



*Reluctant Press* presents:

# Working Girls

Jennifer Lauren



ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHAS

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**A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL**

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# Working Girls

By Jennifer Lauren

## CHAPTER ONE

Angela Bradford flopped herself down on the worn sofa, turned on the television, and started clicking through the channels. Finding nothing of interest, she yawned and turned the TV off. “I am SO bored!” Angela sighed, getting up from her warm place on the sofa and crossing the drafty hardwood floor in her bare feet. She grabbed a blanket from the closet and wrapped it around herself as she sat down in front of her computer.

It was January in Boston and the outside temperature hovered only a few degrees above zero. It was also freezing inside the small townhouse apartment she shared with her friend, Kelly. The gas had been turned off the day before because they couldn’t pay the bill. If it wasn’t for the small electric heater Angela had beside her computer desk, she would probably freeze to death!

Angela was in her late twenties and had long, wavy brown hair. She was 5’4” tall and weighed 118 lb.. Her big brown eyes seemed to convey an exotic innocence; she was very intelligent and passionate about the fast-paced life of a Paralegal.

Kelly, her best friend and confidant, had known Angela since the fourth grade. She had long, straight blonde hair that fell to the middle of her back. She was a couple of inches shorter than Angela at 5’2”, and weighed barely a hundred pounds soaking wet! She was blessed with the most beautiful almond-shaped blue eyes which seemed to reflect her confidence and sense of adventure.

Angela and Kelly had moved to Boston from a small town outside of Nashville, Tennessee. They were used to warmer weather when they arrived in Boston the previous fall, looking for work. Angela was a Paralegal and Kelly a Legal Secretary

by trade, but neither of them were able to find jobs in their fields, even though they had ten years experience between them, working in a legal aid office.

But that seemed years ago rather than a few short months. The two of them had grown discouraged pounding the frozen pavement and braving the snowstorms in search of work. They had pooled their savings in hopes of beginning a new life in Boston and now, with no job possibilities in sight, they were down to their last few hundred dollars. As Kelly slept, Angela logged on to the computer and searched for jobs.

Life seemed so much less complicated when they worked for the small legal aid office a half hour outside of Nashville. The town where they lived and worked had fewer than ten-thousand people and everyone knew everyone, it seemed. Things were very different there. Very different indeed. That was because Angela and Kelly were actually men!

They both really enjoyed their jobs, and were very good at them. But that didn't matter in a profession almost entirely made up of women! And even though they had proven themselves highly competent employees, they were constantly harassed and ridiculed by the attorneys for whom they worked! And to make matters even worse, most of the people in town suspected that they were gay, and treated them cruelly and with contempt.

Neither of the men dated or seemed to have an interest in the opposite sex, and mostly kept to themselves. This behavior only fueled the intolerance they experienced from their coworkers and the other people in town. They had tried since high school to fit into the mold society demanded of young men, but were unsuccessful in the attempt.

As far back as the fourth grade, the two had been teased and made fun of by their classmates. They had always been considerably shorter than other boys their age, and neither had any interest in doing the things boys usually did.

Both Angela and Kelly knew they were different. And whenever they tried to express the feminine side of their personalities, it was met with resentment and disdain from their parents and schoolmates. So they learned to hide their feelings and real personalities from everyone but each other. They were pretty successful, most of the time anyway.

Angela had always wanted to be a girl, ever since she was about eight years old. She felt awkward and out of place as a boy, and used to lie in bed at night and pray that she would wake the next day and be the girl she always knew herself to be. But, of course, she would always wake up the same as when she went to bed. A frustrated, confused and lonely little boy, she was envious of her older sister Robin, who always got to wear pretty clothes and do fun "girl" things with their mother.

Kelly's life was similar, growing up with two older sisters. She always wanted to join in with them when they played with their Barbie dolls or had tea parties. But her sisters never let her, insisting that boys didn't do those sorts of things. One thing that Angela and Kelly had in common was they both were very close to their mothers and craved the kind of relationship that mothers and daughters shared.

The only thing the two of them could count on was each other. They understood each other's thoughts and feelings, and they would often talk for hours about how much they wished they could be female and be treated as such by their parents and society.

By the time they graduated from high school and were in college, they decided to do something about their situation. They began acquiring female clothing, wigs and makeup and joined a transgender group in Nashville. There they met others who also felt out of place and "lost" in their born gender. And they learned how to dress properly and how to apply makeup to create the women they knew themselves to be.

After some practice, Angela and Kelly began to go out in public with some of their TS friends, dressed as women. Since they were both rather small and effeminate, they "passed" easily and soon their feminine personalities flourished and grew. They were both so much happier and at ease when they were women, so much so that they both began to see a local Psychologist who specialized in working with people with gender identity conflicts.

Within a year, Angela and Kelly had both obtained prescriptions for Premarin, a female hormone that feminized their bodies and caused their breasts to grow. After graduation from college, they began working for the small legal aid office. They worked as men because they had to. Everyone knew them by their given names, Paul and Steven, and they couldn't risk losing their jobs and, possibly, their lives by crossing over to the female gender in such a small, judgmental community.

But after work, they would drive to Nashville, change their clothes at a friend's house, and become Angela Bradford and Kelly Clark! Nashville was a big city, and few people there knew them, so they were able to start living their lives as females there. They began electrolysis treatments which removed unwanted hair from their faces and bodies, and Angela began seeing a voice therapist who helped her learn how to sound more feminine. Angela then taught Kelly what she had learned, and eventually they both could go anywhere, day or night, and "pass" as women!

After experiencing what it was like to live as women, Angela and Kelly decided to leave Tennessee, move to Boston and start living and working as women full-time. So they quit their jobs and moved, hoping to find work after they got settled in. But jobs in the legal field were few and far between, and neither had any luck. Angela came close to being hired, but when the law firm ran a background check, they discovered that she was not who she said she was, and they declined to hire her.

After learning that they couldn't legally get documentation representing their new identities, the girls got new ID's and Social Security Cards through the "black market." But neither of them could find work and times were becoming desperate. They were down to their last few hundred dollars in savings, and were unsure about what to do next. They couldn't return to where they had come from. Too many people back there knew them.

Some of their TS acquaintances had suggested that they try working in the escort business, a glorified name for prostitution, and neither Angela nor Kelly wanted to go there. They had to find something, and soon!

Angela checked the local bulletin boards, the same ones she had searched every day since they arrived in Boston. Nothing. Again. "Damn!" she cursed as she took her last cigarette from a pack of Marlboros and lit it. On a whim, feeling she had absolutely nothing to lose at this point, she broadened her search to include the West Coast. She scrolled down a long list of employment opportunities in the legal field, stopping to read only those pertaining to Legal Secretaries or Paralegals. Nothing really stood out until she neared the bottom of the page. "Hmmm...now *this* sounds interesting..." she said out loud, taking a drag from her cigarette. The ad read:

LEGAL SECRETARY & PARALEGAL INVESTIGATOR WANTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS SAN FRANCISCO LAW FIRM. MUST BE EXPERIENCED IN ALL ASPECTS OF CIVIL LAW OFFICE PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENT PREPARATION. SALARY DEPENDING UPON EXPERIENCE. Reply to [tlclaw@cybernet.com](mailto:tlclaw@cybernet.com).

After studying the ad, Angela shrugged her shoulders. "Oh well, what have we got to lose?" she said in a low voice while she prepared to send her and Kelly's resumes. She quickly typed a cover page and a letter of interest, attached them to an e-mail and sent them off.

Angela heard the bedroom door open and Kelly walked into the kitchen, poured herself a cup of coffee before returning to the living room. "It's freezing in here!" Kelly remarked as she sat cross-legged on the sofa, taking a sip of the strong, black coffee that Angela had made earlier that morning. "Find anything?"

"Nothing around here, as usual," Angela mused, getting up from the computer and crossing the icy cold floor to sit on the sofa next to Kelly. "But I found a possibility."

"Where at?" Kelly yawned, setting her cup down on the table and stretching. "San Francisco," Angela answered matter-of-factly. "San Francisco? You can't be serious."

Kelly replied, making a sour face. "I am completely serious! Besides, we haven't found shit here!" Angela retorted. "It's a well-respected civil law firm, and they are looking for legal secretaries and paralegals. I sent them our resumes, but I'm not getting my hopes up."

Kelly took another sip of her coffee and shivered. "Well, right now, ANYTHING would be better than this!" Angela got up, went into the kitchen and took some eggs and bacon from the refrigerator. As she began preparing breakfast for the two of them, she let her mind wander; trying to imagine what San Francisco would be like this time of year.

After breakfast, Angela and Kelly decided to take a walk down by the waterfront. Although it was very cold, the sky was clear and the sun was shining. The two of them put jeans on over long-johns, and pulled on heavy sweaters to ward off the chill in the air

As they left their small apartment and started walking in the direction of the bay, they sidestepped several street vendors who tried unsuccessfully to interest the girls in their wares.

Most were peddling cheap watches and jewelry, stuffed animals and candy. Angela and Kelly refrained from carrying their purses on these walks about the city, preferring to carry a little money and their ID's within their bras where they would be safe from the numerous thieves and purse-snatchers that prowled the streets day and night. As they walked down the crowded sidewalk, slipping and sliding on the ice as they went, they were still amazed by the sheer size of the buildings around them.

As they neared the waterfront, they could smell the salt air from the bay, mixed with the scent of cooking crabs and seafood. The wind picked up as they walked along the waterfront, and it seemed to cut right through them like a knife! They ducked into a small café and bought a cups of chowder to warm them up, before continuing their trek down the wharf. This would be the only part of the city that Angela would truly miss if they moved again. The cry of the gulls, the smell of fresh French bread baking, the beautiful sunrises. She thought that she could tolerate all the negative aspects of the city if she could only get her career going again.

But without gainful employment in the field she loved so much, nothing else really mattered. Kelly was beginning to think that she could make it in Nome, Alaska, if she was doing legal work again. The girls hardly spoke at all, preferring to take in the sights and sounds of the bay. They stood and watched fishermen unloading their morning catch along the wind-swept docks, bundled against the cold in heavy coats and gloves.

When they could take no more of the cold, the girls headed back towards their apartment, relishing the thought of huddling around the small electric heater when they got back. They both silently prayed things would get better...soon!

## CHAPTER TWO

When Angela and Kelly got back to their apartment, they turned on the small heater and sat around it, thawing their frozen fingers. Then while Kelly turned on the TV, Angela decided to check her e-mail. She logged on and saw that there were three new messages in her inbox. Crossing her fingers, she held her breath and opened her mail. The first and second letters were those irritating "You've Won!" letters everyone deletes, not wanting to waste her time on the scams. But the third one was from TLC Law!

It read:

Dear Ms. Bradford,

Thank you for your inquiry and resume. After reviewing your experience and credentials, I would like to interview you and Ms. Daniels tomorrow at 10 AM over the phone. If this time would be convenient for you and Ms. Daniels, please reply to this letter ASAP.

Ms. Clark  
Office Manager  
TLC Law, Inc.

Angela showed the letter to Kelly, who was slightly skeptical. “What do you think?” Kelly asked, rereading the letter to make sure it said what she thought it said. “I’m not getting my hopes up, but it sounds legitimate to me!” Angela answered, as she typed a response. “Well, we’ve got nothing to lose at this point!” Kelly shrugged. “My thoughts exactly!” Angela responded. “I guess we’ll just see what tomorrow brings.”

The girls went to bed early that night. Angela lay in her bed trying not to think about their interview the next morning, but it was impossible to block it from her mind. She thought about how great it would be to work in her chosen profession again, and to be accepted as a woman with intelligence and talent. She wondered what it would be like to live in San Francisco and to wear pretty clothes again instead of the long-johns and sweaters they were forced to wear during the winter in Boston. She drifted off to sleep, wondering and hoping.

The next morning came quickly. Angela took a long, hot shower as if she was preparing for an in-person interview. When she finished and got dressed, she could smell bacon cooking in the kitchen, and fresh coffee. She went in and sat at the table, grateful that it was Kelly’s turn to prepare breakfast that morning and not her’s. “Coffee?” Kelly asked, pouring herself a cup. “Just pour it in my eyes, it works faster!” Angela replied sleepily. Kelly poured her friend a cup and set it down in front of her, returning to the stove and finishing with their eggs.

The two sat eating in silence, neither one wanting to broach the subject of that morning’s interview for fear of jinxing its outcome.

A few minutes after 10 AM, the phone rang, and Angela answered. It was Ms. Clark from TLC! After exchanging pleasantries, Ms. Clark asked Angela about her experience and her education. Then she asked to speak with Kelly, asking her similar questions. She must have liked what the girls said, because after she finished with Kelly, she asked to speak with Angela again! “So, when can you two start?” Ms. Clark asked in a serious tone. “I’ve already checked your references, and you both came highly recommended!”

“Both positions start out at \$3,200 per month, with a very nice benefits package after six months.”

Angela was dumb-struck for a moment, then thanked Ms. Clark and asked her if she could talk it over with Kelly and get back to her later in the day. “Alright, but don’t take too long. We would really like to have you as soon as possible.”

Angela and Kelly were excited! They checked their savings account and noted that they had just enough left to purchase their airline tickets, with a little left over! Angela e-mailed Ms. Clark accepting her proposal, and told her that they would be flying out to San Francisco the next day!



Angela immediately went to work on the computer, acquiring their airline tickets, while Kelly started packing. Even on such short notice, Angela was able to get a flight out of Logan International the next day. She then called and informed their landlord that they would be moving out the next day, and made arrangements to have their computer and a few other things put in storage until they got settled and could send for them. It didn't take them long to pack, and by noon the girls had their two suitcases each and a carryon bag sitting by the door. The only thing left to do was go to the bank, close out their account, and place the rest of their belongings into storage, which they did in short order.

The landlord informed them that since they were moving out on such short notice, he couldn't return their entire security deposit to them. But he liked the girls, having two daughters of his own about the same age. He told them that if they left the unit clean; he would refund half of the deposit the next morning before they departed. So Angela and Kelly spent the rest of the afternoon and evening cleaning the apartment.

By 10 PM the girls were exhausted and, deciding that they had done a relatively good job of cleaning the place, they went to bed. As they drifted off to sleep, they couldn't help but wonder and anticipate what their new lives would be like, and what new adventures awaited them three thousand miles away!

The next morning came quickly and after the landlord inspected the apartment, he gave the girls a check for \$300, half the security and cleaning deposit, and wished them a safe trip. When the cab arrived to take them to the airport, he helped the driver load their luggage into the trunk and gave them both a hug. "You two take care...and be careful!" he said in a fatherly way. "We will and thanks for everything!" Angela waved as the cab pulled away and into the early morning traffic.

At the airport, Angela and Kelly loaded their bags onto a cart. They wanted to change their clothes before eating some breakfast and boarding the plane. Angela decided to wear a brown skirt suit, nylons and a pair of 3" heel brown pumps. Kelly changed into a seafoam green knitted dress, matching tights and her black leather knee-high boots.

The girls then purchased their one-way tickets to San Francisco, and checked their luggage in. Noting that they had an hour before boarding, they decided to have breakfast. They found a little restaurant near their boarding gate and sat down at a table by a large window that looked out on the tarmac where several large airliners were parked. A friendly waitress brought them coffee and the girls quickly ordered a hearty breakfast, knowing that it might be a few hours before they ate again.

Angela took a sip of her coffee and took a cigarette from her purse, lighting it with a small gold lighter a coworker had given her as a gift before they left Tennessee. She noticed Kelly was a little nervous as she looked out the window, watching some baggage handlers loading a United 737. "Are you getting excited?" Angela asked, smiling knowingly at her friend. "Yeah, a little apprehensive I guess," Kelly replied, adding some cream to her coffee and stirring it lightly with her spoon.

“Just think...in a few hours we'll be in a whole new world!” Angela said reassuringly. Kelly smiled. “I hope San Francisco likes us!”

After finishing breakfast, Kelly went to the ladies room while Angela left a tip and paid for their meal. Then the two walked the short distance to their boarding gate and took a seat with the other passengers gathering for the flight to San Francisco. Kelly took a compact from her purse and touched up her face and applied some pale pink lip gloss as the two sat waiting for the call to board.

A couple of ticket agents stepped up to the desk near the boarding tunnel. “United Flight 107 to San Francisco now boarding!” came over the room speaker. Everyone stood, collected their carryon luggage and personal belongings and began forming a line while the agents checked tickets and flight manifests and began sending passengers down the boarding tunnel and into the aircraft. Angela and Kelly got in line, and when it was their turn they presented their tickets to the agent, who smiled and checked them off, assigning them seats 32A and 32B.

As they boarded the plane, a flight attendant checked their boarding passes and they found their seats for the flight. The girls stowed their carryon bags in the overhead compartment and took their seats, which were located just forward of the wing on the right side. Kelly sat in the window seat and Angela took her seat beside her. After a few minutes everyone had boarded and settled into their seats. It was 9:05 AM when the flight attendant came on the intercom and announced their departure. She said that they were expected to arrive at San Francisco International at about 3:30 PM Pacific time.

The girls settled back in their seats as they felt the aircraft taxi toward the runway. After a few minutes, it was their flight's turn to take off. The plane began rolling down the runway, gaining speed, and lifted slowly into the air. As the plane climbed over the bay and crossed above the city, Kelly looked out the window for a last look at the city where they had hoped their new lives would begin.

Angela sat back in her seat, closed her eyes and placed her hand on Kelly's. She had no idea what their future held, but she had high hopes that the two of them would have a chance at beginning new lives.

When the plane touched down in San Francisco, the sun was shining brightly. The two retrieved their carryon baggage and departed the plane, walking through the long departure tunnel with the other passengers. When they reached the terminal, there was a small crowd of people awaiting arrival of relatives and friends from their flight.

At the front of the crowd was a handsome young man in his early twenties, holding a sign that read, “Welcome! Angela and Kelly!” He was tall, and had short, curly brown hair. “I'm Angela Bradford and this is Kelly Daniels. Who are you?” Angela asked, slightly bewildered. “I'm Robert Clark, from TLC Law. My mother sent me to pick you two up.” He smiled shyly. “I had no idea you two ladies were so attractive! If you come with me, I have a car waiting to take you into the city. My mother is the Office Manager who hired you, and she wants to meet you right away!” Robert added, reaching to pick up the girls' carry-on baggage. “I've already made arrangements to have your other luggage delivered to your hotel room later

this afternoon, if that's OK?" Robert said as the three walked through the terminal. "That would be fine!" Kelly answered in her best feminine voice, glancing at Angela, who seemed to be checking out young Robert's backside as he led the way out of the terminal to a waiting black BMW sedan. Robert placed the girls' bags in the trunk and opened the passenger door for them, before getting into the front seat next to the driver.

"Wow! Nice!" Kelly whispered as the car sped off and onto the freeway heading into the city. "What, the car or the guy?" Angela grinned back, trying not to giggle. Kelly playfully nudged Angela as Robert looked over his shoulder and smiled at them. "How long will it take to get to your offices, Robert?" Angela asked, glancing out the window of the car. "About twenty to thirty minutes," Robert answered, adding, "and your hotel is just around the corner!"

After a half-hour drive, the car pulled up in front of a tall office building on Market Street. They were in the heart of San Francisco's financial district! Robert opened their door for them, Angela and Kelly stepped out onto the sidewalk. They were amazed by the sheer size of the building. "Wow!" Angela gasped. "It must be forty stories high!" "Actually, its fifty-two stories...and our offices are on the forty-eighth floor. This is the Bank of America building, one of the West Coast's tallest buildings."

"I bet the view is fantastic from up there!" Kelly noted. Robert instructed the driver to drop off the girls' bags at the Sheraton Hotel, only a block away, then return to take the girls to their room in an hour. Angela and Kelly followed Robert up the steps and into the lobby, which had a gleaming marble floor. He led them to an elevator around the corner from the others, which had long lines waiting to board them. He took a small key from the pocket of his vest and inserted it, and the door opened to admit them.

As they rode the elevator, Angela was glad that she had worn her nicest skirt suit and matching 3" tan pumps. She was fashionable, yet conservative; she wanted to make a good impression with Ms. Clark! After a few minutes, the elevator stopped on the forty-eighth floor and opened, revealing a spacious and nicely decorated lobby with a shiny brass sign on the wall. It read: TLC LAW, INC.

Robert led the girls down a thickly-padded green carpeted hallway and knocked on a door. "Come in..." a woman's voice called. Robert stuck his head in the door and motioned the girls to enter. "Angela! Kelly! Please come in! How was your flight?" Ms. Clark asked, setting aside a small tape recorder. "Please have a seat." Angela and Kelly sat down on the comfortable leather sofa in front of Ms. Clark's desk. "It was nice, the time went by pretty quickly," Angela answered, straightening the hem of her skirt. "Good! Very good. Well, why don't I take you on the tour?" Ms. Clark said, standing. "This is my office, of course. I will be your immediate supervisor. You both report directly to me. Of course, you will both be working with all of the attorneys and other paralegals and secretaries from time to time."

Ms. Clark guided them through the office which included the entire 48<sup>th</sup> floor. She introduced Angela and Kelly to the other legal secretaries and paralegals

working that Friday afternoon. Then she showed the girls where they would work. She introduced Angela to Felicity, another paralegal she would be sharing an office with. Then she guided Kelly to her own small office, adjacent to Mr. Clark's office.

All of the leading attorneys had large offices with beautiful, sweeping views of the city and San Francisco Bay. Their personal secretaries had smaller, more modest quarters next to their bosses, all with large windows affording the same panoramic views that the attorneys enjoyed!

Kelly was overwhelmed as Ms. Clark showed her all the features of her new office, beginning with the large file room where Mr. Clark's personal case files and disks were stored. As Kelly followed Ms. Clark's every word, she couldn't help but notice the thick dark green carpet that made it feel as if she were walking on clouds! And her large oak desk and computer station were the best that money could buy! As Ms. Clark was showing Kelly how the office phone and intercom worked, she glanced up and gasped audibly! There before her was one of the most beautiful sights she had ever seen! An amazing panoramic view of the entire East Bay, including the Bay Bridge and Oakland!

Ms. Clark looked up and smiled knowingly. "It is lovely, isn't it?" "Yes it is!" Kelly answered, as if in a trance. "I had no idea San Francisco was so beautiful!" "Wait until you see it at night!" Ms. Clark continued. "You will be required to work late some nights...that goes with the job." Kelly smiled broadly. This was turning out to be one wonderful day!

Meanwhile, Angela was getting an introduction to her new job. She was paired with the firm's leading paralegal, Felicity Bauer. Felicity was about thirty and had shoulder-length blonde hair and big blue eyes. She was rather tall in her 3" Italian pumps, almost six feet, with a firm, athletic figure. She explained to Angela that she used to run track in collage, and still jogged through Golden Gate Park every morning. This was apparent to Angela when Felicity bent over her desk to retrieve a brief, and Angela caught a glimpse of a firm, shapely thigh that peeked out of the slit in her rather short black skirt.

Felicity showed Angela where everything was, and brought her up to date on a few of the cases that they would be working on together. Felicity explained their job was to do the investigative work that helped the attorneys with their cases. She told Angela that Ms. Clark wanted her to work with Felicity for a month or so, or until she got the hang of the investigations and legal papers and reports that they dealt with every day.

Around 4:45 PM, Ms. Clark called Angela and Kelly into her office and explained that she had reserved a room for them around the corner at the Sheraton Hotel until they could find an apartment. She welcomed them both to TLC and told them to report to work at 8:00 AM Monday morning.

The girls retrieved their purses and made their way to the elevator. Once inside and on their way down, they looked at each other and smiled broadly. Only a day before, their lives had seemed hopeless. Now they were in a whole new world! They

were on track to getting a fresh, new start in life! The kind of life that they had both only dreamed about until now! And they intended to live it to the fullest!

When they got to the hotel, the purser welcomed them to San Francisco and gave them each a key card to their room. “Ms. Clark asked me to give you these American Express cards. She said to tell you they are tied to your expense accounts. You can use them for eating out, transportation, and the like. You each have a \$500 per month limit.” Angela and Kelly thanked the purser and proceeded to the elevator, which they rode to the 17<sup>th</sup> floor. After getting off the elevator, the girls walked down the hall and found their room, #1706.

Upon entering, they were amazed by the spacious accommodations! Their “room” was actually like a townhouse, with a large living area, a small kitchen, and their own bedrooms! Both Angela and Kelly were trembling with excitement as they approached the large curtained window at the far end of the room. Kelly opened the curtains and the view took her breath away! Both girls stood there in a daze, watching the sun setting over the Golden Gate Bridge! In the distance they could see the lush green hills of Marin County. It was gorgeous beyond belief!

After getting settled in and taking long showers, Angela and Kelly dressed for dinner. Angela wore a short black long-sleeved dress, black stockings and a pair of 4” black pumps. Kelly decided on a short red skirt and sweater, a pair of matching red tights, and her red 3” heeled sandals. After touching up their makeup, the girls grabbed their purses and rode the elevator down to the lobby. Exiting the hotel, the two began walking down Market Street in search of a Chinese restaurant. They didn’t have to go very far before they spotted one. The aroma told them they had found what they were looking for!

Over plates of pan-fried noodles and sweet and sour pork, the girls discussed their day. “You wouldn’t believe the view from my office!” Kelly began as the waiter brought them each a pint of Kirin beer. “Ms. Clark said she’d introduce me to Mr. Clark on Monday,” Kelly continued, taking a long sip from her beer. “I’ll be his personal secretary!”

Angela gave Kelly a wink and held up her beer in a toast. The two clinked their glasses. “Now aren’t you glad we came to San Francisco?” Angela asked with a sly look on her face. “It will be great getting back to work again!” But Kelly’s mood suddenly changed from elated to concern. “What’s wrong?” Angela inquired, setting her beer down. Kelly quickly looked around and then spoke, almost in a whisper. “You don’t think they’ll find out, do you? I mean, what if they run a background check on us?”

Angela shook her head. “I’m not going to worry about it. All we can do is do the best job we can and hope no one gets suspicious, OK?” “You’re right, as usual,” Kelly forced a smile. “Of course I am. I know we can pull this off, as long as we don’t do something stupid!” The two finished their dinner, then walked back to their hotel room. Angela and Kelly had had a big day, and they were exhausted. They changed into their nightgowns and went to bed.

## CHAPTER THREE

The next day, Angela awoke and went to the window. It was a beautiful Saturday morning, and the sun was shining magnificently! She could see sailboats on the bay, and cars moving across the bridge. She made fresh coffee in the room's small coffee maker, and the aroma filled the room, awakening Kelly with its fragrance.

Angela poured herself a cup and returned to her chair in front of the window. She wondered what it would be like to be out on the bay on one of those sailboats, feeling the wind in her face and the smell of the cool salty air. Kelly sat up in her bed, stretching luxuriously. "What's it like outside?" she asked, sitting on the edge of her bed. "It's lovely!" Angela replied, taking a sip of her coffee, transfixed by the view.

"Mmmm, that coffee smells heavenly!" Kelly said elatedly, pulling on her robe and making her way to the coffee pot. Pouring herself a cup, she joined Angela. She stood transfixed by the awesome view from their window. "I know this may sound strange, but I am really looking forward to going to work on Monday," Kelly said. "Me too!" Angela agreed, taking a cigarette from her purse and lighting it.

They enjoyed the view for a while, then dressed. Angela put on a pair of denim shorts, a pink T-shirt and a pair of crosstrainers. Kelly slipped into a floral sundress and a pair of sandals. Then the girls went down the street and caught a trolley to Fishermen's Wharf. It reminded them of the waterfront in Boston somewhat, but the sun was shining and it was much warmer. As they walked among the shops and the restaurants, the smell of fresh seafood and salt air stirred their senses, and they were both taken by the friendliness and openness of the people.

Angela and Kelly enjoyed a wonderful lunch at one of the bayside restaurants, then took a cab to Golden Gate Park before returning to their hotel with a newspaper and some fresh ideas about what kind of apartment they were going to look for. Ms. Clark had suggested a few places in a nice area of the city and they were looking forward to checking them out in the next few days. After they returned to their room, Angela made a couple of phone calls, and made arrangements to see some apartments on Sunday afternoon. One of the apartment complexes was a gated community only three miles from the financial district and their new jobs!

Sunday the girls spent looking at apartments. After viewing several, they found one that seemed to fit their needs. It was relatively close to their work, and was brand new! The townhouse had two bedrooms, a large living room and kitchen and was on the second floor with a large balcony with a spectacular view of the bay! The apartment complex was in the gated complex that Ms. Clark suggested they check out. It had a large heated pool and Jacuzzi as well! Angela and Kelly liked the landlady. Her name was Mrs. Baxter and she was in her fifties. She had a positive, sunny disposition and really seemed to like the girls. Now, all they seemed to need was a car!

The next day, the girls awoke early and showered, before dressing for their first day at work! Angela wore a gray skirt suit, a garter belt and stockings, and her 3"

heel black pumps. Kelly chose her navy blue skirt suit, pantyhose and her navy blue 3" heel pumps. They both looked very professional, although their skirts were rather short; they noticed on Friday that most of the other young women in the office wore their skirts short as well.

Arriving at the office at 7:45 AM, they noticed that most of the other women were already hard at work. Angela walked into her office and was met by a smiling Felicity, who was sitting on the edge of her desk, sipping coffee and reviewing a case file. "Good morning!" Felicity greeted her. "Good morning!" Angela returned. "Pour yourself some coffee. I have something I want to show you." Felicity motioned toward the coffee pot in the corner of their office. Angela poured herself a cup and joined Felicity at her desk. "This is a file on a case we've been working on for about six months," Felicity began, handing Angela the file. "I want you to take a look at it and tell me what you think. You can write any notes you have on this pad."

"Take your time, and get back to me after lunch. I have to sit in on a meeting in a few minutes," Felicity said as she stepped out. Angela noticed that another desk had been moved into Felicity's office; she sat down and began to read the report. It was an investigation that Felicity had been working on for Mr. Clark. As she read further, she realized that the report pertained to a murder case that Mr. Clark was appealing after his client had been found guilty and sentenced to 30 years in prison. Mr. Clark's client, a Mr. Ron Pearlman, had been a respectable CPA in San Francisco. He had been charged with the murder of one of his clients, a Mrs. Judy Hansen, whom he had a yearlong affair with.

He had been found guilty of her murder on circumstantial evidence. The jury consisted of mostly women; it seemed that the women sided with the assistant district attorney who was prosecuting the case. There wasn't any hard evidence against Mr. Pearlman, other than his association with Mrs. Hansen, and the fact that he appeared to be the last person to see her alive!

Angela read on, absorbed with Felicity's investigative report. She had spoken with a number of Mr. Pearlman's neighbors and associates, all of whom indicated that he was a good neighbor and a fine man. Mr. Pearlman's had indicated that after he and Mrs. Hansen had finished their romantic encounter that night, he had taken a cab home. But two days later, the cabby had been fired and left town, leaving no forwarding address. He may have been a help in establishing a time frame, possibly helping to prove that Mr. Pearlman couldn't have been Mrs. Hansen's killer!

Meanwhile, Kelly was typing a letter for Mr. Clark to one of his clients. Ms. Clark had introduced Kelly to Mr. Clark earlier that morning. She found him to be very kind and almost casual as he spoke of what her new job required and what he expected of her. He told Kelly that he would require her to work late at times, especially nights before he had a court appearance. He told her that he was a perfectionist and required the same from the people he worked with.

After a brief overview of the company history, he dictated a letter to Kelly, and requested that she get it in the morning's outgoing mail. He told her that when

she was finished, she should see Ms. Clark about some files he wanted transferred to the computer data base.

Kelly was an excellent secretary and was determined to gain Mr. Clark's confidence. She finished the letter in short order and put it in the outgoing mail with time to spare. She then retrieved the files to be transferred and began to enter them into the firm's data base from her computer.

At noon, Ms. Clark asked Angela and Kelly if they would join her and her son, Robert, for lunch. Before they left, Mr. Clark told Kelly that he had an important court appearance the next morning, and asked her to work late with him that night. He told her to return to the office at 7 PM.

Robert met his mother, Angela and Kelly, down in the parking garage and drove them to a quaint little restaurant in Chinatown. "I hope you two like Chinese food!" Ms. Clark mused as they walked into the colorful place. "We love Chinese!" Kelly replied, noticing that Robert was eyeing her. "Ms. Clark, how nice to see you! I have a nice table all set for you!" said a smiling, young, Asian woman.

Robert held Kelly's chair for her, and she smiled up at him. "Thank You," Kelly managed as she felt a stirring deep within her. It was a feeling that she had never experienced before. As the four of them gave the waitress their orders, Kelly tried to avoid Robert's admiring gaze. She felt him eyeing her through their entire meal, and she felt strangely vulnerable and open to him.

After a leisurely lunch, the four returned to the office and went back to work. Angela met with Felicity and the two discussed Mr. Pearlman's case. Felicity was pleasantly surprised that Angela had a good grasp on the legal implications of the case, as well as sharing her own beliefs that Mr. Pearlman couldn't possibly have killed Mrs. Hansen!

"What would you recommend?" Felicity asked candidly, sitting back in her chair and crossing her long, stockinged legs. Angela thought for a moment, then looked up from her desk. "Well, the first thing I would do is find out more about the missing cabby...where he lived...who his friends or acquaintances were." Angela spoke thoughtfully. Felicity smiled. "My thoughts exactly! So what are we waiting for?"

Angela looked puzzled. "So, where do we start?" Angela asked, slightly bewildered. "I know where he lived. I got his address from his boss last week!" Felicity smiled. "Let's go!" The girls grabbed their purses and left the office, taking Felicity's silver 2001 Mazda. They headed toward the North Beach area of the city. They didn't have much, but they did have an address. It was time to go to work!

Meanwhile, Kelly was busily entering the case information she had been given by Ms. Clark into the firm's data base. Mr. Clark came in from a late lunch and smiled at Kelly as he passed through on his way to his office. "Any messages, Kelly?" he asked, smiling her way as he passed her desk. "No, sir." Kelly glanced up, noticing that he had caught a glimpse of her long, shapely legs. "Good, no news is always good news!" he said quickly as he opened the door to his office, and then turned to face Kelly. "See you at 7 PM?"



“What?” Kelly seemed perplexed. Mr. Clark made a strange face. “Tonight, remember? We are working?” Mr. Clark reminded Kelly. “Oh, yes! Of course,” Kelly stammered, feeling his gaze upon her. “Good! I’ll see you then,” Mr. Clark said as he turned and disappeared into his office. Kelly looked up at the clock. It was nearly 5 PM.! She needed to get back to the hotel in order to eat some dinner, take a shower, and return to the office by 7 PM. She would have to catch up to Angela later!

Grabbing her purse, she took the elevator down to the lobby and walked to the hotel. As she took the hotel elevator up to her room, she wondered what she would wear that evening. When she walked into her bedroom and opened her closet, she knew exactly what she was going to wear! Angela had told her that she looked great in the little black dress she had bought while in Boston...a garter belt and black stockings...her 4” heel black pumps.

She changed out of her skirt outfit and slipped on her terry robe, then walked into the kitchen to make a fried egg sandwich. That would be quick, Kelly thought to herself, and allow her plenty of time for a nice, long, hot bath! After preparing her sandwich, Kelly poured herself a glass of ice cold milk and went over and sat in the chair in front of the window, looking out over the city and the bay. She still couldn’t believe that they were actually there, in the City by the Bay!

After finishing her meal, she stepped into the bathroom and started her bath water, pouring a little perfumed bubble bath into the steaming tub. Then, testing the water with her fingers, she dropped her robe and stepped into the liquid warmth that embraced her. She wondered what the evening, or Mr. Clark, for that matter, had in store for her!

About that time, Angela and Felicity were on a mission! They had gone to the cabby’s last known residence in a run-down section of the North Bay district, and were questioning his neighbors and people in the shops and bars, looking for anything that might give them a clue as to his whereabouts. After nearly an hour of no leads, they finally came upon a man sitting in a bar who claimed to have had a few drinks with their prospective witness! He told them that the man’s name was Les Kimber. He was a black man of 35, about six feet tall, and had a tattoo on his right forearm of a dragon.

After they bought the man a drink, he stated he didn’t know where Les Kimber was, but that he talked of wanting to move back to the Los Angeles area, where he had relatives. The girls thanked the man, and Felicity drove Angela back to her hotel. They would continue their quest the next day.

When Angela walked into the hotel room, she called out to Kelly, who was in her bedroom dressing. “Working this evening?” Angela inquired as she sat on the edge of Kelly’s bed. “Uh-huh,” Kelly replied, taking a black garter belt from her drawer and wrapping it around her trim middle. She fastened it and twisted it into place. She sat on the edge of the bed next to Angela and pulled on her nylons, fastening them to the garters. Next, she put on a pair of pink silk bikini panties, and then walked to her closet to pick out her dress.

“Why don’t you wear that cute little black number?” Angela chimed in, eyeing Kelly with a sly grin. Kelly turned and winked at her friend. “That’s exactly what I had in mind!” “You don’t think it’s too short, do you?” Kelly asked, holding the dress up in front of a full-length mirror behind her door. Angela shrugged her shoulders. “Well, if it is, I am sure Mr. Clark will let you know!” “That’s what I’m afraid of. What if he makes a pass at me?” Kelly almost whispered.

“Well, if he does, go for it. What have you got to lose?” Angela said as she took a cigarette from her purse and lit it. “I guess you’re right,” Kelly sighed, stepping into her black pumps and pulling on her dress. “Will you zip me?” Kelly asked. Angela stood up and zipped up the back of Kelly’s dress, noting that she fit into it, as someone once said, “Like a dagger in its sheath.”

“I’m running low on my Premarin,” Angela noted as she checked the prescription bottle in her purse. “Me too,” Kelly said as she turned to apply her makeup. They would have to find a local doctor who would renew their prescriptions in the next few days. Both Angela and Kelly had been on hormones for a couple of years, and the effects were quite evident on both girls. Their breasts were round and firm, and their skin very soft. Their hips had taken on a very feminine contour and their muscle tone had become noticeably more woman-like.

Their male organs had become small and floppy and their testicles had withered to about half their normal size. But neither of them cared about this in the least. They were women, as far as they were concerned, and both yearned for the day when they could have their Sex Reassignment Surgeries, correcting the cruel mistake that nature had bestowed upon them. They both wanted to find a man who was kind and loving toward them. A man that they could love forever. But until their surgeries, they had to be very careful with whom they allowed to get close to them!

After Kelly finished applying her makeup, she said good-bye to Angela and left for the office. She hoped that things would go well that evening, and that Mr. Clark would be a gentleman. There was a cool breeze blowing and winter was in the air as Kelly walked to the office. A flood of people in skirts and suits were leaving the building as Kelly arrived. Most were on their way home to wives or husbands and families. As she rode the elevator up to the TLC offices, she took her compact from her purse and touched up her lipstick, smiling back at the image she saw in the little mirror.

She was very pretty. But she also wanted to show the world that she was very smart and skilled in her profession. Maybe tonight she would get the chance to prove herself. That would be up to her new boss, Mr. Clark.

When Kelly walked into Mr. Clark’s office, he was sitting at his desk in a large brown leather chair, speaking into a mini recorder. He saw Kelly, smiled, and motioned for her to have a seat in the chair next to his desk. Kelly sat and crossed her long stockinged legs as Mr. Clark continued to speak into the recorder. It sounded like a letter to one of his clients. After a few minutes, he finished and went to a file cabinet and took out a thick file. He sat back down and looked up at

Kelly. "You ready to go to work?" he asked, giving her a wink. "Always!" Kelly answered cheerfully.

"Alright, let's get down to business," Mr. Clark started. "I have to be in court at 8 AM sharp tomorrow morning, and I am defending a client who has been charged by the IRS with tax evasion. I believe I have proof that he is innocent of the charges, but the IRS are tough customers, and I'll be up against some of the best attorneys in the country. What I would like you to do is take my notes and type them out for me in a clear and straight forward way. Feel free to change the wording, but not the content. I am counting on you, Kelly."

Kelly took the file and stood up, flashing him a winning smile. "I'll do my best," Kelly said confidently as she turned to go into her office next door. "You can work here with me, Kelly. You can use my computer while I put the case file in order," Mr. Clark said with an air of calmness. Kelly sat down in Mr. Clark's big leather chair and began typing and flipping through his notes.

"Oh, and Kelly?" Mr. Clark smiled. "You can call me Jim, when we're working alone together." Kelly looked up, slightly bewildered, and smiled back. Then he went over to the file cabinet and pulled out another file, sitting down at another desk. It was 6:30 PM. The two worked diligently into the night, and by the time they finished preparing the case notes and file, it was nearly midnight.

"I want to thank you for being such a trooper during your first week, Kelly. I think these notes will do nicely. I don't know where the time went, but you don't have to come in tomorrow until noon, OK?" Mr. Clark told her, fixing his tie and putting on his suit coat. "I'm starved, want to get something to eat?" "Sure, that would be nice!" Kelly replied, stifling a yawn.

The two took the elevator down to the parking garage and got into his silver 2003 Porsche 924. He drove them to a quiet supper club near North Beach. Over steak and eggs, Mr. Clark and Kelly listened to soft music and chatted quietly. Mr. Clark told her how he started the business and how successful it had become in the last few years. He told her he enjoyed his work and that he loved San Francisco. "I absolutely adore it here!" Kelly told him as he drove her back to her hotel. "It is so beautiful and exciting!"

"It's never boring, that much I can promise you," Mr. Clark commented as he pulled into the dimly-lit parking garage and parked, turning off the engine and lights. Mr. Clark seemed like a really nice boss. He had held doors for her and seated her like a gentleman. And he talked to her on her level, and seemed to treat her with respect.

Suddenly, he pulled Kelly to him and kissed her! She stiffened with surprise at first, but then she relaxed, closed her eyes and kissed him back with a passion she didn't even know she had! She boldly snaked her tongue into his mouth to be sucked and he took the bait, sucking on it ardently! Mr. Clark pulled her closer to him, holding her in his strong arms while they embraced. She melted into him, and she could feel the heat of his desire growing.

Kelly knew that he was married and the thought of Ms. Clark finding out scared her. But she also knew that Mr. Clark was a man who was used to getting

his way, and she was confused as to how to respond, other than to just go with it! Mr. Clark slowly broke the long, drawn-out kiss, and sat back in the car seat. "Open my pants," he rasped. Kelly didn't have to be told twice. She reached over, undid his belt and unzipped his fly. She could feel the heat of his desire beneath the fabric of his pants, and she looked up at him, not sure how to proceed. "Go on, take it out," he whispered, as if in a trance.

Kelly slowly reached in and grasped his throbbing manhood, and gasped audibly. "It's so big, Mr. Clark!" Kelly stammered, feeling it grow even harder in her small, soft hand. She took it out and began to stroke it softly, and she moved to lean over the console. She saw that it was so big, her fingers couldn't reach all the way around it, and the tip was glistening with his pre-cum. She moved her lips to the seeping tip, and took him slowly, deliberately, into her warm, wet mouth, an inch at a time.

As she began to suck, Mr. Clark groaned loudly and moved his huge hand behind her head, guiding her movements. She flashed her tongue all around the tip and began to stroke the long shaft, taking more and more of him into her mouth. "Oh, Kelly. Oh, Kelly," Mr. Clark began to moan. "I just didn't know. I had no idea!"

Kelly began to bob her head up and down on her boss' aching hardness, feeling him start to shudder. She knew what that meant, and began to moan, preparing herself for his climax. He felt that familiar rumble deep in his loins, and the delicious pleasure rose like the mercury in a thermometer until he could hold it no longer! Suddenly, he came! His hearty spurts hosed again and again into Kelly's sucking mouth and down her throat, to pool warmly in the center of her being.

"Oh, Kelly!" Mr. Clark moaned as she sat upright in the car seat, a thin trickle of semen dripping down her chin. She wiped it with the back of her hand, suddenly aware of what she had just done. "I'd better go now," Kelly stammered, feeling a little awkward as her boss zipped up his pants and fastened them. "Yes, of course," Mr. Clark said, almost in a whisper. "See you tomorrow, Kelly. And Kelly?" She stepped out of the car and turned toward him. "Yes?" Kelly asked. "You're doing just fine...at work, I mean." Mr. Clark smiled, starting his car.

Kelly walked to the elevator, wondering if Angela was still up. When she got to her room, she noticed a large, wet semen stain on the front of her dress. She wondered if Angela would see it. But when she walked in, she noticed that Angela had already gone to bed. She stuck her head into Angela's bedroom. "Angela? Are you awake?" Kelly called softly. "Yeah," Angela answered, turning on the lamp on her nightstand.

Kelly walked in and sat on the edge of Angela's bed. "What's this?" Angela asked, pointing to the stain on the front of Kelly's dress. A slight smile came to Kelly's lips, and she blushed openly. "Is that what I think it is?" Angela inquired, smiling back. "Uh-huh. Jim, I mean, Mr. Clark and I worked until almost midnight on the case notes he needs for tomorrow's court appearance," Kelly said

softly. "Jim?" Angela echoed. "Well, he told me I can call him by his first name...when we're alone, that is."

"But how did you get this?" Angela asked, pointing to the still wet stain on her dress. "Well, after we finished working, Mr. Clark took me out for a late dinner, and when he brought me back to the hotel, we talked for a few minutes. Then, out of nowhere, he just pulled me to him and kissed me! After a few minutes, he had me open his pants and take his cock out, and told me to suck it. It was so big and hard, Angela!" Kelly told her friend excitedly.

"Go on..." Angela whispered impatiently. "Well, I was just going down on him, right there in his car, when he suddenly came in my mouth! When I thought he was finished, I took his cock out of my mouth and stroked it softly, and that's when he shot another spurt or two on my dress, I guess," Kelly admitted, slightly embarrassed.

"You mean you blew the boss?" Angela asked, sitting upright in bed. "That's right, I did!" Kelly answered. "I hope you know what you're doing, Kelly," Angela told her, brushing back her long brown hair from her face. "What if he wants more next time?" "I don't know. I'll tell him I'm having my period, I guess." Kelly smiled playfully. Angela just shook her head in amazement and threw her arms around her friend, hugging her. "You are too much!" Angela giggled. "Just be careful. We don't want to blow it this early in the game, you know?"

"I know, but it was so exciting! You should have been there," Kelly began. But Angela lay back down in her bed. "I'm sure I'll get my chance soon enough, but for now, I need to get some rest. I've got to get up early." Angela groaned. "OK, but don't wake me. Mr. Clark told me I didn't have to come in until noon. Goodnight!" "Uh-huh," Angela mumbled, turning off her light and pulling the blanket up over her shoulders.

Kelly went to her own bedroom, kicking off her heels and sitting on the edge of her bed to remove her nylons. As she undressed, she thought about what Angela had said. "What if Mr. Clark wants more from me next time?" she thought as she pulled on her pink lace nightgown and crawled into bed. Well, she would cross that bridge when she came to it. In the meantime, she was having the time of her life! She closed her eyes and drifted off to sleep with visions of the San Francisco skyline at sunset on her mind.

## CHAPTER FOUR

The next morning dawned cloudy and gray it and looked like it might rain. Angela took her umbrella and, as she walked to work, and thought of a quote from Mark Twain about San Francisco. He said that the coldest winter he ever spent was a summer in San Francisco. This seemed to be the case as a cold wind blew in from the bay, chilling Angela and causing her to shiver. She pulled the collar up on her gray suede coat.

She arrived at the office early and noted that Ms. Clark was sitting in her office, sipping coffee and reading the paper. Angela stuck her head in the door and

smiled. "Got a minute?" Ms. Clark glanced up and smiled back at her. "Sure, Angela, come on in. What's up?" "Well, Kelly and I found an apartment in the complex you told us about. It's perfect, and I was wondering if Kelly and I could go by there today and sign the lease around 1 PM?"

"That's great! I'm sure that won't be a problem. Why don't you two go over there after lunch? We should be able to get along without you until 3 PM or so," Ms. Clark offered. "Thanks, that would be great!" Angela smiled. "Let me know how it turns out. Maybe you two can get moved in and settled this weekend!" "OK," Angela answered as she turned and went to her office.

She made coffee and sat down at her desk to study the case file she and Felicity were working on. As she studied the file, she was amazed at their luck the day before, when they had found the man in the bar who suggested that the cabby they were looking for, Les Kimber, might possibly be in Los Angeles. They now had a name and a possible location. Now, all they had to do was locate him. Once they did that, Mr. Clark could have him subpoenaed if necessary, and his testimony could change the whole situation!

Felicity soon arrived and Angela took notes as her coworker made some phone inquiries as to Mr. Kimber's whereabouts in Los Angeles. This kept the two busy until lunch and when Kelly came into the office, the two went out for a quick sandwich, then took a cab over to see Mrs. Baxter about their new apartment.

Mrs. Baxter greeted them warmly, and asked them to come in. She had a small ground-level apartment that was teeming with live plants, as well as a large white cat that immediately took a liking to the girls. Over coffee, Mrs. Baxter went over the lease and the house rules with the girls. Everything went well and, after the girls signed the papers, Mrs. Baxter gave them two keys for the apartment.

Angela and Kelly could barely contain their excitement as they thanked Mrs. Baxter and went to check out their new apartment. It was a brand new furnished two-bedroom townhouse on the second floor. The white tiled entry led past the small but cozy kitchen and into the living room, which was nicely furnished with a comfortable-looking sofa, a matching love seat, and a reclining chair. The thickly-padded carpet was sea foam green in color, and the girls giggled and kicked off their shoes and walked over to the sliding glass door that led out onto the balcony.

When they stepped outside, the view took their breath away! There was a vista beyond their wildest dreams, with the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz Island and the hills of Marin County in the distance. A fresh breeze was blowing with the smell of rain in the air.

The girls continued their tour of the apartment. Down a short hallway, they found a small bathroom with a glassed in shower, also done in sea foam green tile. "Let's check out the bedrooms!" Kelly smiled as she led the way up the stairs to the second level. There was a second larger bathroom with a garden tub and whirlpool bath, with a large hanging fern suspended above the vanity with two sinks. "Wow! Our own sinks! I could get used to THIS!" Angela said with amazement.

The bedrooms were side-by-side, each one having its own window in front of a small computer desk. The girls each had a twin bed, nightstand, and a large walk-in closet with full-length mirror. Angela lay back on her bed, closing her eyes momentarily. Everything was going so well since they had come to the City by the Bay. She hoped that things would continue as such. When she opened her eyes, she noticed a large skylight in the ceiling, and imagined awakening to its light.

Kelly was testing her bed as well and noticed the skylight at about the same time as Angela had. "Did you see the cool skylight?" Kelly called from her room. Angela smiled to herself. "Awesome, huh?" "That sure was nice of Ms. Clark to let us do this today," Kelly said as she peeked into Angela's bedroom. "Yes it was, but we've better get back to work. She asked us to be back by 3 PM, and it's almost that time now!" Angela commented, looking at her watch. "We'll have plenty of time to check out all the amenities later! Let's go!"

"Alright, but maybe we can look for a car this weekend!" Kelly said as they walked down the stairs and out the door. "Yeah, it's kind of expensive taking a cab everywhere." Angela agreed. The girls hailed a cab and returned to the office, arriving just before 3 PM.

As Angela ducked into Ms. Clark's office to tell her about their new apartment, Kelly went to her desk and began typing a letter that Mr. Clark had asked her to do the night before. As she worked, she found herself thinking about the night before, and the implications of the whole thing began to set in. It was very excit-



ing, but she had gotten caught up in the passion of the moment. Angela was right; she would have to be more careful in the future. She didn't want to jeopardize their new careers and lives, but, after all, what else *could* she have done?

After Angela had finished telling Ms. Clark all about their new apartment, she returned to her office and found Felicity on the phone. She motioned for Angela to have a seat beside her desk. "That's right, I'd like two tickets for the 7 AM flight to Los Angeles, and we'll be returning on Friday." Felicity winked at Angela, who was giving her a perplexed look.

"We can pick up the tickets at the United Airlines ticket counter in the morning? Great! That will be just fine. Thank you, good-bye." Felicity hung up the phone, smiling broadly at Angela. "What is it?" Angela inquired. "What happened while I was gone?" "Well, I learned that Les Kimber not only is in Los Angeles, but that he is working for a cab company there as well. I have the address, and Ms. Clark authorized us to fly down there tomorrow and see if we can get a deposition out of him!"

"Wow!" Angela sighed. "This is really beginning to get interesting!" Felicity reached out and hugged Angela. "Tell me about it. Just pack a couple of changes of clothes and I'll pick you up at your hotel at 5:30 AM." "Alright, but Kelly and I found an apartment this morning. We'll be checking out of the hotel after work, but here is the address to our new place. It's over in North Beach," Angela told her, scribbling down her new address for her. "That's a nice area, Angela. You'll like it there. I used to live in North Beach before I met Danni!"

"Danni?" Angela asked. "Who's Danni?" "Oh, I didn't tell you about...?" Felicity began. Angela shook her head in the negative. "Danni is my girlfriend. I'll introduce you to her sometime. Well, I have to go. Ms. Clark said I could leave early to get ready for tomorrow. See you at 5:30?" "Ok, see you then," Angela responded, trying not to sound too surprised by her co-worker's sudden revelation.

As Felicity grabbed her purse and walked out of the office, Angela sighed and sat down at her desk. So Felicity was gay? She had no idea, none at all! That didn't really make a difference to Angela in the least. She liked Felicity for her cheerful, positive attitude and for her energy. It really didn't matter to her who her coworker slept with...or did it? After all, Angela considered herself purely heterosexual. But how would she react if Felicity ever made a pass at her? She didn't really have an answer for that one.

She closed her eyes for a moment, took a couple of deep breaths, and cleared her mind. Obviously, Felicity had put together the legal papers they needed to take with them, as well as a letter from Mr. Clark which was to be their "ace in the hole." She had heard Mr. Clark dictating the letter to Felicity in case Mr. Kimber was less than cooperative. It basically said that if he didn't agree to voluntarily testify on his client's account, that he would be subpoenaed. On the other hand, if he agreed to voluntarily testify, TLC would cover all of his expenses and compensate him for his "inconveniences."

A few minutes before 5 PM, Mr. Clark walked into the office carrying his briefcase and with a look similar to that of the cat that just swallowed the canary.



“Well, how did it go?” Kelly asked, looking up from her computer. “The judge ruled in our favor and our client was exonerated!” Mr. Clark said triumphantly. He winked at Kelly, placing a hand on her shoulder as he walked past her toward his office. “Thanks for all your hard work, Kelly. Your notes were a big part in me winning this case!”

When Mr. Clark closed the door to his office, Kelly let out a big sigh of relief, and a satisfied smile came to her lips. This is exactly what she liked about her job: making a difference. There was nothing like receiving praise from a new boss on a job well done! As she finished typing the letter she was working on, she placed it in Mr. Clark’s box for his signature, gathered up her purse and coat, and went to Angela’s office.

She stuck her head in the door and saw Angela diligently reading through the case brief she and Felicity had been working on. “You ready?” Kelly asked as Angela looked up from her reading. “Yeah,” she said, reaching for her coat and purse. “I have to go to Los Angeles with Felicity tomorrow morning early. We have a flight out at 7 AM.”

While waiting for the elevator, Angela filled Kelly in on the reason for her and Felicity’s trip to Los Angeles. When the elevator door opened, there stood a smiling Robert! He was wearing a nice gray Italian suit, similar to his father’s. He looked very handsome!

His eyes met Kelly’s and the two stood there staring at each other for a moment. “Hi, Kelly, I was wondering if...” he began awkwardly. “Yes?” Kelly asked, intrigued. “Would you like to go to dinner tonight?” Robert finally finished. “Sure. I’d like that!” Kelly smiled, looking at Angela. “Go ahead. I have to get to bed early tonight anyway,” Angela responded.

Kelly gave Robert her new address and Robert told her he’d pick her up at 7 PM. Then both girls got on the elevator and rode it down to the lobby. Hailing a cab at the curb, they had no sooner got into the yellow cab when it suddenly began to rain, hard. Typical San Francisco weather for this time of year, the cabby stated as he pulled into the heavy traffic on Market Street and up to the lobby at their hotel.

“We’ll be back in ten minutes. Will you wait for us?” Angela asked the cab driver. The man nodded in the affirmative and the girls retrieved their belongings from their room and checked out of the hotel. As Angela and Kelly were bringing their suitcases out through the front door, the cabby got out and opened the trunk and helped the girls load their bags into the cab. Ten minutes later, he dropped the girls off at their apartment complex.

It was raining steadily as Angela and Kelly scurried through the gate, toward their apartment. Seeing Mrs. Baxter standing at her living room window, they waved to her and received a friendly smile and a hearty wave from their personable landlady. They both really liked Mrs. Baxter. Kelly thought it was because she had a couple of daughters of her own, close to their age, who had families of their own and were living back east somewhere. Angela thought she had heard her say Maine, but she wasn’t sure.

That evening, Angela diligently scanned the classified ads with hopes of finding a good used car they could afford. Kelly was in her room, trying to decide what to wear on her date with Robert. She finally decided on her short black jumper with her long-sleeved white silk blouse. She took a long, relaxing bubble bath, and as the tensions and stress of the day faded away, she found herself imagining her evening with Robert.

Even though Robert was five years her junior, he was very handsome and seemed to be kind, intelligent, and courteous. He appeared to have the qualities of a man much older, and this intrigued Kelly.

After her bath, she blow-dried her hair and applied her makeup conservatively. A little black eyeliner with a light application of gray eye shadow, a touch of peach blush. She then stepped into a pair of pink panties and put on a matching pink lace bra. She sat on the edge of her bed to put on her sheer black tights and pulled them on carefully. Next, she put on her blouse, feeling the soft material caressing her skin softly. Then she pulled on her jumper and stepped into a pair of black 3" heel pumps, completing her ensemble.

She returned to the bathroom mirror and finished applying her makeup. A few light strokes of black mascara and her pale pink lipstick, and she was finished. Her goal was to look nice, but not overly "made-up."

"Well, what do you think?" Kelly asked as she walked out to where Angela was sitting with the paper. Angela looked up and smiled at her. "Nice," Angela commented. "Good choice. You always did look great in that jumper!" Kelly smiled, blushing slightly. "Thanks! I DO feel pretty tonight," Kelly said as she sat down next to Angela. "Find any possibilities yet?"

"Well, there are a few here that match what we are looking for. A 2002 Honda Civic with only 5,000 miles on it and in excellent condition. The seller wants \$8,000 for it and is willing to take payments of \$400 a month." Angela continued. "Here's another, a 1998 Ford Mustang Convertible with 35,000 miles, in good condition for \$12,000, but it's being sold through a dealership and financing is available."

"Hmmm, what color is the Mustang?" Kelly asked, smoothing the hem of her dress. "Yellow" Angela answered, continuing to scan the ads. "Wow, a convertible would be nice!" Kelly said casually, checking her watch for the time. "Yeah, it would. Maybe we can go check some of these out this weekend if I get back from L.A. on Friday as planned," Angela answered. "I'd better get to packing."

Just then there was a knock at their door and Kelly grabbed her coat and purse. "Have fun, and behave yourself!" Angela chided her as Kelly headed for the door. "I will, but I may be back late," Kelly said, glancing at the oval mirror in the entryway before opening the door.

It was Robert! Right on time, he looked very handsome in a pair of black slacks and a blue sport shirt and tie. Robert smiled when he saw Kelly. "You look very nice!" Robert commented as Kelly stepped out onto the front porch. Robert helped her with her coat, scoring his first points of the evening. "Hmmm," Kelly thought

to herself as they walked to Robert's car and he opened the door for her. A gentleman as well!"

"You look pretty nice yourself!" Kelly smiled at Robert as he got into the drivers side of the silver 2003 Mustang. "Thanks!" Robert replied as he put on his seatbelt and started the car. "Buckle up now." Kelly put on her seatbelt and couldn't help but smile to herself as they drove off. "Do you like seafood?" Robert asked casually. "I LOVE seafood!" Kelly responded. "Good! Let's go to Fisherman's Wharf. I know a great place there that has the best steak and lobster you've ever tasted!"

Kelly smiled. "You're forgetting I came from Boston! I can be a tough critic," Kelly answered. Robert glanced at her out of the corner of his eye. "Well, we'll just see about that!" Robert announced, confident that the restaurant they were going to was superior to anyplace Kelly had ever been to. "Cool!" Kelly said playfully, flirting a little with him. Kelly was aware that Robert was glancing at her out of the corner of his eye as he pulled into the parking lot.

He got out and walked around to open Kelly's door. She got out and the two walked together across the street and along the wharf, which was bustling with activity. Vendors were busily going about their business, preparing shrimp cocktails and selling souvenirs to the tourists. The aroma of fresh fish, crab and the nearby restaurants mingled to stir their senses as well as their appetites. "This is it," Robert announced as they came to a place called Fisherman's Grotto #9.

Robert opened the door for Kelly and they stepped inside. There was a long line of hungry tourists, but Robert guided Kelly to the head of the line where an oriental woman was standing. "Good evening, Mr. Clark!" she smiled, motioning for them to proceed. "Your table is ready!" "Thank you, Cynthia!" Robert smiled as he took Kelly's hand and led her to a small secluded booth in a corner by the window.

He took Kelly's coat and his own and hung them on a coat rack nearby. Kelly sat down, sliding over near the window, and smoothed the hem of her skirt. She was half-hoping that Robert would take the hint and slide in next to her, but he didn't. Instead, he sat on the opposite side, smiling at Kelly. She centered herself, smiling back at him coyly. "This is my favorite restaurant in San Francisco. I've been coming here since I was a kid," Robert told her in a low voice as a waiter approached their table carrying menus and a pitcher of ice water. "Mr. Clark, how are you tonight?" the waiter announced in a cheerful tone. "I'm just fine, Andrew!" Robert replied. "Would you like cocktails before dinner?" Andrew asked, taking his pad out of his shirt pocket.

"Yes, I'd like a glass of Chablis. Kelly?" "I'll have a glass of Burgundy," Kelly responded, meeting Robert's gaze. "Thank you," Andrew replied. "Coming right up." He turned to leave and Robert winked at Kelly and opened his menu. Kelly did the same. She already knew what she wanted to have, but she was waiting to see what Robert was having. Actually, Robert knew what he wanted as well, but glanced at the menu anyway. It was obvious to Kelly that Robert was a little nervous as he pretended to look through the menu.

Kelly looked up at him and smiled. She couldn't help but admit to herself that she was a little turned-on by Robert's timid nature. In an attempt to save Robert's dignity and put him more at ease, she stretched her hands out across the table, taking Robert's hands in hers. He smiled back, regaining his composure. "To tell you the truth..." Robert began, "I already know what I want." "Me too," Kelly replied, squeezing his hands.

About this time Andrew returned with their glasses of wine. "I think we are ready to order now, Andrew," Robert said with confidence. Andrew retrieved his pad. "Go ahead," Robert told Kelly. "I'll have the steak and lobster, with a baked potato and vegetables, green salad with ranch dressing," Kelly said. "How would you like your steak, Miss?" Andrew asked. "Rare, please!" "And Mr. Clark...?" "I'll have the same, exactly!" Robert responded. Andrew nodded, turned and left.

Andrew returned shortly with their salads and a loaf of that famous sourdough French bread still warm from the oven. As they began to eat, Kelly decided to break the ice. "So, tell me about yourself?" Kelly inquired, buttering her bread. "Well, I was born here...in San Francisco, I mean," Robert began. "I guess it was always expected of my brother and me to follow in our father's footsteps and go into law," Robert offered, taking a bite of his salad.

"What do you think of it so far?" Kelly ventured, taking a sip of her wine. "It's OK, I guess. I graduated from Berkeley last year, and I've been interning in my father's law firm since last September. I've been working with my father and brother on a few cases, you know, to gain experience, but I haven't gone solo yet," Robert declared with a hint of regret. "Give it time," Kelly replied. "I'm sure you'll do just fine. It took me almost two years of internship before I really got to do anything substantial."

"Yeah?" Robert asked, taking a sip of his wine. "Yeah," Kelly responded. "I mean, I really like the idea of helping someone in need. Sometimes I feel I'd like to leave the firm and go into the public defender's office. But my folks told me that my place was with the firm for now, until I learned the realities of the law and how it's applied."

"So, what do you like to do in your spare time?" Kelly asked. "I like to spend as much time as I can outdoors. Ever since I was a kid, my brother and I have been going up into the mountains with my dad...you know, hunting and canoeing trips, backpacking and the like. It's so beautiful, being out on a river at dawn, with the sun rising and the smell of the forest," Robert said thoughtfully. "But enough about me. What are your passions?"

Kelly thought for a moment. She wished that she could be honest with him. Tell him the truth. But that was impossible. And she couldn't risk losing her new life. "Well," Kelly began, taking a long slug from her wine. "I really love what I do...my work I mean. I love being a part of something much larger than myself. Being part of a common goal in the field of law. It was so satisfying to know that my notes helped your father win that IRS case he went to court on the other day."

Robert smiled knowingly. "Go on," he asked, intrigued with her thoughts. There was something mystical about this woman, and he wanted to hear more.

"I'm a city girl at heart, I guess. I've always loved the pace of a big city...the lights, the noise, the humanity." Kelly trailed off dreamily. She was beginning to feel a little giddy from the wine, and hoped their meal would arrive shortly.

"So, what do you like to do in your spare time?" Robert asked. "Well, I like to take drives...you know, just get in the car and drive, with no particular destination in mind. I like walking on the beach on a nice day. Angela and I used to pack a picnic lunch and drive until we found a suitable spot to enjoy it." Robert smiled. "Then you do like the great outdoors!" he commented. "Well, yes, I guess I do...just not too far from a nice hot shower and my comfortable bed!" Kelly smiled.

For a moment it seemed as if they were the only ones in the restaurant, captivated by each others company. They gazed into each other's eyes, seemingly searching for something, although neither knew what.

Just then, Andrew brought them their meals, and it broke their trance. "Oh, my goodness, this looks so delicious!" Kelly commented as Andrew set their plates in front of them. "Will there be anything else, Mr. Clark?" Andrew asked, noting that the young couple seemed preoccupied. "This should do it for now, Andrew, thank you!" Robert smiled, eyeing the fat lobster tail and 12 oz. T-bone steak on his plate. The two of them savored their delicious meal, enjoying each other's company.

When they had finished, Robert ordered coffee for them and they sat looking out the window at the marina and the lights on the bay. "Well, what did you think?" Robert asked, referring to the lobster. Kelly smiled. "I must admit, the Australian tails ARE better than the Maine tails." "I'm glad you liked it," Robert said, motioning to Andrew for the check. "It is so beautiful here..." Kelly noted, sipping her coffee and glancing out the window. "I think I'm going to like San Francisco." Then she turned her gaze to Robert. "There's already something else here I've found I like." Robert smiled shyly. "Thank you, Robert!" Kelly said in the sexiest voice she could muster. "No, thank YOU, Kelly, for joining me!"

Andrew brought the check as Kelly and Robert were just finishing their coffee, and Robert signed it. "Care to walk off some of this?" Robert asked, holding his stomach. "I'd like that," Kelly answered. As they got up from the table, Robert, always the gentleman, helped Kelly with her coat and put on his. Reaching into his coat pocket, he retrieved his wallet and took out a twenty dollar bill and left it on the table.

Kelly took Robert's arm and they walked out of the restaurant, into the still-bustling crowd of tourists roaming the wharf's shops. A cold breeze was blowing in from the bay and it felt refreshing to Kelly after the warmth of the restaurant. As the two walked, Robert took her hand and Kelly realized just how tall Robert was! Even in her heels, he seemed to tower over her!

As it started to rain, they ducked into a small novelty shop and looked around. Kelly found a scented candle in a pretty glass jar that she liked, and Robert bought it for her in memory of their wonderful evening together. It smelled of jasmine, and was her favorite shade of green. After a few minutes, the rain let up slightly and the two walked back to Robert's car. Kelly was wondering what was

next when Robert mentioned that, although he had a wonderful time, and didn't want the evening to end, he had to be into work early the next morning.

Kelly told him that was alright, and that they would get together again soon. Although in her heart she was slightly disappointed, she knew it was probably best. She was extremely attracted to Robert, but she was also afraid of what could happen, and she didn't trust herself enough to be able to refuse him, if it came to that!

Robert drove her back to her apartment, and walked her to her door. "Thank you, Robert. I had a wonderful time!" Kelly told him as she fumbled in her purse for her key, and opened the door. She turned and Robert bent his head and kissed her softly. "See you tomorrow?" Robert said as he back-stepped toward his car at the curb. "Of course. Goodnight...and thanks again!" Kelly waved, and turned and went into the apartment.

Inside the door she saw Angela's small suitcase, and she walked into the kitchen. She poured two glasses of wine and joined Angela in the living room. Angela was sitting on the couch in her blue terrycloth robe, reading a case brief from work. She glanced up and smiled at Kelly as she handed her a glass, then sat down beside her. "So, how did it go?" Angela asked curiously. Kelly took a sip of her wine and smiled sheepishly. Angela's expression suddenly changed from curious to concern.

"Oh, no! You didn't?" Angela began, setting her glass down on the end table. "Of course not!" Kelly began. "We just had dinner down at Fisherman's Wharf. Robert was the perfect gentleman! In fact, he's kind of shy, to tell you the truth. But he bought me this..." Kelly opened the small bag and took out the candle. She removed the lid and held it under Angela's nose for her to smell. "Mmmm, that smells delightful!" Angela said. "He bought it for me in remembrance of the evening," Kelly replied, sniffing the candle herself. "We had steak and lobster at Fishermen's Grotto #9, and then we walked around through some of the shops, waiting for the rain to let up. He told me he had to go into the office early tomorrow to help his dad with one of his cases, so he just brought me home."

"So, nothing happened?" Angela seemed disappointed. "No, not really. He kissed me goodnight at the door was all, but he wasn't at all the horndog his father was, if that's what you mean." Kelly replied, smiling.

"What time are you leaving in the morning?" Kelly asked, toying with a strand of her long blonde hair. "Felicity said she'd pick me up around 7 AM. Our flight leaves at 9 AM." "Well, I'm going to bed. Have a safe trip and be careful, OK?" Kelly said as she got up, taking her empty wine glass into the kitchen and putting it in the dishwasher. "Goodnight," Kelly said as she started up the stairs toward her bedroom. "Goodnight!" Angela echoed. She put her case brief down on the coffee table and leaned back into the comfortable softness of the sofa, and closed her eyes. She remembered when they had been back in Boston, in that cold, damp apartment. They had come a long way in the last couple of weeks.

## CHAPTER FIVE

The next thing Angela remembered was her alarm clock going off, signaling 6 AM. She got up out of bed, and pulled open the blinds to look outside. The sun was just peeking over the hills to the East, and the sky was clear. She took a long, hot shower and stood in front of the mirror drying her hair, noticing how long it was getting. As she applied her makeup, she thought about what she was going to wear for the flight down to L.A. with Felicity.

When she finished doing her makeup and combing her hair out, she went to her closet and looked for something to wear. She decided on her gray and white skirt outfit, pantyhose and her 3" heel black pumps. The skirt was a little short, she thought, but she still looked businesslike and relatively conservative. And that was just the look she hoped to achieve. After all, this trip WAS for business, not pleasure. And somehow she just knew that Felicity was going to have a similar look as well.

When she was finished getting dressed, she took a look at herself in the full length mirror on the back of her bedroom door. She looked pretty good, she thought. Especially her long, firm legs, a bonus from years of running track.

She went downstairs to the kitchen, made herself some coffee and a cinnamon bagel, and sat down at the small table to eat. She wondered what the day would bring, with their trip to L.A. and whether or not they could convince Les Kimber to cooperate. She also made a mental note to call in the prescriptions for both her and Kelly's Premarin after she returned from Los Angeles. They were both nearly out of their hormone pills, and Angela wanted to reestablish a therapy schedule, in hopes of getting approval for the final step in her transformation.

She knew that eventually, she would have her gender reassignment surgery. But up until this point, getting established in a career was most important. After all, it would cost a lot of money, and there were still quite a few obstacles she needed to overcome before she could proceed with her surgery. She needed to save a considerable amount of money, and she also needed a good alibi for her employers, to explain to them why she needed two weeks off.

She was finishing her second cup of coffee when Felicity drove up and honked her horn. She grabbed her suitcase and locked the door behind her. Felicity got out and opened the trunk for Angela's suitcase. She was wearing a navy blue skirt suit herself, which was rather short, and showed off her long legs as well. "Good morning, Angela!" Felicity smiled. "You look nice." "Thanks, so do you!" Angela replied as they got into Felicity's car and drove off.

As Felicity got onto the highway and headed south toward the airport, Angela couldn't help but feel as if Felicity was checking her out of the corner of her eye. She hoped this wasn't the case, because she liked Felicity, and wasn't really quite sure how to cope if she made a pass at her.

After about thirty minutes, Felicity pulled into the main parking lot at San Francisco International Airport. The lot was crowded, as usual, but she was able to find a spot fairly close to the terminal entrance. There was no sense having to

carry their bags too far, she reasoned to herself. The two took their small suitcases from the trunk and headed into the busy terminal.

As they entered the terminal, Angela glanced at her watch. It was 8:10 AM. They hurried to the ticket counter and checked their bags, as Felicity picked up their tickets. "We have plenty of time," Felicity said calmly as the two walked toward the airline gate. Angela was surprised that the airport was swarming with travelers and tourists so early in the morning.

Felicity said it was always like that, except between midnight and 6 AM. And even during those hours, she had said, international flights were always arriving or departing. There was a long line at the security gate, so the girls, fighting the urge to duck into one of the clothing shops, took their place in line. The line was moving at a snail's pace, and somehow both girls knew it was going to be a long day.

Meanwhile, Kelly had arrived at work and was busily typing a letter at her computer. She had decided to be bold that morning and wear one of her shortest skirts, a green plaid number with her hunter green turtle-necked sweater. A black garter belt and black stockings completed her ensemble. She looked great in it, and felt extremely feminine, if not a little vulnerable.

Mr. Clark came in with Mr. Landers about 8:30 AM. Carl Landers was one of the other senior partners in the firm. He was a few years younger than Mr. Clark, and not as tall, but much heavier. Both men smiled as Kelly greeted them with a cheerful "Good Morning!" and continued into Mr. Clark's office, chatting. She got the feeling that both men were eyeing her from the rear before she heard the door close behind her. A moment later, Mr. Clark's voice came over Kelly's desk intercom. "Kelly, would you please bring some coffee in?"

"Yes, sir!" Kelly replied quickly. She got up from her desk and went over to where the coffee pot was, on a small table in the corner, and poured two cups. She placed the cups, along with some sugar and cream, on a small tray and took it into Mr. Clark's office. Mr. Clark was standing behind his desk and Mr. Landers was seated in a chair, and they appeared to be discussing a case together. She took the tray over and set it on Mr. Clark's desk carefully. "Thank you, Kelly!" Mr. Clark responded, and Mr. Landers smiled and nodded appreciatively.

Kelly turned and stepped toward the door, when she heard Mr. Clark say "Oh, and Kelly?" She turned and looked at Mr. Clark expectantly. "I have a brief that needs to go out in the morning mail. When we're done with it, will you see that it gets in the outbox right away?" "Of course!" Kelly answered, flashing him one of her winning smiles. "Thanks, Kelly!" Mr. Clark winked.

Kelly went over, poured herself a cup of coffee, and returned to her desk with it. Taking a sip, she realized just how lucky she really was! Only a few weeks before, she and Angela had been cold and desperate living in Boston. Nearly out of money and unemployed, they had no idea that their luck would soon change for the better. She loved her job and couldn't have been happier with her new life! She was constantly being challenged in her new position, she loved San Fran-



cisco, and most of all, there was a handsome young man who had taken a serious interest in her!

Kelly allowed herself to drift off momentarily, and relived Robert's passionate kiss the night before. It gave her goose bumps as she imagined herself in his strong arms once again, being kissed liked she'd never been kissed before! Robert was a man. A real man with a man's needs and desires, and she could almost feel the heat of his body holding her close to him.

"Hi!" she heard, in a seemingly faraway voice. She quickly came out of her dreamlike state and saw Robert standing in the door. "Oh, HI!" she managed, noticing that he held something in his hand. He walked over to her desk and held out a single red rose. "I had a good time last night," Robert said, handing Kelly the rose. "Thank you, Robert, that's very sweet of you!" Kelly replied, taking the rose from him, smiling up from her desk. The two of them gazed into each other's eyes for a moment, but it seemed an eternity. Kelly's heart raced in her chest as she stood up and walked over to the coffee table, finding a vase and adding some water to it. While she did this, she could feel Robert's hungry gaze as he watched her place the rose in a vase. "Wow! Kelly, you look fantastic!" Robert blurted out incredulously.

She turned a walked back, setting the vase on her desk. Smiling back at him, she wasn't really sure how to respond to Robert's obvious adoration. "Thank you, you look very nice yourself!" Kelly commented. "Going someplace special?" "Yes, I'm tagging along with Mr. Landers this morning. He has a client who has a plea hearing this morning, and my father thought it would be a good idea if I went along." Kelly nodded, trying her hardest to keep her composure. "Well, you look very handsome. Just remember, the best way to get some experience is to see how the old timers do it. OK?"

Robert smiled, amazed by the casual, yet sensual way Kelly had about her, and her enchanting way of making him feel more at ease. Robert smiled. "See you later?" he asked as he turned to leave. "Count on it!" Kelly quickly replied. "And good luck!" "Thanks!" Robert called back over his shoulder as he stepped out of the office. Kelly sighed, picking up the vase and sniffing her rose lightly, then brushed the bright red pedals against her lips, feeling their softness.

No sooner had she set the vase down and began to type once again, when Mr. Landers came out of Mr. Clark's office carrying his briefcase. "Good luck, Carl!" she heard Mr. Clark's masculine voice call out. "Let me know how it goes, OK?" "You bet! Should be a cake walk!" Mr. Landers replied, giving Kelly a wink and exiting the office.

A moment later, Mr. Clark came out and set the brief he was referring to down on Kelly's desk. Noticing the red rose on her desk, curiosity got the better of him. "Where did that come from?" he asked, a crooked smile coming over his face. "A secret admirer," Kelly replied immediately, smiling to herself. "Oh, well, that's nice!" Mr. Clark sounded a little surprised by her response. Saying nothing more, he retreated back into his office quietly.

Back at the airport, Angela and Felicity had just cleared security and were headed down the covered loading tunnel to board their flight. As the girls found their seats, they were pleased to see that the flight was less than half-full. Felicity took out her notebook computer and began to format her notes as Angela picked up a magazine and began to nervously thumb through it. She was never very fond of flying, and Felicity sensed this. After a few minutes, they felt the engines start and soon the plane was taxiing out to the runway.

A stewardess came on the intercom and welcomed the passengers aboard, stating that the weather in Los Angeles was clear and cool, and that their approximate flight time would be about an hour and ten minutes. "Don't worry, Angela, we'll be down there in no time! You'll see," Felicity reassured her, smiling and touching her hand lightly. Angela smiled back halfheartedly. "Thank you." Angela mouthed the words as the stewardess reminded everyone to buckle their seatbelts and return their seat back tables to their stowed positions. They were turning onto the runway and they could feel the vibration and noise from the engines increase as the plane began its run, picking up speed quickly.

Before they knew it, the planes nose was pointed skyward and the girls felt themselves being pushed back in their seats as the plane rose from the runway and climbed skyward. Angela had the window seat, and after a few minutes she looked out and saw the Golden Gate Bridge far below, looking as if it were a miniature model of the real thing! As the airliner banked high above the bay and headed south, Angela sat back in her seat and sighed. She hoped everything would go as planned in Los Angeles and that they would be returning home in a couple of days.

A little more than an hour later, the plane touched down in Los Angeles, and the girls picked up their rental car and drove to their hotel. After checking in and putting their bags in their room, Felicity and Angela drove to the downtown area. When they arrived at the cab company where Les Kimber worked, they were told that he was driving a fare into Long Beach, about a thirty minute drive from downtown Los Angeles. On further prodding from Felicity, the dispatcher told them that Mr. Kimber usually ate lunch at a nearby diner. He was there everyday, with few exceptions, around noon.

As the girls left the cab company, Felicity suggested that they go to the diner and eat an early lunch while waiting for Mr. Kimber to arrive. Angela agreed and they drove to the diner, only a few blocks away. Somehow the diner wasn't what Felicity or Angela had imagined. This place was old and run down. The paint on the walls was cracked and peeling, and the cold, plastic upholstery in the booths were uninviting to say the least. Angela glanced at her watch. It was 11:45 AM.

Angela ordered a French Dip sandwich and Felicity a turkey sandwich on French bread and a bowl of soup. They both felt a little out of place here, considering how they were dressed. Most of the other customers were in jeans or sweat-pants, and the majority were black. Angela felt as if every eye in the diner were on them, and when she conveyed this to Felicity, she agreed. Just about the time when the two were getting ready to get up and leave, the waitress brought their food.

Strangely enough, the food was very good! Felicity's soup was hot and tasty, and Angela couldn't remember ever having a French Dip that was so tender and delicious! The girls soon forgot about the unwelcome stares they were receiving and focused on their meals. When they finished, they both ordered coffee and Felicity took the firm's written offer to Mr. Kimber and showed it to Angela. Then she took the other "offer" and handed it to Angela, who glanced through it a couple of times. They were instructed only to present the second paper to Mr. Kimber if he refused to cooperate.

Angela and Felicity were on their second cup of coffee when a black man matching the description they had of Mr. Kimber entered the diner, and sat down at the counter. After he had placed his order, Felicity got up and walked over to him. She introduced herself, and asked that he join her and Angela over in the booth. From where Angela was sitting, it looked as though he hesitated slightly, then smiled cordially and accepted, following Felicity over to the booth. Angela scooted over and Mr. Kimber took a seat beside her, facing Felicity.

Felicity took a deep breath. "This is Angela Bradford, my associate," Felicity introduced, breaking the ice and trying to put Mr. Kimber at ease. "We were sent here to ask for your cooperation in a court case in San Francisco. Our law firm is representing a Mr. Ron Pearlman, who you gave a ride to on the evening of a murder. The coroner testified that the victim, a Mrs. Hansen, was strangled to death between the hours of 11 PM and midnight on the night of June 21<sup>st</sup>. We checked the cab company's logbook for that night, and it clearly stated that you picked Mr. Pearlman up at 10 PM and dropped him off at his apartment exactly fifteen minutes later. So, as you can see, there is no way that Mr. Pearlman could have committed the murder of Mrs. Hansen."

Mr. Kimber listened intently, then Felicity handed him the paper detailing the firm's rather generous offer. He read it with interest, nodding his head as he scanned each page. "I remember that night, and Mr. Pearlman. The reason why I remember it so well was 'cause it was a night I was supposed to have off. My daughter, who lives with my ex-wife over in Oakland was graduating from junior high school. I was going to go to the school program, but at the last minute, my boss asked me to work that night because there were so many other drivers out sick. So, I worked and missed my daughter's graduation." Mr. Kimber explained thoughtfully.

"I remember Mr. Pearlman very well, because when I told him about missing my daughter's program, he told me that family is always more important than jobs or money and that I should have told my boss 'no' and been there for my daughter."

Felicity and Angela looked at each other. They both were rather taken in by Mr. Kimber's unexpected sensitivity and regret at missing his daughter's special event. They could see the sorrow in his face, and his eyes began to tear up slightly. Both Angela and Felicity felt for him, but they also had a job to do. "We can't say we know what you're going through, what you're feeling..." Angela began, reaching across the table to touch his hand, which was beginning to shake. "I guess about all you can do is learn from the experience and be there for her next time. There

will always be a next time, you know,” Angela told him in a low voice with compassion and feeling.

Mr. Kimber looked up into Angela’s eyes. “Do you really think so?” Mr. Kimber asked, trying to compose himself. “I know so,” Angela answered, squeezing his hand in reassurance. “But right now, there is a man in prison for a crime he didn’t commit. We both know that. And right now, you are his only hope.” “Will you help?” Felicity asked, as his gaze shifted from Angela to her. He hung his head and nodded in the affirmative. “Yes, of course I will. What do you want me to do?” Mr. Kimber responded, taking out a handkerchief and wiping his eyes. Felicity took an envelope from her purse and placed it on the table in front of him. “Everything you need to know is written in here. The trial is next month and your airline tickets and hotel reservations are in there, along with some money to pay for your expenses.” Mr. Kimber opened the envelope and took out the plane tickets, the information letter, and three \$100 bills. “All I need from you at this time is for you to sign this affidavit, stating that you will be there on the appointed day to testify on our client’s behalf,” Felicity told him, taking the paper from her briefcase and sliding it across the table in front of him.

Mr. Kimber read the affidavit carefully, and then nodded his head. “Do you have a pen?” he asked. Angela took a pen from her purse and handed it to the man, who signed and dated the bottom. Felicity handed Mr. Kimber her card with the phone number to the firm, and told him to call if he had any questions or concerns. She also reminded him that he would be compensated for any lost wages and for his time. She told him that she didn’t anticipate him having to be in San Francisco more than a day or two to testify.

Angela and Felicity then stood up and offered their hands. “Thank you very much, Mr. Kimber. You’re doing the right thing. And we certainly hope that the next time your daughter has an important event in her life that you’ll be able to be there for her.” Mr. Kimber stood also, and shook both the girls’ hands. “You are SO right, and thank you for everything!” Mr. Kimber acknowledged, smiling slightly.

The girls left in a somber mood, neither of them expecting the reaction from Mr. Kimber that they experienced. Hardly saying a word, they returned to their hotel. Felicity called Ms. Clark back in San Francisco and reported that her and Angela had met with Mr. Kimber, and that he would be willing to testify. Ms. Clark seemed very pleased and told Felicity that she would pass the information on to Mr. Clark. “Oh, and Felicity...?” Ms. Clark said with praise in her voice. “Good work!” Felicity thanked Ms. Clark, and stated that Angela was a big help as well. “Well, you tell Angela that we are all very proud of both of you at TLC. And while you’re there, why don’t you two take tomorrow off and just relax and enjoy yourselves? You’ve earned it, OK? We’ll see you on Friday,” Ms. Clark told her.

Felicity thanked her and said good-bye. She smiled at Angela and informed her of what Ms. Clark had said, and of her praise. “Want to go for a swim?” Felicity asked with a sigh. “That sounds wonderful!” Angela smiled, relieved that their “mission” was actually accomplished. “Do you think Mr. Kimber will really come?”

Angela asked, digging in her suitcase for her bathing suit. "I think he will," Felicity responded. "He seemed very sincere about wanting to help."

Angela stepped into the bathroom and undressed. It was warm and muggy in L.A. that day, and it felt wonderful to get out of her skirt suit, nylons and heels! As she stepped into her yellow string bikini bottom, she thought about Kelly and how her day was going. It had been quite a while since the two of them had been apart, and she wished that Kelly could be there with her. After she put on her bikini top, she checked her reflection in the mirror, glad that she had worn waterproof makeup that day. When she came out of the bathroom, Felicity had already gone down to the pool. Angela grabbed a towel and went down to join her. Even though there was a heavy haze in the sky, the perpetual smog layer that always seemed to embrace the Los Angeles area, the sun was shining brightly. Angela was glad that she brought her sunglasses. She didn't get to wear them much in San Francisco during this time of the year. But L.A. enjoyed a lot more sunny days during the winter months.

As Angela walked through the gate to the large, shamrock-shaped pool, she heard a distinct whistle, coming from Felicity's direction. "Wow, looking good, girl!" Felicity commented as Angela made her way over to the chase lounge where Felicity was laying, sunning herself. "You look pretty good yourself!" Angela smiled, blushing slightly. The bright red string bikini Felicity was wearing showed off her beautiful body nicely! Her long blonde hair fell across her softly tanned shoulders, and her long, shapely legs were the envy of every woman at the office!

Angela lay back on the lounge chair next to her coworker and stretched out, feeling the warm rays of the sun caressing her exposed skin. She hadn't worn the bikini very much in public, and she was strangely aware of her near-nakedness. As she lay there, she felt slightly vulnerable, but excited at the same time! She could hear the sound of children playing and the conversations of the people sitting around the pool.

After a little while, Felicity could take no more! Her skin felt as though it were sizzling like an egg on a hot sidewalk! "I'm baking!" she said as she stood and walked over to the pool's edge, sticking her foot in to test the water. Angela sat up also, and shaded her eyes from the sun as she smiled and watched Felicity as she dove in! "Ohhhh, that feels SO good!" Felicity cried out as she surfaced and stood in the chest deep water, pushing back her long, wet hair luxuriously. "Come on in, the water's great!" she called out to Angela as she began to swim about in the shallow end of the pool.

Angela admired Felicity's femininity, her grace and her charm. As a woman herself, she looked at other women differently than a man looks at a woman. Instead of looking at them with lust or in a sexual way, she looked at them in admiration of the attributes that she admired most: Their soft skin. Their long legs or nicely rounded bottoms. Their hair or the shape and contour of their breasts.

Angela stood up and pulled her long brown hair back and put it in a pony tail. She walked slowly over to the edge of the pool, noticing a group of men sitting at a table on the other side gazing at her. "Is it cold?" Angela asked fearfully as she

looked to a smiling Felicity, who had also noticed the men watching Angela. “Just jump in, it feels great!” Felicity grinned broadly. That must mean it’s cold, Angela thought to herself as she stood on the edge, preparing to dive in head first. She put her arms over her head and dove in as gracefully as she could. “Ohhhh, my goodness!” she exclaimed as she came to the surface. “It’s freezing!” Angela sputtered, breathlessly.

“It gets warmer...you’ll see,” Felicity giggled as she stretched out and began to swim slowly towards the opposite end of the pool. Angela followed, attempting to imitate Felicity’s grace in the water. She was vaguely aware of the men’s stares as she neared the deep end of the pool and held onto the side next to Felicity. “Those men are watching us,” Angela commented in a low voice. “I know. Cool, huh?” Felicity replied with a mischievous look in her eyes. Angela smiled a crooked little grin. “You’re a tease!” Angela giggled, pushing off from the side and swimming on her side, watching her co-worker with interest. But she only winked at her, and pushed off herself, and began to swim gracefully to the other end of the pool. The cool water felt wonderfully refreshing, and it renewed the girl’s spirits. After a little while, they climbed out of the pool and laid down on their lounges, languishing in the afternoon sun.

About this same time, Kelly was finishing up her day back at the office. Ms. Clark came in and had told her about Mr. Kimber agreeing to testify, and told Kelly that Angela and Felicity would be back tomorrow evening. She went into her husband’s office and after a few moments Kelly heard Mr. Clark shout a jubilant “Yesss!!!” upon hearing the news that Mr. Kimber had been found and that he was willing to testify on behalf of his client.

After Ms. Clark walked out of her husband’s office a few minutes later, Mr. Clark asked for Kelly to come in and to bring her steno pad. When Kelly walked into his office, she saw that he was in an extremely cheerful mood. He dictated a letter to Kelly for his client, Mr. Pearlman, relating that they had found the cab driver, Mr. Kimber, and that he was willing to testify at his appeal hearing next month. He asked that Kelly type up the letter, and return it to him for his signature. After she did this, Mr. Clark signed the letter and asked that Kelly mail it on her way out that day.

When Kelly returned to her desk to retrieve her coat and purse, she noticed a small card on her desk, next to her rose. She opened the envelope and took out the tiny card inside. It read: **I’d really like to see you tomorrow night, Kelly! I’d like to fix you dinner at my place. 4550 Hilltop Street Apt. 204. See you around 7 PM? Robert.** This might be interesting, Kelly thought to herself as she left the office, saying goodnight to Ms. Clark as she passed her office. She really liked Robert, and now, it seemed, he liked her, too! But she was torn between her own personal feelings and also her desire not to jeopardize her new position at the firm by dating the boss’ son!

The sun was setting and a cold wind blew as she hailed a cab and returned to the apartment. She was glad that Angela was going to be returning Friday night, as they had planned on looking at some cars that weekend together. Tomorrow

would be their first real payday, and she was looking forward to seeing the fruits of her labors for the past couple of weeks. As she entered the cold, growing darkness of the apartment, she was anxious to change into something more comfortable, light a fire in the fireplace, eat some supper, and maybe listen to some soft music as she contemplated tomorrow night.

She started her bath water and walked into her bedroom to change her clothes. While the tub was filling, she went downstairs and lit a fire, warming her hands before returning upstairs and retreating into the relaxed comfort of the large garden tub. Turning on the water jets, she slowly sat herself down in the steaming tub. As the warm, swirling water covered her soft, cool skin, she let out a long sigh. It had been a good day at work, especially after hearing the news that Felicity and Angela had accomplished their work in L.A. and would be returning tomorrow. She also knew that it meant a lot to Mr. Clark that the one and only witness who could free his client appeared willing to testify on his behalf. She imagined Mr. Pearlman's elation on hearing the news as well. She closed her eyes and sank down into the warmth and security of her bath. Her hands reached up and cupped the round fullness of her breasts, and she kneaded them softly, sensuously. Her fingers brushed over her nipples, which caused her to gasp audibly. The feeling was electric and she imagined being held within Robert's strong arms, her breasts being crushed against his hard chest as he kissed her passionately and intensely.

Just then, the phone rang and brought Kelly abruptly out of her fantasy. She was glad that she had thought to bring the phone into the bathroom with her, and she reached to answer it. "Hello?" she asked, sitting up in the tub. "Hello, did I call you at a bad time?" she heard the voice on the other end of the line ask. It was Robert! "No, not at all!" Kelly tried not to sound too surprised. "Did you get my note?" Robert inquired. "Yes, I did. In fact, I was just thinking about you," Kelly admitted as she lay back down in the warm tub. "You were?" Robert responded, sounding surprised. "Yes, I'd love to come for supper. I had no idea that you could cook," Kelly said teasingly. "Well, actually, I'm pretty good at it. When I was growing up, my folks were gone a lot, and my brother and I had to fend for ourselves. I guess it was good that we learned, because I've been cooking for myself for quite a while now," Robert admitted.

There was a brief silence as neither of them could think of what to say next. Then Kelly asked coyly. "Well, what are you making...or is that a secret?" Robert hesitated. "Well, I make a pretty mean Shepherd's Pie," Robert began. "But if you'd like something else, I can..." "That sounds wonderful!" Kelly responded. "It's been so long since I've had a home-cooked meal!" Her answer seemed to put Robert more at ease. "Great! Then, I'll see you at 7?" Robert asked, sounding more confident with himself. "I'll be there!" Kelly elatedly responded. "See you then." "Alright, Kelly, good-bye!" Robert said, hanging up the phone.

He smacked himself up the side of his head, feeling like he sounded foolish. Kelly hung up the phone and smiled to herself. Robert's shyness had always been a major turn-on for her. She had been propositioned by many men in the past, and found their stupid come-on lines demeaning and dull. With Robert, she felt

secure and safe. She somehow knew that he would never hurt her or attempt to compromise her principals. And this suited her just fine! Gentlemen were few and far between these days, and Kelly wasn't about to settle for anything less!

Her bath water had begun to get cold and Kelly flipped the lever to drain the tub which had been her sanctuary for the past hour. She stood and began drying herself, looking at her reflection in the partially-fogged bathroom mirror. Her appearance pleased her, and she smiled slightly. So many things were running through her mind: Her new career, her future, Robert, among other things. She put on her black lace nightgown and went downstairs.

She picked up a Steven King novel she had begun on the plane flight out from Boston, and sat down beside the fireplace to read. Her stomach was growling as she hadn't eaten anything since lunch, but she decided to ignore her hunger pangs. She had gained about five pounds since coming to San Francisco, with all the good food they had been eating, and she was adamant about looking good in her bikini. She had a feeling that she would be wearing it before too long, even though it was winter now. Something told her that if things kept going well with Robert, she would be wearing it soon.

She tried to concentrate on her book, but her heart just wasn't in it. She had come to an exceptionally scary part of the book, and being there all alone, she chose not to continue reading it, and set it down on the coffee table. She stood up and walked into the kitchen. Going to the refrigerator, she poured herself a glass of wine and took out a small plate of carrots and celery to snack on. Rabbit food, Angela called it. But it would fill her empty void until morning. And the wine would help her sleep.

Walking back out by the fire, she sat down, bringing her legs up beneath her. As she munched her carrots and celery and sipped her wine, her thoughts turned back to Robert. She wondered what tomorrow would bring and how their evening together would go. Even though Angela and Felicity had only been gone for a couple days, it seemed like much longer. She wondered what Felicity and Angela were doing that evening.

Felicity and Angela returned to their room and showered and dressed for dinner. Felicity suggested a nice Italian restaurant that was nearby and a nightclub where they could go for drinks afterward. As Angela applied her makeup in the bathroom, Felicity changed into a short black skirt, a white cotton blouse, nylons and a pair of 4" heel black pumps. When Angela finished with her makeup and hair, Felicity took her turn in front of the mirror. She began to blow-dry and brush out her long blonde hair, while Angela dressed in the next room.

She had anticipated an evening out on the town before they returned, and she was glad that she had brought one of her favorite dresses, a short white flower-print dress, a pair of black thigh-high nylons and her 3" heel black pumps. While she was applying her lipstick, Felicity came out of the bathroom. "That's a pretty dress," she commented as she grabbed her purse. "You ready?" "All set!" Angela replied, checking her reflection in the mirror.



It was just getting dark as the girls walked down to their car. The sun had just dipped beneath the horizon, and the sky to the West had turned various shades of purple and pink. The cool evening air felt good to Angela as they drove down the busy, wide boulevard and pulled into the parking lot of the Italian restaurant. As they stepped from the car, the wonderful smell of food enlightened their senses. After their swim and the relaxing afternoon they spent lying in the sun, they were very hungry!

Inside, they found wine bottles hanging from the ceiling and candles burning on all of the tables. Since they were early for dinner, they were seated right away at a cozy little table in a corner. As they scanned the menus, it was apparent to both girls that they had chosen the right place to dine that evening. The atmosphere was relaxed and charming, and the food smelled delicious! Felicity ordered lasagna and Angela chose the spaghetti and meatballs dinner. Felicity looked at the wine list and glanced up at Angela, and winked at her. "Trust me?" Felicity asked. Obviously, she had a bottle of wine in mind, and Angela nodded her head in affirmation. Angela excused herself to go to the restroom while Felicity ordered their wine.

When she returned, Felicity poured her a glass of wine, and they both toasted the day and their good fortune at finding Mr. Kimber and getting him to agree to come up to San Francisco and testify. "Mmmm, this is very good!" Angela responded. "I love it," Felicity added. "It's excellent with the food here." Angela took another sip. "Then, you've been here before?" she asked as she took a cigarette from her purse and lit it from the candle. "Yes, I first came here last year when the whole firm came down for a law seminar. Mr.



Clark took everyone out for dinner here, and all of us loved it, especially the wine!”

After a few minutes, the feast began with salad and fresh hot bread and butter. Angela had to restrain herself to keep from eating too quickly! It was all so good! They were just pouring their second glass of wine when their main course arrived with perfect timing! The aroma from their food was unbelievable, and as the girls savored their meals, Angela admitted that she'd never had such a delicious Italian meal. It was almost as if they were dining at an Italian villa overlooking the blue Mediterranean.

After they had finished eating and polishing off the bottle of wine, Felicity called for the check. Angela opened her purse for some cash, but Felicity just shook her head. “It was my idea and my treat!” she had said with a smile. “It was so good! Thank you, Felicity!” Angela said graciously. Felicity handed the waitress her credit card and took a five dollar bill from her purse and placed it on the table. When the waitress returned with her receipt, Felicity signed it and they got up to leave. As they stepped out into the evening, a refreshing breeze was blowing.

“Want to have some real fun?” Felicity asked as they got into the car. “Sure, what did you have in mind?” Angela replied, looking at Felicity. “There’s a little club down the street from here. They make the best margaritas and pina colodas and they play some pretty good music.” Felicity said as she pulled out of the parking lot. “Sure, I’m game,” Angela smiled; somewhat relieved that Felicity’s idea of fun was basically the same as hers. It seemed that with Felicity, anything was possible! But Angela decided to give her the benefit of the doubt, since she had always been right on before.

They pulled into the parking lot of the club, which seemed to be filling up quickly. Finding a parking place, they walked toward the entrance, which was lit up like a Christmas tree. Music was playing loudly, and the girls could feel the thump-thump-thump of the bass even before they got close to the door! A line of partygoers was forming at the door, but seemed to be moving quickly. A burly bouncer with tattoos up and down his arms was standing at the door, stamping people’s hands. Felicity explained that during Happy Hour, there was no charge for women to enter and that drinks were half-priced. She told Angela that it was a good idea to get their hands stamped, in case they wanted to leave and get back in later for free. When it was their turn, the girls held out their hands and the bouncer stamped them with what looked like the outline of a martini glass, then the girls went inside. Although it was still early in the evening, the place was nearly full as Felicity and Angela searched for a table. The music was blasting, and a DJ inside a glass booth was playing good dance music as they walked through the club and around to the far side of the dance floor, which was all lit up with multicolor lights and even a twirling disco ball!

Finding a lone booth in a corner, the girls sat down and were immediately approached by a waitress wearing a short, tight black skirt with 5” stiletto-heeled shoes. “What’ll it be, ladies?” she asked, taking out her pad from her pocket and a pen from behind her ear “I’ll have a strawberry margarita, blended, with salt,” Felicity replied. “Angela?” “I think I’ll have the same,” Angela smiled, somehow knowing that Felicity had been here before, and that she knew what was tasty.

The waitress smiled. "Coming right up!" she said, and turned and headed towards the bar.

The girls looked around and realized that they had arrived none too soon, as they couldn't find an empty seat in the place! People were making their way to the dance floor, which was crowded as well. Angela and Felicity watched the dancers bump and grind to the beat of the music as they waited for their drinks. The music was so loud that they couldn't hear each other from across the table, so Angela came around and sat on Felicity's side, where they could speak into each other's ear.

The waitress returned with their drinks, which looked like two fish bowls! "Gee, this is huge!" Angela commented, taking a long sip on her straw. "And tasty!" Felicity smiled, enjoying Angela's amusement with her drink. "Here here!" Felicity raised her glass, and Angela raised hers, clinking the glasses together and toasting each other.

The music stopped and a familiar, danceable song from the 80's began playing. Angela smiled. "Remember this song?" Angela spoke into Felicity's ear. "Of course I do. It was one of my favorites!" Felicity grinned back.

About this time Angela began to notice a couple of guys approaching their table. "Would you like to dance?" the first guy asked Felicity. He was tall and had that tan, California surfer look about him. "Sure!" Felicity replied, taking a quick sip of her drink before standing and following the guy to the dance floor. "Hi!" the other guy said to Angela. "Want to dance?" "Yes, thank you!" Angela answered cheerfully. She stood up and the guy took her hand and led her out onto the dance floor beside Felicity and her partner, and they began to dance. Angela could feel the uplifting rush from her drink as she began to move to the music.

She noticed that Felicity was a very good dancer, but Angela was no wallflower herself! In the past, when Kelly and she had gone to clubs in Nashville, she had watched other women dance and observed their moves, and developed her own, sensuous style. The drink had relaxed her and she felt less inhibited and more daring! Her partner was a good dancer and had a great smile! He was rather tall and had short brown hair and blue eyes. He was not what Angela would consider handsome, but he had a rugged, outdoorsy look and an air of confidence about him that Angela admired in men.

As the music wound down to a close, he leaned forward as if to speak. "I'm Daniel, but my friends call me Dan." "Glad to meet you, Dan. I'm Angela!" she said softly, flashing him that coy smile that she had practiced over and over in front of a mirror. "Glad to meet you, too, Angela," Dan smiled back at her. "Maybe later we could dance some more?" "OK, I'd like that!" Angela heard herself say. She could tell that he was definitely interested. He unexpectedly took her hand and kissed it, like a medieval knight, then turned and walked back to his table. As Angela turned and headed back to her table, she noticed a similar conversation between Felicity and her partner.

Angela stirred her drink and was taking another long sip from it when Felicity returned, wearing a wide grin which reminded Angela of the Cheshire cat in Alice

in Wonderland! “Did you see that guy?” Felicity beamed. “He was SO cute!” “Yes he was!” Angela agreed, glancing over in the direction of their table, but trying not to look too obvious. The guys were looking at them as well, and the one Felicity was dancing with raised his glass to them, smiling. Angela quickly looked back at Felicity with a wry smile herself.

“Did he tell you his name?” Angela asked, trying not to let her excitement show. Felicity took a sip from her drink. “Jack...and yours?” “Daniel,” Angela revealed, looking at her friend as a crooked grin grew on both of their faces. “That’s funny! Jack and Daniel!” Felicity laughed. “I’m sure!” Angela laughed back, realizing the implications of the men’s given names. “I bet they tell ALL the girls that for a laugh!” Felicity giggled, stirring her drink.

Angela finished her drink, then excused herself to go to the ladies room. When she returned, there were two fresh drinks at their table. Felicity was smiling back at her, and it was obvious that she was feeling no pain! “Thanks!” Angela said. “These sure are tasty!” “Don’t thank me,” Felicity responded, nodding in the direction of the two men. “Thank them...” Angela looked over at the two men sitting across the room and they both raised their glasses to the girls. Angela nodded to them and mouthed the words “Thank you” to them.

“What do you want to bet they are drinking Jack Daniel’s?” Felicity teased when Angela turned back around. Angela giggled, and both girls began to laugh out loud, feeling the effects of their drinks. Felicity winked at Angela, then boldly gestured to the two guys to come sit with them. “What are you doing?” Angela suddenly asked, incredulously. “Let’s have some fun with them.” Felicity smirked as the men grabbed their drinks and came and sat down at their table. This didn’t surprise Angela much. She admired Felicity in so many ways; she was bolder than anyone she ever knew! After introductions, Felicity began flirting with “Jack” while “Daniel” asked Angela to dance again. It was evident that Daniel was slightly embarrassed, and seemed to be a little on the shy side. This suited Angela just fine. She was more attracted to shy, soft-spoken men than the loud, overly-talkative ones who always seemed to be hiding something.

A slow, romantic ballad began to play. Daniel took Angela’s hand and the two walked out onto the dance floor once again. Daniel took Angela’s left hand in his right, and placed his left hand around her waist as she put her right hand on his shoulder. Daniel pulled Angela close to him and they swayed to the soft sounds of the music together. She could feel Daniel’s strength as they moved together, and she placed her head against his barrel-like chest in an effort to avoid his attentive eyes.

When she had met men in the past that interested her, she always felt incomplete. Confused. Inept. Unworthy. She knew that her present status as a pre-op TS always seemed to stand in the way of a real relationship with a man. The kind of relationship that she wanted and needed more than anything in the world! She couldn’t tell them the truth, for fear of ridicule and rejection.

She expected men she liked to be honest, but it was impossible for her to be honest with them! The whole thing was a “Catch-22” that she couldn’t seem to

break free of...until she made the commitment to becoming a complete woman! She knew that until her transformation was complete, she would never really achieve the total happiness she so desperately wanted in her life.

After their dance, Angela and Daniel returned to the table and found Felicity and Jack gone. Felicity had left a twenty to cover their drinks and a handwritten note saying that she and Jack had gone out to the parking lot for some "play time!" Daniel asked Angela if she wanted to go out to his car and listen to some music and talk. She knew what this meant, but she did find Daniel attractive and it had been a long time since she had been with a man. So the two of them walked out to his 2002 Thunderbird, and Daniel opened the passenger door for her and she slid inside, straightening her skirt before Daniel walked around and got in the driver's side.

Daniel put a smooth jazz CD on and they sat quietly for a few minutes, listening to the music. Angela could smell Daniel's cologne as she sat near to him in the car, and it smelled really good to her. She was wondering if he was going to make a move for her when he suddenly pulled her into his arms and kissed her, long and hard and deeply! Angela closed her eyes and returned the kiss passionately, and their tongues dueled wetly within the confines of her mouth! She sucked on his tongue wantonly, and his hand came up to cup one of her heaving breasts, kneading it softly through the material of her dress.

His hand felt so good on her breast! Little gasps of pleasure escaped her lips as his fingers found her nipple and begun to squeeze it softly, teasing the little bud into hardness! Angela moved her small, soft hand across his thigh, coming to rest on the large bulge in his pants! She began to rub and knead the growing hardness, feeling the heat of his desire through the denim of his jeans. Daniel slowly, reluctantly, broke the long drawn-out embrace and opened his pants. Angela's eager hand snaked in and she grasped the aching fullness of Daniel's throbbing manhood! "Geez!" she thought to herself as she began stroking him softly. "He's really got a big one!" Angela carefully took out the man's aching hardness, feeling it grow even larger and harder. It was so big her fingers couldn't reach all the way around its girth!

It had been a long time since Angela had been with a man, a real man with a man's needs and desires! She could see Daniel's man-sized hardness in the dim light, and he moaned lustfully with the intoxicating feeling of her hand. "It's so big, Daniel," she heard herself say to him as she leaned across the console to get a better look. She began to plant little kisses up and down the shaft and flashed her tongue out to tease the bloated tip, and he groaned deep in his throat. Angela could see that he was seeping in his excitement, and she flashed out her tongue to capture and taste the essence of him.

But Daniel had had enough teasing from this sexy little thing! He entwined his fingers in her hair and guided her lips to his aching hardness, and inserted the swollen tip into her warm, wet mouth. "Go on...do it!" Daniel told her with authority. She wrapped her lips around the first few inches and began to suck, flashing her tongue all around the shaft as she started to bob her head up and down on him. She tasted his desire and this seemed to egg her on, and her fingers wrapped

around the base. She started to pump it with her hand and suck at the same time, causing Daniel to moan and groan like an animal! Then she felt him start to quiver, and she knew what that meant! Before she knew it, the muscles of his loins contracted, and spurt after spurt of his raging cum hosed into her sucking mouth and down her throat in torrents of hot, creamy delight!

“Ohhhh! Ohhhh! Ahhhhh Mmmmm,” Daniel moaned loudly as he emptied his churning load down her throat! Angela tried to keep up with the raging river, but it was too much for her and as she pulled her mouth off of him, two more hearty spurts shot across the front of her dress! She kept pumping on his still throbbing manhood as more and more of his hot semen ran down across her fingers to pool wetly on the car seat between his legs. Angela just lay there, satiated in his lap until she could catch her breath. As she sat up in the car, a long string of Daniel’s semen trickled down her chin and onto the front of her dress! She couldn’t ever remember seeing so much semen before in her life!

“Oh, my goodness,” was all she could manage to say when she regained some of her composure. “I guess it’s been a while for you, huh?” Angela asked groggily as she attempted to clean herself up a bit. “Yeah, it has been a long time,” Daniel replied, zipping up his jeans, neglecting the creamy mess on the seat. Angela glanced over and saw Felicity and Jack a couple of cars over. She appeared to be cleaning herself up as well. “I guess I’d better get going,” Angela said in a soft voice. “Yeah, well, it was fun! I mean, dancing with you and all...” Daniel responded sheepishly.

Angela got out, walked over to their car and got in the passenger side. Felicity saw her and made her exit also. As she got in, Angela could see that she had been in need of a “bib” as well, and they broke into laughter together. “Let’s get back to the room,” Felicity said as she started the car. “I need a shower.” “Me too,” Angela agreed. “Now THAT was certainly a different kind of evening.”

When the girls got back to their room, they took turns showering, then got into their nightgowns and into bed. Felicity turned on the TV but they both fell asleep within ten minutes, and slept like babies until almost 9 the next morning. Angela awoke with a slight hangover, and went directly into the bathroom and took a couple of Tylenol. When she returned, Felicity was stirring as she sat down on the edge of her bed, rubbing her neck.

“Good morning, sleepy head!” Angela greeted Felicity playfully. “Good morning yourself,” Felicity moaned. “As much as I hate to admit it, my head is pounding!” “Same here,” Angela chimed in. “Did last night really happen or was it just some bizarre nightmare?” Angela groaned, feeling as if her heart was beating loudly inside her head. “No, it really did happen...I think,” Felicity replied candidly, sitting up in bed. “That’s what I was afraid of,” Angela admitted reluctantly. “Seemed like a good idea at the time, though,” Felicity added, heading for the bathroom.

“When is our flight?” Angela called after her. “2 PM I believe. The tickets are there on the dresser.” Angela got up and checked the tickets, confirming that their flight did indeed leave at 2 PM. She was looking forward to getting back to San Francisco and home. She wondered why anyone in their right mind would live in

L.A. It was smoggy and muggy. Traffic jams wherever you went at any time of the day or night, and was overcrowded to the point where one felt as if they were in the middle of a giant ant hill. As the girls dressed for their return flight, Angela's thoughts were of Kelly and the new city they called home. She couldn't wait to get back!

## CHAPTER SIX

Kelly was sitting at her desk, busily typing out a case brief for Mr. Clark. She allowed her mind to wander for a moment, wondering what Angela was doing that very moment. In nearly six years together, Kelly and Angela had never been apart, and these last couple of days seemed like a lifetime to Kelly. She missed Angela's humor, her wit, and her company. She had come to count on her best friend, through good times and bad. They had gone through a lot together, and she wondered if Angela felt the same way about her.

Kelly forced her thoughts back to the legal brief she was typing. She recalled what Mr. Clark had once said about the professionalism of his staff. He had said: "My people don't make mistakes...important ones anyway." Kelly knew she had to focus on her work in order to live up to that slogan. Actually, at TLC that was more a way of life than a slogan. In their business, they were expected to dwell on the small details and accuracy and precision meant everything.

Kelly took a lot of pride in her work. She also took pride in the way she dressed, as did most of the other women at the firm. Ms. Clark seemed to set the fashion pace and it was unspoken that all the women in the office were expected to dress in professional, feminine attire while at work.

That Friday Kelly was wearing a smart-looking gray wool skirt suit, a long-sleeved white cotton blouse, black thigh-high stockings, and her black 3" heel pumps. Her long blonde hair was pulled back off her shoulders and pinned in a bun on the back of her head. Although she didn't really like it this way, she knew it gave her a more mature, professional appearance and it made her some points with Ms. Clark, who wore her hair this way whether she was working or not.

This seemed to be the way that all women dressed at the office, the only difference being that the younger ones tended to wear their skirts a little shorter than the older women did.

Kelly liked to think she had inherited her mother's knack for resourceful dressing. Although she didn't really have a lot of clothes, she did have several versatile outfits that she could wear in different ways. She had tried to teach this trait to Angela, but it never really worked. Angela loved to shop for clothes, and thought it necessary to have countless articles of clothing and accessories in order to achieve an ever-changing appearance from day to day.

About thirty minutes before quitting time, Ms. Clark called Kelly into her office. It had been nearly a month since she and Angela began working at TLC Law, and Ms. Clark wanted to go over her first evaluation with her. Kelly was a little nervous at first, but she soon relaxed when Ms. Clark related that she was very happy

with both Kelly's and Angela's work, and integration into the company. She told Kelly that her quality and quantity of work was superior, and that her professionalism and dedication to the job was very commendable! She also stated that Mr. Clark was "very satisfied" with her work and "can-do" attitude. Out of a possible 100 points, she scored a 95!

"Keep up the good work, Kelly. I'm recommending you for a raise of 10% of your base salary. In a couple of months, we'll get together again. If you continue to do as well as you have done so far, you will qualify for your benefits package at that time. And please tell Angela that I'd like to go over her evaluation with her first thing Monday morning, OK?" Ms. Clark asked, giving her a smile.

"I will, Ms. Clark...and thank you!" Kelly smiled back "Have a nice weekend, dear," Ms. Clark told her as she got up to leave. "You, too!" Kelly said, feeling elated with her good news! She couldn't wait to tell Angela! She grabbed her coat and purse and headed for the elevator, saying "goodnight!" to everyone in the office. On the elevator, she was trembling with excitement! She had given her best effort, and it was wonderful to be recognized for it, especially from the woman who hired her! She was feeling on top of the world as she hailed a cab that took her through the rush hour traffic and to the apartment that she and Angela called home! She began to think about her date that evening with Robert, and what to wear.

As she unlocked her door and went inside, she felt compelled to walk straight to the balcony and view the bay and the setting sun over the Golden Gate. It all felt like a dream to her. Everything seemed to be happening so quickly! Her new life, her career, the apartment...and now there was a handsome young man who seemed to think the world of her! It was almost too much for her to bear, and she began to cry. But her tears were not from pain or loneliness, as she had experienced in the past, but tears of joy! She just never knew that life could be like this. Not in her wildest dreams or fantasies!

Kelly took a nice, hot bath, relieving the tension of the day. She counted her blessings and thanked God for giving her a chance at a new life. She liked Robert, and she knew he liked her. But she was reluctant to let herself go. She couldn't let herself fall in love with Robert. Not now. She felt she needed to become a complete woman first, so that when the time came, she could give all of herself to the man that she loved, body, mind and soul! One thing about Kelly, she never skimmed on anything. It was ALL or NOTHING with her. That's just the kind of woman that she was.

The one thing that frightened her most was the fact that she was more of a woman than she gave herself credit for. And she didn't trust her emotions or her heart. The only thing she knew at this time was that she wanted to be with Robert. To get to know him better and ensure he had the qualities that she was looking for in a man. He needed to be sincere, thoughtful, loving and attentive. She had been around long enough to realize that looks and money weren't everything. Actually, they were secondary. But he needed to have direction and purpose in his life, as well as dreams and the ability to achieve them.



“Why am I even thinking about these things right now?” Kelly asked herself as she stood up and began drying herself. She walked into her bedroom and stood in front of her full-length mirror. Kelly knew she needed to move ahead with her plans to have her surgery as soon as possible. She already had approval from her doctors back in Tennessee. And she was living and working as a female full-time now. But she needed to find a skilled surgeon there in San Francisco. And she also needed to find a way to finance the surgery and get the two weeks off from work that the procedure required.

There were so many things she needed to do. So many things that needed to be ironed out. She decided to take things one step at a time, and not let herself become overwhelmed by the imposing obstacles in her way. She would begin by doing some research on her computer over the weekend, and go from there. As for tonight, she would concern herself only with her date with Robert.

She knew right away what she was going to wear that evening. She went to her closet and took out her favorite dress, her black jumper, and her long-sleeved white silk blouse, and laid them out on her bed. Going to her dresser, she took out a pair of pink bikini panties and stepped into them. Then she took out the matching pink lace bra and put it on. Next, Kelly found her black lace garter belt and black silk stockings. She hooked the garter belt around her trim middle and twisted it into place. She sat on the edge of her bed and rolled up her nylons, then pulled them on and attached the tops to her garters. She walked over to her closet and, deciding to be bold, took out her highest heels, a pair of black 4” heel sandals, stepped into them and fastened the tiny buckles.

She stood up and glanced at her reflection in the mirror. Wow! Kelly thought to herself. She was a sight to behold! Her high heels made her long legs seem even longer, and her nylons accentuated her shapely legs nicely! Deciding that she didn’t need a slip, she put on her white silk blouse and buttoned the buttons carefully. This wasn’t a good time to lose a button. Not tonight, anyway! Then she pulled the short black jumper over her head and pulled it down, completing her ensemble. Kelly walked in front of the mirror, turning this way and that, checking her appearance. The hem of her skirt came to about six inches above her knees; she wondered if it had shrunk the last time she had washed it.

But she really didn’t care about that. She was feeling extremely sexy tonight, and wanted Robert to notice what she considered her finest asset, her long, shapely legs! Kelly walked into the bathroom and thought about Angela as she applied her makeup. She had called the airlines earlier and found out her flight would be coming in around 7 PM, about the time when she would be arriving at Robert’s apartment. She would see her later that evening, she thought as she applied some black eye liner. Then she smoothed on just a hint of green eye shadow and feathered it out softly, giving her large, almond-shaped eyes a dramatic effect!

Although Kelly rarely wore mascara, she wanted Robert to notice her eyes as well, so she applied a light coat of black mascara to her naturally long lashes, which completed her eye makeup. A little peach blush and some red lipstick, and she was ready to go! One more thing, she thought as she applied just a hint of co-

logne to her neck and wrists. There! That was it. It's amazing what a woman goes through to get her man's attention, she thought to herself. And she knew there was a fine line between looking sleazy and looking sexy, and the latter is what she had wanted to achieve.

Kelly glanced at her watch and saw that it was almost 6:30 PM. She walked downstairs and called for a cab, then canceled it when she looked out the kitchen window and saw that Robert had sent one of the company drivers to pick her up! "What a guy!" Kelly said out loud as she grabbed her purse and coat, and walked out to the waiting black Mercedes. The driver saw her coming and got out and opened the door for her. "Good evening, Miss Daniels!" the driver nodded. "Good evening, Sam!" she returned, remembering him as the man who drove her and Angela into the city from the airport when they had arrived from Boston.

Sam closed her door and then got in behind the wheel. "Mr. Clark asked me to give this to you," Sam told her, handing her a single long-stemmed red rose. "Thank you, Sam!" Kelly replied, lifting the fragrant flower to her nose. "Hmmm," Kelly thought to herself as the car pulled out into traffic and headed downtown. "Is this guy for real?"

After a twenty minute ride across town, the car pulled into an underground parking garage. Sam pulled the car to a stop next to an elevator and got out to open Kelly's door for her. "Just go up the elevator to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, get out and turn right. Mr. Clark's apartment is #307." Sam told her with a smile. "I'll be right here when you're ready to go home...and have a nice evening!" "Thank you, Sam. You're very sweet!" Kelly smiled to him as she got into the elevator. "You're welcome, Miss," Sam nodded.

As Kelly rode the elevator up, she quickly took her compact from her purse and checked her appearance. She took out her hairbrush and gave her long blonde hair several strokes before the elevator door opened, and she got out on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Going right, she walked down about five doors before stopping in front of #307. This is it! Kelly thought to herself. She was a little nervous as she rung the doorbell, and waited a moment until Robert opened the door.

Robert's eyes said it all when he saw Kelly. "Wow! Kelly! You look great!" Robert smiled broadly. "Please come in!" "Thanks for the rose!" Kelly said as she stepped in, rose in hand. "You look very nice yourself!" Kelly commented, noticing that Robert was wearing tan slacks and a shirt and tie. "Can I take your coat?" Robert asked. Kelly handed her coat to him and he hung it up in the hall closet. He led Kelly into the large living room, and she noticed that the drapes were open, affording a spectacular view of the Bay Bridge and Treasure Island! "Please...have a seat!" he told Kelly. "Can I fix you a drink?" "Sure, how about a Black Velvet?" Kelly asked, giving him a coy smile. "Coming right up!" Robert smiled back, heading into the kitchen.

The aroma coming from the kitchen was wonderful as she walked over, opened the sliding glass door and walked out onto his balcony. What a view! She thought to herself as she studied the panoramic picture of the entire bay and the lights of Oakland. Robert came out with their drinks and they stood there for a moment in

silence, sipping from their glasses and enjoying the lights of the city. "I love it here!" Kelly admitted, looking off in the distance as if in a trance. Robert could smell the sweetness of her cologne and the freshness of her hair as he moved closer to her. "I know what you mean. I love the city, too. But I also like getting away from time to time," Robert told her, as if in a trance himself.

He moved closer to Kelly, setting his drink down and putting his hands around her waist lightly. Kelly felt the heat from his body and leaned back into him. He towered above her, and she could smell his delicious scent as well. "Dinner smells wonderful!" Kelly commented, feeling her pulse begin to quicken. "Are you hungry?" Robert stammered, slightly distracted by the soft warmth of her body close to his. "Yes! Very!" Kelly turned to face him, putting her arms around his neck, looking up into his searching eyes. "Is it ready yet?" Kelly asked with a little pout, flirting with him as if she were a little girl who wanted something very badly.

"Yes! Of course. Come on," Robert answered, taking her by the hand and leading her into the dining room. Kelly was impressed! The table was set for two as Robert seated her, then went into the kitchen to get their meal from the oven. "That smells delicious!" Kelly said as Robert brought the steaming dish out to the table and set it on a hot pad. "It's a family favorite," Robert told her, serving her first and then himself. He took a bottle of wine from an oak rack, opened it, and poured them each a glass, then sat down across from his guest.

As they began to eat, Robert told Kelly about his day in court and how things were progressing with the trial he was working on. Kelly could tell that he seemed more into his work than he had been the last time she had spoken with him at the office. She took a sip of her wine and smiled. "I told you once you got involved in a case that things would get more interesting." Robert raised his glass to her. "You were right. Up until today; I was beginning to think I had chosen the wrong profession. About all I was getting to do until today was observe and sit on the sidelines. But today, Carl actually let me cross-examine a witness and he told me I did well," Robert stated with enthusiasm.

"When I first started back in Tennessee, about all they let me do was file," Kelly said, rolling her eyes. "I was SO bored!" "But after a while, the office manager started assigning me more important tasks, like case investigations and typing trial briefs. Things got a lot more interesting after that!"

"Yeah, I know exactly what you mean," Robert commented. "It's like you get assigned trivial little tasks that no one else wants to do, and then you get a chance to do something that really matters, you know?" Kelly nodded in agreement, but changed the subject. She wanted to learn more about what Robert liked to do in his spare time. "Enough about work..." Kelly began. "What was it you told me you like to do in your spare time?" Robert took a long slug of his wine, finished it, and poured himself another glass.

He took a deep breath and his expression changed, a slight wry smile coming to his face. "Well, I like to spend time in the mountains," Robert began. "I like to get off the beaten path and go where few people have ever gone before. My dad and I took a canoe trip down the American River last summer, just he and I.

There's really nothing like it; you're out there on the river, feeling the sun on your face and the river moving you along. No traffic, crowds or noise. There's nothing else in the world like it!"

"Sounds nice," Kelly replied. "But scary! Weren't you afraid of tipping over and drowning?" "No way! As long as you know what you are doing and don't take the river for granted, you're fine! We ran into some formidable rapids in a few places, but after you get through them, you feel like you're on top of the world!" "Yeah?" Kelly asked, feeling his enthusiasm for a challenge. "Uh-huh," Robert replied.

When the two of them finished their meal, Robert put some soft, romantic music on the stereo and they went into the living room. "That was the best meal I've had in over a year, Robert. Thank you!" Kelly said as she sat down on the sofa, pulling her skirt down as she sat. "It was my pleasure, Kelly!" Robert smiled, sitting down next to her. She could see that he was checking out her legs, and this really excited her. She had discovered what Robert's passion was, and now she wanted to know where he'd been.

"So have you ever been in love?" Kelly asked boldly. "You don't pull any punches, do you?" Robert chuckled... "I'm serious," Kelly said. "Well, I thought I was once. About a year ago while I was still in law school, I met a girl who was pre-med at Berkeley. We went out for a while and seemed to click," Robert continued. "Then one weekend she asked to go along with me on a backpacking trip. Well, it was a disaster from the word go." "What happened?" Kelly asked, intrigued. "Everything!" Robert said, rolling his eyes. "She complained about every little thing—the dust, the bugs, having to sleep on the ground. It just didn't work out."

"I'm sorry," Kelly said in a low voice. "Don't be," Robert added quickly. "It just wasn't meant to be. Besides, I would never have met you!" "I guess that's true," Kelly smiled. "Anyway, the girl that I marry doesn't necessarily have to love the outdoors as much as I do. But if she wants to be with me, she has to be able to hold her own in the wilderness or on a river," Robert told her casually.

"Enough about me. Tell me what you like to do, besides work I mean," Robert asked, refilling their wine glasses. "Well," Kelly mused, "I'm kind of into photography." "Yeah?" Robert asked, picking up his wine glass. "Yeah, well, I'm not an expert or anything like that, but I enjoy getting outside when the weather is nice and looking for photo opportunities. I guess my favorite things to shoot are landscapes and natural things, like waterfalls and wildlife," Kelly explained, taking a sip from her glass.

"I'd like to see some of your work sometime," Robert said. "Well, I started a portfolio last year, nothing really great, just some of my better shots. Sometimes, when I go out to take some photos, it doesn't really matter what the subjects I'm shooting are. I'll usually only get one or two nice photos out of a whole day's worth!" Kelly told him. "Well, I know a really great place up in the mountains near Lake Tahoe where I sometimes go to hike. The view of the lake is awesome, especially when there's still snow on the peaks. Maybe we can go up there sometime," Robert suggested.

“Sounds wonderful!” Kelly added. “I’d like that.” She took the last sip of her wine and set the glass down on the end table. “Would you like some more?” Robert asked her, refilling his glass. “No, thank you, I am fine,” Kelly stammered, feeling a little tipsy. She sat back on the sofa, crossing her stockinged legs as she did so. Leaning back, she closed her eyes for a moment, feeling a little dizzy.

She felt Robert move closer to her, then felt his lips on hers, kissing her softly, but deliberately. She felt one of his big hands move to her thigh as she began to return his sensuous kiss. It was as if the whole world came to a complete stop around them. All Kelly could comprehend was Robert’s passionate kiss and his warm embrace! He put his strong arms around her and pulled her to him, devouring her mouth with his! It had been so long since she had been in a man’s arms, and she felt weak with the power of his kiss. Robert flashed his tongue into her mouth, and their tongues dueled wetly within the confines of Kelly’s hungry mouth! She slipped her little tongue into his mouth and he sucked on it gently. He pulled her tightly against him, and she felt as if he was squeezing the life from her body! He moved his hand along the outside of her thigh until it came to rest on the top of one of her gartered stockings, and she moaned softly. She loved the feeling of his warm, strong hands and his massive, muscular arms!

He drew his mouth from her’s and began planting firm, passionate kisses down the nape of her neck, moving back up to kiss her ear. “Oh, my goodness!” Kelly thought to herself, feeling a shiver rush run up her spine. She trembled uncontrollably in his arms as his mouth once again found hers, and they kissed deeply. He squeezed the top of her thigh and moved his hand around to knead her nylon-encased buttocks, his fingers entwining in one of the elastic straps of her garter belt. He moved slowly, deliberately across the top of her stocking toward her inner thigh, and she suddenly stiffened and pressed her hand against his arm.

“Slow down,” Kelly whispered breathlessly, looking deeply, knowingly into his eyes. He nodded and placed his face into the nape of her neck, like a child who had been scolded, and Kelly began to rub his head and neck. “Whew!” Kelly thought. “That was close!” Then Robert began kissing down her neck once again, to her collar bone, and beyond! He started to kiss and lick the tops of her heaving breasts, and moved a hand up to cup one of them through the material of her dress. “Oh, Kelly! Kelly...” he began to murmur, the feeling of her firm, full breast in his hand nearly driving him crazy with desire for her!

Kelly knew that she’d allowed their love play to go too far, but there was no way she could stop it now! Robert had one of her breasts out of her bra and was licking and sucking at her hard little nipple, causing her to tremble with excitement! She moved her hand down into his lap and felt the hardness of his desire for her! She began to squeeze and rub his growing manhood, feeling it throb within the confines of his slacks. He groaned as he felt the intoxicating feeling of her hand, and once again covered her searching mouth with his, in a warm, wet oral embrace which took her breath away!

His kiss had become much more urgent and passionate as she rubbed and squeezed his aching hardness! She could feel the wetness seeping through the material of his slacks, and she knew they had reached the point of no return! She

had to do something to satisfy him, and she had to do it soon! She broke the long, drawn-out kiss and reached down to unbuckle his belt and open his pants. She reached in and wrapped her fingers around his seeping hardness, and he gasped audibly. She took his manhood out and gasped out loud. It was huge! Not as big as his father's, but much thicker!

"Oh, Robert! It's...it's beautiful!" Kelly whispered in her amazement. She began to stroke it softly; the feeling of it in her small hand drove her desire to an even higher level! She wanted him inside of her SO badly! But she knew that was impossible. So she knelt down in front of him, and began to kiss and lick the raging shaft, bringing little gasps of pleasure from the depths of his being! She could feel it throbbing, and he was beginning to seep almost continually. She wanted to taste him more than anything now, so she took him slowly into her mouth and began to nurse and suck on him. It felt as if it had a heart of its own as she felt it beating and throbbing! She took as much of him as she could as deeply as she could into her mouth and began to suck, bobbing her head up and down over him rhythmically. Her hand was stroking the base as she licked and sucked, moaning with her mouthful.

She felt him stiffen, then he came! Wave upon wave of his pent-up, raging semen blasted out forcefully into her mouth and down her throat! She moaned, determined to swallow every drop! "Oh, Kelly! Kelly," Robert moaned softly, stroking her long, soft hair. Kelly laid her head down in his lap and closed her eyes. She just wanted to enjoy that closeness, the oneness she felt with him as long as possible. It had been a very special evening for both of them. And neither of them wanted it to end!

Everything was going so well in her life right now. She felt an indescribable bond with Robert that she'd never experienced with anyone before. She liked the things Robert said, and the way he said them. Actually, there really wasn't anything about Robert that she didn't like or that she thought would be a problem. She enjoyed being with him and thought about him all of the time. Could she be falling in love with him?

She didn't even want to consider that, not now anyway. Right now, all she needed to concentrate on was her job and her final transformation into womanhood. That needed to take priority over everything else in her life right now, if she wanted to have the happiness of the lasting relationship she wanted for herself in the future.

Meanwhile, Felicity and Angela had returned from Los Angeles. They had gotten something to eat at the airport, and Felicity had dropped Angela off at her apartment. As Angela had walked in, she saw Kelly's note, telling her that she'd be back later that evening. Angela went upstairs and unpacked her suitcase, and ran a hot bath. She just wanted to relax in the tub and soak away the tension of the flight back up to San Francisco. She never really liked flying and there had been a lot of rough air and turbulence on the return flight. She knew that a nice bath would relieve some of the stress.

As she eased herself down into the steaming tub, Angela began thinking about some of the same things troubling Kelly earlier that day. Not only was she nearly out of her Premarin, but she also knew that she needed to find a surgeon there in San Francisco to do her SRS. Like Kelly, Angela already had approval to go ahead with her surgery, but it wasn't that simple. She needed to secure the financing for the procedure, which cost nearly twenty thousand dollars! And she also was thinking about how she was going to get the two weeks off from work that she needed for her recovery. And she needed to find a way to do all this without anyone besides Kelly knowing about it!

But Angela was organized and very detail-oriented. She knew enough not to become overwhelmed by these things, but to take one day at a time, and do one thing at a time. First things first, she thought to herself, soaping herself up with a sponge and her Rain Bath shower gel. She and Kelly needed to look for a reliable car that weekend. Then, on Monday, she would call in her prescription for her hormone pills. That shouldn't be a problem, she thought. But finding a good surgeon and securing the financing to pay for her procedure was something else. That was something that she'd work on that next week.

When Angela finished her bath, she blow-dried her hair and went into her bedroom and put on her nightclothes. Since she had moved to San Francisco, these consisted of a camisole top and a pair of panties. She went downstairs and lit a fire in the fireplace, picked up the paper, and looked through the used car section of the classified ads. Angela found herself leaning more towards a Honda Accord or a Toyota Camry. She knew Kelly wanted a Mustang convertible. They would have to see what they could find in the morning.

Around 11 PM, Kelly walked in from her date with Robert. The two hugged each other and admitted how much they missed one another. Angela told Kelly all about her trip to L.A.. She told her about the meeting with Les Kimber, and about their afternoon in the hotel swimming pool. She even told Kelly about the great Italian restaurant where she and Felicity had eaten and about the fun they had at the nightclub. Kelly knew there was something different about her best friend, and probed her for more details about her evening at the club! "OK, OK, I'll tell you, but only if you give me ALL the details of your date with Robert tonight, alright?" Angela said, laughing. Kelly agreed.

Angela told Kelly that they had some drinks at the club and that two good-looking guys asked them to dance. She told her that the guys ended up sitting with them at their table and they all had more drinks and danced some more. She said his name was Daniel, and that he was tall and the "surfer" type. Then they went out to the guys cars for some "playtime"! She told Kelly that she and Daniel started kissing, one thing led to another, and she ended up giving him a blowjob!

Kelly giggled like a little girl at a slumber party. "Did he, you know, come?" Kelly asked eagerly. "Of course he did, silly!" Angela smiled, knowingly. "Wow! That is SO cool...coming from you," Kelly smiled. "What's that supposed to mean?" Angela retorted. "Well, you know, you're usually the goody two-shoes between us, that's all," Kelly chuckled. Angela smiled. "Alright, let's hear about your date," Angela pressed. "And I want to know everything, too!"

“Well, Robert asked me over to his apartment for dinner,” Kelly began, brushing her hair back over her shoulder. “He made you dinner?” Angela asked incredulously. “Yes, and it was really good! He is a great cook!” Kelly told her excitedly. “Then what?” Angela asked, impatiently. “Well, then we had some wine and talked for a while. He really likes the outdoors and hiking and backpacking. He wants to take me with him this summer to a place near Lake Tahoe,” Kelly continued. Angela could see from the look on Kelly’s face that she was stalling. “OK, OK, get to the juicy part!” Angela begged her. “Oh, alright, well, we were both very relaxed from the wine and the music. He just leaned over and kissed me...softly at first. Well, we kissed and petted for a while, and both of us got really hot and bothered. He started playing with the tops of my stockings and my garters, then he came around the front with his hand under my skirt,” Kelly continued. “You mean?” Angela looked shocked. “No, no. He didn’t get that far. I stopped him. I told him to slow down. Anyway, we started kissing again and he started fondling my breasts. Well, I knew I had to do something, so I started to rub his cock through his pants. It was SO big and hard, Angela!” “Go on,” Angela begged.

“Well, I opened his pants and went down in front of him and blew him! I must have done a pretty good job, too, because it didn’t take him long at all to come,” Kelly told her. “Wow! Really?” Angela asked. “Uh-huh!” Kelly said. “Did he, you know, come in your mouth?” Angela asked curiously. Kelly blushed slightly. “Uh-huh,” Kelly admitted. “It was pretty wild!” “Wow! Sounds like it!” Angela smiled.

“I’m so glad to be home!” Angela admitted. “And I missed you so much!” Kelly added. They both hugged again. “We’d better get some sleep, though. We need to find us a car tomorrow,” Angela told her as she got up and put her hair in a ponytail for the night. “Yeah, I guess you’re right. I’m pretty tired anyway,” Kelly agreed. “Good night!” Angela said as she walked up the stairs. “Goodnight!” Kelly said, heading towards her bedroom.

Saturday morning dawned clear and cold. Angela got up at 6 AM and dressed in jeans, a sweatshirt and her Nike crosstrainers, and went downstairs and made a pot of fresh coffee. Kelly smelled the coffee brewing and took a quick shower before dressing in her jeans and sweatshirt also. When she came downstairs, Angela was sitting out on the balcony sipping her coffee, so Kelly poured herself a cup and joined her.

“Beautiful, isn’t it?” Angela said as Kelly sat down next to her. “It sure is,” Kelly sighed as she looked out across the wide expanse of the bay, already shimmering in the morning sunlight. There were dozens of sailboats dotting the bay, their multicolored spinnakers resembling hot air balloons drifting across a deep blue sky. The bright green hills of Marin County reminded Angela of the hills of Ireland, gently rolling and wet from the morning dew.

“I don’t think I’ll ever tire of this view,” Kelly remarked, with a far away look in her eyes. “I know what you mean,” Angela agreed. “I’m going to start looking for a surgeon next week,” Angela stated. “I don’t know how much longer I can keep living a lie.” Kelly looked at Angela knowingly. “I know. I feel so incomplete when I’m with Robert,” Kelly admitted. “So you really like him, huh?” Angela said, taking a sip of her coffee. “I think I’m falling in love with him, Angie,” Kelly answered, look-



ing down at her feet, shaking her head. "I've tried, really tried to just not get too involved, but I really think he's the one."

The girls sat there for a long moment in silence, just looking out across the bay, enjoying the quiet Saturday morning. Angela finished her cup of coffee, and stood up to go back inside. "Well, we'd better get going. I'll call for a cab." "OK, I'm ready too," Kelly said as she followed Angela back into their apartment.

Thirty minutes later the cab arrived and the girls went downtown where there were Honda and Ford dealerships next to each other. Angela paid the cab driver and the two began walking through the Honda car lot, looking at Accords and various other models. Unfortunately, they were more than the girls wanted to pay, and the dealership didn't carry their own contracts, so they went next door to the Ford used car lot.

Right away they found a beautiful yellow and black Mustang convertible. It was a 2001 model, and looked brand new. A young woman salesperson came out and introduced herself as Robin. She opened the car and let the girls get in, telling them that they just got the car in from Sacramento, and that it had only one owner. It had 45,000 miles on it, but didn't look it at all. It had new tires, and the exterior paint was flawless, indicating that it had probably been kept garaged. The interior showed almost no signs of wear, and the top, which was up, looked in great shape as well.

The sign on the windshield said \$14,000, with easy terms and monthly payments. But Angela, being a bargain hunter, figured she could talk them down a little, when the time was right. "Would you like to drive it?" Robin asked them. "I have the keys," she smiled. Kelly looked at Angela expectantly, so Angela agreed and got in the drivers seat while Kelly hopped in the passenger side Robin got in the back. Angela started it up and drove it off the lot, and turned to go down Market Street.

There wasn't much traffic at this early hour on Saturday, so Angela was able to step on it a little and test the car's power, of which it had plenty! Kelly found it difficult to hold in her enthusiasm, noting the CD player, black leather seats, even the air conditioning! "Take it out on the highway if you'd like," Robin said, pointing to the onramp for highway 101. Angela turned onto the highway and took it up to speed. To the girl's delight, the car purred like a kitten, and they were impressed.

Taking it back to Market Street, Angela pulled over and let Kelly take the wheel. Kelly was so excited, she could hardly contain herself! Although she hadn't driven in almost 6 months, it all came back to her. After a few minutes, she pulled it back into the car lot and parked it where they had left from. "Well, what do you think?" Robin asked. "Shall I start the paper work going?" Angela asked her what was the least they would take for the car, and Robin went into the office to check with her boss, while the girls waited outside.

After a few minutes Robin came back outside with some figures. "My boss said you can have it for \$13,000. Your monthly payments would be \$310 per month and that's with 48 month financing, which we could do for you here through Ford

Motor Company Financing. If you'd like, we can go inside and I'll get some information from you. We should be able to get an answer for you in about 30 minutes."

"That would be super!" Kelly said, looking at Angela expectantly. "Alright, alright," Angela agreed. "The worst they could say is 'No,' right?" The girls followed Robin into her office and provided her with the information she needed. After a short time, they got their answer, and it was "Yes!" The car was theirs if they wanted it! Robin told them they could drive it home that day, after they filled out some more paper work and got their temporary license.

After about an hour, Angela and Kelly walked out the door, each of them with their own set of keys! Angela saw the car as basic transportation, but Kelly saw it as confirmation of their new beginning! It also meant that they would no longer have to depend upon taxis or other people to get around town.

Angela had to smile when she saw how happy Kelly was driving the car back to their apartment. She couldn't remember ever seeing Kelly so excited and pumped up! When they pulled into their apartment complex and parked in their own assigned parking spot, Mrs. Baxter was watering her flowers in her front yard, and the girls couldn't resist sharing their excitement with her! "That's a very fine car, girls!" Mrs. Baxter said with a big smile. "I'm so happy for you both!" Kelly and Angela hugged her and told her if she ever needed a ride to the market or anything, they'd be glad to take her. "I appreciate that, girls. I may take you up on that!" Mrs. Baxter smiled.

The rest of the day, Angela and Kelly cleaned up their apartment, then they lounged around the rest of the evening, watching TV and talking about their future plans. Kelly couldn't stop going out onto their balcony and viewing their new car parked down below. Angela teased her mercilessly, and they laughed together! "You are just like a kid!" Angela chided her.

Sunday the girls decided to pack a picnic lunch and take a drive. They crossed the Golden Gate Bridge and headed north through Marin County and along the coast. It was windy and cool as they drove along Highway 1. But the sun was shining brightly as the girls stopped to have their picnic in Bodega Bay, a quaint little fishing village made famous by Alfred Hitchcock's movie, *The Birds*. Spotting a grassy area with picnic tables down by the water, Angela parked the car and they sat down at one of the table to have their lunch.

As they began to eat their sandwiches, a flock of seagulls and crows joined them nearby, possibly hoping for a handout. Kelly threw them a piece of her bread and suddenly the number of birds doubled. "Now you've done it!" Angela laughed as the birds approached the table boldly, obviously hoping for more food. "Fend them off with some of your chips!" Angela told Kelly in a low voice. The spectacle was reminiscent of the movie, where the characters tried not to startle the birds for fear of being attacked!

But the birds didn't attack, and the girls enjoyed the rest of their picnic lunch without being overwhelmed by their hungry feathered friends. After lunch they drove into town and looked through the little shops. Then they continued driving

north along the water, stopping occasionally for Kelly to take a picture of the beach or of the two of them standing by the car. Because Kelly had a tripod for her digital camera and a self-timer, she could take photos of the both of them together wherever they went, without the need for a third person. Finding a long stretch of beach, they took their shoes off and walked along the shore for a while, enjoying the sound of the waves pounding and the smell of the cool, salty air. Later in the afternoon the sky turned dark with rain clouds and the girls decided it was time to head back home. On their way back through Bodega Bay, they stopped at a candy store and Kelly bought some peanut brittle and Angela got some chocolate macaroons for the drive back to San Francisco.

Kelly drove them back into San Francisco, and they made it home just before the sky opened up in a torrential downpour. The girls collaborated on dinner; Angela cooked them a couple of T-bone steaks with baked potatoes while Kelly prepared them a garden salad and baked some fresh biscuits. By the time dinner was ready, they were both very hungry and they sat down and ate in quietly, savoring every bite of their meal.

After dinner, Angela got on her computer and researched some of the surgeons in San Francisco who performed SRS. She also chatted with a couple of other post-op TS's in the area who had their procedures done by local surgeons, and got a couple of good recommendations. One of them, Dr. Emily Richardson, had worked with Dr. Biber, a veteran surgeon, in Colorado. Dr. Biber had pioneered the procedure known as nerve grafting, and Dr. Richard-



son had perfected this technique.

Basically, nerve grafting enhanced sensitivity, and made it possible for many post-op TS's to achieve something very similar to a female orgasm. This interested Angela, who shared the information with Kelly. One of the post-op women Angela had chatted with also told her that Dr. Richardson's procedure was so good visually; that she had later married and her husband never knew that she was not born a genetic female! This is exactly what both Angela and Kelly wanted, and they agreed to try to get an appointment with Dr. Richardson.

Monday morning arrived rainy and cold and the girls dressed for work accordingly. Angela wore her black skirt and a gray cashmere sweater, while Kelly wore her black jumper with her red sweater. It seemed kind of strange, yet wonderful as they walked out to their new car and drove to work, instead of having to take the bus or a cab! The girls also worked out a system where Kelly would drive to work and Angela would drive home. They decided that whenever either of them needed the car to go somewhere in their off-time, they would confer the week before and work these times out.

They arrived at work early, and while Kelly made coffee, Angela called Dr. Richardson's office and made consulting appointments for both herself and Kelly. Angela's appointment was scheduled for a week from Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM, and Kelly's for the next day at 2 PM. The girls also called in their prescriptions at a nearby pharmacy, and were told they would be ready for pick up later that afternoon.

Kelly began working on the new filing system for case briefs Ms. Clark had asked her to start on that week. It was very labor-intensive, and soon Kelly had files everywhere...on her desk...on top of the filing cabinets...even on the floor! She knew this was a project that Ms. Clark wanted done as soon as possible, and Kelly wanted to make some "brownie points" with her. She and Angela both realized, it would be a good idea to stay in Ms. Clark's good graces. Besides, they might need to take some time off work and knew that if they did a good job and even came in early sometimes, the chances of getting that time off would be a lot better!

Just then, Mr. Clark walked into the office, carrying his inevitable briefcase. "Good morning, Kelly," he said lightheartedly. "I see you're here bright and early this morning." "Yes, Ms. Clark wanted me to get started on the new filing system!" Kelly answered, smiling at him. "Good job, Kelly! Ms. Clark will be pleased!" He continued into his office and closed the door, and Kelly continued her reorganization of the files.

Meanwhile, Angela was working on the deposition documents for Mr. Kimber. She knew that the trial date was set for next month, but she wanted to get a start on them early. Felicity came in, right on time as always, and Mr. Landers asked her to attend the staff meeting for the senior attorneys, and fill them all in on her meeting with Les Kimber in Los Angeles the previous week.

It was a typical Monday morning; the office was bustling with activity. A few minutes after 10 AM, everyone's life would be changed forever. The staff meeting

was just getting started when the whole building began to shake! Beginning with a hardly discernible shimmy and building up to a rolling vibration, the entire building began to sway and tremble. The vibrations grew more intense, then the lights suddenly went out in the office.

Kelly grabbed her desk and held on as she heard women screaming and excited voices calling out. In their darkened office, Felicity and Angela immediately suspected an earthquake and quickly scrambled beneath their desks, calling to each other amid the noise and chaos! In the staff meeting, everyone ducked under the large conference table in the center of the room. Some people were praying out loud, others were swearing in panic, and still others were sobbing as if their whole world was on the brink of collapse!

It was impossible for anyone to stand on their feet! Ceiling tiles began to fall everywhere and bookcases fell, making a terrific crashing noise in the darkness. Then, just as suddenly as it started, the shaking stopped! "Is everyone alright?" Mr. Clark called out from the conference room. People began answering his call, most indicating that they were alright, just a little dazed. Someone found a penlight and Mr. Clark and Mr. Thompson began moving through the offices, checking individual rooms for people who might be injured.

Angela and Felicity came out from under their desks and hugged each other, grateful that neither of them was hurt. Angela didn't smell gas so she lit a candle that was on her desk for some light while Felicity checked the phone. The electricity and phones were down and a cloud of dust hung in the air. Since the air conditioning had stopped working, the air was getting muggy and stale. "Are you two alright?" Mr. Clark asked as he looked into the office where Angela and Felicity were. "Yes, we're fine...is anybody hurt?" Felicity asked. "Everybody's fine except Carl Landers. It looks like he was hit by a falling bookcase and he's out cold. He may have a concussion," Mr. Clark reported. "You girls come out here. We are all gathering in the conference room, then we're going to evacuate the building, just to be safe." Angela and Felicity joined the others in the conference room, and Angela was relieved to see Kelly there. "Does anyone know if the phones work?" Mr. Clark asked, looking from face to face. "I think they're all out of order," Kelly added, her eyes watering from the dust.

"Alright, listen up!" Mr. Clark took charge. "Scott will lead you all down the stairs to the lobby. We have no idea what shape the building is in without any communications. And there may be aftershocks that could do more damage, or even bring the building down. Don't panic. Just take it slow and easy going down. Alan and I will build a stretcher and carry Carl down.

Two more men offered to stay and help carry Mr. Landers down, and Mr. Clark accepted their offer. Everyone else, including Angela and Kelly, followed Scott out to the stairwell. Luckily, the emergency lights in the stairwell were working, and the group started the long walk down the stairs, keeping together and taking breaks frequently as they went. Scores of other people were crowding the stairwell as they made their way down as well.

Mr. Clark and the other men couldn't find anything to use as poles for the stretcher, so they started down the stairs with the younger men supporting Mr. Landers under each arm, with Mr. Clark a few steps out in front, clearing their path of debris. Mr. Thompson followed. The TLC offices were on the 48<sup>th</sup> floor, and by the time the men reached the 38<sup>th</sup> floor, they stopped to rest. Mr. Clark and Mr. Thompson took over carrying Mr. Landers for a while.

Meanwhile, Angela, Kelly, and the others had made it down to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor, and everyone sat down on the steps, exhausted, but thankful to be alive. Just then, the building began to shake again! Everyone grabbed on to whatever they could find to steady themselves as they felt the floor sway and tremble beneath them. After a few seconds, the shaking stopped as suddenly as it began, much to the relief of everyone in the stairwell.

"We'd better keep moving," Scott told everyone. "Let's go!" The group started down again, the desire to get out of the building overcoming their aching leg muscles. On the 16<sup>th</sup> floor, they heard noise and voices below them; the voices got louder and louder as if someone was coming up the stairs. "Oh, thank God!" Kelly heard Scott say. "Boy, are we glad to see you guys!" Three firemen were moving up the stairway, carrying equipment and hose packs. "Just keep moving, people!" the first fireman told them. "Don't panic, the stairs below are clear." They were huffing and puffing as they made their way up past the group and continued on, towards the upper stories.

"Is there a fire? I don't smell any smoke," Felicity remarked as they continued their mass exodus down the stairs. After what seemed like a lifetime, the group made it to the lobby, where they were escorted outside by firemen. There was a lot of broken glass and debris on the ground around them, but the building had held! Scores of people were moving down Market Street toward an open park about two blocks away. "Our car!" Kelly suddenly called out and turned toward the underground parking garage beneath the building. "Don't worry about it for now!" Angela said, taking Kelly's arm. "We'll return for it later, when it's safe!"

It was obvious Kelly was in shock, like a lot of others who made their way toward the park and relative safety. Amazingly, there wasn't a panic. Everyone seemed to be moving slowly, but deliberately, away from the tall buildings, guided by policemen and emergency workers. They could smell smoke and there was a lot of bricks and broken glass on the ground around them. The wail of police cars and fire engines could be heard in the distance, shattering the strange silence that had fallen over the city like a dark cloud.

When Angela and Kelly's group made it to the park, firemen and emergency worker were already setting up a triage for the injured. Scores of people had congregated here. Some looking for missing friends and family, others seeking the relative safety of the open ground. Exhausted, the group sat or lay down on the grass, trying to catch their breath, and thanking God they were still alive and unhurt! Red Cross workers began to arrive, handing out water and helping the scores of people with minor injuries.

About this time, the firemen climbing the stairwell came across Mr. Clark's group on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor, resting on the stairwell landing. Mr. Landers was still unconscious, and one of the firemen called on his radio for paramedics and a stretcher team to come and bring the injured man down to the lobby. "Help will be here shortly," the fireman told Mr. Clark. "Is there anyone else on the upper floors?" Mr. Clark shook his head. "I don't know...the rest of our group went down already." The fireman nodded and continued up the stairway above them.

When the men had caught their breath, they picked up Mr. Landers once again and started moving down the stairs. Mr. Clark thought that the further down they could get, the faster Carl could receive medical attention. But by the time they made it to the 10<sup>th</sup> floor landing, they could go no further and collapsed on the steps. Totally spent, the men lay, trying to catch their breath. They could hear voices in the distance, and those voices grew closer and closer until finally, the medical team arrived with a stretcher. A paramedic checked Mr. Landers and determined that, although he was still breathing, it was imperative that they get him to a hospital as soon as possible.

So the team loaded Mr. Landers onto the stretcher and began carrying him down the remaining flights of stairs and into the lobby. A doctor quickly examined him and immediately had him loaded into an ambulance and taken four blocks down to San Francisco General Hospital, which was fully operational and undamaged. Mr. Clark asked Alan Thompson to go with Carl to the hospital, while he made his way to the park to check on the others. He found them all dazed but uninjured, and reported that they had gotten Mr. Landers down to the lobby and that he had been sent on to the hospital, accompanied by Mr. Thompson. Angela and Kelly decided to go see if there was anything that they could do to help, but were told that the medical teams had everything under control, and that most injuries were cuts and bruises from falling glass and debris. Someone in the crowd had a radio and the girls heard part of a broadcast by the mayor. He said that San Francisco had been hit with an 8.0 scale earthquake and, although there were a lot of injuries, no one had been reported dead or missing! He also said that, although there were a few small fires started by broken gas lines, no major buildings had collapsed, and that the roads and bridges had apparently held as well.

This was encouraging news, in light of what they'd just been through. There was talk of possible aftershocks among the people in the park, and no one seemed to be in a very big hurry to leave the relative safety of the park. Emergency personnel were preparing meals, the injured were being cared for, and there was plenty of drinking water and warm blankets for the people that needed them. As Angela and Kelly moved about, they were amazed by the goodwill and spirit displayed by the people of their new city. Everyone wanted to help, and there was no panic going on. Only people helping and encouraging others.

As the day wore on, emergency workers and firemen checked buildings for structural damage and trapped people. The Bank of America building, the fifty-two story monstrosity where TLC had its offices, was one of the first to be inspected. Later that afternoon, people who had vehicles parked in the basement parking lot were given clearance to remove their cars. Mr. Clark gave everyone the

next day off because no one would be allowed to return to the upper stories until the structural engineers had a chance to inspect every floor to ensure that they were safe.

As the girls drove home later that afternoon, they were amazed by how little visual damage there actually was. Other than a lot of broken glass from windows, and bricks and plaster from some walls, everything still looked the same as it had been on their drive to work that morning. When they got to their apartment, they were also surprised that everything seemed to be as before. They spoke for a few minutes to Mrs. Baxter, who told them the building shook and swayed, but no serious damage was done. She said this wasn't anything like the quake that hit the bay area in 1989.

When Angela and Kelly entered their apartment, they found a few things lying on the floor where they had fallen, but no broken glass or dishes. They'd been very lucky indeed. Not only had they escaped with their lives that day, but neither their car nor belongings were damaged at all! "I guess it could have been a lot worse!" Kelly said as they sat down in their living room, breathing a sigh of relief. "Oh, darn!" Kelly said suddenly, remembering something they'd forgotten. "What is it, Kelly?" Angela asked, bewildered. "We forgot to pick up our prescriptions!" Kelly told her. "Don't worry about that, we'll pick them up tomorrow," Angela sighed.

The girls spent the rest of the afternoon and evening watching reports of the quake on TV. Although a large part of the city was without power, it was still functioning in their area. About 10 PM they both started to nod off, and decided to go to bed. As tired as they were, it took them both a while to fall asleep. They were wondering when the next aftershock would come. And what would they do if it was a bad one? Kelly thought about Robert. Although he wasn't in the office that day, he had called his father on his cell phone while they were in the park. He and his brother, James, had been in the court house when the quake had hit... They were not injured, but, like everyone else, a little shook up.

Kelly wished that she was with Robert that night. He had a way of making her feel safe and protected, and that was something that she needed to feel that night. She wanted to be held in his arms, and to hear his voice. She thought of calling him, but decided against it. She knew she needed to be strong if she was ever going to have a future with Robert. She got up and opened her window a little for some fresh air. She could hear it raining, and she took her big teddy bear that sat on a chair next to her bed and got back into bed, holding it tightly. She finally relaxed and slipped off to sleep.

The next day, Angela called the pharmacy to check on their prescriptions. They were ready to be picked up, and she and Kelly drove across town to get them. They stopped and did some grocery shopping, and noticed that although the store was still open for business, most of the clerks were still busy cleaning up the mess in the aisles from the quake. After what they'd been through the day before, neither Angela nor Kelly felt like doing anything but going home. Later that evening they got a call from Ms. Clark telling them that their building had been com-



pletely checked and was safe. The electricity had been repaired also, and she told them to report to work the next morning.

Although it was difficult for the girls to return to their offices, they both knew that the best way to deal with their fears were to meet them head on, just as every other San Franciscan was doing that morning. When they arrived, Ms. Clark told them that Mr. Landers has suffered a concussion when the bookcase had fallen on him, and that he was in satisfactory condition. She said he should be returning to work by Friday.

That week seemed to drag on for Angela and Kelly, who were looking forward to their consultations with Dr. Richardson the following week. Kelly finished up the reorganization of the case files on Friday, and Angela and Felicity had finished preparing the documents for the Ron Pearlman appeal, which was slated to begin in two weeks.

Robert continued to take an interest in Kelly, and he asked Kelly out to dinner that Saturday night. Kelly felt that she was really getting to know Robert well the more time they spent together, and she discovered that they had more in common than she at first thought. Even when they had a flat tire, and Robert had to get out in the pouring rain to change it, he had kept a level head, and they both laughed about it afterwards.

James Jr. had asked Angela out a number of times, and she had declined. It wasn't that she didn't like James. He was tall, very handsome, and seemed to be a real gentleman. She just didn't really want to get involved with someone from her work, especially the eldest son of her boss, Ms. Clark. She had told Kelly that she was afraid of beginning a serious relationship with a man before her surgery. But she was lonely.

Angela had the same desires as Kelly, or any other heterosexual woman for that matter. And since there wasn't anyone else knocking at her door, she decided to accept his invitation to go sailing that Sunday. Angela had been particularly relieved when she heard that Kelly and Robert would be going along as well. They were to meet James and Robert down at the marina at Fishermen's Wharf at 7 AM.

Sunday morning dawned clear and cool, with a brisk breeze blowing from the West. Angela and Kelly awoke at 6 AM and put on their jeans, warm sweaters and their tennis shoes, and ate a light breakfast of toast and coffee before getting in their car and driving down to the marina. They met James and Robert, who were busily readying the family's sailboat, the Horizon. Robert gave them both a hand onboard.

"Welcome aboard!" James called from the bow, as he was preparing the jib sail. The girls smiled and waved, quite impressed by the appearance of the boat. Robert took them down below to give them a tour. He told them that it was a 42 ft. sloop that their family had purchased new the year before. When they got to the foot of the ladder leading down into the cabin, Angela and Kelly were amazed by the amount of space in the main salon.

“That’s a nice kitchen!” Kelly said, running her hands along the teak edging on the butcher-block counter tops. “It’s called a ‘galley’ on a boat,” Robert smiled, correcting her. “This is the navigation station,” Robert added, gesturing to the large table and seat across from the galley. “That’s where we keep the charts and work out our position” “How can you tell where you are?” Angela asked with interest. “Well, it’s a matter of knowing your course, your speed, and the time. My dad can use the sextant to figure our position, but it’s a lot easier just reading the GPS receiver here,” Robert told her, pointing to a digital instrument above the navigation station. “That displays our latitude and longitude all the time, wherever we are, and we can plot our position on the chart.”

“Cool!” Angela replied as they continued walking forward. Robert showed them where the bathroom was located; telling them it was called the “head” on a boat. He told them that the toilet worked somewhat differently on a boat than it did on dry land, and showed them how to flush it properly. “So where does it flush to?” Angela quizzed Robert. “Out in the bay?” “No, it flushes into a holding tank,” Robert told her. “Then what?” Angela was curious. “Well, when it gets full, we attach a hose and pump it out into the sewer system back at the dock. But sometimes, when we are out past the Golden Gate, we empty it out there,” Robert explained. “I see,” Angela said, making a face at Kelly.

“This is the forward stateroom, which is like a bedroom. It has a double bunk and storage space for sails and stuff,” Robert told them. “There’s also another stateroom back behind the galley, and another head. And that’s about it...are you girls ready to give it a go?”

“You bet!” Kelly answered, a measure of excitement in her voice. “Alright, let’s go!” Robert led the way back up the companionway ladder and asked the girls to make themselves comfortable in the cockpit, the area where they sat and steered the boat while they were sailing. “I’ve got to help James with a few things before we get going.” Robert went forward and readied the mainsail while James finished preparing the jib and returned to the cockpit. “I’m glad you came,” he said to Angela as he started the motor and adjusted some of the lines. “There’s a good breeze, it should be fun!” he added. “You all set up there?” James called out to Robert. Robert gave a thumbs up and began untying the mooring lines. When he cast off the last of the lines, James began to slowly back the boat out of the moorage, turned, then headed out of the marina and into the bay.

When they were clear of the marina, they hoisted the sails and shut off the engine. Immediately, the boat began to pick up speed and heeled over on its side, causing the girls to hold on for dear life! The boys laughed as Angela and Kelly grabbed onto them in panic. “What’s happening?” Kelly asked, alarmed. “It’s alright, Kelly!” Robert reassured her, putting his arm around her shoulder. “Sailboats always heel over when they sail to windward, but it’s perfectly safe!” James added, as he steered the boat with one hand and put his arm around Angela’s shoulder with the other.

“I think you guys are enjoying all this.” Angela’s eyes narrowed in mock annoyance as she looked at James, and she couldn’t help breaking out in a broad smile! “Boys will be boys,” Angela thought to herself as the boat picked up more speed

and heeled over with the power of the wind in the sails. She recalled a saying that she had heard years before: "The only difference between men and boys is the cost of their toys." That was SO true and she giggled to herself.

James guided the Horizon out around Alcatraz Island, where the famous old prison was. Robert handed Kelly a pair of binoculars, and the girls took turns scanning the island with its crumbling cellblocks and guard towers. Although it was the middle of winter, the island was alive with color in the form of flowering daisies and ice plant blooms.

As they rounded the backside of the island, and headed out towards the Golden Gate once again, the wind picked up considerably. They tacked across the brisk headwind, the boat quickly picked up speed and they began to feel the rolling waves beneath them. Occasionally, a splash of cold, salty sea spray would come over the side and wet them slightly, causing the girls to scream and the boys to hoot and holler! It was like a sleigh ride with horses that had gone wild!

There were a number of other boats beginning to appear out on the bay as well. Some of them were sailboats traveling downwind, and their bright, multicolored spinnaker sails reminded Angela of hot air balloons. Others were fishing boats, of all shapes and sizes, heading out to try their luck. Even a huge seagoing ship steamed by them as they sailed out under the massive Golden Gate Bridge and beyond. The ground swells were heavy beyond the bridge, and the girls were getting a little seasick, so James headed the Horizon back into the bay and steered for a calm anchorage on the leeward side of Angel Island.

By now it was almost noon, and the bay was getting congested with other boats on this rare sunny day. The boys lowered the sails and motored the Horizon into a sheltered cove and dropped anchor. Although it was exciting sailing fast out in the bay, it felt good to be stationary with the sun warming their skin and the gentle rocking of the boat lulling them. The girls decided to go down below and change into their bathing suits while Robert made them lunch and James coiled some lines and stowed their lifejackets. A few minutes later the girls came up on deck clad in their string bikinis and wearing their sunglasses. They stretched out in the cockpit and began applying suntan lotion. James was up on the bow coiling line when he caught the scent of Coppertone, and he glanced back at the girls and whistled.

"Wow! Are these the same girls who were bundled up in sweaters earlier?" James teased. "Where's my camera? The guys back at the office won't believe this!" He came back to where Angela and Kelly were lying and took a digital camera from a seat locker and prepared to take their picture. The girls smiled coyly and James took their picture, then went down below to change into a pair of cut-offs.

Protected from the wind in the sheltered cove, and with the sun beating down on them, the girls began to get really warm. About the time when they were discussing going for a swim and wondering how cold the water was, Robert brought sandwiches and cold sodas up and set up a table right there in the cockpit for

them to eat on. “Oh, you are such a sweetheart!” Angela praised Robert as they all sat around the table to eat. “You’d better hang onto this one!” Angela teased Kelly.

“Hey, what about me?” James responded, faking a little pout. “Don’t forget, I found us this little piece of paradise!” “That you did!” Kelly admitted. “Here here!” Angela toasted, raising her can of soda. Everyone clanked them together, and then took a sip. It wasn’t long before all the sandwiches were gone and everyone was belching loudly from the carbonated beverages. “That really hit the spot!” Angela said. “I had no idea that I was so hungry!” “Same here. Every time we go out sailing, there’s something about the salt air and the sunshine that makes you really hungry and thirsty!” James told them.

“Does anyone want another soda?” Robert asked as he opened the ice chest and fished out a 7-Up for himself. “I do!” Kelly replied. “Sure!” Angela responded. As Robert dug deeper in the ice for more, James shed his T-shirt and walked to the swim platform on the back of the boat. “No more for me. I’m going for a swim! Anyone want to join me?” “Is it cold?” Angela asked, pushing her sunglasses up on her head and watching him. “Only for a minute or so,” James said. “Well, here goes nothing!”

James sprang from the swim platform and made a perfect dive into the water! When he came to the surface a moment later, he let out a hoot and a yell! “How’s the water?” Robert asked as he broke into a hearty laugh. “It’s not bad...really! Come on in!” James chattered, looking as if he had just jumped into a pool of ice water. As he swam about the boat, Angela stood up, handed her sunglasses to Kelly, and put her hair up in a ponytail. “Ready or not, here I come!” Angela smiled as she stepped down to the swim platform. She hesitated momentarily, her better sense telling her that the water had to be cold. But she was beginning to perspire after sitting in the bright sun for almost an hour.

“I’m waiting,” James spoke through chattering teeth. Angela put her hands above her head and dove in! The cold water surrounded her immediately, and she wanted to scream when she came to the surface, but decided not to discourage Kelly, who was watching her from the cockpit with Robert. “Whew! That feels great!” Angela gasped, trying to sound convincing. “I bet!” Robert smiled and stripped off his t-shirt, revealing his chiseled abs. Kelly took off her sunglasses and put her hair up as Angela had done a few moments before.

Angela swam around to the side of the boat where James was treading water. He seemed to be looking at something at the waterline on the side of the boat. “Let’s go!” Robert said, taking Kelly’s hand in his and leading her back to the platform. “Let’s go on ‘three,’ alright? One...Two...Three!” Robert counted, then they both jumped off the platform into the cold green water. When they came to the surface, they were gasping and sputtering, hooting and hollering from the sudden rush of fifty-two degree water!

Angela swam up alongside James, who was reaching into a small hole in the side of the boat. “What’s that?” Angela asked, watching him. “This is where the engine cooling water flows out from the engine. Sometimes it gets a little crusted up, so whenever I go into the water, I usually clean it out,” James told her. “Wow!

I'm swimming with a regular Indiana Jones!" Angela teased him, moving away a little to splash him. James responded in fun by swimming to her and picking her up in his strong arms, kicking with his legs and supporting them both! She giggled, putting her arms around his neck, and they both began to laugh together.

Kelly and Robert swam around the side of the boat, wondering what all the laughter was about. Kelly saw that, for the first time in months, Angela was really enjoying herself. She was also glad that she and James seemed to be hitting it off. They seemed a good match, both of them being practical jokers and having strong, independent personalities. Kelly shifted to float on her back and Robert moved to support her. She felt so safe when she was with Robert, the way a woman should feel when she is with that special man! Kelly closed her eyes and Robert kissed her softly. The spontaneity of the kiss gave Kelly a shiver rush that ran down her spine, and she kissed him back, wantonly.

Kelly had always been an enigma to Robert. There was something mysterious and very passionate about her, and he loved that in a woman. She was very intelligent, beautiful, articulate, sexy and sweet all mixed into one. He was never quite sure what she was thinking, and this was very attractive to him. He was beginning to think maybe Kelly was the mythical girl of his dreams!

And Angela had tweaked James' curiosity as well. She had surprised him with her quick wit, her spontaneity and her cheerful disposition. He had only seen her at work, always dressed nicely and professionally. She seemed so serious at work, and it was hard for James to believe there was a playful side to her as well! By the time the four of them climbed back onto the swim platform and rinsed themselves with fresh water from the hand-held shower head there, he felt certain that he wanted to know more about her. What her career aspirations were. What she liked to do for recreation. Even if she liked children! James was the oldest of four. Besides his brother Robert, he had two younger sisters, Amy and Jennifer. Amy was in college in Colorado and Jennifer was in her senior year of high school. His family had always been very close, and he was at an age where he was looking to settle down, marry, and start a family of his own... He had fond memories of growing up in a tight-knit family, and yearned to find the right girl to share his life and passions with.

The girls went below to change back into their jeans and sweaters for the trip back across the bay. The day had gone by so quickly, it was hard to believe it was nearly 4 PM! When the girls had finished dressing, James and Robert went below to change as well. When they returned, they found the girls feeding some bread to the seagulls that had congregated around the boat. Robert raised the anchor as James started the engine and began to slowly motor the Horizon around the back side of Angel Island, giving the girls a magnificent view of the Bay Bridge and the Oakland hills.

As they came out of the lee of the island, and the wind picked up, Robert set the sails once again and the Horizon began to tack briskly across the white-capped waters of the bay. As they approached the marina, Robert lowered the sails and James restarted the engine to move slowly into the Horizon's berth at Fishermen's Wharf. It had been a great day, and both Angela and Kelly had some

wonderful memories to take home with them. The boys asked them if they cared to join them for dinner on the wharf, but both girls declined, politely, telling them another time. They were bushed and looking forward to a nice hot bath before slipping into bed and getting a good night's sleep before beginning another work week.

As the girls thanked the boys for the great day and walked to their car, it was obvious that they were contemplating their consultations that next week with Dr. Richardson. They knew that the recommendations from their doctors back East would carry some weight, but that the final decision would ultimately lie with Dr. Richardson as far as their SRS was concerned. As the girls drove back to their apartment, they discussed their concerns and thoughts relating to the final step in their journey to become complete women. They both agreed that becoming "complete" would be the key to opening a whole new world of possibilities for them.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

Angela awoke early the day of her consultation appointment with Dr. Richardson. She went into the bathroom before Kelly awoke and took a warm bath before dressing herself in her best skirt suit, nylons, and her 3" heel black pumps. She wanted to look and be her best that day, and she got together all of her pertinent papers from her doctors in Tennessee, along with her legal papers pertaining to her name change. She also decided to take along her journal, documenting her entire transformation from the very beginning to the present. She knew that Dr. Richardson would likely be interested in her personal thoughts from the time she started living full-time as Angela. She put all these things in her briefcase and set it by the door. As she made some strong Hazelnut coffee, she heard Kelly stirring upstairs dressing for work, and she started making some eggs, sausage and hash browns for breakfast. She knew that if she started the day out right with a good breakfast, it most certainly would help her concentration and performance that day.

She was just putting their plates on the table when Kelly came down the stairs with a bounce in her step. "Mmmm, that smells SO good!" she commented, going straight to the coffee pot and pouring herself a cup. "Pour it in your eyes, it works faster," Angela teased her as she sat down at the table. Kelly smiled. "So, today's the day, huh?" she said, digging into her breakfast. "Yeah, I go in right after lunch," Angela replied, sipping her coffee. "Mine is tomorrow at 2 PM. Do you think I'll have a problem getting the time off?" Kelly asked, curiously. "You shouldn't, just clear it with Ms. Clark first and I'm sure it will be alright," Angela told her.

The girls finished their breakfast in relative silence. Then as Angela dashed back upstairs to brush her teeth and apply her lipstick, Kelly rinsed their dishes and put them in the dishwasher. A few minutes later and they were out the door and on their way to work. They arrived thirty minutes early, and as Kelly made a pot of coffee for Mr. Clark and checked the days work itinerary, Angela ducked

into Ms. Clark's office and asked her if it would be alright if she went to her doctor appointment at 1 PM that day. "Of course you can, Angela. You're always here everyday early anyway. You go right ahead!" Ms. Clark reassured her.

That was most comforting, coming from Ms. Clark. Angela was a little nervous about meeting Dr. Richardson, and she was a little concerned about whether or not she would be accepted into Dr. Richardson's SRS program. And if she was, she needed to start working on a financial solution as soon as possible! She thanked Ms. Clark cordially and walked down the hall and into the office she shared with Felicity. Felicity hadn't arrived yet, so Angela made some coffee, then started reviewing some of the documents the two girls had worked on together the day before.

Later that morning, Mr. Clark asked Angela and Felicity to come into his office. He had a date for the Pearlman trial. It was to begin on Monday March 10<sup>th</sup>, about two weeks away. He asked Felicity if she thought they'd have all the documents and legal papers ready by that time, and she assured him that they would. "That's good, that's very good, Felicity!" Mr. Clark smiled. "That was a great idea Ms. Clark had about having you two work together, you seem to make a great team!" "We really do!" Felicity replied, smiling at Angela. "Angela's been super!"

"That is very reassuring, Felicity, because I'd like you two to join the defense team for that trial. I suspect it will last only about a week, but I'll clear it with Ms. Clark. That will get you out of the office for a time, as Mr. Landers and I will need you two." "You can count on us, Mr. Clark!" Felicity beamed as she and Angela went back to work. Angela found out later that it was quite an honor to be assigned to work closely with the senior attorneys during a trial, especially one of this magnitude. Felicity told Angela that she had worked for TLC for a little over three years and only once had she been asked to sit at the defense table at a trial.

Just before noon, James came in to ask Angela if she'd like to go to lunch with him. She agreed, stating that she needed to make it a quick one, because she had a doctor's appointment at 1 PM. So James and Angela walked around the corner to a little deli for an Italian sandwich and a soda. Angela wasn't even aware of the deli, but was impressed by the tasty sandwiches and soups they offered there. Angela told James that she'd had a good time that Sunday with him and Robert and Kelly on the boat. James told her likewise, and said that the next time they went, he would barbecue some of his "famous" beef ribs for lunch. She told him she'd like that.

Angela made it to her appointment right on time, and was immediately given a questionnaire to fill out, which she did. After she had turned in her clipboard information, the receptionist asked her if she wanted to present any documentation pertaining to her case. She told Angela that copies of her documentation would go into her file, and that Dr. Richardson kept them confidential. Angela agreed, and supplied both of her letters of recommendation for SRS from her doctors as well as the legal documentation pertaining to her name change.

The receptionist asked Angela to have a seat while she made copies of her information, then returned the originals to her when she called her back into the doctor's office a few minutes later. She was seated in a comfortable leather chair facing a large oak desk, and was told that the doctor would be with her shortly. She crossed her stockinged legs and scanned Dr. Richardson's diplomas and credentials on the wall behind her desk. The room was painted a lively shade of yellow and decorated tastefully. She noted the pictures of what she assumed were Dr. Richardson's husband and two young children, a boy and a girl of around nine or ten years old.

After a few minutes, she walked into the office. "Hello, I'm Emily Richardson. You must be Angela?" "Yes, I'm glad to meet you!" Angela stood, taking her outstretched hand. Dr. Richardson smiled and took her seat behind the desk. She did not look like Angela had envisioned her at all. She was about thirty-five, and had shoulder-length blonde hair, and the most beautiful, piercing blue eyes Angela had ever seen! Not at all what Angela had expected! She took a pair of reading glasses from her desk and opened Angela's file. "You have a lovely voice and accent. Where are you from?" Dr. Richardson asked her, while she scanned through her file.

"Originally from Tennessee...near Nashville," Angela answered, shifting in her chair and straightening her skirt. She was a little nervous, and hoped it didn't show! "How long have you been living and working as a woman full-time?" the doctor asked her, continuing to look through her file. "Well, I've been living full-time for about eighteen months but I've been working as a female on and off for about a year," Angela told her. "I see..." Dr. Richardson replied. She set the file down on her desk and took her glasses off, looking at Angela intently. "You are very beautiful. You obviously don't have any problem passing and you've mastered your voice. To tell you the truth, that's the hardest thing for any TS to accomplish, and I would have never known that you weren't a genetic female if I met you in public." Dr. Richardson commented. "Thank you," Angela answered, relaxing a little.

The doctor put her glasses back on and took Angela's two letters of recommendation from her file and stood as she began to read through them. She walked around the office as she read, then returned to her desk. "I will have to get in touch with your doctors back east of course, but it seems they were both in agreement on one thing. That is that you would be a very good candidate for Sexual Reassignment Surgery." Dr. Richardson sat down at her desk once again, and removed her glasses.

She took a notebook from her desk drawer and sharpened a pencil. "Now I want you to tell me, in your own words, why you feel that you want to become a complete woman." Angela took a deep breath, and let it out slowly. "I knew that, from a very young age, I didn't feel right in my body," Angela began. "Go ahead," Dr. Richardson encouraged her. "I guess I was about six or seven years old when I began to notice that I didn't like to do the things that boys usually like to do. I was much happier and content playing girl's things like tea parties and with dolls.



I felt awkward and out of place in boy's clothes, but strangely comfortable and natural in girl's clothes and dresses.

"I felt a special kinship with the girls, like I was one of them rather than a boy. My father tried to get me to play sports and rough boy's games, but I hated them. The other boys sensed this and I was teased quite a bit. The more society tried to change me into what they thought I should be, the more I rebelled. I really knew something was wrong when I reached fourteen and had no interest in girls sexually, like all the other boys did. I wasn't ever attracted to other girls, but I liked boys, and as I got older, I learned I liked men," Angela spoke, almost apologetically.

Angela went on to explain her feelings of loneliness and despair growing up. She told Dr. Richardson how she learned to hide her feminine thoughts and feelings from others, and learned how to conform herself to fit the mold of the typical young male. She went on to say that until she met her friend Kelly, she had no one to relate her feelings to or to confide in. She said that after she and Kelly graduated from their respective schools, that they began to experiment with their female personas, and that they often spent their weekends in Nashville. There, where no one knew them as their male selves, Angela and Kelly would dress up as women and began to live and relate to others around them as two young, single females.

She related how really happy and content they were letting their female personalities flourish while in Nashville, but how depressed they became when they had to return to the "world" and their male jobs on Monday. They both decided that neither of them could play the "Cinderella" game anymore, so they quit their jobs and moved to Boston to start living and working as women on a full-time basis. They had done fine living as women, and no one suspected that they were not who they claimed to be, but neither of them could find work in their respective fields of law. Then she told the doctor about how they were offered jobs in San Francisco and how their lives changed dramatically overnight. She related how much they loved working at TLC Law, and how they were totally accepted, not only as women, but as the professionals that they were. They had found their niche, Angela told her. And she and Kelly had both met handsome and successful men who wanted relationships with them, but that they both felt that by not being complete women, they were unable to let the relationships take their inevitable course towards romance and eventual marriage.

"I can certainly relate to what you're saying," Dr. Richardson told Angela quietly. Then she opened a drawer in her desk and handed Angela a picture of a young man of about twenty-five years of age. "I don't understand," Angela said, looking at the picture. "That was me, ten years ago, while I was in medical school," Dr. Richardson told her.

"You mean you're...?" "That's right, Angela. I'm a transsexual, too!" She took the picture and replaced it in her desk drawer, and then looked into Angela's disbelieving eyes. "I went through a lot of the same things that you and Kelly have, and understand exactly what you're going through. I met my husband while we

were in medical school together, but it was impossible for me to allow the relationship to grow beyond a certain point until after I had my SRS.”

I would have never guessed,” Angela admitted. “It never came easy, though, as I had to make a lot of sacrifices and hard decisions,” Dr. Richardson continued. “I served my internship in Colorado and worked weekends as well while my future husband completed his on the East coast. I met Dr. Biber at his clinic in southern Colorado, and served my surgical residency under his instruction. He understands transsexuals as real people and not freaks.”

“But how did you ‘cross over?’” Angela asked, bewildered. “After I arranged to serve my residency with Dr. Biber, I began to dress and live as a female in the small southern Colorado town where the clinic was located. At the time, I was only seeing Bob about two or three times a year because of our hectic schedules. Then toward the end of my residency, Dr. Biber agreed to do my surgery...and the rest is history. Dr. Biber taught me his technique, and I refined the procedure

even further. I moved out to San Francisco five years ago and started my own practice. Eventually, Bob moved out here and started his own Pediatric practice.

“We started dating again, and spending more and more time together. We re-kindled our relationship, and, two years ago, he asked me to marry him,” Dr. Richardson explained. “And he never knew?” Angela asked. “That’s right. Dr. Biber’s work was so good that no one ever knew that I was once male.”

“But your children...?” Angela began. “I told Bob before we were married that I couldn’t have children of my own, but he said that didn’t matter to him. We both wanted children very badly, so we adapted a boy and a girl. But just as everything you tell me is kept strictly confidential, I would expect the same from you,



considering what I just told you,” Dr. Richardson said seriously. “I understand,” Angela agreed.

“Well, let me talk with your doctors and I’ll let you know my decision in a few days,” Dr. Richardson said, as she stood and offered her hand. “I understand I’ll be meeting Miss Daniels tomorrow?” Angela stood and shook her hand. “Yes, at 2 PM, I believe.” Angela smiled. “Well, if she’s anything like you and her recommendations are in order, I don’t really see any problems. Here is a financial summary of the cost of the SRS, which, by the way, includes your hospital stay. Are you financially prepared?” Dr. Richardson asked. “I’m working on it,” Angela told her. “That’s good. Well, unless you have any further questions, Angela, it was wonderful meeting you and you’ll be hearing from me soon.” “Thank you very much, doctor...and don’t worry, you’re secrets safe with me!” Angela smiled as she turned to leave.

Angela felt good about her meeting with Dr. Richardson. She felt confidence in her and she was convinced that the procedure she offered was the right one for her. When she got into her car, she looked at the bottom line of the financial aspect of her SRS. It was nearly \$20,000! She knew it was going to be expensive, but she had no idea it would cost *that* much! Her heart suddenly dropped into her stomach and tears began to fill her eyes. She glanced at her watch. It was nearly 2 PM. She knew that she needed to be back at work right away, but she couldn’t bring herself to start the car just yet. Her tears were streaming down her cheeks, and her vision was blurred. What was she going to do?

She knew she had to put herself together and fast. She drew on all of her years of frustration and disappointment and stopped the tears. She knew it wouldn’t do any good anyway. She touched up her makeup and started the short drive back to work. “No sense in worrying over the money part of it for now,” Angela thought to herself. “I need the surgeon’s approval first, and if I get that, I’ll just take it a day at a time. That’s all I can do anyway.” But she knew in her heart one thing for certain: She would never give up on herself...ever!

When Angela got back to work, she was surprised to see a dozen long-stemmed red roses in a vase on her desk. “Oh, my goodness!” she said out loud as she walked over and looked at the card. “They came about a half hour ago,” Felicity told her, a tinge of jealousy in her voice. “Must be nice.” They were from James! Angela looked up and Felicity winked at her, trying to hide her smile! With Felicity, Angela never knew when she was serious or just playing around. “Oh, you...” Angela smiled, reading the rest of the card. It read: “Heard you had a doctor appointment today. Hope all is well. Hugs & Kisses, James.”

“Hope you know what you’re doing,” Felicity said casually. “I’ve heard he’s quite a ladies man.” “Oh, really?” Angela asked, looking at Felicity. “Well, I went out with him a couple of times, and he was like an octopus trying to get into my panties!” Felicity continued. “And what’s not to like? He has money, a great career, he’s good-looking. A guy like that is never satisfied with being with just one woman!”

“Yeah, I see your point,” Angela admitted. Felicity DID have a point. After all, most men with looks and money had an ego to match, and usually a wandering eye for the women. Well, she would just play it cool, and not get involved with him too seriously. Besides, she had other concerns to deal with before she would allow herself to get close to a man.

On their way home that afternoon, Kelly wanted to know all about Angela’s appointment with Dr. Richardson. “How did it go? What was she like? Is she going to do the surgery? How much does it cost?” Kelly knew something was up by the wry smile on her friend’s face. But Angela refused to tell her. She just told her that she’d find out the answers to all of her questions the next day at her own appointment. But Angela did tell her to be sure to take her recommendations with her, as Dr. Richardson needed to verify them.

But Kelly wouldn’t give up. That evening during dinner and then later while they were relaxing and watching TV, she kept pestering Angela for answers to her questions. Finally, Angela made Kelly promise that if she showed her the financial summary of the SRS that she wouldn’t ask anything else until she spoke with the doctor herself the next day. Reluctantly, Kelly agreed. Angela took the paper from her purse and handed it to Kelly. As Kelly read the paper, Angela could see her expression turn from hopefulness to despair. “How are we going to get that much money?” Kelly asked incredulously, as her eyes began to fill with tears.

Angela didn’t know. But she moved closer to Kelly and put her arms around her, trying to give her some comfort. “Let’s not worry about that for now. We need to be accepted first, otherwise, there’s not a chance at all, OK?” Angela told her firmly. “One thing at a time, OK?” Angela looked into Kelly’s eyes intently. “OK, OK, you’re right. Of course you’re right,” Kelly stammered, whipping away her tears. “If we get approved, then we’ll just HAVE to find a way. That’s all there is to it. We didn’t come this far to let the cost shatter our dreams, did we?” Angela added with intensity.

“No, we didn’t,” Kelly answered with conviction in her voice. “I’m sorry, Angie. I just didn’t have a clue it was going to cost that much!” Kelly admitted, laying her head on her friend’s shoulder. “I know, I had no idea either,” Angela said as she stroked Kelly’s hair.

“All I can tell you is this: Be prepared to tell Dr. Richardson the complete reason why you want to have the surgery,” Angela told her. “And try to look your best and just be yourself, OK?” “Why do you have to be so RIGHT all the time?” Kelly nudged her playfully. “Well, I’m not always right but I do know this: We’d better get a good night’s sleep tonight, otherwise, we won’t have a prayer tomorrow, alright?” Angela reasoned. “Yeah. I’m going to bed,” Kelly stated as she got up and started climbing the stairs. “I’ll be up in a minute myself,” Angela told her.

She walked outside on the balcony and lit a cigarette. She could see the lights from the buildings across the bay shimmering on the water, and she shivered as a cold breeze caressed her bare legs. She thought about James and his wonderful gift of roses that day. She found it difficult to put him out of her mind. One part of her yearned for him, to feel his body holding her close in those strong arms of his.

And yet another part of her told her to stay away. What was a girl to do? All she knew was that, since her encounter with Daniel in Los Angeles, she missed being close to a man. She missed the strength and the hardness. She knew in her heart that was what she needed to be truly happy. But was James the right one? She didn't know. Not yet, anyway. Maybe someday she'd find out. Angela went back inside, locking the sliding glass door behind her and walked up the stairs to bed.

The next few days seemed to drag by for Angela. She and Felicity worked hard putting together all the legal documents and Mr. Kimber's deposition. They knew that their attention to detail and the accuracy of their work could make the difference in justice for Mr. Pearlman. They also knew that their reputation as professional paralegals and investigators was at stake.

By Friday morning, Angela still hadn't heard from Dr. Richardson. Kelly had gone to her consultation on Wednesday and came away feeling really good about how things went. But the waiting was the hardest part for both of them. At noon, the girls decided to go eat lunch at that little deli that James had introduced Angela to. Kelly was never one to keep anything from her best friend, and she confided in Angela that Dr. Richardson had inquired into Kelly's sexual experiences with men. Kelly said that she had told her about her passionate encounter with Robert, but didn't say anything about her encounter with her boss or about Robert being her boss's son.

When Dr. Richardson had asked her what she thought about the sexual aspects of her encounter with Robert, she had told her that she was very excited, and that she received a lot of pleasure from the experience, even though it seemed the encounter was mostly one-sided. Kelly admitted to feeling a bit frustrated because she couldn't give "all of herself" as she had wanted to, providing she had the "right" equipment. Apparently, this was the answer Dr. Richardson was hoping to hear, because she told Kelly that was usually the reaction of a normal genetic heterosexual woman.

The girls enjoyed their chicken Caesar salads and breadsticks and were returning to the office when Angela found a memo on her desk from Ms. Clark! She was to call Dr. Richardson's office at her convenience! Angela's heart began to pound inside of her chest and her hands began to sweat as she dialed the number. Dr. Richardson's receptionist answered the phone and told Angela that the doctor wanted to see her after she got off work that day! Angela told her that she would be there shortly after 5 PM. The suspense was killing her! What did that mean? Yes or no? Well, she was going to go home for the weekend knowing one way or another. She wouldn't have to suffer the whole weekend not knowing, and that was a blessing to some extent!

Angela was filing a copy of Mr. Kimber's deposition with her back to the office door when she heard someone come in. Thinking it was Felicity returning from her lunch break, she turned to see a beaming Kelly, her face all aglow! She had also received a memo to call Dr. Richardson's office, and was told to come in after work that day as well! "It's good news, Angela! I just know it is. I can feel it in my heart!" Kelly whispered excitedly. "I sure hope you're right!" Angela replied, shaking with excitement as well. The two hugged each other warmly. "See you after

work!” Kelly announced as she turned to go back to her office, holding up both her hands with crossed fingers.

Angela was excited as well, but didn’t reveal her emotions as clearly as Kelly did. She had gotten her hopes up in the past, and been disappointed. She wasn’t going to allow her emotions to get the best of her now. She sat at her desk, took a deep breath, and told herself she’d wait until after the news before allowing herself celebration. She would just wait and see and she crossed her fingers momentarily for luck as well!

Naturally, the day seemed to drag on forever for both Kelly and Angela. Felicity even noticed that something was up with her coworker. But Angela put her off by telling her she had a bit of indigestion from lunch that day. A few minutes before quitting time, Robert ducked his head in and asked Angela why Kelly was “glowing.” Angela laughed and told him to never ask why a woman was “glowing” but to just “go with it.” Robert seemed a bit confused, and just shook his head. “Women! They’re a mystery to me!” and he left, more confused than he was when he first asked.

The girls counted down the last few minutes before taking the elevator down to the parking garage and leaving in their car for Dr. Richardson’s office. They made it across town in record time, despite the rush hour traffic, and were soon sitting in the waiting room, expecting to be called into Dr. Richardson’s office individually. Instead, they were surprised when the doctor herself greeted them both and asked them into her office together! Somehow they both knew by the look on the doctor’s face that the answer would be “yes!” for both of them!

Dr. Richardson sat them down and then retrieved their files from her cabinet behind her desk. Seeing the excited anticipation in their faces, and remembering what it was like herself, Dr. Richardson told them that she had received “very positive” recommendations from both the girls’ psychologists and psychiatrists, and that she was approving both girls’ applications for their Sexual Reassignment Surgeries! She told them that she had spoken to the other members of the board there at the clinic for approval of a financial agreement that would allow both Angela and Kelly to pay for approximately one quarter of the total cost of their procedures, and having the balance paid for by a special “scholarship” donated by a wealthy San Franciscan who wished to be anonymous!

In short, Dr. Richardson explained, she thought the girls had a very good chance at receiving their surgeries for a fraction of the usual cost, approximately \$5,000 each, instead of the usual \$20,000! She told the girls that she was almost certain that the scholarships would be approved, and that she would let them know for sure first thing Monday morning after the board had voted. But she told them that she had already talked with the board members, and the majority had agreed with her recommendation! So, technically, the vote was just a formality.

“I don’t know what to say,” Angela said as tears began to fill her eyes once again. But these were “happy tears” and not tears of despair. “Dr. Richardson, you don’t know how much this means to us,” Kelly said softly, trying unsuccessfully to hold back the tears herself. “I believe I do know, Kelly,” Dr. Richardson re-

sponded as she winked at Angela. That's when Angela realized that Dr. Richardson had only revealed her "secret" to her! "Now you girls go and enjoy your weekend and I'll let you know for sure Monday morning on the scholarship part. But other than that, we are ready to go as soon as you can get a week off from work. Do you have any vacation time coming yet?" Dr. Richardson asked, opening her surgical planner.

"No, not yet, but I am sure we can get the time off!" Angela added, smiling broadly at Kelly. "Well, you two think about it over the weekend. I have two open surgery dates next month. The first is Monday March 15<sup>th</sup>, and the second is on Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>." Dr. Richardson informed them.

The girls were still in a state of shock! Everything was happening so quickly!

"Thank you so much, doctor!" Kelly said excitedly as they got up to leave.

"Yes, thank you, Dr. Richardson. We don't know what else to say," Angela told her, shaking her hand.

"You're entirely welcome, ladies. That is one of the things I love about my work...making people's dreams come true!"

And as Angela and Kelly left her office and drove home, they really realized that their lifelong dream of becoming complete women was only a couple of weeks away! Kelly suggested that they celebrate that evening by going out for pizza and beer! She got no argument from Angela. "That sounds good to me!" Angela agreed. Now the only obstacles in their way were finding a way to get a week off from work and getting the \$5,000 they needed to apply towards their surgeries.

The girls drove straight back to their apartment and changed into their jeans, T-shirts and cross trainers, then drove down to a local pizza restaurant to celebrate their victory! They were walking on air as they entered their favorite pizza place, and just glowed with happiness! "I haven't seen you two in a while," the young man in his mid-twenties remarked as he took their pizza order and poured them a large pitcher of beer. "What's the occasion?" Angela and Kelly just looked at each other and giggled like a couple of school girls, but said nothing else. The guy just poured their beer and scratched his head as the girls found an empty booth near the juke box.

They each picked out five songs, then sat back and sipped their beers, savoring them. It had been months since they had enjoyed a pizza and beer together. But tonight, they allowed themselves an evening of pleasurable celebration! And the combination of pizza and beer tasted heavenly!

Saturday morning, Angela wasted no time getting on the computer and looking for a local financial institution that would lend her the \$5,000 she needed toward her operation. It wasn't difficult to find a bank willing to lend her the money on her signature alone, since she was making a good salary at the firm. The terms were reasonable and the interest was relatively low. Kelly also applied and qualified for the same terms as Angela had received! They even arranged to come into the bank on their lunch hour on Monday and sign the papers and receive their checks.

Later that evening, as the girls basked in the glow of their success, the phone rang. It was Robert! He asked Kelly to take a drive with him on Sunday up to Lake Tahoe! He told her that it was beautiful that time of year, with a blanket of snow covering the mountains ringing the lake and lots of photo opportunities! “But what about work on Monday?” Kelly asked, wondering what he had in mind. “No problem. We’ll leave early in the morning and drive back that evening. I have to be in court Monday morning anyway,” Robert told her. “I’d also like to scout out a couple of areas where we can do some hiking this summer.”

“That sounds nice,” Kelly sighed, trying to sound somewhat enthusiastic about the hiking part. “Good! I’ll pick you up at 6 AM. That way, we’ll be up there before lunch!” Robert added. “OK, I’ll be ready!” Kelly answered. She was a city girl at heart. But she also felt she needed to expand her horizons, especially if she wanted to make Robert hers for the long haul. “Are you sure you know what you’re doing, girl?” Angela asked her after she had hung up the phone. “What if he tries to get in your pants again?”

Kelly sighed and thought for a moment. “Well, we are just going for the day; it’s not like we will be sleeping together!” Kelly reasoned. “Besides, I can handle myself with Robert.” “Alright, just be careful, we don’t want anything to mess up our plans, now that we’re this close,” Angela warned her.

Kelly went upstairs and got her backpack down from the closet shelf, packing it with a change of clothes and her camera equipment. She laid out her clothes for morning, which included a short blue and gray knit skirt, a matching sweater, tights and her 3” heeled oxfords. It would be kind of nice getting away from the city for a day. And if the Lake Tahoe area was as beautiful as Robert had claimed, she was looking forward to seeing it and taking some good photos!

Kelly’s alarm sounded at 5 AM and she slipped out of bed and got into the shower, trying not to awaken Angela in the process. She hurriedly dried and curled her hair and applied her makeup, wanting to look her best for Robert and in case she ended up in a photo! Robert had been asking her for a picture, and she thought this might be a good opportunity to have one taken for him!

Walking down the stairs quietly, she set her backpack by the door and went into the kitchen to make a cup of coffee and some toast. “I sure hope this is worth getting up at the crack of dawn for,” Kelly said to herself as she finished her toast and coffee and glanced at her watch. It was 5:50 AM. Robert would be arriving any minute! She hurried back upstairs and brushed her teeth and applied her pale pink lipstick. Then, checking her appearance in the mirror, she decided that she looked just right. She wore the short knitted skirt because it showed off her legs nicely, and she knew how much Robert liked her legs! But she wore the tights for herself! They would help keep her legs warm. And, if it got really cold, she could always change into her jeans, which she had placed in her backpack the night before.

As she was coming down the stairs, she heard a soft knock at the door. It was Robert! “Good morning, Kelly! Wow! You look nice!” he commented as the two of them walked out to the hunter green Ford Explorer parked at the curb. He took



Kelly's pack and placed it on the backseat, and even opened her door for her! He certainly hadn't lost his manners since they started dating! "Thank you," Kelly told him as she slipped in and fastened her seatbelt. "Nice!" Kelly said as Robert fastened his seatbelt and started the engine. "Yeah, it's my dad's. He said we might need it if we run into any snow on the way up! Well, you all set?" Robert asked, smiling at Kelly. "You bet I am!" Kelly told him cheerfully.

It was still dark as they drove across the Bay Bridge and turned onto Highway 80 heading east toward Sacramento. "You look pretty nice, too!" Kelly told him, eyeing him in his jeans and heavy turtle neck sweater. "Thanks," Robert blushed slightly. That was one of the things that attracted Kelly to Robert. He was strangely modest for a young, good-looking man of means. There was very little traffic on the road at this hour on a Sunday morning, and they made good time. As the sun was rising over the mountains to the East, they pulled off the highway in Sacramento for a quick breakfast.

Robert was really hungry, and ordered a big breakfast with ham and eggs, bacon, hash browns and juice. Kelly was satisfied with a cinnamon roll and a cup of coffee. In a half hour, they were back on the road again. As they started climbing up into the mountains east of Sacramento, it became colder and it started to snow. Kelly scooted closer to Robert and put her soft hand on his shoulder, stroking his neck. "Mmmm, that feels great!" Robert told her, moving his hand over and resting it on her stockinged thigh. Kelly loved the feeling of his touch. She could feel the strength in his hand as he rubbed her leg, and his electric touch gave her goose bumps!

As they climbed higher into the mountains, the snowflakes became larger and they began to stick on the highway. Kelly snuggled closer to Robert as he put the Explorer in four-wheel drive and continued the long climb to the pass which led them into the Tahoe Valley. There were snowplow trucks grading the highway as they attempted to keep the snow from building and freezing on the asphalt. "It's beautiful!" Kelly commented as they drove into South Lake Tahoe. The snow here was deep and drifting as high as some of the roofs on the houses!

Robert drove around the Southwest side of the lake until they came to a plowed overlook high above the cobalt blue waters of the immense lake. Robert parked the Explorer and winked at Kelly. "Get your camera," he told her. Kelly opened her pack and trudged through the snow over to where Robert was standing, looking out across the vastness of the lake. "Wow! This is awesome!" Kelly breathed, focusing her camera on the large bay below them. "That's Emerald Bay," Robert told her as she took a couple of shots. "It's gorgeous!" Kelly said excitedly. "Especially the way the water changes from light green to such a lovely shade of blue!" It was freezing, but Kelly was too excited to feel the cold at that moment.

"Wait right here!" Kelly told Robert as she went over to the Explorer and set her camera on the hood. Centering Robert in the viewfinder, with a breathtaking view of the lake behind him, Kelly took his picture. Then she set the timer and hurried back to his side before the camera took their picture. "I hope it comes out," Kelly said as they walked back to the Explorer, retrieving the camera and getting back inside. "You should see this place in the summer," Robert said thoughtfully. "It's

the most beautiful place on Earth, as far as I'm concerned." "I can imagine!" Kelly agreed.

"I want to show you something..." Robert told her as he pulled back onto the highway and headed back into town. Kelly was totally surprised by the stunning beauty of this place Robert loved so much. She reached into her pack and put on her gloves and pulled a stocking cap down over her ears as they drove through the little town that was buried beneath a carpet of drifting whiteness. It had stopped snowing and the clouds began to break up, revealing glimpses of the sun.

Robert pulled off the road and showed Kelly a cute little A-frame cabin. He told her that his family sometimes rented it from a local real estate company when they came up to go skiing. The cabin had a cedar deck that ran all the way around it, and he told her it had a large hot tub in the back. He said that after they had been skiing all day, there was nothing in the world like soaking in the steaming tub while it was snowing and freezing all around them.

Robert then drove Kelly to Heavenly Valley, which was a ski resort on the South shore of Lake Tahoe. As they rode the tram up to the top of the mountain, he explained that Heavenly Valley was actually three separate mountains comprising scores of ski runs and dozens of lifts, making it the largest ski resort in the world!

When they got to the top of the mountain, the view of the lake and the surrounding mountains took Kelly's breath away! "Now I see why they call it Heavenly Valley!" Kelly said almost reverently. "It's so beautiful!" Robert put his arm around Kelly's shoulder as they stood looking out on the vastness of the lake. It was so quiet and peaceful. The only sound that they could hear was the rush of the wind through the trees and their own breathing.

Robert took Kelly into the lodge and they had a sumptuous lunch, enjoying the same panoramic view as they had from the deck, but from within the warm enclosure of the lodge. A blazing fire was burning in the huge rock fireplace, and the atmosphere was warm and relaxing. After they finished lunch, Robert and Kelly strolled through the little gift shop. A beautiful picture poster of the lodge with the lake in the background had caught Kelly's eye, and Robert bought it for her in remembrance of the day they were sharing together. Kelly took a few more pictures after they stepped back out onto the deck, then they boarded the tram once again for the seven-minute ride to the bottom of the mountain. By the time Robert and Kelly got back to the Explorer, the sun was dipping low over the mountains and it was getting colder. Neither of them wanted to leave, so entranced had they become with the area. But they both knew that they had to leave, making a promise to return together again sometime soon.

The trip back to San Francisco was uneventful. They spoke occasionally, but for the most part they enjoyed the ride home in silence, with Kelly sitting snugly close to Robert. She pulled his massive arm around her like a warm security blanket, wishing their time together would not end. She wouldn't admit it to anyone, least of all herself, but she was falling in love with Robert, hook, line and sinker!

His gentle kindness, his thoughtful words, his unassuming nature, captivated her soul!

She was riding a wave of emotions like she'd never felt before. When Robert pulled up in front of Kelly's apartment, she wished that they never had to part. He reached over and pulled her trembling body tightly to him, and kissed her deeply. Her response betrayed the true feelings she harbored for him as she kissed him back, passionately...urgently...completely.

Robert slowly, reluctantly broke the kiss, but not his embrace, as he continued to hold her tightly. Kelly sensed that Robert didn't want to let her go, either. Is he falling for me as well? Kelly thought to herself. He's never kissed me like that before! Kelly thanked him, touching his face and lips, her eyes saying what she couldn't bring herself to reveal to him. Not yet, anyway. Maybe she would someday. She hoped he felt the same way she did.

When Kelly walked into the apartment, Angela was relaxing on the sofa, writing in her journal thoughtfully. "Hey!" Angela greeted Kelly as she set her pack down. "Hey!" Kelly answered back. Angela sensed a change in Kelly, a kind of sadness in her voice and expression, but before she could find out why, Kelly sat down next to her and put her arms around Angela and hugged her tightly. "What's wrong?" Angela asked her, putting her arms around her friend. "Did he hurt you?" "No...no, nothing like that," Kelly answered, her voice trembling as the tears welled up in her eyes.

Kelly sniffed them back and sat back, facing Angela, but unable to meet her gaze. Angela studied her friend's face. The girls knew each other as well as the closest of sisters and Angela had only seen that look on Kelly's face once before. "Kelly," Angela asked her gently. "Are you in love with him?" Kelly couldn't answer her. How could she admit it to her best friend when she hadn't even accepted it herself yet? She didn't have to say anything. Angela knew her better than she knew herself. "Come here," Angela whispered, putting her arms back around her.

She held Kelly and rocked her gently, stroking her hair. Nothing was said. No words were necessary. There was a love and understanding like no other. They were best friends. She held Kelly until her trembling abated and she fell asleep. Angela gently laid her friend down, covering her with a fleece throw, and then sat on the floor by the sofa next to her for a while. She could only hope that Kelly would feel better in the morning, and she went upstairs to bed herself.

Monday morning found Angela and Kelly diligently working in their respective offices once again. There was always a lot to do on Monday mornings at the firm, and this day was no different. Mr. Clark had a court appearance with a client at 10 AM, and the majority of Kelly's time and effort was centered on typing up Mr. Clark's trial notes. Angela and Felicity were almost finished with the document preparation for the Pearlman case and were putting the final touches on that project.

Dr. Richardson had called and left a message on the girls voice mail stating that everything was "go" with the board as far as their procedures were concerned. She also said that, pending receipt of their portion of the fees, that she

would contact them again advising them of a primary and alternate surgery date for each of them.

During their lunch breaks, the girls went to the bank, signed the papers for their loans and dropped off the checks at Dr. Richardson's clinic before returning to work and finishing out the day. Everything seemed to be going well for them at their jobs. On Thursday of that week, Kelly learned that her primary surgery date was scheduled for Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. She was told to come into the clinic on the previous Friday after work, when Dr. Richardson would do her preliminary lab work and pre-surgery tests such as her EKG. Angela also learned that her primary surgery date was scheduled for the week after Kelly's, on Monday April 8<sup>th</sup>.

The only obstacle they needed to overcome now was getting approval from Ms. Clark to get those weeks off from work. That weekend the girl's brainstormed ideas, and finally came up with the "reasons" why they each needed to be away from work for a week. Kelly decided to use the "sick" grandmother excuse, telling Ms. Clark that her grandmother was very old and not well, and that it "may be the last time she would get to see her" before she passed on.

Angela decided to use a little different approach. She would tell Ms. Clark that she had injured her right knee in an athletic accident years before while attending school and had damaged the cartilage. She would tell Ms. Clark that, although she had had one surgery on her knee previously, it was bothering her and that she was scheduled to have a second operation to try to repair the cartilage during the second week of April. Although they both knew that they were taking a chance by requesting time off that early in their new jobs, they had hoped that their performance and attitude would compensate for their requests for time off.

They knew that the "coincidence" of their requests might possibly arouse suspicion, and Angela and Kelly decided to make their requests approximately a week apart. Angela would make her request to Ms. Clark that next week, in effect nearly three weeks in advance of her "knee" surgery. Then, a week later, Kelly would asked for the first week of April off in order to "visit her ailing grandmother" in Tennessee. Angela decided to make her request in writing, while Kelly would appeal to Ms. Clark in person. They both reasoned if, for some reason, they were denied their requests, they would just have to postpone their scheduled surgeries until they had completed their probationary period and had accumulated some vacation time. All they could do was try.

During the next week, Angela and Kelly put in extra hours by coming in early and staying late, in an effort to gain the respect of their bosses and especially Ms. Clark. They took on extra work and sought to achieve above and beyond their expected work load. As it turned out, this was a very good idea.

Both requests were enthusiastically approved by Ms. Clark! She told them that although they were still working under their probation periods, they would be allowed to use one week's vacation in advance, mainly because Ms. Clark had been so impressed with both girl's work ethics and professionalism! They would even receive their vacation time with pay! This was actually more than either Angela or Kelly had dreamed or expected!

## CHAPTER EIGHT

The next few weeks went by quickly for Angela and Kelly. After the Pearlman appeal, which lasted only a week, Angela, Felicity and Kelly were all named to share Employees of the Month honors! At a company dinner given by Mr. Clark, all three were recognized for their contribution to the case. Mr. Pearlman also attended and thanked them all personally for their hard work and dedication in helping Mr. Clark overturn his conviction. Les Kimber also gave very important testimony relating to the case, and was compensated accordingly.

On the Friday before Kelly was to go in for her surgery, she went into the clinic and had her pre-surgery EKG and lab tests completed. Later that evening, Dr. Richardson personally called Kelly at home and told her everything had come out fine and to report to the clinic at 6 AM Monday morning for her surgery. Kelly and Angela spent the weekend together. They didn't do anything special. They just talked about their surgeries and relaxed around the apartment. Angela did take Kelly out for dinner Sunday night though.

Dr. Richardson had been straight with both the girls, telling them that the first four to five days after their surgeries would be very difficult indeed. But they both knew that at this point in their lives, they were willing to go through hell and back for the chance to become complete women.

Robert called Sunday night and the two talked for about an hour. He had wished Kelly a safe "trip" and told her that when she returned, he had something he wanted to ask her. Angela said she thought Robert was going to propose to her, but Kelly said that she couldn't allow herself to think about that possibility right now. She needed to focus her mind on one thing and one thing only: Her surgery and recovery. She would need all her strength and perseverance to get through this. She wished that she could have told Robert the truth about her SRS, but that wouldn't be possible. She knew Robert had never seen her as anything else but a total woman, and she didn't want to mess that up. Not now.

Angela and Kelly were up early the next morning, and while Kelly packed a few items that she would need in the hospital, Angela made them a light breakfast of a couple of eggs, toast and coffee. "I'm going to miss this place," Kelly said as they walked out to the car for the ride to the clinic. "You'll only be gone a week," Angela added as they got in and Angela started the car. "I know, but it'll seem like a lot longer, I'm sure," Kelly replied.

When they arrived at the clinic, they got Kelly checked in and into a pink hospital gown. Angela accompanied Kelly up to the second floor where her room was located. A nurse got her settled into her hospital bed and took her vitals and made her as comfortable as possible. Kelly was a little nervous and Angela sat with her, reassuring her and holding her hand. The nurse came back into Kelly's room with a warm blanket, which felt wonderful as they wrapped her up in it.

Angela stayed with Kelly as long as she could before having to leave for work. About that time the nurse returned and told Kelly everything was ready and told her she was going to give her the first of two injections which would relax her and

put her to sleep for her surgery. "I love you, Kelly," Angela told her as she got up to leave. "Be strong and I'll see you soon!" "I love you, too, Angie," Kelly replied, sniffing back the tears. "Thanks for being there for me." The scene was almost too much for Angela to bear, and as she turned and walked from the room, tears welled up in her eyes. But they weren't tears of pain she was feeling for Kelly, but tears of joy, because she knew the next time she saw her she was going to be a woman...a real woman!

Angela then left the clinic and drove to work. She found it difficult to concentrate that day, constantly looking at the clock on the wall in her office. She tried to imagine how Kelly was doing, and found herself praying for her to come through the surgery without too much pain or discomfort. She knew that Kelly's surgery was scheduled to begin at 7 AM. Dr. Richardson had said, barring any complications, that she would be out of surgery and into recovery by noon.

On her lunch break, Angela called the clinic and inquired as to Kelly's condition. She was told that everything had gone smoothly and that, as they spoke, Kelly was being transferred to her room at San Francisco General Hospital, a few blocks from the clinic. Dr. Richardson had left a message for Angela also. She requested that Angela postpone her visit until Tuesday evening, as Kelly would be strongly sedated and drifting in and out of sleep. She explained that, although the hospital staff could spare her a significant amount of pain through administering pain medication during her first few days post-op, that she would be in a considerable amount of discomfort. She advised Angela that, for the first few days anyway, that she should keep her visits brief and supportive.

Angela was considerably relieved to learn that Kelly's procedure had gone well, and that all she needed right now was time to heal. Angela finished her work day and drove straight home. It seemed so strange coming back to their dark, silent apartment alone. Angela didn't deal with loneliness as well as Kelly did, and she found the silence almost suffocating. She lit a fire and heated up some soup for dinner. She put a soft, mystical Celtic romance CD on the stereo, kicked off her shoes and lay back on the sofa.

She closed her eyes but could not clear her mind. All she could seem to think about was her friend. She forced herself to consume the hot soup, telling herself that she would need her strength, but she didn't enjoy the broth as she usually did. She found herself nodding off, and went upstairs and took a long, hot bath. As she sank down into the hot tub, she shuddered as her tight muscles slowly relaxed. Angela found it easier to clear her mind now, and she closed her eyes, took a deep breath, and exhaled slowly.

After a while, the water began to cool down. She stood and dried herself, looking at her reflection in the mirror. She was very pretty, and she was glad that she was finally going to complete her transition while she was still youthful and strong. Angela slipped into her nightgown and dried her hair before crawling into bed. She said a silent prayer for Kelly, and faded off to sleep. The next few days she would be wise to get as much sleep as she could. The time for her own surgery would be upon her before she knew it.

Tuesday evening, Angela visited Kelly in the hospital. She stopped by a florist and bought a floral arrangement of a dozen pink roses. She really didn't know what to expect. Kelly was sleeping soundly as Angela entered her room, placing the roses on a table next to her bed. She was a little surprised by Kelly's appearance. She was very pale, and looked so small and frail lying in the bed hooked up to the monitors. She had an IV running into each arm, and an oxygen line running into her nostrils.

Angela sat down in a chair beside her bed and reached out and touched Kelly's hand. Kelly stirred slightly, and then slowly opened her eyes as if awaking from a pleasant dream. She smiled at Angela and weakly squeezed her hand. Angela smiled back, searching her eyes, as if for some encouragement. "How do you feel?" Angela whispered, giving her hand a squeeze in return. It took a moment for Kelly to respond. Her mind was still clouded from the medications she was receiving through her IV, and she blinked several times to bring Angela's face into focus. "Water?" Kelly finally rasped, her mouth and throat as dry as the Sahara.

Angela reached over to the table beside her bed for a cup, took a pitcher and poured some cold water and ice into the cup, replacing the lid and bendable straw. She held it up to her friend's mouth and guided the straw between her lips. Kelly took a couple of long draws on the straw, and then laid her head back down on her pillow. "Thank you," she said, squeezing Angela's hand once again. "I'm feeling OK, just a little out of it from the medication. I've been sleeping a lot," Kelly said, almost in a whisper. "So I've been told," Angela replied, stroking Kelly's hair softly. "The doctor says you're doing just fine...no complications," Angela reassured her. "So how does it feel to be a complete woman?" Angela asked. "Ask me in a few days," Kelly whispered as she closed her eyes, and faded back to sleep.

Angela leaned over and kissed Kelly's forehead. She was not a particularly religious person, but she bowed her head for a moment in prayer, thanking God that her best friend seemed to be on the mend. As she was leaving the hospital, she saw Dr. Richardson in the hallway and they chatted for a moment. "I was just on my way to check on our patient," the doctor told Angela. "Did you get to talk with her?" "Only for a moment. She seems pretty weak and sleepy," Angela responded. "She will be for a few days. I'm giving her a lot of pain medication as well as antibiotics to fend off infection, and that's why she is so groggy and sleepy. But it's just as well she sleeps as much as possible while her body heals," Dr. Richardson explained.

"I understand," Angela replied. "I have to make my rounds now," Dr. Richardson told her. "But we'll talk in a couple of days, alright?" Angela nodded. "Thank you, doctor." Angela turned and walked down the hall and stepped into the elevator. She was glad she was alone, because as the elevator door closed, she began to cry. She couldn't help it. The tears just came. But they were not tears of sadness, but tears of relief. The last couple of days had been hard on her as well, and she could rest easier now, knowing that Kelly was going to be fine.

The next couple of days were kind of a blur for Angela, just going through the motions at work. She was starting to focus on her own surgery date that was quickly approaching, and she was a little apprehensive. But when she visited

Kelly on Thursday evening, her spirits were lifted considerably! Kelly was sitting up in bed and had just finished eating her first solid meal since Sunday! She had regained the color to her face and looked much better than she did when Angela saw her on Tuesday. "How's my best girl friend?" Angela smiled as she sat next to Kelly's bed.

"I'm feeling much better. Dr. Richardson took out one of my IV's and I told her I was starving, so she had the nurse bring me something to eat," Kelly told her with a smile on her face. "So I see," Angela replied, taking Kelly's hand and squeezing it. Kelly squeezed back, this time with more strength and vigor. Dr. Richardson came to the door and smiled broadly at Angela. "Seems our patient was hungry tonight!" she commented, writing on her clipboard. "She was up and walking a little while ago as well! If you'd like to, Angela, you could take Kelly out for some fresh air...but in a wheelchair, OK?" Dr. Richardson told her.

"That would be great!" Kelly responded enthusiastically. Dr. Richardson and Angela helped Kelly sit up and swing her legs over the side of the bed while a nurse brought a wheelchair. A couple of minutes later Angela was pushing Kelly down the hallway and out into the foyer between the two wings of the hospital. The area was protected from the wind and designed to resemble a Japanese garden. Angela pushed Kelly along the pathway, and Kelly took a deep breath. "Mmmmm, that fresh air smells SO good!" Kelly remarked. "Let's stop here," Kelly said, indicating a bench where Angela could sit down. "It feels so good to be outside again. I'll never take it for granted again!" Kelly said, looking up at the sky full of stars. Angela sat down on the bench and held Kelly's hand. "I've missed you so much," Angela admitted. "Yeah, really?" Kelly asked, her smiling eyes flashing back at Angela. "Yeah, I really have!" Angela told her seriously.

"Any idea on when you'll get to come home?" Angela asked Kelly, taking a cigarette from her purse and lighting it. "Well, Dr. Richardson said possibly Saturday, after she removes my stitches," Kelly told her. "That's great!" Angela said with a far away look in her eyes. "I hope my surgery goes as well as yours did." "Don't worry, Angie, you'll be just fine. You've always been the strong one between us," Kelly admitted. "Yeah, but I've never gone through anything like this before," Angela added. "That's true, but just think...you'll be back home with me in only a week, and we'll be able to start living the dream we've both shared for so long," Kelly reassured her.

"I'm getting a little cold now. Could we go back inside?" Kelly said as she pulled her robe around herself. "OK. Just promise me one thing..." Angela said as she stood up and began to push her friend back inside. "What's that?" Kelly asked curiously. "Just promise me that you'll come visit me when I'm in here too, OK?" Angela asked. "You know I will, silly!" Kelly told her, holding her hand up near her shoulder for Angela to grasp and squeeze.

Angela wheeled Kelly back to her room and she and a nurse helped Kelly back into bed. "Do you need anything?" Angela asked Kelly as she stood to leave. "Yes, as a matter of fact...when you come to pick me up, will you bring my black jumper and white silk blouse? I want to look nice when I leave this place and come home," Kelly asked her. "Of course I will, Kelly. You take care, and I'll see you in a



couple of days,” Angela said, kissing Kelly’s cheek and squeezing her hand. “Thanks Angie, I love you!” Kelly told her. “I love you, too!” Angela told her, giving her a wink.

After work on Friday, Angela went to the clinic for her pre-surgery labs and EKG just as Kelly had the week before. It was obvious to Dr. Richardson that Angela was a little apprehensive, and the doctor reassured her in the same way she had done with Kelly. Dr. Richardson was a wonderful doctor, Angela thought to herself as she drove herself home that evening. She really seemed to know what the girls were thinking and how they felt inside.

After her bath that evening, Angela stood naked in front of the full-length mirror in her bedroom and looked at herself. She really had a beautiful body. Her breasts were firm and shapely. Her hourglass figure and round, firm buttocks were something the men went crazy for. Her legs were sleek and firm. The only thing that was out of place with her body was, of course, the small, floppy penis and withered testicles hanging between her legs. They had been relatively useless appendages for her entire adult life. And the female hormones she had been taking for so long had rendered them even more useless. She couldn’t wait until she could look at herself in the mirror again and see what she believed she should have been born with: Her very own vagina! Then, and only then, would her body be complete, and she would be free to start living her life as a complete woman!

Saturday afternoon Dr. Richardson called and told her that Kelly was ready and cleared to come home! She got together the dress Kelly wanted her to bring and drove to the hospital. When Angela got to Kelly’s room, she found her up and moving around the room, getting together her belongings and packing them in her suitcase. The nurse gave Angela a bag full of pads, medications, and things Kelly would need to help her complete the healing process. Kelly walked down to the nurse’s station and said good-bye and hugged all of the nursing staff, while one of the nurses located a wheelchair to wheel her out to the car in.

“But I can walk on my own,” Kelly replied. “Sorry, hospital rules,” the nurse told her. Dr. Richardson met the girls on their way down to the car and presented Kelly with a long list of “Do’s & Don’ts” for her to ponder over the next couple of weeks while she completed her recovery. “Can I return to work Monday?” Kelly asked Dr. Richardson. “Sure, if you feel up to it. Sometimes work helps keep your mind off the discomfort and helps you focus,” the doctor told her.

So Angela drove Kelly home and made her comfortable on the sofa. She told Angela that she wasn’t experiencing much pain, and that most of the discomfort had stopped, except when she had to insert a little metal tube into her new vagina. The doctor had told her she needed to do this twice a day for a couple of weeks in order to keep her new “pussy” from closing up.

Kelly slept on the sofa and used the downstairs bathroom for the time being, because it was much easier than climbing the stairs. On Sunday afternoon, while Kelly was dilating her vagina, Angela asked the inevitable question. “Can I see it?” Kelly was more than happy to accommodate her. She lifted her nightgown and opened her legs, revealing her new vagina to Angela. “Wow! It looks so real!” An-

gela gasped, looking closer. “I know. Dr. Richardson did a wonderful job,” Kelly smiled. “Now comes the fun part.” Kelly’s expression suddenly turned from amused to serious as she sterilized the metal tube and slowly inserted it into herself.

Angela winced, making a painful face. “Does it hurt?” she asked softly. “Not so much anymore. I’m getting used to it, but the first couple of days, it was torture!” Kelly admitted. “I can only imagine!” Angela cringed.

Later that evening Angela packed her bag for the hospital and told Kelly she would be taking a cab to the clinic so that she could drive to work the next day. “I’ll be looking for you Tuesday evening, OK?” Angela told Kelly as she started up the stairs for bed that night. “You can count on it!” Kelly answered her. “Good night and good luck tomorrow!” Kelly called. “Goodnight yourself,” Angela returned. “And thanks!” Angela set her alarm clock and stretched out on her bed. By this time tomorrow night, I’ll be a complete woman as well! Angela told herself as she drifted off to sleep. Tomorrow would be a big day for her!

Kelly awoke the next morning early. She had had the best night’s sleep since her surgery, despite sleeping on the sofa, and she went into the bathroom and took a sponge bath and applied her makeup. She was so overwhelmed by the reality of finally achieving her goal of becoming a total woman! As she dressed, she felt more feminine, more of a woman than she’d ever felt before! She wanted to share her happiness with the entire world, but, of course, she couldn’t do that.

Angela had already left and was being prepped for surgery as Kelly drove their Mustang convertible to work that sunny morning. She was the first into the office that morning, so she made some coffee and just stood and enjoyed the view of the bay from her window on the 48<sup>th</sup> floor. For the first time in her young life she felt right with herself and with the world!

As people began to come into the office, they all welcomed Kelly back and asked about her ailing “grandmother”. She wanted to tell them the truth, as she was proud of herself considering what she’d been through. But she told everyone that her grandmother was doing better, that her condition had improved, and how much it meant that her granddaughter had come to visit her! Ms. Clark even welcomed Kelly back to the office by handing her an arm load of files to be put away into the new filing system she had created! It was back to business as usual! And it was great to be back!

But the best part of her day came when Mr. Clark came in, and complimented Kelly on how pretty she looked that morning. He asked her if she was wearing a different hairstyle, or if she was wearing a new dress. He knew there was something different about his secretary, but he couldn’t figure out just what it was. Felicity had come in to welcome her back, and said she had a “glow” about her, whatever that meant...but she wasn’t interested in defining it. She just knew that a woman looks how she feels, and Kelly definitely felt many things this morning: feminine, pretty, happy, contented, and most of all, complete.

Robert came into her office and noticed something different about her as well. He couldn’t remember ever seeing her look so pretty and so feminine! He asked

her out to lunch and she accepted. She told Robert that she would meet him down at her car in a few minutes after she made a phone call. Robert seemed a bit confused, but answered in the affirmative and went to his office to retrieve his suit jacket and take the elevator down to the parking garage.

Kelly called the clinic and asked about Angela. She was told that Angela had just gotten out of surgery, and that, although her procedure went well, she had lost a considerable amount of blood. She was told that Angela was receiving a transfusion as they spoke, but was expected to be fine. Although Kelly was relieved to hear the surgery had gone well, she was a little concerned about her blood loss. But she also knew that her friend was in the best hands possible with Dr. Richardson, and she allowed herself to go to lunch with Robert and not be too distracted. Kelly drove herself and Robert to Fishermen's Wharf for lunch. She wanted to show off their new car to Robert, but she also craved a fresh crab salad and some of that wonderful sourdough French bread!

After they had eaten, Robert took Kelly's hands in his, and looked deeply into her smiling blue eyes. "What did you want to talk to me about?" Kelly asked coyly, as if she had no clue what he was going to ask her. Kelly knew that Robert was a little nervous, and she tried to put him at ease. She reached over and touched his face softly. "Well, I was wondering if...I mean, I was hoping that..." Robert stammered, searching for the right words. "It's alright, you can tell me anything," Kelly added.

There she went again. She always had a way of calming him down, of making him feel like the man he truly was. He couldn't let this one go. He wanted her in his life, and he wanted her forever! "Kelly, I love you. I have since the first moment I saw you! I don't know if you feel the same way, but if you do, would you marry me?" Robert blurted out. Kelly knew the answer to that one. That was a no-brainer for her. "I love you, too, Robert. Are you asking me to be your wife?" Kelly played it for all it was worth.

Naturally, she'd never been asked this question, nor would she ever expect to hear it again, and she wanted to savor the moment. "Oh, Kelly. Yes! Would you do me the honor of being my wife?" Robert asked, getting down on one knee beside the table and opening a small box, revealing a shiny gold ring with a large diamond set in it. "Oh, yes, Robert. Of course I'll marry you!" Kelly cried out in total bliss. Suddenly, the whole restaurant broke into cheers and applause as they realized that the proposal had been heard by everyone there!

Suddenly, they needed to be alone, so Robert paid for their meal and the two walked out along the waterfront, hand in hand. Kelly was all aglow, basking in the brightness of the moment. There was one detail she needed to tell Robert about. And she had no idea on how he would accept the revelation. "I need to tell you something," Kelly stammered, searching for the right words. "What is it?" Robert asked with concern. "I...I cannot have children, Robert. I had an accident when I was younger, and it's impossible for me to bear children!" Kelly told him, almost in tears.

Robert stared at her in disbelief. “You mean that’s all?” he asked incredulously. “Yes...why?” Kelly said, studying his face. “That’s a relief! I thought you were going to tell me you were a prostitute or had cancer or something like that!” Robert told her, suddenly relieved. “But you like children, right? I mean, we can always adopt,” Robert asked her, waiting for her reply. “Of course I do. I mean, I want children very much, too, but you’d be OK with the fact that we couldn’t have our own?” Kelly stammered, unsure of what his response would be. “That makes no difference to me, Kelly; I love you and want you to be my wife. We can always adopt children.” Robert pulled Kelly close to him, and held her in his strong arms.

Robert bent his head down and kissed her. “I love you, Kelly Daniels and I want to spend the rest of my life with you.” Robert told her with conviction. “Oh, Robert, yes! Oh, yes!!” Kelly cried. But Robert cut her off. He crushed his mouth down over hers, kissing her deeply! He slowly broke the kiss and took the little box from his pocket and opened it. He took the engagement ring out and placed it on her finger. “I want you to be mine so badly,” Robert whispered in her ear. “Oh, I am Robert. I am!” Kelly sighed. “But we’d better get back to work, or else we’re going to be a jobless couple!” Kelly pointed out. “Oh, shit! You’re right!” Robert agreed, glancing at his watch. “Let’s go!”

They were a half hour late returning from lunch, but no one seemed to notice as they slipped back into their offices. But trying to concentrate on their work instead of each other was nearly impossible. While Robert thought of how he was going to break the news to his family, Kelly was practicing writing what would be her new name: Mrs. Kelly J. Clark! Over and over and over again!

The next few days went by quickly for Kelly. She visited Angela in the hospital and was happy that she was getting stronger and healing more and more with every passing day! Kelly refrained from wearing her engagement ring at work until Robert decided when the right time would be to tell his family. Angela was released from the hospital on Saturday afternoon, and Kelly drove her home and made her comfortable on the sofa, just as she had done for her.

When Kelly told Angela the news about Robert asking her to marry him, it didn’t really surprise her. She knew how much Robert worshipped her and she knew that he loved her very much. She was a little saddened by the fact that, eventually, Kelly would be moving out of their apartment. But she also knew that she would someday fall in love with a man, and he would become the focus of her life.

But that’s another story.

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