago. Now they were doing very well and felt quite secure.

During a delicious dinner I felt so contented and at ease that I said, "I think I've made a decision. When I get my discharge I am coming back to Amesville. If everyone is as nice as you two, this is the place to be."

Linda asked, "would you like me to arrange for a job interview with my boss when you get back"?.

I accepted her offer with thanks and we agreed that upon my leaving the Navy the following month I would come to Amesville, stay with them and interview for the job.

When it was time to retire Mrs. Nash showed me to the guest room, and realizing I had no sleepwear, she brought me one of her new nightgowns made of warm flannel.

"You and I are about the same size, so this should fit," she said handing it to me.

I must have grimaced for she said, "I hope you aren't going to pull the Macho routine and refuse to use this, as being unmanly. You can wash your underwear and socks so they'll be dry in the morning. At least they'll be clean for your trip back. This is all we have for you to sleep in. I had enough macho with my ex-husband, so sleep in this and no arguments."

I didn't want to aggravate her as she had not only been kind to offer it, but I would be back living with them in two months. So I spent that night in a nightgown. And from that humble beginning I am now, to all intents and purposes, a woman. The nightgown felt strange and kept riding up to my hips, but was warm and I slept well.

Linda and her mother awakened me in the morning, fed me and got me to the bus stop in time, and thus by nightfall I was back at the base in San Diego.

The next month passed quickly, and despite some nice offers from the Navy to serve another hitch, I left with an honorable discharge. I often wonder what fate would have had in store for me had I stayed in the Navy. It's five years since I came back and I'm happy with the way things turned out. So are Linda and Mrs. Nash, whom I love so dearly. We are today a family, as close as can be.

When I got off the plane in Lincoln City, my suit case with all my belongings was missing including the presents I had bought for Linda and her mother... It was either in San Diego or still on the plane.

I filed the lost baggage report and hopped the bus for Amesville, where I was met by Mrs. Nash, who took me to her home.

While waiting for Linda to come home, she told me some good news..Linda's boss would interview me, and when Linda got home she greeted me warmly, I realized how much I had missed them both. Linda seemed more beautiful than I remembered, and I was very happy to see her again.

They were now the only family I had, and to celebrate I insisted that I take them out to dinner, as I had all my discharge money and wanted to return in a small way, the kindness they had shown me.

During dinner Linda told me I had a nine o'clock appointment the next morning to meet her boss, John Simms, so on getting home we talked for a short time and then we retired.

As everything I owned was in the lost suitcase, Mrs. Nash brought me the nightgown I had used on the previous visit along with one of her robes and backless slippers to wear, cautioning me again not to go macho on her.

I had to tread carefully as she evidently hated any display of exaggerated masculinity...as her ex-husband had shown.

I awakened at seven the next morning, bathed and found that the underwear and socks I had washed when I went to bed were still damp.

When Mrs. Nash exhorted me to hurry or I would be late, I told her of the problem.

Since I had no clothing, but what I had arrived in, she brought some of some clean fresh unfeminine cotton underwear, underpants and a top, not unlike my own, except of course no fly and thinner shoulder straps. Navy regulation called for skivvy shirts, but I never did like them so I bought civilian tops to wear. When she handed the underwear to me her look cautioned me to accept them with no comment.

I would have to explain to John Simms about my missing suitcase, thus the uniform. I would be shopping later that day, to replace the lost items. I vowed that the first purchases would be underwear and pajamas, stop wearing Mrs. Nash's things.

John Simms was a personable guy about the same age as Mrs. Nash. He hired me and told me I would have to spend three weeks at the plant learning the manufacturing process for the items I was to sell, plus being trained in sales techniques by their personnel department.

I almost laughed when he said he looked forward to having a Navy vet join the company as they needed some good masculine men in the organization, and there I was wearing women's underwear and I had slept in a woman's nightgown, and had worn a feminine robe and slippers that morning.

As it was Friday, we agreed that I would report to work the following Monday, which gave me Saturday to buy some civilian clothes. He turned me over to the shop foreman, who gave me a tour of the plant for the next several hours. As I left his office Linda gave me a wink and a smile, knowing I had been hired.

When Linda came home I told the women all that had transpired and we agreed that the next order of business was for me to shop for new clothes at the Mall in the morning.

"I'll get out of your hair and find an apartment as soon as I get my first paycheck," I told them, and until then I insisted they allow me to pay for my room and board.

Mrs. Nash said, "we'll discuss that later, and it's time you called me Marion rather than Mrs. Nash."

I looked at Linda and she smiled her approval.

The following morning, Marion drove me to the Mall, and prior to the opening at 10:00 A.M. she showed me through her own shop. She had two girls working for her and when they arrived I sat in the office while they all got organized for the Saturday business.

At ten all the stores opened and Marion took me a short distance and introduced me to the owner of a men's store, and asked him to give me the courtesy discount.

I purchased suits, slacks, and jackets. I had just enough money to pay for them and carried the packages to Marion's store. I hoped they would find the missing suitcase, as I could at least use that underwear and socks if nothing else. I still needed many other items, an extra pair of shoes, shirts, underwear, pajamas etc.

Marion insisted on loaning me money to purchase the shirts and socks and said she could furnish underwear from her store to save me money until I got paid. "Besides, when they locate your suitcase you'll have what you need."

She gave me some money and sent me on my way. When my shopping was completed, Marion told me to put all my purchases in her car and to take them home, and instructed me, "You and Linda have dinner together and pick me up here at nine, when we close."

Returning home Linda wanted to see what I had bought, and to celebrate I took off the old uniform, and donned civilian clothing for the first time in four years. I had spent all my money plus most of what Marion had loaned me.

I told Linda, "I'm out of money, but as soon as I get enough to repay your mother, and contribute what I'll owe for board and room, I am taking you out on the town for a wonderful dinner."

She said she'd hold me to the promise.

I was probably falling in love with her then and didn't realize it. I'm sure it wasn't very likely that she felt anything for me. As beautiful as she was I was sure she had every guy in town after her.

We picked Marion up at nine and she got in the car carrying a good size box which she gave to me on reaching home and told us it was underwear from the shop!

When I started getting pay checks I could repay her. Later on I could purchase my own things. From that day to this I haven't worn anything but women's under clothing.

And so the next three weeks passed quickly, me wearing women's underwear, sleeping at night in nightgowns, and wearing robes and slippers that would satisfy the needs of any young woman.

I was busy at the plant learning.

Linda and I saw each other on many occasions each day and had our daily lunch together.

At the end of my three week period, they sent me out with the top salesman of the company, whose territory was such that he could be home every night. Another week and I was pronounced by John Simms, "ready for the road".

As the newest man on the sales team I was given the worst territory covering parts of three states, not so good. And also not so good was the fact that I had to buy a new car which put me so badly in debt that my dreams of getting my own apartment went out the window. I would have to stay with Marion and Linda as long as they would have me, or until my commissions worked their way up to adequacy.

I would leave Monday mornings and return Friday afternoons or evening. I had a list of potential customers to call on and a list of established ones to service.

Marion loaned me a suitcase and packed it for me as I couldn't get the hang of it. Early Monday, they wished me luck and gave me a hug and a kiss as I left for my great adventure on the road. After driving and calling on trade all day, I checked into a recommended motel, had dinner, did my paper work and undressed to retire. Looking through the suitcase I found a very pretty nylon nightie, with a note from Marion and Linda, bidding me success and pleasant dreams.

'What the hell,' I thought. *'Why not?'*

I was used to sleeping in these things and I liked the one they packed. It was rose color with a lace panel down the front, and a little lace trim on the very short sleeves and neck.

Looking further into the suitcase I discovered not only the nightgown but a matching peignoir and a pair of white backless slippers with little rosettes on the each toe.

I figured Marion was testing my "macho" again. I'd just take it in stride and show her she couldn't scare me out, as I had to keep her happy. I bathed and put the new items on.

They felt soft and cool and I had to look in the mirror.

The entire outfit thrilled me and I tried to picture Linda wearing it, and suddenly I got hard and had to relieve myself.

I wondered why Marion had packed this outfit for me to wear. Did she think I would enjoy wearing these feminine items, or was she testing me, or was she fulfilling some sort of desire of her own? Did Linda know about this, and was she laughing at me?

I didn't dwell on the subject as I had get to bed for an early start in the morning. My next stop was a town 150 miles away, and I had two old inactive accounts to call on and one of our best established accounts.

In the morning when I took the days wear out of the suitcase and found a clean shirt and socks, but also found that instead of the utilitarian women's underwear, they had packed new nylon panties and chemise in white, and these were more feminine from the standpoint of texture and design. No lace or frills, but more feminine

than the others I had worn. I had no choice but to wear them, and reminded myself to keep my suit jacket on so the shoulder straps wouldn't be easily seen.

I was puzzled. *What were they trying to accomplish?*

When I arrived at the next stop that morning I called the plant to give the order I had dredged up yesterday from an inactive account to Linda, who would route it through the channels. She congratulated me on the order and Simms got on the phone to do the same.

After I finished the business with her she asked how I had slept.

A pointed question and I replied, "very comfortably. Very relaxed".

We were both referring to the sleepwear. I thanked her for her thoughtfulness, "and be sure to thank Marion for me"

Neither of us wanted to say more on the phone, but we both knew whatever they had planned had been a success.

And so the balance of the week passed. Town to town, calling on the trade, glad-handing, and luckily writing some good sized orders, which were the talk of the plant and more than was expected of me on my first trip.

At 2:00 P.M. Friday, I finished my last call, and headed the car back home, arriving in Amesville about 5:30 P.M.

Linda arrived home as I pulled into the drive. A big hug from her and gushing congratulations on the orders I got. Marion kept the store open on Friday night, so after unpacking and tossing my soiled clothing into the washer, we made dinner and waited for Marion who arrived about 9:30. She had eaten dinner at the Mall, but both of them wanted a play by play of my trip.

I told them everything, but didn't mention the underwear and night clothes, waiting for one of them to ask.

Finally Marion asked, "did the new things I packed for you fit okay? They were close-outs but they are of very good quality. By wearing them you saved money and they are a write off for me."

I told her they were just fine, and I figured I'd be able to repay her for the loan and cost of the clothes in about three months. And maybe the air line would find my suitcase, with my other things in it, but I thought, *'who needs them. I hope they never show up.'*

Was I nuts I wondered..did I really like wearing these things so much?

Saturday morning Marion woke me and said breakfast was ready.

"I'll be up and dressed in about ten minutes," I told her.

"Come now while it's hot," she ordered. "Just put on your new peignoir and slippers. I want to see how they fit anyway to make sure I'm getting the proper sizes for you."

I figured how bad can it be ..they picked the stuff out and wouldn't dare laugh. So I went down to breakfast in peignoir, and slippers, after washing up and combing my hair.

They looked at me critically and I felt some embarrassment, but remembered Marion's caution about "macho" and carried on as though it was the most natural thing for me to wear these feminine clothes. Today I can't think of wearing anything else. I was put at ease after Marion had me walk and turn for her and she expressed satisfaction that she had guessed at the correct sizes.

"By the way," she told me, "you are size 14, and if you lose a little weight you could be a 12.

Marion had to be at the store as Saturday was the busiest day of the week. When she left Linda and I cleaned up the breakfast things and we were about to go to our rooms to bathe and dress when the phone rang. It was the air line calling to tell me that they found my suitcase in Trenton, New Jersey, and had shipped it to Lincoln City, where I could pick it up at will.

I asked Linda to come with me to get it.

"If you'll help me with the housework when we get back. Saturday is cleaning day, and it's left to me so Marion can be at the store," she said.

I readily agreed and shortly afterward we were off to Lincoln City. On our return to Amesville with the suitcase safely tucked in the trunk, I suddenly pulled over to the side of the road and looked at Linda for a second and then leaned over and attempted to kiss her lightly on the lips.

She turned her head so I got her on the cheek.

"Why did you do that?" Linda inquired.

"Because I think I am falling in love with you, and I just tried to show how much you and Marion have meant to me. I am happier now than I've ever been, and you are the major reason."

We remained silent for the last part of the trip both with our own thoughts. On our return we cleaned the house,(no I didn't suddenly blossom out with a maids uniform) and waited for Marion's arrival.

We had dinner and afterward we all donned our night clothes for comfort, and watched television.

I didn't mention the suitcase in trunk of my car. I didn't want to use anything in it except my shoes, and the presents I had intended giving them when I first arrived. To heck with the underwear. I was becoming addicted to the soft feel of feminine things and really no longer felt strange in them, but looked forward to anything new that Marion brought home. I also felt closer to them both and they seemed to accept me as one of the family.

Before retiring Marion gave me a box in which was another new peignoir and gown outfit, in mint green, stating that it was old stock. She had remarked previously that the original slippers with the rosettes didn't do the dusty Rose outfit justice, as the slippers were white. On this night when she gave me the new outfit she also had in-

cluded a pair of silver mules, with little one inch heels stating, "you can wear these with both your peignoirs."

At their suggestion I went to my room and changed into the new outfit, and the mules. Looking in the mirror, I suddenly smiled with happiness, and realized that Linda and Marion liked me dressed in these things as much as I did. It didn't make sense, yet the germ of an idea crept into my mind. I would ask Marion about it some other time. When I returned to the living room I gave them the present I brought from San Diego. They thanked me and of course once again kissed me. I had more kissing in a month than I did the previous ten years.

And so the days became weeks and the weeks became months. The routine established that first month was followed with regularity. I fell more deeply in love with Linda, and our time together became more meaningful, yet though she seemed more relaxed I sensed she was holding something back. She still wouldn't let me kiss her. I began to talk about marriage once I had established myself financially. She smiled, but said nothing. Maybe I wasn't manly enough in her eyes..maybe my wearing the things that Marion brought for me turned her off. Yet she expressed only good will and shared my happiness with each new item I wore. I was confused.

I picked up more and more business from old and new customers and made enough to repay Marion for the loan. I had money in the bank and kept the car payments up. We all agreed that I should continue to live with them, but I insisted they allow me to pay for a third of the coast of maintaining our mutual home.

On my return from the next trip, after I had repaid Marion for the loan, I told Linda that I was going to make good on my promise to take her out for dinner at the best place in town. As it was a Friday, Marion had to be at the store and encouraged us to enjoy the evening.

On our return home, we both "slipped into something comfortable". Sitting on the sofa, I kissed her. She was tense but returned my kiss shyly, but it was a start. I decided I had to talk to Marion soon, because Linda liked me..maybe even loved me, yet she stayed at a distance. I felt she wanted to further our love and eventual marriage, but something was holding her back.

When Marion came home Linda remarked that she had had a trying day and was going to bed early. Marion sat down in the chair opposite the sofa and looked at me and I knew she was about to say something of importance.

I felt a little foolish sitting there in my mint green outfit and silver mules, while Marion was still in the suit she had worn at the store.

She looked at me and said, "Linda and I decided it was time to talk to you. We know you are in love with her, and she tells me she loves you too. The most natural thing to do now would be to get engaged and set the wedding date. But we feel it's time for a talk to set the record straight. We don't want you to get your hopes up too far.

"You see she was married for a short time several years ago. She very much in love with this man, and after a very short courtship they married, though I tried to caution her.

"I too had married in haste.