

**K K**

# ***SERIOUSLY SKIRTED***

**“The Show Piece” by KK  
Illustrations by Joe Six-Pack  
A Tales of Transformation Story**



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[j6p@sixpacksite.com](mailto:j6p@sixpacksite.com)

[www.sixpacksite.com](http://www.sixpacksite.com)

## THE SHOW PIECE

Matthew Melbourne Hoopes grew up on the other side of the country. His parents were long separated and he hadn't had anything like a traditional family for a very long time. He had moved out at 18 for college, and even though he had just moved a few miles into town, he might as well have moved a million miles away. He didn't hear much from his parents or friends. Indeed, the only things he had left from his youth were a few old CDs and the nickname of "Mel." He had graduated from a so-so college with a degree in business, but with the economy in shambles, finding work was proving to be all but impossible and student loans had him in a state of desperation. At 25, he had spent two years on various forms of assistance and his ability to pay his bills was coming to an end.

Some months ago, he decided to move out of his hometown, where the prospects would be much better, in his opinion. He scraped together what savings he had and got a place in a run-down apartment building. Things looked good at first, as he had met a nice girl by the name of Allison who he had been seeing a while and was getting pretty serious about. If only he had some money to take her out or buy her something nice. Unfortunately, he had just as much luck getting a job as he had in his hometown. Now, he had a power bill that he hadn't paid in three months and an eviction notice nailed to his door.

It was for that reason he met up with his older cousin Catherine in a coffee shop on a fateful day in late April.

"So that's it," he sighed as he folded up the classifieds section, having explained his current predicament. "I don't know what's the use of having a degree in business when I can't even get hired on anywhere, Cat!"

His cousin frowned at him for using her nickname, then laughed. "I suppose I'm getting used to being called 'Ms. Perry.' I sure didn't anticipate that!" She took a sip from her coffee cup. Cat was just thirty, very attractive but slightly severe-looking with her stylish glasses and professional attire. Mel knew she was doing all right for money... better than all right, in fact!

"It's tough right now, I'll be the first to admit it," Cat said. "I'm lucky to have secured my position at the clinic when I did."

"Right, of course," Mel said slyly. He still wasn't entirely sure what went on at her place of work – sometimes it sounded like a finishing school, and at others, a detention center for troubled youth – but he knew the place was absolutely loaded. "That's why I was wondering," continued Mel, "If your clinic might be, um, hiring?"

Cat smiled mischievously, toying with her coffee cup. She had suspected this was coming. “Well, I’ll be honest, Mel, we don’t get a lot of male hires. And you’re a bit weedy for security detail.”

Mel blushed. That was true – standing barely as tall as Cat herself, with a slender frame and paltry muscles, he had never been a big manly man. He was still somewhat in awe of the fact that he had a beautiful girlfriend currently finishing college. Usually girls like Allison wouldn’t look twice at him, but they had been going steady for a while now. That was part of the reason he needed a job so badly! How were they supposed to move in together after her graduation if he couldn’t support himself or even get out of debt?

Mel was crushed. Even his own cousin couldn’t get him work.

“However...” Cat said, as a new idea occurred to her. She looked her cousin up and down carefully. “Ms. White, that’s my boss, was talking recently about the need for an administrative assistant.”

“A secretary?” Mel scoffed.

“Well, if that’s beneath your dignity...” Cat trailed off teasingly.

“No, no!” Mel exclaimed. “I was just hoping for something else. Please, I really need this. If you could wrangle me this job, I’d be indebted to you forever!”

“Don’t thank me quite yet,” Cat said. “Working for the Aphrodite Clinic might involve some lifestyle changes for you, if Ms. White has the same idea I’m hav-



ing. They have some very stringent measures as far as appearance and comportment go, and you may be required to take some preparatory courses.”

“Cat, I’ve been to every company in town begging for a job,” Mel sighed. “At this point, I’ll honestly do anything. Just tell me when I start!”

“Maybe you should start calling me Ms. Perry,” Cat said. “Send me your resume and some head shots, and I’ll forward them on.”

“Head shots?” Mel asked, confused.

“Appearances are very important,” Cat smiled. “But between you and I, I believe you’re a lock. You have such nice bone structure.”

Mel was a bit taken aback by that, since he had always felt his facial features were a bit on the delicate, dare he say, pretty side of things, but any advantage was a good one. He shook his cousin’s hand, noticing that she still had quite a grip, and smiled with anticipation. His girlfriend would be thrilled to hear about a position at a high-paying place of business, even if, like most people, she had probably never heard of the Aphrodite Clinic.



One week later, Mel was driving to his interview. The clinic had a long tree-lined drive, and the building itself was a massive complex with bricks, ivy, and modern-looking touches. Obviously a lot of money had gone into the place. Mel felt completely intimidated as a security guard with a billy club and an unfriendly smile let him through the gate and handed him a parking pass.

Cat had told him stories about this place that he didn’t quite know what to make of. She was never really specific, but she had mentioned that it was a medical facility, but didn’t take patients. That made no sense. She had also talked about classes for teens and young adults, but she said they weren’t a school. So what was this place? Mel figured it couldn’t be all bad, as they obviously were doing well.

As he walked inside the impressive doors, he hoped he was dressed up enough for his interview. Everything inside was very modern and expensive-looking. Getting a job here could be the biggest opportunity of his life!

“Mel Hoopes?” Mel turned and saw a woman in her mid-thirties, or possibly slightly older – she was in great shape and very well-groomed, wearing a professional pant suit and sensible shoes.

“That’s me,” he said, offering his hand.

“Ms. White, chief administrator,” she said. “Follow me.” Mrs. White turned briskly and went down the hall. Mel hurried behind. She swiped her keycard and opened the door on what looked to be a doctor’s office.

“Preliminary inspection,” Ms. White announced. “We have very high standards of health and hygiene for all of our hires. I received your head shots and was quite impressed, but we need to take measurements as well. We need to qualify you from the medical plan. Please strip down.”



Mel stared blankly for a moment, then quickly fumbled with his belt. These Euro-inspired companies had strange

ways of doing things, but he had heard of crazier. And a health plan sure sounded nice, since it was certain to be a cushy one.

“Er, is there a curtain I could stand behind?” Mel asked awkwardly.

“I’m a qualified practitioner,” Ms. White said severely. “I’ve seen it all before. Catherine assured me you would be exceptionally cooperative. She made it sound as if you need this position rather badly.”

“Absolutely,” Mel said, “It’s just...” He trailed off and, blushing, submitted to her request. Wearing only his underwear, he stepped forward and let her take his measurements, lingering on his trim waist and hips.

“Hm,” she said. “Well, there’s something to work with, at least. You’ll be in for your first round of treatments in the morning, and I’ve had Catherine stock up the necessary supplements. Turn around.”

Still a little shell-shocked from being brusquely evaluated in his underthings for a job interview, Mel spun on his heel. Something cold pressed against his buttock, and then he yelped as a needle pricked him.

“What’s that about?” he demanded, rubbing the spot.

“We’re on an accelerated schedule for you, so I administered a booster,” Ms. White sighed. “We only have four months before the clinic begins accepting students in September, and you need to be presentable by then. No, more than presentable. As our administrative assistant, you’ll be representing the face of the Aphrodite Clinic, and as such you must be perfect. Do you understand?”

Mel could not think of anything he understood less, but he nodded his head and crossed his fingers that he had gotten the job, bizarre interview notwith-

standing. After the inspection, he put his clothes back on and was handed a package of clothes to serve as his ‘temporary work attire.’

“My apologies for the speed at which we are moving,” Ms. White said. “We have quite a lot to do and hiring you was something of a last-minute addition. I’m sure Catherine will explain things more adequately. As most of our instructors are still on summer break, she’ll be taking the lead in your introductory program.”

“Does this mean I have the job?” Mel asked hesitantly. Surprisingly, Ms. White smiled.

“On a probationary basis for the first week,” she said. “But I think you may just turn out. Twenty Five dollars an hour, one hour lunch break, medical, dental and retirement. Be here tomorrow at nine sharp. Good day.” She pointed him towards the door and began making marks on a clipboard. Mel wandered back out of the building in a daze. He had the job, but it wasn’t anything like he’d been expecting. What on Earth had she meant about an accelerated schedule? And what on Earth were “treatments?” He got out his cellular phone and punched in Cat’s number, listening to it ring twice.

“Hello?” came his cousin’s voice.

“I got the job, Cat!” Mel exclaimed.

“I’m not surprised,” his cousin said. “You owe me for pulling all those strings! I suppose you’re bringing your things over?” That was his only option. His eviction was in two days, and he had no place to go. It was a long ways a way, and being so far from Allison was going to be heartbreaking. He knew it work out in the end, though.

“I don’t have much, I promise,” Mel said. “But yes, I’m driving over right away. Thanks so much for letting me move in!”

“Anything to cut down that commute,” Cat said. “Don’t worry, I’ll make room.”

“I appreciate it,” Mel said. “Be there soon.”

Cat smiled on the other end as she hung up. He appreciated it now, but she wasn’t so sure he would be thanking her in a few months time. Time would tell just how badly her little cousin actually wanted a job. If the Aphrodite Clinic had its way, there were quite a few changes in store for Mel...



Cat’s condo was much closer to the city limit, and by extension closer to the Clinic, and it was classy and well-furnished. Mel wouldn’t be able to start paying rent until his first paycheck, but she assured him not to worry about it. Relieved, he began moving his few belongings into the spare bedroom. Her prior

roommate had obviously been female, judging by the pastel pink curtains, and the bedspread and walls were in equally feminine colors with plenty of floral designs. There was a well-lit vanity and a walk-in closet that Mel was certain he would never be able to fill with his few clothes.

“That reminds me,” he said aloud. “I should look at what I’m supposed to show up in tomorrow.” Mel unzipped the package of clothing Ms. White had handed him and spread it out on the bed as Cat walked inside.

“Cat, this can’t be right,” Mel complained.

“Ms. Perry,” his cousin corrected, eyebrow raised. “You need to get used to that, Mel. And everything looks fine to me.”

“Not a lot of male hires, that’s for sure,” Mel muttered, holding up the clothes. He had been given a crisp white shirt that looked suspiciously like a blouse, buttoning on the wrong side, along with a flimsy pair of briefs that looked more like panties than anything, a pair of slacks with no pockets, and...

“Are these stockings?” Mel asked incredulously, holding up the slippery fabric.

“Nylon socks.”

“I’m supposed to wear these to work?”

“Of course,” Cat said. “It’s part of the outfit, isn’t it? You need them for those shoes.” She pointed to the last item, a pair of sleek black shoes with, and Mel was sure his eyes were not deceiving him, a hint of a heel.

“I’m going to feel ridiculous wearing this stuff,” he grumbled. “But she did say these were my ‘temporary’ work clothes. Hopefully she has some mens’ stuff coming in!”

“Oh, yes,” Cat smiled. “Only temporary. And besides, hardly anyone is going to see you in them! Tomorrow is your first day of training, and you want to look presentable.”

“She said something about you being my instructor?” Mel asked hesitantly.

“That’s right,” Cat said. “But don’t expect me to go easy on you just because you’re my cousin!”

“Don’t worry, I don’t,” Mel laughed. “But what sort of training is it?”

“Well, you’ll be undergoing a lot of the instruction we give our students,” Cat explained. “To prepare you to be able to properly represent the Aphrodite Clinic and understand its goals and functions. We only have four months, though, so things will be moving a little quicker than usual.”

“That’s what Ms. White said!” Mel said, with a smile. “I hope I can keep up! Are you allowed to tell me what that booster shot was all about?”

“Oh, that,” Cat said, waving her hand dismissively. “Nothing to worry about, just part of the health plan. They provide all sorts of things. You can start on



the vitamin regimen in the morning. My gosh, your nails are a mess.” She took his hands and inspected them, clucking her tongue.

“Is it important?” Mel asked skeptically.

“Attention to detail is very important, Mel,” Cat said. “Here, let me help you out.” Over the next half-hour, they chatted as she buffed, trimmed, and filed his nails, finishing by putting a clear coat of varnish on each one. Mel tried to extract a few more details about the coming day, but Cat was tight-lipped on the subject. The important thing, as he tried to remind himself, was that he would soon be earning a living. He could put up with a lot for that!

“Much better,” Cat said, blowing on his newly-shining fingernails. “Tomorrow we’ll have a look at your toes. Oh, and I have some skincare stuff I’d like to show you before bed.”

“Why not?” Mel shrugged his shoulders. He was slightly uncomfortable with how the varnish caught the light – it looked just a bit too feminine for his taste, but he wasn’t going to complain after everything Cat had done for him. “Anything to look my best on the first day!” he added.

“Oh, you won’t look your best for quite a while,” Cat said, with an uncharacteristic giggle. “But, one step at a time. Come on, I’ll show you the bathroom.” Mel followed his cousin into the large marble bathroom, where she showed him a range of hair products that they received straight from the manufacturers. (“A perk of working at the Aphrodite Clinic, we have the very best cosmetic and hair-care products for free,” she told him.) Mel was slightly relieved, as he didn’t have much in the way of toiletries or money to spend on them. There was also a canister of something called depilatory cream, which Cat told him she would explain in the morning.

He wasn’t used to having so much feminine stuff around, but he decided it was good practice for when he moved in with his girlfriend. Girls always had a ton of this sort of junk in the bathroom. He phoned Allison before he went to sleep and told her all about the interview, leaving out a few of the stranger details, and assured her that before long he would be pulling in a steady income.

“That’s so amazing!” Allison squealed over the phone. “Congratulations!”

“Thanks, honey,” Mel smirked. “I’m afraid I won’t be able to visit you for quite a while, it looks like I’ll be kept pretty busy. Maybe in a month or two?”

“Oh, don’t worry about it, dear,” Allison said. “I’m swamped with my classes right now. We can talk on the phone all the time, and when I get the chance I’ll make the trip for the weekend.”

“Perfect,” Mel sighed. “Love you, Allison. Good night.”

“Good night, and good luck!” his girlfriend said. “Love you too!”

Feeling like just about the luckiest man in the world, Mel adjusted the covers and quickly fell asleep.



The next morning as they drove up to the Clinic, Mel was still fidgeting uncomfortably in the passenger's seat. He had learned exactly what "depilatory" meant, and at Cat's direction, his legs were now silky smooth from thigh to ankle, for the first time since he'd been a young boy. She had told him that it was absolutely necessary, since he couldn't have hairs sticking out from his socks, but that didn't change the fact that his legs were now as smooth as a girl's, and the air conditioning was freezing them!

"Why are you squirming so much?" Cat asked, glancing over.

"I'm not used to this," Mel said, blushing. "It feels funny, and plus it's a lot colder." Cat noticed how he had his knees clapped tightly together for warmth and it made her smile. Before long he would be keeping his legs together for an entirely different reason!

"Now you know what we go through," Cat laughed. She took the key from the



ignition and turned seriously to face him. "Alright, Mel, as soon as we go inside, I'm not your cousin anymore. I'm your instructor, Ms. Perry, and I'll be treating you like any other student. We have measures for uncooperative charges, but I'm trusting you'll go along with everything I tell you. Am I correct?"

"Of course, Ca... I mean, of course, Ms. Perry," Mel said, hastily correcting himself. They got out of the car and Mel followed her into the building, watching her swipe her keycard and smile at the security guard. Mel couldn't help but be distracted by the way his smooth thighs rubbed together in the nylon socks, not to mention the slightly altered step thanks to the heel on his new work shoes. He looked away, embarrassed, as the male security guard smirked.

"Don't mind Officer Davidson," Cat said. "Remember, those clothes are only temporary." She smiled to herself. Before long, the guard would be staring for a completely different reason. Mel traipsed behind his cousin, cheeks still flushed, until they arrived in an empty classroom with plenty of cleared space.

"Welcome to your first day of our accelerated program," Cat said. "From now on, I will be addressing you as Melanie, and I expect you to respond to that. Am I understood?" Mel's mouth fell open slightly, waiting for the other foot to drop. A first day joke? Maybe it was some sort of initiation for new hires.

"Mel... anie?" Mel spluttered out. The cross, intense look on his cousin's face was a message. She wasn't going to take any dissension.

"I understand," Mel said. "Er, Ms. Perry."

"Good," Cat said sternly. She picked up a stack of papers and was reading from a script. "Now, here at the Aphrodite Clinic our primary goal is for our charges to become proper young ladies. Your time spent here will be well used. When you leave, you will be beautiful, demure, and refined. You will be skilled in all aspects of feminine comportment, dress, and appearance. Cooperation is going to be enforced. Lack of cooperation will result in stringent punishments." Mel raised his eyebrows a little at that, but tried not to laugh. That answered a lot of questions. This was some sort of finishing school for girls. Now it all made sense. That explained the non-threatening clothes, and the emphasis on the feminine. It all became clear to him. It was a girl's finishing school, so it only made sense to address him as if he were a girl. If this was what it took to get accustomed to how the Clinic worked, so be it!

This was his cousin, after all, and she knew he was a guy. If she was going to take this program seriously for protocol's sake, he decided that he could go along with it for now.

After that introduction, the real work began. The first lesson was in comportment, and it felt like one long bad and particularly boring dream for Mel. First they spent hours on correct posture, learning how to bend from the knees and cross one's legs, and next how to move with a graceful feminine stride. Mel kept reminding himself that it couldn't last more than a few days, and besides,

only Cat was there to see him mincing along with his wrists flared and hips swinging. He did, however, feel like a complete sissy as she gave him instruction on how to tilt his pelvis, push back his shoulders, place each foot directly in front of the other, and properly allow his derriere to adopt a feminine sway.

“Progress,” Cat said simply as he was finally allowed a break. “Of course, we will be moving up to higher and narrower heels by the end of the week.”

“A week? We’re doing this for a week?” Mel demanded, forgetting himself.

“That’s a demerit,” Cat snapped. “You will remember to address your instructor correctly at all times. Collect enough demerits, and you’ll regret it.”

“Yes, Ms. Perry,” Mel said meekly. Demerits? What was this, boy scout camp? He rubbed his ankles, which weren’t used to even these low heels, and sighed. This was going to be a long day. “Twenty Five dollars and hour,” he reminded himself.



Mel’s prediction certainly turned out. The morning and afternoon passed in a flurry of feminine activity, and a skimpy lunch was eaten with Cat’s sharp eyes critiquing every bite and sip. He had to constantly remind himself that playing along was worth it. After this “accelerated program,” he would be sitting behind a desk with spreadsheets, solitaire, and a paycheck in the mail.

Even so, he was close to drawing the line when he had his first “treatment” session. The treatment, as he learned was something called electrolysis. Cat slipped off to do paperwork, leaving him at the mercy of a bored beautician who didn’t bother to explain the procedure before zapping away almost every hair below his eyebrows. He was still rubbing his face ruefully when Cat returned, ready to tell her that no job was worth this sort of pain, but she pointed out that he had never been able to grow a beard and the clean-shaven look was in anyways. Having her slip momentarily out of the “Melanie” schtick was a relief, and Mel supposed she was right.

After extensive hairstyling lessons on how to properly care for his scraggly brown locks and create feminine styles, even with relatively short hair, the next lesson was on voice: Mel spent about an hour being taught to use a soft, high, feminine pitch, and even took vocabulary worksheets to study. By the time his first makeup lesson came around, Mel certainly felt as though he could sympathize with the girls who had attended this school. It was certainly a tightly-run ship.

Mel wanted to just share a laugh with his cousin, about how absurd this all was. His impulse was to slap her on the back and let her know that he was just playing along. A man being trained like a girl! Imagine that. However, he had the distinct feeling that doing so was a break in protocol. Every time he looked

at Cat for sympathy or acknowledgment, he was met with a ‘don’t you even try it’ expression from his cousin.

As Mel sat down in front of the mirror and listened to Cat lecture him on all sorts of cosmetic techniques, he decided that his girlfriend definitely didn’t need to know about this particular bit of his job training. He didn’t think he had ever felt more emasculated than he did applying lipstick to his pouted lips with Cat – or Ms.

Perry, rather – guiding his hand. Eye shadow, blusher, and mascara followed, eroding every bit of manliness he had, and by the end Mel had to admit that he looked, well...

“Beautiful,” Cat said, giving a smile that had been quite rare today. “Once we’ve done something with that hair of yours, you’ll have quite the headshot.” Mel turned his head nervously from side to side. She was right! With his delicate facial features and wide eyes accentuated by thick, dark, mascara-laden lashes, and his lips painted a coral pink, he was definitely too pretty to be a guy! He was relieved when Cat showed him how to remove the stuff and his old face returned.

By the end of the day, Mel was completely exhausted. He had spent hours upon hours traipsing up and down in the heels, learning proper etiquette, and practicing a soft, soprano voice. He guessed it was a kind of sensitivity training that all the Clinic employees had to undergo – if they understood how difficult things were for the students, they would make more sympathetic instructors, or some bizarre notion like that. He was completely relieved by the time 5 o’clock rolled around and Cat announced that the first day’s lessons were at an end.

“Still thanking me for the job?” Cat asked, smiling as they walked back to the parking lot. She had dropped her fearsome ‘Ms. Perry’ persona, but Mel still



felt somewhat ill at ease speaking to her as an equal again.

“Of course,” Mel said. “If this is what it takes, bring it on! I sure feel sorry for your students, though. Any tomboy whose parents send her here isn’t going to last for long!”

“Well, it’s more of the same tomorrow,” Cat said. “And I’m afraid I have to ask you not to speak about the lessons or ask me about what’s next when we’re outside the Clinic, although I’d be more than happy to give you pointers on your continued feminine development.”

“Okay,” Mel said, mentally bracing himself. If it meant getting a respectable job, he could put up with this strange probationary week. Besides, Allison was always telling him that more guys needed to be in touch with their feminine side! Mel was relieved to change out of his work clothes when he arrived back at the apartment, and Cat showed him how to properly hang up all his things for the next day, explaining that he would need to do his own laundry when the time came. Mel submitted to a pedicure, which actually felt sort of nice, and before going to bed Cat handed him a small pink MP3 player and a pair of headphones.

“Here, put this on before you fall asleep,” she instructed. “It’s something new the Clinic is trying out. The relaxation techniques should help you through the first few weeks. I know they can be awfully stressful.”

“Thanks, Cat,” Mel said, putting the headphones in. “I appreciate it.”

“See you bright and early,” Cat giggled.

“That’s right,” Mel sighed. “It can only get easier, right?”



Contrary to Mel's prediction, things did not get any easier over the course of the first week... at least, not appreciably. Each day's lessons were more grueling than the last. Hair care, nail care, skin care, makeup and comportment – it was almost enough to drive a man insane. Cat maintained her strict attitude during the day and only became bearable after they returned to the apartment. Sometimes Mel felt like he was living with someone who had multiple personalities! The only bright spot was that the little pink MP3 player was giving him fantastic sleep. It only seemed to be playing a strange tuneless music, but it put him out like nothing else and he woke up feeling strangely energized for the day's tasks.

By Sunday, Mel's feet and ankles were killing him after practicing walking in a series of progressively higher heels, and he had learned more than he ever wanted to know about all aspects of feminine behavior. So when, after arriving home from the Aphrodite Clinic, Cat pulled a bottle of champagne from the cupboard, Mel was suspicious but optimistic.

"What's this about?" he asked hopefully, accepting a glass.

"You survived your first week," Cat smiled. "I'm proud of you, that's all! I'd say your probationary period is over, you did very well and worked hard."

"Thank you," Mel said, shaking his head slightly. "I never expected to have to balance books on my head prior to working as an admin assistant, but in this job market, I can hardly complain, can I?" He sipped delicately from the champagne flute, dinner etiquette lessons still fresh in his mind. "Say," he said hastily, setting his drink down, "Does this mean tomorrow...?"

"Tomorrow you won't have to wear that 'temporary uniform,'" Cat assured him. "Or cream your legs! There will be a more suitable attire waiting for you, according to Ms. White."

"Thank the Lord," Mel groaned. His weird trip into femininity was over at last! He had proven himself man enough to work at a girls' finishing school, as ironic as that sounded, and he would finally be wearing a suit and tie as he was accustomed to. Still, he performed the skincare routine Cat had laid out for him before going to bed. He didn't mind it so much anymore. In fact, it was somewhat soothing. Mel climbed into bed and put his headphones in before quickly falling asleep, never suspecting that the strange toneless music he was listening to every night might be behind his acceptance of certain new habits...



Mel surprised his cousin by getting up extra early the following morning, excited for his first Monday where he would not be expected to wear a femmy shirt. No security guards would be laughing snidely at him today! He dressed in a casual pair of slacks and his usual boxers (though he noted that they felt

shockingly itchy and uncomfortable in comparison to what the Clinic had been providing) and a smart button-up shirt to go along with them. He imagined that a good pair of dress shoes and pants would be awaiting him at the Clinic. Inspecting his face in the mirror, he had to admit that the electrolysis would certainly save him time in the mornings. And it couldn't really be permanent, could it? Just about anything was reversible these days.

"My, my, aren't you up early," Cat yawned, coming into the kitchen. The little pink music player was in her hands, as she'd just uploaded the latest files from Ms. White. She put it into her purse without Mel's notice, then sat down for breakfast.

"Up and ready to work!" Mel chirped, in a slightly higher pitch than was usual. The voice lessons had obviously done some work of their own. Cat smiled.

"Since we're up early, why don't we go to the walk-in salon before you report to Ms. White?" she suggested sweetly. "You can get a terrific massage and it will really loosen you up and relax you."

"That doesn't sound so bad," Mel admitted. "Hey, count me in!"

"Perfect," Cat smiled mischievously. After finishing breakfast, they made their usual commute to the Aphrodite Clinic. As the car pulled through the gates, Mel was struck again by how many stringent security measures the place had taken. Were they really so paranoid? It wasn't as if a bunch of girls were going to try running away from makeup lessons.

Once parked, Mel and Cat took a roundabout path to the built-in salon. Mel didn't notice the unconscious wiggle to his hips, even without a pair of heels, but his cousin certainly did. She smiled as she pictured what was in store for Mel – or rather, for "Melanie." The well-furnished salon was empty apart from a few gossiping beauticians, both of whom stood up and greeted them enthusiastically.

"You're a little early for the appointment, but I think we have everything ready to go," one of them said, a pretty brunette. "Oh, he's going to be such a doll!"

"Such a what?" Mel asked, confused. "When did you have time to make an appointment, Cat? Er, Ms. Perry?"

"Don't you worry about it," Cat said. "My treat. Now hop up in that chair and just relax. Here, I brought your music and headphones, since you seem to be enjoying them so much." Mel sat down in the leather chair, leaning back. He guessed they were going to start with a nice foot massage, which he certainly wouldn't complain about. Walking around in heels for a week had done him no favors! Mel slipped the headphones on and was out like a light before he knew it.

"I'll be back in a couple hours," Cat said, looking at stylish watch. "He needs nails, hair, everything. The works. And spare no expense, this is all on company tab."



“We never do,” one of the beauticians giggled.

“Don’t let Ms. White hear you saying that,” Cat said dryly as she departed. Mel, under the spell of the music player was asleep in the chair, and heard nothing of the exchange. The beauticians went to work immediately, stripping off his clothes and replacing them with a simple smock. They started with a pedicure, trimming and cleaning his nails and cuticles before applying a soft pink polish. His hands were next, receiving similar treatment, and then the application of long, feminine French tips. One of the beauticians put small wedges between his fingers to keep them apart as they dried, while the other began preparing the wax.

“This might sting a little,” the brunette said, but Mel, buried in his headphones, didn’t respond. With quick and effective motions, she applied the warm wax to his legs, arms, chest, underarms, and, of course, bikini area! Mel was not a particularly hairy guy, but she knew that if having his legs waxed didn’t wake him up, nothing would. The strips came away one by one, but Mel barely twitched. Smiling at the ease of the procedure, the beautician proceeded to rub a soothing lotion onto newly-hairless skin. Next came the hair extensions, followed by a styling session and, naturally, a bleach.

“That will look just lovely with his complexion, don’t you think?”

“I can’t wait to see him all dressed up,” the other beautician laughed. “Do you want his eyebrows or shall I?” While Mel’s hair soaked, they began working on his face. One tackled his eyebrows while the other began applying the permanent false eyelashes and worked them with a curler. Once his features had been suitably feminized, makeup began! Foundation, blusher, eye shadow, liner, mascara, lipstick – Cat had said the works, and that was exactly what her hapless cousin was receiving. Once his hair and makeup were finished, his nails were blown dry, and his body was completely smooth, the beauticians took out the bag of clothes that would serve as his new work attire. Mel, still completely oblivious, didn’t wake up even as his prone body was dressed in frilly lingerie, including a tight waist cincher and well-padded bra, nor when they buttoned him into a blouse and slid his new skirt up his nylon-covered legs before slipping his feet into his new pencil-thin stiletto heels. As a finishing touch, his ears were pierced and a squirt of perfume in the pertinent places made sure he would smell flowery and feminine.

“Excellent work, ladies,” Cat said on her return, looking at Mel’s completely feminized appearance. “I suppose we’d better wake ‘her’ from her beauty sleep.” She plucked the headphones out from Mel’s newly-pierced ears and smiled in anticipation.

“Ready to see your new look, Melanie?” she asked sweetly. Mel woke up instantly, blinking. His eyelashes seemed strangely heavy, and his hair was tickling his face – but that couldn’t be right, his hair was much too short for that.



“Oh my gosh, how long was I sleeping?” Mel asked, sitting up. He was finding it oddly hard to breathe and his question came out in a breathy, feminine pitch. His waist felt like he was being crushed in half, and something not quite as tight was snug around his chest with weight that shifted a little as he moved. His legs slid against each other as he moved in the chair, and he felt the slippery cool sensation of nylons on hairless skin – and even stranger, nothing between them! Mel looked down and let out a gasp of surprise. He was wearing an attractive women’s blouse, and beneath it a gel bra that pushed his fleshy chest into a semblance of feminine breasts! He went to touch the silky strap, confused, and stopped as he saw his nails. They were long, pink, and finished off by feminine French tips! He stared in bewilderment at his gracefully feminine hands, then looked down at the rest of him. He was wearing a short, tight pencil skirt and nylons, while his small feet were encased in what were, without a doubt, a pair of black women’s pumps with a three inch heel.

“Oh my gosh, what did you do?” Mel squeaked. “Cat?”

“Stand up, sweetie,” Cat smiled. “You need to see the full-length mirror to get the total effect.” She offered an arm and Mel, still bewildered by the situation, stood up. She noted with pride that he wobbled only once on the three-inch stilettos before mincing gracefully to the full-length mirror. Mel gasped at what he saw. The slender brown-haired young man he had seen for his entire life had been wiped away and replaced by a gorgeous young blonde! She was perched on a pair of stylish stiletto heels that exaggerated her long, slender legs, tinted by sleek black nylons attached to a frilly garter belt, which was mercifully covered by a tight, short pencil skirt. The sky-high hem barely reached mid-thigh, ensuring that the majority of her pretty legs would be on display at all times. Mel had always been slim, but “Melanie” had a tiny, delicate waist and willowy figure that most real women would envy, and her gauzy white blouse offered a peek at small but noticeable breasts while exposing plenty of smooth skin from chin to collarbone. Her hair was a beautiful gleaming blonde, spilling in gentle waves down her shoulders and framing a perfectly made-up face with pouty pink lips, manicured brows, and gorgeous, expressive eyes framed by thick, dark, long lashes that Mel was certain couldn’t be his own. Her nails were glimmering pink and a tad too long for practical, and when she turned her head from side to side, feminine silver hoop earrings brushed against her cheeks. Mel was in utter shock. Could this gorgeous young woman possibly be him? No wonder it was difficult to breathe! Mel wasn’t sure if it was more from the shock or from whatever contraption was crushing his waistline!

“What do you think?” Cat asked.

“What do I think?” Mel echoed incredulously. “I look... I look...”

“Just about perfect,” Cat filled in. “A pretty, sexy secretary. I told you we wouldn’t be bothering with your temporary work clothes today. From now on,

you'll be in fashionable skirts, blouses, lingerie and heels, as befits your position."

"You mean I'm supposed to *work* like this?" Mel gasped, touching his new blonde tresses. He was experiencing a clinical case of shock. He didn't know what was going on, and he couldn't process anything. No part of his mind was prepared for this.

"Of course," Cat said. "Who wants a weedy male secretary in slacks? It's all about presentation, sweetie. A secretary's appearance must reflect well on their place of work, in addition to providing a bit of eye candy to prospective male businessmen, and I think you'll do a fine job of that now. Wouldn't you agree?"

"I...I suppose," Mel said weakly, still staring at his reflection. Eye candy, indeed! He looked like a model! "But..no! This is ridiculous!" he snapped, coming out of his reverie. "I demand my clothes back. I'm not going to be made a fool of like this, Cat, job or no!"

"A fool?" Cat asked skeptically. "Melanie, you look gorgeous. Who on Earth would ever make fun of you? Not the employees of the Aphrodite Clinic, I assure you."

This was now no longer a joke. This was no longer a matter of protecting Cat. This wasn't a silly exercise designed for girls. It was real, they were trying to make him into a woman, and they meant it!

"I just don't understand it," Mel said. "If you wanted a cute female secretary, why didn't you simply hire a pretty girl? Why me?"

Cat smiled as she prepared to finally give her cousin full disclosure on the subject. "Ms. White didn't want a female secretary," she said.

"Then why am I wearing a skirt and heels?" Mel demanded furiously, unaware of how unimposing he looked in his attractive feminine attire.

"You misunderstood me," Cat explained. "She wants a pretty secretary who can comport themselves in short skirts and stilettos, present an appealing feminine appearance at all times, and flirt with potential clients... but in order to best reflect the tradition of the Aphrodite Clinic, and act as something of a walking advertisement, that secretary had to be a guy. You were lucky enough to get the spot!"

"I'm still misunderstanding you," Mel sighed, trying to tug down his short, tight miniskirt to no avail. "I'm all dolled up like a gorgeous girl why, exactly? This is a finishing school for girls!"

"That's where you're wrong," Cat said smugly. "And forgive me for sounding petty, but you would have known this if you had ever bothered to really ask about my place of work. The Aphrodite Clinic is a finishing school, of sorts, but it is exclusively for boys! Our job is to mold even the rowdiest, most headstrong boys into demure, attractive, refined young ladies."

“But that’s crazy!” Mel gasped. “How could you ever convince boys to become attractive young women?”

“Most of them don’t have a choice,” Cat admitted. “They are sent by their parents or guardians.”

“This is insane!” Mel yelled. “This is the strangest thing I’ve ever heard of! It’s beyond understanding! It’s horrible! It’s immoral! It’s illegal!” Mel needed to find stronger words to express his depth of horror at knowing the true purpose of the clinic, but he didn’t think words of such caliber existed. This was truly the most repugnant and offensive thing he could possibly imagine. That meant he only had one thing left to do, and only one thing that could possibly make his point. “I quit!”

“Really,” Cat said, sarcastically. “You had no idea what we were doing. The clothes you wore, the training, the electrolysis. You had no idea.”

“How was I to ever guess this was the reason?” Mel replied. “This isn’t anything anyone would ever imagine was real! You can’t make a man into a woman! It’s not possible!”

Cat was still smirking. “Well... Did you ever think you would be standing here in heels, a skirt, lingerie and makeup? And much more, be able to comport yourself gracefully in those stilettos?”

Mel stared at his reflection in abject humiliation. He had thought that finding a job would make him a man, but to the contrary, it seemed to have turned him into a beautiful young woman! From head to toe, he was completely unrecognizable as anything but a pretty secretary.

“You took advantage of me!” Mel screeched. “I trusted you!”

“I gave you a job, Mel.” Cat said, sternly. “Not a perfect job, but a job. You’re making more money then you’ll ever get with that business degree of yours.”

“That’s not...” Mel was about to say “true” but the past few months were proof otherwise. This hadn’t been within a million miles of a job yet. “This is wrong.”

“Fine. You don’t want the job. I get it.” Cat was exasperated. “But I’m not going to let you stay at my place without helping out on rent and food. You have to have a job or you’re out.”

“When?”

“Tonight.”

“You’re forcing me to take this job?” Mel said, shock on his face.

“I’m not forcing anything. This was our agreement. You could stay if you had a job.”

For just a moment, Mel thought that he would do just that. He’d got get a job in the next few hours and... No. It wasn’t going to happen. “I can’t do this job, Cat!”

“So you’ve said. Tell you what. You can quit. Just don’t quit today.”

“Cat!” Mel whined, in a surprisingly good imitation of a petulant woman.

“I put myself on the line for you! If I tell Ms. White you’re leaving after just a few days, I might lose *my* job!”

“You want me to keep doing this?”

“It’s not what I want, it’s what you have to do. You leave and you’ll lose your income, I might lose mine, and we’re both out on the street.” Cat saw that her argument was having an effect. At least, Mel wasn’t immediately objecting.

“You just leave it to me. Give me a week or so, and I’ll find a replacement for you. That way, we’ll both have a shot. I keep my job, and you have plenty of time to find something else.”

“So do I have to continue dressing up and taking these classes to keep the job?” he asked miserably. “Learn to dress and comport myself as a female?”

“Yes,” Cat admitted, “But is that so bad? Look how much progress you’ve already made! And the Aphrodite Clinic promises not to interfere in the personal lives of its employees. You will receive full pay, be treated with respect and warmth by the other employees, and what you do in your time off is entirely up to you, Mel or Melanie!” Mel considered the offer, still unnerved by his feminine appearance. What was he willing to do stay off the streets?

“So you’re saying I only have to be ‘Melanie’ at work?” Mel asked hesitantly, twirling a strand of blonde hair in an unconsciously feminine gesture.

“Well, that will make things a little harder adjustment-wise,” Cat said. “You’ll find it easier to become accustomed to dressing this way if you do so at all times. Let’s table that for now.”

“One week and I can leave?”

“Two weeks tops,” Cat confirmed. It was time to press Mel for an answer. “Are you ready for secretarial training?”

Mel sighed, still shell-shocked by the revelation that his job would require him to be a pretty secretary in skirts, heels, and makeup. But it was a job, wasn’t it?

“I’m ready,” Mel decided. “This isn’t what I was expecting on my first day of work, but so be it. As long as you don’t breathe a word of this to Allison, that is.”

“Don’t you trust me?” Cat asked innocently. Mel laughed.

“After you dressed me up as a woman and waxed my legs?” he exclaimed. “Come on!”

“Oh, it wasn’t just your legs,” Cat smiled. She couldn’t help but chuckle at the sudden look of terror on her cousin’s prettily made-up face. “Now, I think it’s time we presented you to Ms. White. Come along, Melanie.” Mel blanched slightly at the prospect of being shown off to his new employer dressed in a

short skirt and high heels, but he reminded himself that all of this had been done at Ms. White's behest. He certainly looked the part.

Mel steeled himself. He needed to get in the right frame of mind. This was just temporary. It was just a matter of getting through this day, and then deal with tomorrow when it came. For now, he had to just sweep all his objections aside and soldier on.

"How should I act?" Mel blurted. "I mean, I don't know anything about being a girl! Is that what she wants?"

"Remember your lessons," Cat said simply. "And don't worry, they'll be continuing right alongside your administrative training. You'll be a perfect little secretary in no time."

"That's not so reassuring," Mel said, blushing. He followed his cousin down the deserted hallway, exceptionally glad that the clinic was still mostly empty of staff. He would have absolutely died of embarrassment if everyone saw him mincing down the hallway in his short skirt and nylons. His new shoes clicked noisily on the floor and he stumbled a few times, but a week's worth of training had basically prepared him for the slightly more intimidating heels.

When they arrived at Ms. White's office, Cat knocked sharply on the door and stepped back. "Come in," came Ms. White's commanding voice. Cat gave her cousin a reassuring pat on the recently-manicured hand, then opened the door and led him inside. Mel's heart beat wildly behind the silky constriction of his lacy new bra, and the waist cincher made him feel quite faint. Ms. White's office was very spacious and well-furnished, and the administrator herself was seated behind an oak desk. She looked up as they entered, raising one imperious brow.

"Yes?" she demanded.

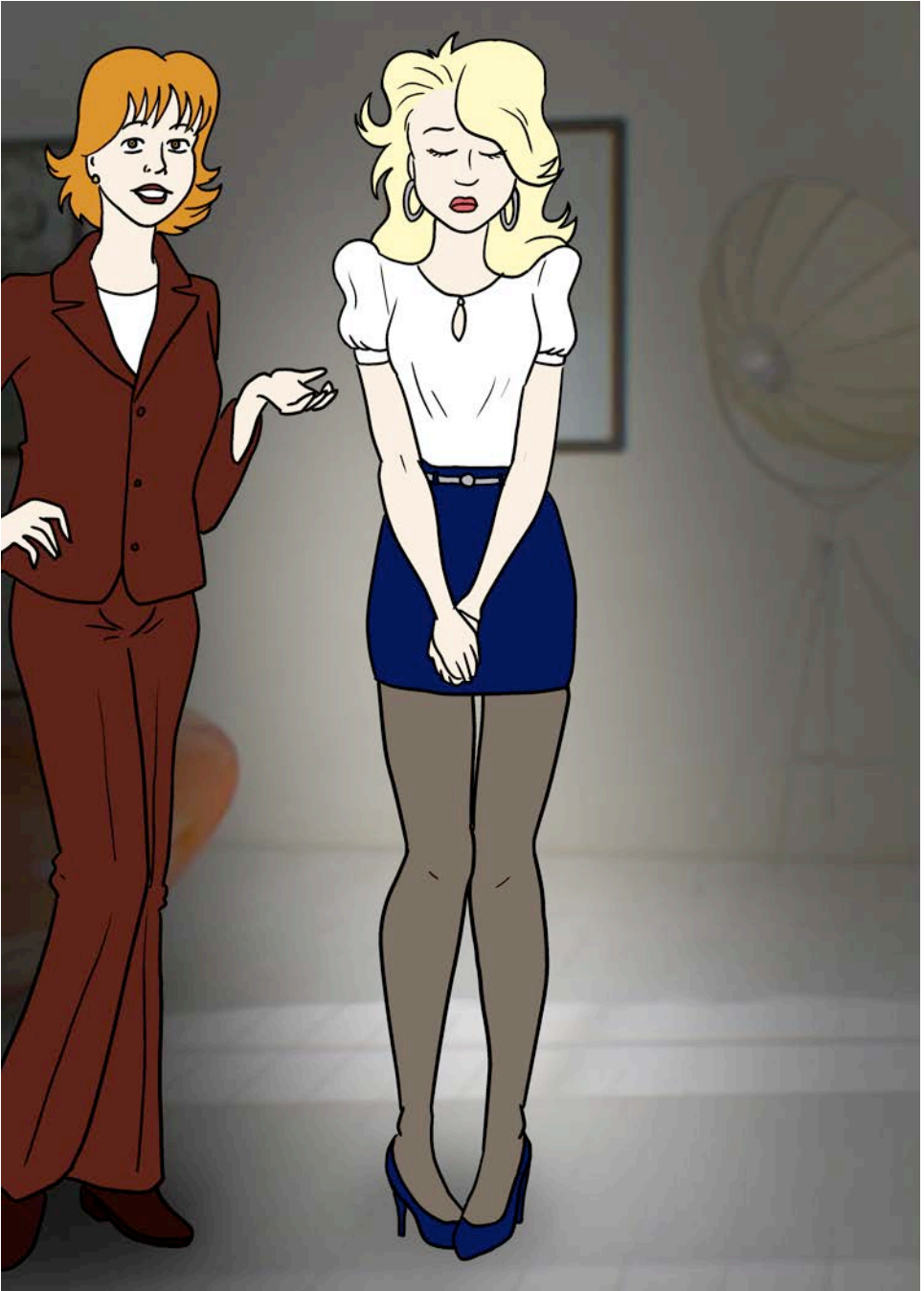
"Melanie Hoopes, your new secretary," Cat introduced smilingly, indicating towards her hapless cousin. Mel clasped his hands together in an unintentionally lady-like fashion, eyes turned down and cheeks still flushed with embarrassment.

"Hello, Ms. White," he said in a small voice.

"Well, what remarkable progress," Ms. White said, standing up from behind her desk and walking around it to join them in the middle of the room. She looked Mel up and down but didn't crack a smile. "Not a bad start," she said. "Of course, you'll be on a strict diet in order to slim down."

"Slim down?" Mel squeaked. He had never been on a diet in his life! He was already much too skinny!

"Speak when you're addressed, Melanie," Ms. White said sharply. "I won't have a chatty secretary. Save that for when you need to make small-talk with our clients. Understood?"



“Yes, Ms. White,” Mel said quickly.

“You’ll now be splitting time between administrative training with myself, and continuing your lessons with Ms. Perry,” Ms. White said sternly. “Your proba-



tionary period is over, but I expect you to continue to apply yourself. Is that understood?”

“Yes, Ms. White,” Mel said again, bobbing his head. His earrings brushed his cheeks and he was reminded again of his new feminine status.

“Very good,” Ms. White said. “Welcome to the Aphrodite Clinic. I hope you enjoy working here, dear.” Mel nodded sheepishly. His thoughts were all a jumble as his cousin escorted him back to the classroom for another round of etiquette lessons. Enjoy working here? How was that even possible? Fortunately, he knew that he would be done with this madness in just two weeks.



As the days went by and Mel adjusted to skirts and heels, he began to realize that there was very little to his “job.” Ms. White gave him brusque instruction in dictation and telephone protocol, but in reality there was very little for him to do except greet her with coffee in the morning and put the occasional call through for her. Most of his time was spent with Cat in his continuing lessons on hairstyling, makeup, and deportment. Their first priority was teaching how to bend and move gracefully in a skirt.

He had no idea that wearing feminine clothes was a full-time job in itself! He accidentally flashed his new panties more than a few times before he got the hang of keeping his knees together, crossing his legs in a dainty, feminine manner, and bending from the knees rather than the waist to pick things up from the floor. Together with that, he had to learn how to put together outfits and accessorize. Cat had filled up his new wardrobe with skirts, blouses, lingerie, heels, and even a few dresses, for some reason, though he didn’t think he would ever have to wear them.

His morning routine had certainly changed. Mel now had to make sure he was moisturized, smooth, perfectly made-up, and dressed in impeccable female attire. Fortunately Cat had become somewhat less strict with him during the lessons, though he still had to address her as ‘Ms. Perry,’ and he was slowly becoming accustomed to his new status as a pretty, feminine secretary. In fact, he was becoming almost too accustomed! In his calls with his girlfriend Allison, he was finding it more and more difficult to avoid slipping into his girlish soprano register that he practiced every day. When she remarked on it, he managed to explain it away as a head cold. It was harder, however, to explain his new feminine vocabulary!

“Oh, Cat’s been a real doll, she’s so precious,” Mel had told her, in the midst of doing up his long blonde hair.

“Precious?” Allison had asked skeptically. “Mel, it sounds like working with only women has really rubbed off on you.”