

**EXPOSING THE SECRET  
DOUBLE LIFE OF MEN  
WHO DRESS IN "DRAG!"**

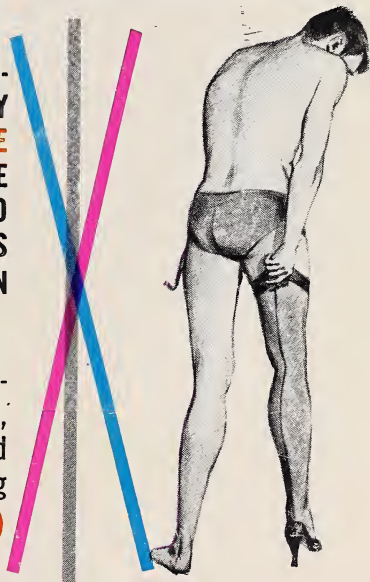
**SEX LIFE**



# TRANSVESTITE

A BOLD, FULLY DOCUMENTED CONFESSION BY ONE OF THAT **STRANGE BREED** OF MEN WHO HAVE THE COMPULSION TO DRESS UP IN WOMEN'S CLOTHES BUT REMAIN SEXUALLY "NORMAL."

(With a special introduction by Dr. Albert Ellis, noted psychologist and author of the best-selling **Sex and the Single Man!**)



By Larry Maddock (As told to him by Leonard Wheeler)



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# **SEX LIFE OF A TRANSVESTITE**

*By* **LARRY MADDOCK**

The complete case history of Leonard A. Wheeler, with an introduction by Albert Ellis, noted psychologist and author of the best selling book *Sex and the Single Man*, and fully documented with notes by world famous researchers in sexual aberrations!

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## FOREWORD

This is an unusual book about an usual type of man, all too commonly thought of as a "sex deviate." The psychological name of Leonard Wheeler's aberration is "transvestism," coming from the Latin words meaning, "cross-dress — or, more specifically, the transvestite is a person of one sex who experiences a compulsion to wear the clothing generally associated with the opposite sex. Pathologically speaking, transvestites are almost always male—men who have a strange desire to dress as women—although a degree of female transvestism is present as a symptom of some cases of lesbianism. Rarely is overt homosexuality involved in male transvestism, however.

It is not the purpose of this book to point with alarm or to condemn the practices described herein. Rather, it is the hope of the author that a better understanding of the phenomenon of cross-dressing and a more tolerant attitude toward the practitioners

of this departure from the socio-sexual norm may result from its publication.

On the other hand, it is not our purpose to defend or to glorify transvestism as a means of sexual expression. In our culture it is most definitely an irrational mode of behavior, and when used as an exclusive sex outlet it is definitely fetishistic and unhealthy. It is neurotic in origin; and although no harm is done to anyone else, no thinking person — most transvestites included! — would consider encouraging the spread of this neurosis.

Psychologists have found that compulsive or fetishistic cross-dressing is invariably a symptom of a general personality disorder, and responds poorly to conventional psychoanalytical or psychotherapeutic treatment. Much remains to be learned about this form of abnormal sexual behavior. Readers are warned not to jump to any conclusions about *all* transvestites solely on the basis of Leonard Wheeler's case history.

Leonard Wheeler's story, as presented here, is a distillation of twelve tape-recorded interviews, edited and condensed where necessary to present the salient points of his transvestism and the circumstances surrounding it, while attempting to preserve the feel and flavor of his own words. The prose, at times, is purple, but only because one of the most immediately obvious facets of his personality is his strong streak of romanticism.

Where necessary, explanatory material (in parentheses) tying in his experiences with the findings of social and psychological researchers has been included in the narrative. It is assumed that the serious

reader will find these asides more of a help than an interruption. The names of certain people and places are fictitious or have been substituted for real names and place designations to protect the actual identity of Leonard Wheeler.

The exact number of practicing transvestites in this country is unknown, but it is a safe bet to assume that the total is many times the most conservative estimate. If the men who have had transvestic urges but have never translated these longings into practice were included in our estimate, the figure would be truly astonishing — as was the publication of Kinsey's findings about the number of American males who had had some homosexual experience at some time in their lives.

One of the first facts the student of psychology discovers — a fact which runs contrary to “common sense” and popular assumption — is that transvestism among homosexuals is a rarity, and that homosexuality among transvestites is practically non-existent. Yet the early psychological factors which later result in both homosexuality and in transvestism are found by psychologists to be virtually identical!

Another startling piece of information is that 70 percent of practicing transvestites polled by Dr. Charles Prince are married, and that 70 percent of these transvestic husbands are also fathers. A recent poll taken among homosexuals, however, revealed that only 10 percent had ever been husbands and fathers.

Many more unusual factors of this little-understood facet of human sexuality will be encountered in the Leonard Wheeler story. Some of the information here runs counter to accepted psychiatric doctrine and offers a baffling challenge to the psychoanalytical theorist who strives to place every aberration in its own neatly labeled cubbyhole.

Yet all of the information presented here is true, despite the rather sketchy coverage which has been given transvestism by the psychological pedants of our time. The condition has been pronounced incurable by some psychologists who have found that it often does not respond to conventional techniques. Much still is to be learned about this bizarre and fascinating topic before anything constructive can be done to prevent it or cure it — indeed, before we can even be sure that prevention and cure are desirable social goals.

The world is changing rapidly, thanks to accelerated technology, the increasing level of education, the improvement of means of rapid and mass communication, and the growing interdependence of the various elements in society. Some social critics have said that there is little need for the traditional family structure; others, equally vehement, bewail the breakdown of traditional family structure and predict dire consequences.

Whatever happens next is bound to have a profound effect upon the future of transvestism — indeed, upon all forms of sexual expression and sex-role playing. The economic and social function of the individual man and the individual woman has

changed so greatly in the past fifty years that "all-male" and "all-female" occupations — and preoccupations — no longer exist. The trend towards social and economic interchangeability of men and women is reflected most obviously, perhaps, in our patterns of dress, with fly-front trousers and masculine shirts becoming standard items in ladies' sportswear shops, while girdles (under the guise of "polo belts") are steady sellers in male sports shops. Masculine habits, hobbies and even "vices" are being feminized in the interests of greater sales appeal.

Thus, we have little choice but to view today's transvestite in terms of today's society when attempting to understand the forces which motivate his behavior.

It is the author's fervent hope that this book will be a small measure of help in the task of better understanding ourselves and each other.

Larry Maddock

San Francisco, California

January, 1964

**PREFACE BY "LEONARD A. WHEELER"\***

*I was born twenty-seven years ago into a normal family living in Waterloo, Iowa. I began kindergarten at age five with no complications whatever. I was a good student in school, but not as popular as I would have liked to have been. In my teens I developed a healthy, normal interest in girls, but I didn't do much dating — generally I was far too busy with other things.*

*No one encouraged me to dress as a girl. No one forced me to do it as punishment. As far as*

*I know, no one in my family has ever known of my strange desire to wear feminine clothing. Yet I started doing so, in secret, when I was fourteen years old!*

*I've been deeply in love twice in my life, I've been to bed with six different women and enjoyed it tremendously each time. With two of these women the affair lasted over a period of months. A third became my wife, and seemed quite happy during the first two years of our three-year marriage.*

*I've never had a conscious homosexual desire to make love with another male at any time in my life. The mere thought of it repulses me.*

*Yet if I were seriously hurt in an automobile accident I'm certain there would be murmurings of "queer," "Pansy," "fairy" and the like on the way to the hospital. My "hobby" is thought of by most people as a sordid perversion.*

*For today I don't own one stitch of male underclothing.*

*Beneath my tastefully conservative advertising agency "uniform—the sort of wardrobe you see on the male attire pages of PLAYBOY—I am wearing frilly lace panties, a tight girdle, sheer nylons and a brassiere! Furthermore, there's a wide strip of adhesive tape across my shaved chest, creating an excitingly deep cleavage which I can feel from time to time when I slip my fingers in between my shirt buttons as I sit at my drawingboard doing fashion layouts in one of the top advertising agencies in the country!*

*When I go home to my apartment it takes me an hour or better to dress for dinner — and the ME who high-heels it down the street to my favorite restaurant is in expensively dressed meticulously made up “girl,” complete with all the contours, mannerisms and preferences of a well-behaved young lady. Her “TV” name is Connie —and by almost any man’s standard of feminine pulchritude, she is more than passably attractive.*

*Some of the propositions I get from absolutely normal males would certainly shock a well brought-up young lady!*

*I have agreed to tell my story for two reasons: first, so that other men like me who prefer to dress as women might know that they are not all alone in the world, and second, so that you — the general, “normal” reader — will have a better understanding of “freaks” like me. We’re not all employed as night-club entertainers and, judging from our actual sex lives, we’re certainly not “queers.”*

*In fact, you might be surprised at what some of your all-male friends like to wear in the privacy of their own homes . . .*

*Leonard A. Wheeler*

*(\*The name “Leonard Wheeler” is a pseudonym, to protect the author’s business career and social anonymity.—L.M.)*



## CHAPTER ONE: THE EARLY YEARS

Without a doubt, being twenty years old and in love is one of the most wonderful things in the world. Not just having the hots for a girl, but being violently, madly, blindly, idiotically in love with her. Being convinced that she's the most perfect of all of god's creations, and that you're the luckiest man in the world because she's in love with you. There's no feeling on earth quite like it, no experience that can match it, no other emotion which can leave you so breathless and so happily confused.

That's the way I felt about Linda Carpenter. She was two years older than I, but that didn't matter. We were so right for each other that I was convinced Fate had planned it all from the start—from our improbable meeting, four years earlier, and the accidents of life which had kept us physically apart while we grew spiritually and emotionally closer with every delivery of the mail, and now this, the almost unbelievable chain of events which had brought her more than two thou-

sand miles to be at my side that night.

We were childhood sweethearts suddenly reunited through the compassionate intervention of Destiny, given a chance now to make up for the four wasted years, to set aside the mistakes and the errors of our childhood, to share at last the intimate, stolen embrace which we had denied ourselves for so long.

My hands were unsteady as I helped Linda out of her clothing. She seemed as eager as I—the long anticipation of this night had keyed us both to a fever pitch, and as we were intelligent, rational lovers we built the mood to even greater intensity by lingering over each preliminary step, going as slowly and as deliberately as our fermenting passions would allow. It was our first encounter—oh, we'd come close to it before, two years earlier, but we'd decided then to postpone it, to wait until we could belong to each other forever. And so we took great pains to make this first time together as perfect as possible. With our love to guide us, a love which practically spanned continents, we knew it would be. There was no question of a last-minute attack of conscience or of a sudden change of heart—we were committed to each other by an understanding stronger than any marriage tie, more lasting than any ritual could ever guarantee.

Her hair was long and shimmering, loosed now from the severe upsweep she'd worn for travel, cascading around her bare shoulders like a soft cloud tinted by the setting sun. I envied her, that reddish-gold hair, the length of it and—I guess—her right to wear it.

Her naked breasts rose and fell invitingly as she took each ragged breath. I wondered what it must feel like to have breasts like that, so large and yet so lovely. Her eyes, blue-green with flecks of gold, gazed hungrily into mine, and as my arms went around her I forgot

my envious thoughts and crushed her to me, feeling the cool warmth of her hard-soft breasts moulding their contours to my chest—and then our mouths met, devouringly, and the strength of our embrace sought to make us one being even before we reached the bed.

“I’ve waited so long for this, Len,” she breathed.

Further delay was not only pointless, it would have been criminal. Quickly we resumed our embrace upon the cool sheets of the bed. I devoured her breasts with my mouth and she shivered with delight. The ultimate moment was rapidly approaching, the event we’d longed for at the close of every letter, the union between man and woman which had been the undertone of those costly long-distance calls, the physical melding of two people in love.

I straddled the loveliness of her hips, my body pressing hers into the uncomplaining mattress. It didn’t matter that I wasn’t quite sure how to go about it—it didn’t even matter that she was married to another man and that what we were doing constituted adultery—because for the first time in years I felt clean, and it was right and good and proper that we should be in bed together.

Yet I soon realized that my eager attempts were getting me nowhere; I didn’t bend in the right places. A smile came to Linda’s lips and a laugh flickered in her eyes. “Let’s try it this way, darling,” she suggested softly, rearranging herself.

I felt the color rising in my neck, the embarrassment of not even knowing how to do it properly almost blotting out the strength of my passion, but in a moment she pulled me fondly to her, engulfing me with her perfect femininity, initiating me to man’s estate, assisting me across the point in space and time which marked the end of my childhood.

Too quickly, far too quickly it was over, and we clung together, gasping from our exertions, unwilling to part or even to break the embrace.

“Now you belong to me,” I whispered.

“Now and forever,” she murmured in return.

We got up and showered, and dressed, and I took her to dinner, and afterwards we played on the beach like a couple of kids who had just discovered what it feels like to run barefoot in the sand while the moon smiled down from a windy sky.

We talked and laughed together, and sang loudly, proudly, caroling our love to the stars, and walked back to the apartment to resume our two weeks of stolen ecstasy.

She talked about getting a divorce. She had plenty of grounds for one—her husband was cruel and mean, almost inhuman in his treatment of her, in the bestial things he demanded of her. I hated him, for having stolen her by trickery in the first place, and I felt no great guilt over the technical fact of our adultery together—just a gnawing remorse that it hadn't happened sooner.

About four years sooner.

For then, maybe, I would never have learned to be a pervert.

*There is far more, of course, to Leonard Wheeler's romance with Linda Carpenter, and it will be examined in greater detail later in this book. The preceding episode, however, coupled with his extreme and long-term emotional involvement with Linda is ample proof that his basic sex orientation is that of a normal heterosexual. Although adulterous and therefore vulnerable to unconscious guilt feelings, his sex relationship with this girl was emotionally satisfying and phys-*

ically gratifying. It may seem almost unbelievably odd to the uninitiated that a young man such as this should, at this writing, prefer to spend several hours of each day dressed as a girl.

His attitudes towards love itself reflect the romantic idealism of the popular love song, and are characterized by feelings of worshipful possession. These feelings are significant mainly because they are so widespread in our culture, and because they are the socially accepted attitudes which most of us try to teach our children.

As he states elsewhere in this narrative, he has never felt either physical or romantic attraction towards another male (with the isolated exception of a particularly beautiful professional female impersonator), and is puzzled and resentful when confronted with the popular notion that transvestites are homosexual.

His first conscious desire to wear female clothing predate by several years his romantic involvement with Linda and his subsequent "initiation into manhood." A passive, rather bookish youth, Leonard seems to have preferred his private fantasies, in which he could always triumph, to the realities of social competition—where painful failure was a foregone conclusion. This, along with other significant aspects of his personality, is apparent as he recalls his first experiences with transvestism and his feelings about himself during his early teens.—L.M.)

I was about fourteen, I think. It's hard to pinpoint the exact age, as I can remember no historical event which ties in with it. I might have been a year younger. I don't think I was any older than that, though.

I had been aware of girls for some time, and had watched the contour changes of the girls in my class

at school. Some of them seemed to have developed the curves of womanhood practically overnight—others changed more slowly. I was in love at this time, of course. There were four girls that I was interested in during junior high and high school. Aside from Linda, I mean. I can't remember which one was the first to attract my attention. They were all lovely, each in her own way.

*(It might be noted here that in all of his romantic experience, Leonard does not admit to erotic interest in any girl who was NOT lovely, at least in her own way. Even those with whom he did not fancy himself "in love" were beautiful in his eyes.—L.M.)*

I wasn't lovely at all. I was about as unlovely a kid as you can imagine. Everything was wrong with me, I was sure of that. My chin was too weak, my mouth was too soft, my teeth were too big, my upper lip was too long, and I was fat. My chances of ever growing into a hero-type were slim. My mouth was practically a duplicate of my mother's—my nose was a cross between hers and dad's. My hands were delicate, with long slim fingers, hands that belonged (they said) to a brain surgeon or a musician.

As a little boy I had taken music lessons—piano at first, which I soon gave up in disgust after the first few sessions because I couldn't play "Home of the Range." And then, later, after it was definitely known that the family couldn't afford the costly orthodontia necessary to straighten my teeth they bought me a trombone, with the idea that holding it tight against my mouth would gradually push my teeth back where they belonged. That might have worked, if I'd kept with it. But music just wasn't my line.

I didn't like the way I looked, and that may have contributed to it, I don't know. I was sure I was ugly

—I was certainly not handsome. This bothered me because I have always been a perfectionist.

Mom taught me to be a perfectionist, I guess. She used to say, “If it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing well.” And she stressed that since I was such an intelligent, talented kid, anything I really wanted to do I could succeed at. I suppose she thought telling me that would give me confidence, but her well intentioned slogan seems to have backfired, because the motto of my high school days seems to have been, “If you can’t do it right, don’t do it.” In other words, if I couldn’t succeed at something right off, I’d convince myself that I didn’t really want to do it in the first place.

There were some things that I *could* do well, though, and I concentrated on them so I’d be able to do them better than anyone else. One of them was reading and remembering facts. I got good marks, but they came easily. I worked just hard enough to put myself in the upper 10 percent of the class, and then spent my time on what I most liked to do, which was to draw pictures.

I suppose my early grade school drawings are still tucked away in an attic somewhere, if dad hasn’t thrown them out by now. (*Leonard’s mother died a year ago.* —*L.M.*) Most of them were sketches of animals, but sometimes of people. I remember a certain phase when all I wanted to draw was comic strips, the action kind, Batman and Superman. But that was when I was younger. By the time I was fourteen I was busy drawing nudes.

The classic nude, you know. Nothing, I was told, is more beautiful than the female figure. And nothing is more challenging to the artist than to capture on paper the grace and the symmetry of a lovely nude. I became enormously engrossed in drawing nudes and collecting pictures of nudes to use as reference material or “copy.”

My relatives gave me books on technique—Mom was an art student herself, in college—and bought art supplies for me. I drew nudes from every conceivable angle, in every position imaginable.

Gradually I began to clothe them, but I knew so little about women's clothing that my first attempts must have been laughable. I began examining the ads in newspapers and magazines to learn how women dressed. The lingerie ads were particularly interesting, although I was a little ashamed to be caught looking at them.

There's so much about those early years that may be important. Like my sex education, for instance. My parents were pretty advanced, I guess. Mom much more so than Dad, though. Maybe I feel this way because I was always so much closer to her than to Dad. He was away from home so much of the time, selling, that we never seemed to have very much in common. But Mom was always there, and it was to her that I turned when I wanted answers to my questions.

I remember being sent to the library when I was about nine or ten for a book on where babies come from. It explained lots of things about eggs and sperm and the growth of a baby inside the womb, but it didn't tell me anything about me. The book was vague on just what part the man played in all this, except that his body manufactured the sperm which somehow was then placed inside his wife's body where it joined the ovum and a baby started. From then on about all the husband was needed for was to pay the doctor bills.

There was always an open line of communication between me and Mom—I told her just about everything. When I found a new word I'd ask her what it meant, especially if I couldn't find it in the dictionary. This included the new words that were scrawled on the lava-

tory walls at school. The standard four-letter obscenities she dealt with easily enough—these were words used by the stupid and the uneducated. I knew what they meant.

But one expression puzzled me. What in the world did it mean to “jack off”? Mom dismissed it by saying that it was something bad boys do and I shouldn’t say it. The joke at that time, as I remember, was: “If your Uncle Jack was fixing the roof and couldn’t get down all by himself, would you help your Uncle Jack off?” It was supposed to be very funny, but I didn’t have the slightest idea of what it meant.

It had something to do with the idea of “playing with yourself” which was always said in a nasty tone of voice. I wanted to know how to do it, but there wasn’t anything in the books about it, and I didn’t want to admit to kids my own age that I wasn’t as sophisticated as they were, so I didn’t ask.

I’d been having nocturnal emissions or “wet dreams” long before I succeeded in any form of masturbation. Since this was perfectly natural, there wasn’t any guilt connected with it. Except that it was messy. Girls didn’t have this problem.

I was aware that girls had menstrual periods, of course, as that was covered in the books on reproduction, but science had thoughtfully invented Kotex for them. Science wasn’t interested in keeping my pajamas dry.

Girls had another advantage which I envied them—they didn’t have erections. They wouldn’t be walking down the street and suddenly get a hard-on that would bulge and be obvious to everyone if you didn’t hold something in front of you. I got so I made it a point always to be carrying a book or a raincoat or something. I wasn’t sure just what was causing these

erections, but I'd get one every time I thought about naked girls. And I didn't know what to do about it. Maybe I was the only boy in the world who was afflicted with such a condition.

I'd never actually seen a naked girl, although I'd tried often enough. Correction. I'd seen my mother without any clothes on quite frequently, but she wasn't exactly a girl. She had plump thighs and a round, protruding belly, and her breasts were very large. Sometimes I wished I'd had a chance to see her when she was younger, before her breasts had begun to droop and sag so. I don't remember ever having got an erection from looking at my mother when she was naked.

I guess I was about eight or nine when I managed to "accidentally" walk into the bathroom while the teenaged babysitter who was taking care of me and my kid brother, five years younger, was taking a bath. I remember getting one good look at her breasts before she hid them with her arms and screamed, "Get out of here and keep that door closed!"

But other than that, there were just no opportunities. It was rather discouraging to a budding young artist who was concentrating on figure studies to have to copy from books and statues and brassiere ads in the magazines.

Drawing from life was my great ambition, only there wasn't a life class within fifty-miles—and I doubted very much if they'd let a fourteen-year-old boy into one, anyway.

Fortunately, I had some girl cousins and one time we played strip poker, but they were very disappointing to me because they were so young that they hardly had any breasts at all.

I was convinced by this time that no girl who had anything worth looking at would ever let me look at

it—willingly, anyway. And it was somehow quite exciting to think about forcing the older girls to let me look at them against their wills.

I am an artist. I think visually, and I usually think with a pencil in my hand, so it wasn't long before I was drawing picture of girls who were in the nude quite against their will. And when I drew them tied up, in chains, or restrained in any other way I found that it was tremendously exciting.

There is some overlap here, some skipping back and forth. All of it happened within two years, but I can't remember which event was first.

But there may be some significance in the actions and feelings surrounding the first time I managed to achieve an orgasm that wasn't just a wet dream. I didn't really intend it to happen, so I was quite shocked and surprised when it did.

It was summertime, and I was sleeping on a screened-in porch at the back of the house. There was a storm coming up, I remember, and the wind was blowing shredded clouds across a full moon. The big maples in the back yard were rustling, and something within me was struggling to express itself. I know now that it was Connie, but I'd never met her, never even suspected that she existed.

Somehow, though, I was conscious of a desire to dance in the wind, to dance naked in the moonlight. It sounds stupid, looking back on it, but I remember it vividly. Mom had an old skirt, a full-circle thing in a brown printed pattern, a tropical leaf design, I think, or it may have been large flowers, like a South Sea sarong.

Anyway, it was late at night, around midnight, and I wanted to wear that skirt. I wanted to pretend I was a girl on a South Sea island, and dance in the tropical

moonlight.

I tiptoed through the house to where I found the skirt, and returned to my sleeping porch to put it on in the darkness. It was too tight and I had to pull my stomach in before I could get the waistband fastened, and by that time I had an erection which spoiled the drape of the skirt. It was painful, but I found that if I kept my thighs pressed tightly together it gave the effect of being a girl—which I found tremendously thrilling.

I know I was breathless with excitement over what would happen if anyone should see me, might catch me in the impersonation—and I remember thinking it was wrong and sinful and depraved, but that just made it more exciting. I don't think I considered it "abnormal," because I hadn't heard about sexual abnormality yet, but some time later I came to the conclusion that it was "silly" and that made me quite ashamed of myself.

Anyway, I crept into the back yard in my bare feet and in my Mother's skirt, and I danced under the trees, feeling the skirt brushing against my bare legs. I don't know how long I stayed out there—it might have been only a minute or two—but when I came in I was tremendously excited and felt awfully guilty about what I had done. I lay down on my bed and pulled the covers over me. I was still wearing the skirt; I didn't want to take it off. Trying to retain the illusion of being a girl, though, was just too painful, and without knowing exactly what I was doing or how I *should* proceed, I began playing with myself. The pleasure was intense but it only led to further excitement.

Finally, I don't know why, I took a sliver of wax and pushed it partway into myself. I think I tried a hairpin or a toothpick first, but that was too painful.

The wax was painful, too, but very exciting, and suddenly the skirt, which was up around my waist now, was wet and I was exhausted and guilty and I was sure God had been watching and that He was shocked and disappointed in me. But then I figured since I was already a sinner I might as well do it again.

It must have been a month or so later that I saw another boy making a "masturbation" gesture with his hand and connected it with the way it ought to be done.

I worried about masturbation a lot after that, and I swore off several times. I remember keeping score on the number of days I'd managed to go without doing it, and then one morning I'd wake up cold and slimy and sticky again. I thought maybe I was doing it in my sleep and I was horrified, and I tried to smuggle my soiled sheets and pajamas into the washing but without much success. My mother caught me at this and carefully explained that nocturnal emissions were perfectly natural for teenaged boys and they weren't anything to be ashamed of. Maybe so, I thought, but mine—I was sure—were not "normal" emissions.

I was positive I was sinning in my sleep. I got so concerned with covering up my transgressions that I'd fake a nervous tic in my foot which would make the bed creak rhythmically—I don't know if this fooled anyone but I was sure at the time that if my folks got used to my jiggling my foot they wouldn't suspect anything if I should start masturbating in my sleep, when I couldn't brace my feet against the bedstead and eliminate the telltale creaks.

I'd never heard of a clothing fetish but I felt guilty every time I saw ladies' underthings. One day I tried on one of my mother's brassieres, stuffing it with nylon stockings. The chestband was so tight it nearly cracked my ribs, but the general effect was extremely pleas-

ant. Then I put on some of her panties, and tried to get my feet into her shoes. I discovered a girdle—one of those harnesses with a hundred laces, with hooks like for the laces on hightops boots, and I squeezed myself into that. None of this stuff was comfortable—as I recall, it was all very uncomfortable, but very exciting. I'd lock myself in the bathroom and put on this stuff and then masturbate, and when it was over I wanted to get it all off quickly and hide it.

I'd never heard of any other boy doing a thing like that; I was sure I was the only one in the world, and that I'd invented a brand-new sin. It was frightening, and after a while I swore off, vowing never again to do anything like that.

I was an awkward kid, talented in my own way, but awkward around other kids. I was so clumsy on my feet that I refused to even try to dance, for fear of being laughed at. Ridicule, especially in public, was the worst thing I thought could ever happen to me. There were lots of things I didn't try for fear that I'd be laughed at. Dating girls was one of them.

I liked girls. I liked talking with them, and I would invent all sorts of non-romantic excuses to be around them, but the thought of taking one of them in my arms and attempting to kiss her was enough to paralyze me. She might say no. She might slap me. Worst of all, she might laugh at me.

I became very cautious, and I watched the other guys making out like crazy. At least I thought they were making out like crazy. Maybe some of them had problems just like mine and they put on a good show to cover up how scared they were.

After a while I decided that it was too late for me to learn the things I should have learned earlier, like dancing and dating and necking and kissing, and I threw

myself whole-heartedly into my studies and into my artwork. If I kept myself busy enough maybe I wouldn't have to go out with girls—no matter how much I wanted to.

No girl would ever willingly go to bed with me, I was sure of that. No girl would ever kiss me unless forced into it or tricked into it—or paid to do it. No girl would ever voluntarily take her clothes off in my presence. I was ugly, I was unromantic, I was physically a failure and socially a first-class flop. I was miserably in love—at a distance—with the three prettiest girls in my class, and I was miserably sure that they were hardly aware that I existed.

But then I met a girl who *was* aware that I existed. I was fifteen, and I was a hundred miles from home, attending an art convention. Linda was seventeen, and as lovely as any girl can be. We had a mutual interest—art—and she was impressed with how advanced I was, artistically speaking. As we talked together, we were amazed at how much we had in common, how alike we felt on all the important issues. We had met within minutes of my arrival at the convention—which was at noon—and by midnight she had to catch a bus back home because her folks insisted she be on time for the first day of school. Mine were more lenient and had allowed me to spend the entire week at the convention.

The next morning I wrote her a letter, telling her what had happened since she left, informing her of what all she was missing, and gently hinting that the only thing wrong with the convention was that she was no longer there.

She answered with a cautiously friendly letter.

For better than a year we wrote each other daily. Gradually the letters turned into love letters—at first seemingly in fun—I have always tried to hide my true

feelings by seeming to joke about them—and then more seriously. I was riding high on a cloud of romance. I guess I was using my “true love” as an excuse not to date any of the local girls, but Linda and I seemed much closer by mail than I thought I could ever be to anyone who was physically available to me. And there was a safeguard in our romance—Linda couldn’t laugh at me.

Suddenly my world collapsed—I got a letter from Linda’s husband! I couldn’t believe it at first. I thought it was a gag, but when I wrote her about it she answered that it was true. She had been dating him and had married him without bothering to inform me of it—effectively she had managed to laugh the loudest of all at the lovesick teenager who was pouring his heart into each letter.

I felt betrayed. I got out all of her letters and read them through my tears and made a bonfire of them.

For a short time I withdrew from the entire world, it seemed, and then gradually I came out of my shell and made a few half-hearted attempts to get to know the local girls, but to no avail. I had started too late—they were all going steady with someone else, except for one of the girls I’d had a crush on a couple of years earlier. She was really beautiful, and had a fabulous talent. She later became a concert pianist, and I guess in high school she just didn’t date anybody—maybe she was afraid, too, but of course I didn’t figure that out until I was quite a bit older. All I knew was that the few times I tried to make dates with her I was turned down—diplomatically, but turned down just the same. I felt utterly rejected.

I buried myself in my artwork again, creating a world of terrified paperdoll nudes, tied up, chained, manacled, lashed to instruments of torture while ugly little men

supervised their punishment. I hated myself for indulging in such a perverted pastime, but I hated all women even more, for the world of women had rejected me.

I don't remember any cross-dressing at this time. I was excited by the sight of girdles, corsets and brasieres, but I gleefully thought of them as devices girls needed to keep them feminine—deceptive, cheating devices designed to make their natural ugliness appear lovely. My fantasies were full of torture and humiliation for the females of the world—I delighted in imagining myself chopping off the crowning glory of a girl who prided herself on her lovely hair.

I graduated from high school and went away to college. I was barely eighteen—and I had been there but a few weeks when I encountered someone who knew Linda. He casually mentioned that he had heard she'd split up with her husband.

The old hurt came back, and I guess I wanted to hurt her in return, to get even for the humiliation of her silent laughter.

I wrote her a brief note, and she answered, and within two weeks she came down to spend a weekend with me. I had moved into a cooperative apartment with two other guys, and we arranged things so Linda and I could have ample privacy. The impression I gave my roommates was that Linda and I would be having intercourse—and I guess that was my idea for a while, but I knew it was wrong with a girl I loved. I wasn't sure whether or not I still loved her, but until I made sure I wanted to cover all the angles.

I'd dreamed about making it with Linda. I'd imagined what it would be like to actually having a girl. Just about everybody else I knew had tried it, except me. It was an exciting thing to think about, a naked

girl in my bed, all of her exposed so I could see them and touch them if I felt like it. It was important to me that I be a great lover—for Linda.

I didn't want her to know that I'd never had any experience. And then I thought, no, she wouldn't like me if I'd had too much experience. A husband and wife ought to be virgins, and learn together.

That day we toured the campus and then returned to my bedroom, where we lay down on the bed together with all our clothes on and hugged and kissed for a while. I got an erection almost immediately but I tried to hide it from her, and I guess she pretended it didn't exist. My hands went to the front of her blouse and fondled her breasts through the fabric—then, gently, I unbuttoned her blouse so I could feel them through her brassiere. She was getting excited, I know, but she tried not to show it. "Let's take this off," I suggested.

She hesitated a moment. "All right," she agreed.

Linda rolled away from me so I could unhook the band, and shrugged out of the blouse and brassiere.

It was the first time in my life I'd had a girl so close and so cooperative, and things would have got out of hand if it hadn't been for my decision that I'd save myself for her until the time when we could be married. Still, I was determined to enjoy the top half of her, for her naked breasts were large and beautiful and I couldn't get my hands off them.

She closed her eyes and lay back and smiled while I played with them with my fingers. Shyly, I kissed one of her nipples, just with my lips, and I felt her body go tense.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"I never even allowed my husband to do that!" she exclaimed in a whisper.

"You like it, though, don't you?"

"I guess so."

I kissed the other one and took it partly into my mouth. Then I told her I thought we'd both better stop right there, before we went too far.

"You don't want to do it?" she said.

"I want to very much," I told her. "But I love you, and I think this is one thing we should save until we're married."

I added that I'd been thinking of quitting college and had decided to apply for officer training in the Navy. I think she liked the idea of someday being an officer's wife.

I quit college, all right, but as much at the request of the college as on my own volition. My grades were lousy. And I applied for Naval OCS—and was rejected for having flat feet!

At about the same time Linda informed me she was pregnant. As I hadn't touched her, I was baffled and hurt at the idea that a girl could profess such love for me and then cheat on me by going to bed with her husband.

I drifted around the country for a couple of months after that, and then one day I made a great discovery in a metropolitan bookstore. I found a pamphlet put out by a "bondage" publisher. I was amazed, excited, and a little relieved to find that I was not the only man in the world who got excited over the idea of tying girls up.

And the next day, when I went back to see if there were any more such pamphlets, I discovered one devoted to the perversion of transvestism, petticoat punishment and all. There were letters from men and women who apparently cooperated in this sort of thing.

I was greatly relieved to know that I was not unique among sinners, but my guilt feelings about it were not diminished.



## CHAPTER TWO: "CONNIE" IS BORN

If anything, my sense of guilt increased, because of the flavor of these publications. Some of the art work in them was excellent, but the concept of organized clubs of "bondage enthusiasts" was repulsive to me. I guess my feeling at that time was that as long as my sins remained private they were not quite so bad, but if I were to admit them—even to other "sinners"—it would be unforgivable.

*(Leonard's remarks regarding the publications which dealt erotically with his two major fetishes—bondage and transvestism—became somewhat scrambled at this point, as he was obviously having difficulty dissociating one from the other. I have taken the liberty of separating his reported feelings about the bondage pamphlets from this reaction to those which dealt primarily with cross-dressing, in order to present a more coherent narrative.*

*A study of the two types of literature, however, re-*

*veals considerable overlap between the two, along with material obviously designed to excite aficionados of other fetishes, too. In fact, there seems to be an entire family of fetishistic fixation being served by these little books, so it is not surprising that Leonard should have found himself erotically interested in two fetishes at the same time.*

*A few remarks regarding the probable effect of such literature upon young and impressionable minds will be found at the conclusion of this book.—L.M.)*

Not only the tone of these little books was revolting to me, but the attitude of the newsdealer that they were somehow "dirty," almost pornographic, disturbed me. Sex should be clean and pure and wholesome, but the stories and the letters presented in the pamphlets I considered most unwholesome.

I guess, despite my "liberal" upbringing, I had led a pretty sheltered life. Probably most kids do. I don't know if it's a good idea to protect children from the facts of sex.

I remember one story in particular which excited me. It was fiction, purportedly a manuscript washed up in a bottle on the seashore. It told of a shipwrecked sailor who awoke on a Pacific island where there were no motorized vehicles and no horses or other animals to perform work. Each native girl, when she reached the age of fourteen, was "conscripted" into service as a human pony, and spent the next two or three years in harness—literally.

Girls were groomed for speed and endurance, and the fastest and the best looking were used in the island sport of harness racing. Their harnesses, of course, were elaborate, and kept the wearers' hands and arms bound behind their backs, pulled up tightly between

their shoulder blades. The males—and females over eighteen—would wager on the races, and the owners of the winning “ponies” would be awarded prizes. The concept was very exciting to me, and I remember drawing countless pictures to illustrate it.

I began to draw a bondage comic strip of my own about then. It was about a “training farm” for beautiful girls, each one kidnapped from a different part of the world and forced to live in submission until her will was broken and she became convinced that man was her rightful master. I spent months working at it, as the story unfolded through the first two or three days of a new girl’s life at the “farm.” Naturally, all of this time she was tied up, completely helpless and at the mercy of her sadistic keepers who fed her (making her say “Please, master,” for every bite), bathed her (with stiff brushes and a bucket of soapy water, with a fire hose for rinsing) and supervised every embarrassing and degrading moment of her day.

The material on cross-dressing was exciting, too, but in a slightly different way. In the stories, and in the letter columns in particular, most of the transvestism was imposed on boys and men by their mothers, sisters, maiden aunts, fiancées and wives. I guess it’s comforting to some transvestites to feel that they’re not doing it voluntarily, but being forced into it, often as punishment for misbehaving. This was referred to in these books as “pinafore punishment” and was supposed to be very humiliating.

I remember one letter from a “contrite husband” who reported that whenever he misbehaved his wife would force him to put on high heels, silk stockings, a wig, makeup, and a skimpy French maid costume, and then invite three of her women friends over for a game of bridge. The husband, blushing scarlet in his

embarrassment, then had to serve tea to the ladies, who complimented his wife on her good luck in finding such a cute, feminine and well-behaved maid.

This entire idea was outrageous to me. Something inside me *wanted* to dress like a girl. At the same time, I wanted to tie girls up and punish *them*—not have it done to me. It was all very confusing.

I finally discovered a medical article on transvestism. I guess it was the first time I was consciously aware that it was a medical term, and it disturbed me. Suddenly it wasn't just a quirk, something I had invented, as I'd thought earlier. And it wasn't just a sort of perverted approach to sex, like the bondage stuff. No—this had a psychological name, and it was a recognized mental illness!

It wasn't very comforting to discover that I was mentally ill. Maybe my interest in bondage was a disease, too.

Still, at the same time, I was becoming engrossed in acquiring and wearing various items of feminine attire. Gradually, I came to own a fairly complete female wardrobe—panties, bras, girdles, hose, petticoats, even a pair of high heel shoes. I found the shoes somewhere, in a trash bin, I think. I know I would never have dared go into a shoe store and try to buy any for myself. All of this stuff I'd wear in the privacy of my own room.

My interest in girls at that time was intense, but rather twisted. I'd look at a pretty girl on the street and imagine that she was wearing a painfully tight cinch belt or an annoyingly uncomfortable bra. Or I'd visualize the girl tied up and at my mercy.

The idea of having intercourse with my imaginary victims didn't occur until much later, for the primary goal was simply to make them helpless, dependent,

un-dangerous to me. After a while I figured that intercourse with them would be okay, but only on my terms, only if they begged for it.

*(Leonard's choice of the expression, "Un-dangerous to me," is of particular significance in understanding his neurotic approaches to sexual expression. Earlier we learned of his conviction that no girl would willingly go to bed with him, kiss him, or allow him to see her in a state of nudity. It would take a competent psychotherapist to pinpoint the exact moments in his history when these irrational beliefs were acquired. Underlying all of Leonard's actions is his opinion that girls are dangerous, and therefore must be restrained, controlled, treated with caution as if they were treacherous beasts. The harnesses and various other restraining devices found in bondage literature accomplish this purpose.*

*Intercourse "only if they begged for it" is another clear indication of Leonard's neurotic fear of being rejected and of having his sexual overtures laughed at. He had proof that being rejected—by Linda, through her husband's unexpected letter—was the most horrible thing which could happen to him, and he was taking great pains in his fantasy sex life to make sure that none of his imaginary sex partners could successfully reject him.—L.M.)*

Gradually, though, these fantasies subsided, and I became more and more caught up with *being* feminine, with improving my wardrobe and my ability to act like a lady. When I started in, I looked ridiculous in my frills and pads, with lipstick and eyebrow pencil and my head wrapped in a scarf to simulate the effect of long hair, but as time went on I became more pro-

ficient at the arts of femininity and came to realize how big a job it is to be a lovely girl. It's not just a matter of contour or cosmetics, or of pretty clothes. There's a loveliness *inside* which must be allowed to express itself.

I wished I had been born a girl, for there was so much of me that was feminine in nature. I'm not aggressive, I'm not much of a man, but given my talents and my tastes and a female body I was sure I could be a success as a woman. Remember, I was eighteen years old and still a virgin when all this happened.

*(When asked to explain his opinion that he wasn't much of a man, it soon became clear that he was vastly dissatisfied with his physical self. As noted earlier, he considered himself not handsome, and was quite specific in listing the areas in which his appearance failed to live up to the "hero" stereotype of what a real man is supposed to look like. Prevented by illness, specifically, asthma, which even Leonard now suspects was largely psychosomatic in origin, from competing with other males in athletic pursuits during his school years, he developed a scornful attitude towards all sports. His father seemed disappointed, Leonard recalls, that the boy was not more of a man—specifically that his interests lay more in "girlish" activities such as art in masculine pastimes like boxing.*

*But more than his lack of facial handsomeness was evident in Leonard's childhood. He recalls being concerned, at puberty, over the size of his penis—"it wasn't six inches long, as it OUGHT to be, but closer to five"—which unduly bothered him. He cannot recall the source of his belief in the six-inch minimum for acceptable masculinity, but feels it may be related to a dirty joke concerning a dollar bill.*

*There may well be a connection between his genital disappointment and his attitude, expressed earlier, that if he couldn't excel in something, don't do it at all. In any event, as part of his transvestic "dressing" he learned to tuck it away, to get it out of sight and out of mind. Perhaps he felt he was accomplishing a desire to be "more like Mommy" in this respect.*

*As noted by R. E. L. Masters, the hiding of the male genitalia is symptomatic of the TRANSSEXUAL male who dreams of the day when he can afford the costly "conversion" surgery which would substitute a simulated vagina for the penis which he hates and resents. Almost 75 percent of the transvestites polled by Dr. Charles Prince, when asked, "Would you have a sex conversion operation if it were financially and otherwise possible?" replied that they would NOT, as they were satisfied to be men.*

*Concern over body image and worries about real or imagined "imperfections" are not by any means limited to the transvestite. Femininity is equated in this country with hairlessness on the face and body, while the he-man has a wiry beard and a thick rug growing on his chest. Many women worry foolishly about the presence of hair in "unfeminine" places, such as around their nipples, or a public growth which is seemingly "too high" or too far up on the abdomen.*

*The need to conform to a socially accepted "ideal" appearance is far more prevalent among women than among men—but some psychologists question the validity of the general assumption that this is an inborn or natural feminine trait. Cultural anthropologists such as Margaret Mead have shown us that "masculine" and "feminine" characteristics vary from culture to culture, largely being dictated by social edict and local traditions.*

*Boys are taught that males should engage in certain activities, hold certain "male" opinions, react in a "male" manner and experience certain "masculine" emotions. Psychotherapist Albert Ellis contends that today's American women are taught by ceaseless repetition in popular media, including advertising, beauty hint articles and by the glorification of physical beauty in contemporary fiction, that conformity to arbitrary standards of physical appearance is absolutely essential to success. And since only one in a hundred human beings can attain any given "ideal" without resorting to drastic fakery, the other ninety-nine have no choice but to feel physically inferior. Girls are taught the need for physical conformity much more intensely than are boys, but the trend, according to Dr. Ellis, is definitely towards a standardization of male "beauty," too. "The results," he says, "from a mental hygiene standpoint, are dismal."*

*Obviously, at some point in his early development, Leonard Wheeler was made to think that being handsome and muscular—and "well-hung"—were absolutely essential for success as a male. When asked specifically if he considered his father a success, he said he did not. The most outstanding models for masculinity in Leonard's childhood were Superman and Batman—comic book characters of great strength and exaggerated physical development. Unable to be this kind of man, he gave up manly pursuits entirely.—L.M.)*

My attitude toward this compulsion to wear female clothing was all mixed up with my earlier fears of masturbation. I was masturbating heavily then—I had learned somewhere along the way that it was a childish habit and I hated myself for it, but there was just no other way to obtain sexual release. I worried quite

a bit about whether or not I was doing it to excess, and I felt it was draining my vitality—and more important, killing my creative talents, too. I had the idea from somewhere that creativity is a sublimation of sex vigor, and I was afraid if I kept it up I wouldn't have anything left to sublimate.

To support myself I tried a number of jobs, none of them very successful. Oh, I was a magazine salesman for a while, and a dishwasher, busboy, an elevator operator—things like that. I didn't want to go back to college until I "found myself." I didn't know what I wanted to be. From one standpoint, working for a garment company would have been ideal because it would put me in close daily contact with the frilly feminine things I loved, but it might also lead to exposure of my "horrible perversion." So I stayed as far away from it as I could. I thought that I would be suspect the minute I expressed an interest in women's clothes. Actually I was afraid of being accused of being a homosexual—or worse yet, being accosted by one—because I had heard that the fashion industry is loaded with them. Like hairdressers.

I was afraid, I guess, that I *was* a homosexual—or that I might become one. I didn't know much about homosexuals at that time, except that they hated women and made love to other men. I hated women—that was obvious to me. But the idea of making love to another man turned my stomach. I could think of nothing more personally disgusting. Maybe I was a *latent* homosexual. It worried me.

Adding to my worry was the fact that I'd had *some sort* of homosexual experience when I was little. I was about eight or nine, I think. Probably nine. It happened in the winter, so I would have been just barely nine years old. I remember it was icy that day,

and I slipped on the ice, and this bigger boy came along and helped me up. He could have been anywhere between twelve and sixteen, I don't remember. He wanted to make sure I hadn't been really hurt when I fell, and even though I told him I was okay he insisted on our going somewhere together so he could look and see for himself that I wasn't bleeding or anything.

I tried to get away from him, but he was awfully strong and he took me to a woodshed or a garage—I remember his dragging me in there, *but I can't remember what happened next.*

My mother told me, when I was older, that I had reported that he tried to spank me, that he made me take my pants down and tried to spank me but I don't know how honest she was being with me about it.

I guess I'll never know what actually happened, but whatever it was, a short time later—maybe fifteen minutes, I don't know—I was running home as fast as I could, scared stiff and crying like a baby. I think he told me not to tell anyone what had happened, but I'm not even sure of that.

I do remember my mother telling me that this was not the first time he'd done something like that, and that a week or so later he'd been caught hiding in the girl's bathroom at school and that his parents were finally putting him in an institution where he belonged. I don't think Mom would have lied to me, unless she thought I wasn't old enough to be told the truth. Maybe the truth was that it was the *boy's* john he was in and he made a homosexual pass at somebody. I don't know.

The important thing was that while I was learning to be a transvestite, I couldn't remember what happened in the woodshed—in spite of the fact that I was crying

afterwards, I didn't know just what it was that I was crying about. Was I a latent homosexual? Instead of spanking me, did the bigger boy seduce me? Maybe I enjoyed it, and cried, because I was ashamed of enjoying it. At any rate, I didn't *know*. I didn't know what happened, and I didn't know what I was—queer or normal.

And it was pretty plain to me that I wasn't exactly normal.

Still, I couldn't see how the feelings I had could be classed as queer, in a homosexual sense, I mean. I was beginning to fall in love with the beautiful girl who looked back at me from the mirror. She never laughed at me. I knew her intimately. My fantasies changed to where I imagined myself two people, me, Leonard, and her, Connie. I don't know why I named her Connie, except that I think it's a pretty name and if I had been born a girl I would have liked being called Connie. Anyway, Connie and Leonard existed, in my fantasies, as separate people.

I was aware at all times that she was really me, that there was only one of us—this isn't a case of split personality, at least I don't think so, but in a sense there were two of us. When Connie discovered a new trick of makeup which made her prettier, the Leonard part of me would be very proud of her and pleased with her success. And when she dressed in too much of a hurry, or in poor taste, or put her makeup on sloppily, Leonard would be angry. I'd be angry. Then Connie would be contrite and submit to punishment for not doing it right. And afterwards, we'd go to bed together—Connie pleading with me to make love to her, writhing with passion, hungry for the teasing and the refined torture of my lovemaking, until finally I'd take off part of what she was wearing and direct my

physical passion at it.

Then the hurried, guilty wiping off of the makeup, scrubbing my mouth with a soapy washcloth until my lips were raw, practically ripping off the hated garments of my perversion, stuffing them away in a drawer, hiding them under other things.

It was awful. I was sure I belonged in a mental institution, only I couldn't figure out why. Several times I tried to throw Connie's clothes away, but something always stopped me. Just like with the masturbating when I was younger, I'd swear off ever doing it again, and I'd keep track of the number of days I managed to resist Connie's urge to dress up.

I finally succeeded in destroying the comic strips I'd drawn, along with the pamphlets I'd bought. But I found that my sex urge required some form of expression, some sort of focus or I was unable to do anything about it. I had two choices—either let Connie get dressed, or draw a picture of a beautiful girl being tortured. For a while I wavered between these two outlets, drawing the pictures and burning them when I was through, and wearing Connie's clothes. I hated myself for these pastimes, and I hated the idea that I was wasting so much time with them.

Gradually, I began buying figure study magazines again, the slick glossy collections of nude photos that sell for a buck or a buck and a half. I'd leaf through several of them until I found one with a good representation of girls in poses where I could *imagine* they were tied up.

I don't know if anyone else knew the exact kind of kicks I got from photos like these, but *I* knew, and I suppose I was imagining the whole world knew, so I was quite ashamed of buying them. The figure stuff was "legitimate"—at least I could pretend that I was

using it for copy in my art studies.

Actually, however, I discovered two ways to work these pictures into my fantasy life—first there was the bondage element—but an even more important fact was that I was able to imagine myself in those poses. Especially when the model was pretty thoroughly covered up, like if she was wearing a merry widow. The less nude they were, the better I liked them. I'd compare them with Connie, and most of the time Connie won hands down when it came to being beautiful.

But the time soon came when I discovered that Connie was unhappy just competing with *pictures* of other girls. The supreme test would come when she was sure enough of herself to actually walk out into the world and spend a day as a beautiful girl among other people. It was a challenge to make Connie so flawless in appearance, movement and mannerisms that she could go undetected.

I worked hard at it, perfecting each separate facet of the impersonation. I cursed the growth of my beard with the necessity for shaving my body. I plucked my eyebrows, discreetly, so it wouldn't show too much when I was dressed as Leonard, but so that Connie's makeup would be more perfect. I forced myself to diet, so that Connie would have a delightfully feminine waistline. I practiced walking gracefully in heels and spent hours in front of a mirror, perfecting the illusion.

The risk, I felt, was tremendous. The chance of detection and exposure was stimulating, however, although I would have been embarrassed to death to be unmasked in public, for I knew that the automatic assumption of everyone would be that I was a homosexual.

By this time I had heard of professional impersona-

tors, and was convinced that *they* were homosexuals. Still, maybe I could learn something from them, so I arranged to visit a nightclub which featured female impersonators.

It was one of the most disquieting experiences of my life.

## CHAPTER THREE:

### THE QUESTIONS AND THE FEARS

I got there when the show was in progress. The club was no different from any other nightclub you've ever seen. A small raised stage at one end of the room, with a sort of runway coming out from it for ten or twelve feet, a place behind the stage and behind a thin curtain for a small band, the room filled with tables that would seat two or three or four people, a bar along the other end of the room. The only difference from most nightclubs was that there weren't any waitresses—just five or six effeminate looking boys circulating around serving the drinks.

Like in most clubs, the majority of the patrons were male, but there were a surprising number of couples. I wondered how many of the "women" watching the show were actually women, and for a moment I regretted not dressing as Connie.

Since I came in alone, I had to sit at the bar. I'd had false I.D. proving I was twenty-one for some time,

although I was actually only nineteen at the time. I ordered a coke hi and sat nervously on the barstool watching the show.

There was a huge, bloated thing on stage when I came in—it looked a little bit like Sophie Tucker, you know? And when I realized that “she” was actually a man I was shocked. I had the idea from somewhere that all female impersonators are supposed to be beautiful.

The fat man in the sequined evening gown was doing bawdy “impressions” of famous women celebrities—like Tallulah Bankhead and Marlene Dietrich, Sophie Tucker, Marjorie Main, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mamie Eisenhower, Mrs. Khrushchev. Most of the audience was lapping it up. But as I listened to the material I realized that It wasn’t funny to me at all, that if anything it was making me angry, because the whole idea behind it was to ridicule these women. The “impressions” were dirty, filthy-minded insults.

What was even worse, was the realization that it was a man dressed as a woman who was doing these things. I couldn’t imagine how the fat man up there could be anything like me at all. I wanted to leave.

Finally he was through, and the crowd applauded like crazy. It was sickening.

Then a scrawny, sick-looking “exotic” came on, and although at first glance he was attractive, I mean the illusion of being a good looking girl was fairly good, the minute he started doing his dance I realized that it, too, was on the disgusting side. It was a burlesque of what a good stripper actually does. I was beginning to feel physically sick just watching him, and listening to the homosexual jokes he told while he “danced.”

*(Dr. Charles Prince, in remarks addressed to the*

wives of married transvestites who are trying to understand their husbands' unnatural urge to dress as women, relates that, "Many a TV husband has made the mistake of trying to break his wife into the subject by taking her to some club where there are professional impersonators playing. These men often make beautiful girls, but the atmosphere and the jokes told are usually off color, on the homosexual side and definitely not the kind of thing that she can relate to the man she loves."

As Leonard's experience shows, this is not even the best introduction to transvestism for the transvestite himself. At the same time that he fears, hates and resents women—as evidenced by his enthusiasm over "bondage" fantasies—Leonard's identification with the feminine ideal is so strong that he resents its being ridiculed. He is a worshipper whose god (or goddess, in this case) is under attack. Leonard's response to the next performer is not unusual—many "normal" men have reported an identical response—but his REACTION to the response is of particular significance.—L.M.)

I would have left at the end of his number, because I realized that these people had absolutely nothing in common with me, but the emcee was announcing another dancer, the featured exotic, a Mr. Jimmy something-or-other. I stayed.

He was breathtakingly beautiful. Or rather, *she* was beautiful. A striking brunette with a lovely figure and an absolutely gorgeous face. It was almost impossible to believe that she was really a man, because her movements and her mannerisms, her grace and charm were so perfectly feminine. And her dance number was well thought out and beautifully done.

The second part of her number was a strip, to the usual strippers' music—it had been a waltz before, but now it was a Latin beat with the drums on top—and it was exciting to watch her. By this time I guess I had forgotten that she was a man, because I was actually getting excited. Then I realized what was happening and it terrified me.

Feeling awfully queer, I watched the rest of her act, then left.

I returned to my hotel room considerably shaken. The impersonations, I had to admit, had been remarkably good, especially the last one. I'd gone there with the idea that I might learn something about dressing like a woman—and I'd learned something about myself instead.

Consciously I knew that the beautiful girl up there on the stage was a man, but the illusion was so perfect that I was responding to "her" as if she were really a woman. Or was I? I worried about this quite a bit. If I knew it was a man, then my getting excited over it was clearly a homosexual reaction. But the others, the ones who were so obviously homosexual, hadn't excited me at all—they had repelled me, in fact. Maybe I was just a particularly discriminating queer.

For a while, I stopped dressing. I denied that Connie even existed. I even managed to throw out some of the stuff I had collected, and refused to wear the rest of it. Almost immediately my interest in bondage and sadistic-masochistic fantasies came back, stronger than ever now.

*(The material which follows is perhaps the most unexpected and certainly the most unusual material to be reported in any book of this nature. As Drs. Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen state in their book, "SEX*

*HISTORIES OF AMERICAN COLLEGE MEN," the most private part, the most fanatically concealed aspect of anyone's sex life is the area of sexual fantasy in which he indulges as an adjunct to his actual sex activity. Many husbands cannot perform their connubial duties without imagining they are having intercourse with someone other than their wives—but few will admit it. It is thought that a large segment of our population of both sexes resorts to similar, and in some cases even more bizarre, fantasies while involved in the physical act of lovemaking. To the patient, these fantasies seem to be the raw material of his shame, and are often concealed even from psychiatrists.*

*It is a stroke of good fortune, then, that Leonard was willing to offer in considerable detail the following account of the sex fantasies which accompanied his masturbation during this period of his life. It is presented here, in somewhat condensed form to avoid tiresome repetition, not as an example of his perverted outlook, but merely to shed added light upon his feelings toward women, his own sense of inadequacy as a male, and to illustrate the fantastic inventiveness and persistence of his urge to find some means, fair or foul, of sexual expression.*

*Since sado-masochistic sex attitudes are so well-established [and yet so fiercely denied] a part of the culturally acquired sex orientation of most individuals raised in America, this material will probably excite many readers who do not consciously admit enjoying such fantasies, and is practically guaranteed to be stimulating to many others who do. The reader is cautioned that if such reactions do occur, they are nothing to be ashamed of, but may indicate the need for a closer examination of the reader's own real or imagined personality defects.—L.M.)*

I hated myself for the sadistic element that I now found necessary in order to have any sort of sex life at all. Even when I tried not to think about torturing beautiful girls I found that I couldn't push these images out of my mind. I hated stories of cruelty—I thought the most horrible period in history had been the Inquisition, when thousands of innocent women had been tortured into confessing witchcraft and then burned alive for their confessions. The inhuman treatment of Jewish prisoners at Dachau and Buchenwald nauseated me, but the idea excited me, too.

I kept buying the men's action magazines, whenever there was a picture of a girl being tortured or even just tied up on the cover, and I'd read about the prison camp brutality, and the medical experiments and the mass rape of pretty girl prisoners and I'd feel dirty all over after reading it, guilty because it always excited me to the point where I'd have to masturbate.

I even remember running across an old copy of *The Reader's Digest* that had a story in it by a woman who had been tortured by the Japanese in the Philippines during World War Two. They wanted her to confess to being a spy, something in connection with a radio station her husband owned in Manila, I think. Anyway, they tied her to a table and spread her legs and held lit cigarettes to the insides of her thighs—and other nearby tender spots, too, I suppose—and they stuck a garden hose in her and turned on a powerful jet of cold water until she would faint from the shock. I guess the story was in there to make American readers hate the Japanese—but all it did for me was make me imagine I was the dirty Jap doing all these things to her.

The funny thing about it is that I'm essentially a quiet, non-violent type, a peace loving man. War is

the filthiest business in the world. I don't like fights. I don't even like arguments—they make me feel physically sick. I guess at heart I'm a coward, with a wide yellow streak up my back.

Just as upsetting to me as my craving for sadism was the simple fact that I was masturbating all the time. It was draining my vitality, it was childish, and I was doing it much too often. I knew better than to think it produced pimples; but there are worse things that can happen to a person than pimples. It was a filthy, shameful habit. I couldn't see how anyone could masturbate and have any self-respect left. There's a certain amount of dignity in having intercourse with a woman, and it takes a real man to go to bed with a different woman every night—but masturbating three or four times a day was ridiculous. It was worse than ridiculous. It was a sickness.

I guess what worried me most was the idea I had that I was becoming addicted to it. I couldn't go through the day without doing it at least once, and usually once wasn't enough.

*(Dr. Eustace Chesser, one of Britain's top medical authorities, tireless advocate of more lenient sex legislation and author of the widely-popular "LOVE WITHOUT FEAR," cites the case of a young man of twenty-three who averaged SIXTY acts of masturbation per day. He even slept with his penis in an electrical device designed to awaken him whenever he had an erection. —L.M.)*

And on top of that, I was making the frightening discovery that it was impossible for me to maintain an erection without imagining a woman being tortured. Either that, or dressing up as a female and watching

myself in a mirror while I did it, imagining that I was spying on a girl using a dildo on herself. It didn't have to be Connie all the time. Quite often, the reflection was of *any* girl, a faceless girl, maybe with her face hidden with a silk scarf and often with a gag in her mouth. But always, what I was holding in my hand wasn't a part of *me*, but was some foreign object the girl in the mirror was using on herself, or that was being used on her by someone else.

Sometimes, when I was dressed like this, I'd tie myself up, everything but one hand, and the girl in the mirror would be struggling to get loose.

I guess I wanted to make sure that my imaginary means of torture were really as painful as they looked, so I tried some of them on myself, tying myself up in awkward and painful positions, squeezing my nipples with pliers, plucking my body hair one hair at a time—dressing as a girl, of course, while doing these things to myself, and being tremendously sexually excited by it all.

Once I stuck a pencil up inside me, imagining it was a Chinese chastity belt. It's a wonder I didn't puncture something and die of peritonitis. After that episode I was really scared, thinking about what *might* have happened. I became deathly afraid that someday I actually would mutilate myself.

After a while, I discovered that I was becoming jaded. The old fantasies weren't good enough. I guess I was just too familiar with them by now. I found that a torture method had to be *new* in order to be any good to me. I had to constantly invent new and more sadistic ways to torture my imaginary victims. Sometimes I'd come up with ideas that could be used on dozens of girls at the same time.

I remember once, when I was about fourteen, read-

ing a book called—I think—*Confessions of an African Slaver*—or something like that, about a man who ran a slave ship to transport captives from Africa to the United States. It went into considerable detail, and told about how the slaves would be chained together on the deck, with an anchor attached to the end of the chain. If a ship of the Royal Navy came in sight the anchor would be tossed overboard and the human cargo would be dragged screaming over the side, to get all of the evidence of slavery out of sight. And it told about how some of the Arab traders would pierce the lips of the vaginas of female slaves, and put a brass ring there and then string the women together by threading a chain through the rings. They could all be stacked up and fastened to a post or a wall or whatever just by pulling the chain tight.

That fantasy worked for a while, but before long I was forced to invent variations on it, such as rings piercing girls' nipples, maybe with ribbons attached which would run up through rings in their earlobes and serve as reins if I wanted to use them as ponies.

I invented expansion devices which could be mechanically increased in size once they were stuck up inside a woman's body. I came up with something similar containing a battery operated vibrator which could be locked into the vagina and would be triggered by any sudden movement of the captive, giving her a painful series of electric shocks. Recently I read about some Vietnamese girls who had been tortured by having the electrodes of a field radio generator clipped to their nipples—so I guess I'm not the only one with a sadistic imagination.

After a while I came up with something like that last one, only this time it was not only battery operated but radio controlled as well, so I could administer the

shocks any time I pleased.

But what worried me—even more than the fear that my drawings of these devices in operation might be discovered—was the fact that without a new means of torture to concentrate on I wouldn't be able to get excited enough to masturbate successfully. It was an unnatural lust, certainly, and what concerned me most was whether I would be able to continue feeding it with new and different torture devices, or if I would be forced to carry out my schemes and actually torture some innocent girl.

I was afraid I was going insane. I didn't *want* to actually torture anybody, and the idea of killing them to keep them quiet about it made me sick. I couldn't do a thing like that. I'd slit my own throat first. All I wanted was a way to get excited enough to masturbate. And I'd exhausted all the possible combinations of torture I could think of.

*(In a REAL LIFE GUIDE magazine article entitled "The Compulsive Masturbator" Dr. Benjamin Morse expresses the opinion that, "A man may have a deep-rooted urge to commit a rape, or to torture, or to have sexual relations with children, etc. If such an impulse is simply repressed, there is a strong likelihood that it may one day erupt into overt action, but if such an urge is resolved by occasional fantasy masturbation, the danger may be diminished considerably. While this kind of masturbation will hardly get at the roots of the person's emotional problem, it will at least avoid anti-social results."—L.M.)*

Fortunately, about then I read about a hormone used in the dairy industry to start milk production in a dry heifer, and this opened up a whole new field for

me. In my imagination I built myself a harem of virgin wet nurses, all of them wearing harnesses that kept them from moving their hands and arms and hobbles around their ankles to make sure they couldn't run anywhere or do any damage with their feet. Otherwise, they were nude, completely dependent upon me for everything—their only purpose was to provide milk—and entertainment—for me and my male guests. Sometimes I'd sell one of my milkers to a guest. I forced some of the girls to wear ice packs in their brassieres so they could give cold milk.

I even designed an elaborate dining table which would seat about a dozen guests. At each end of the table, or near each end, was a large hole with the top halves of two girls sticking up through it. They were tied together, back to back, and their hands were lashed securely under the table. Sometimes they'd be wearing hoods, covering their entire faces and shoulders, exposing only their breasts. Along with his coffee cup, each of my guests was provided with a breast pump so he could draw his own cream.

In the middle of this long table was a novel type of lazy susan, built to support the weight of my best milk producer, a girl with enormous breasts. She was tied up, of course, face down, and her lovely udders hung down through an opening. When the lazy susan was in its normal position her breasts dangled in a bucket of icewater. Then, whenever anyone wanted a cold glass of milk all they had to do was swing her around and squeeze out a glassful. All of the girls, of course, were getting regular shots of the dairy hormone to increase their milk production.

I was fascinated for a while with the notion that as a milker's breasts become full there is pain involved unless they are regularly emptied. This, to my mind,

became another means of torture, and if a girl misbehaved, I'd ignore her for a day or so until she was screaming with pain. Since they were always tied hand and foot, there wasn't any way for them to squeeze the milk out themselves. I'd make them plead with me to drink from their breasts, and I'd force them to agree to a variety of degrading tasks before I would agree to relieve the pressure in their swollen breasts.

*(Leonard was understandably quite nervous and self-conscious while relating these fantasies, and anxiously glanced at me from time to time to see if I was shocked, disgusted or approving, or if I found such material stimulating, too. I cautiously answered that I found his story intriguing, and that I did not like or dislike him on the basis of his sex fantasies, but that I thought he was a worthwhile human being merely by reason of his existence.*

*There is no guarantee that he was not inventing some of these fantasy episodes on the spur of the moment in order to test my shock-proof capabilities, or that he was not deliberately censoring out some of his pet fantasies in order to make him appear less of a "pervert" in my eyes—although my impression, from the wealth of detail involved, was that he was recalling old fantasies rather than inventing new ones.*

*The serious reader should contrast this impression with Leonard's accounts of seducing "lots of girls" to prove he could make the grade as a man. Not having access to a polygraph or being qualified to properly interpret its results, my only recourse is to present the material he gave me as honestly as is possible within space limitations, and to caution the reader that Leonard may not, for reasons of his own, have been telling the truth in all instances. There is also the pos-*

*sibility that he has developed a memory block regarding certain episodes, such as the early childhood experience with a homosexual, about which he has only second-hand knowledge and admits that he cannot remember what took place inside the woodshed.—L.M.)*

Finally I became so disgusted with myself, for the masturbating and the sadism that went along with it, that once again I destroyed all the evidence and swore off ever doing that sort of thinking again. I must have thrown out a hundred dollars worth of magazines, and a thousand hours of pornographic art work. I got interested in religion, then, and finally found a church that satisfied me—one that seemed honest and not all messed up with sin and that silly, “Brother, have you been Saved?” business.

I made friends with the minister and we got into long and involved talks about religion. When he said he needed an assistant in the young people’s group, I volunteered. I have a certain flair for dramatics, and artistic sense, of course, is good, so the first thing we tackled was putting on a play.

There was a girl, young college student, who shared my duties with me. We worked well together. She was an attractive person, in her way, but I don’t remember ever considering taking her out. For some reason, I felt uneasy around her. I guess she was just too close to my own age.

That’s a funny thing about me. I don’t think it has anything to do with sex, or with my being a transvestite, but I’ve never been comfortable around people of my own age. Older people, okay—I get along best with older people. And younger ones, at least five years younger. But I seem to freeze up when I’m forc-

ed to associate with people of my exact age.

*(Contrary to Leonard's belief, it has a lot to do with his sex life, which is characteristic of his personality. His uneasiness among his peers is a clear indication of his fear of competition and the possibility of subsequent failure. Among older associates, he feels he is not expected to live up to their standards of wisdom, ability and general excellence because he is still, comparatively, "just a kid." With acquaintances "at least five years younger" he is accorded a respect—at least in his imagination—which he does not have to earn by open competition. His aversion to associating with his peers is a further indication that his sexual problems are a symptomatic expression of his basic personality structure, and that psychotherapy aimed at strengthening or changing his overall personality would probably succeed in eliminating his overt sexual maladjustment.—L.M.)*

I was working as a dishwasher at that time, and when my minister friend got to know me and found out how talented I was as an artist, he asked me why I didn't try for an illustrator's job. I told him I'd never be accepted because I didn't have any experience, but he convinced me that a history of formal training was often just as good as having actually worked for an agency, and before long he had convinced me I ought to go back to school. When I told him about the scholarship I'd won, and my failure in the first semester of my freshman year, he did a little checking and found out that the school was willing to take me back on a probationary basis, with the scholarship still in effect.

I was a little older now, I'd knocked around for bet-

ter than a year, and I'd grown up a lot in that time. Anyway, before I knew it I was back in school, and I really threw myself into my studies. I really worked hard at it—so hard, in fact, that I didn't have time for any of my perversions, which delighted me. Oh, I'd manage to masturbate two or three times a week, but it didn't worry me any more. I got interested in a couple of the girls in my art classes, and we'd have impromptu coffee dates, but I never took them out. Correction, I once took one of them to dinner, and afterwards I explained that I had some work to do in the fine arts building—it was open all the time, you know, for students working on special projects—and we joined a couple of the other kids who were busy there that night. I was relieved that I didn't have to be alone with her, because I realized that I didn't really know what to do when I was alone with a girl. I'd always scoffed at the primitive rituals of dating, and now I was sorry I hadn't bothered to learn them.

The college helped me find a job in town to make my living expenses—the scholarship covered my tuition only—and I was working for a signpainter. He taught me a lot about alphabets and lettering, and pretty soon I was a first-rate showcard man.

I was getting along real fine, making excellent grades and having no problems at all. I was just twenty years old.

And then one day, a couple of weeks before the end of the semester, the Dean of Men called me into his office.

"I have a letter here that you should know about before I can decide how to answer it," he said.

He handed me the letter. It was addressed to him and it said, as closely as I can remember, "Some time ago I was acquainted with a student at your College,

one Leonard A. Wheeler, and should like to renew the acquaintance. I believe he quit school, but through mutual friends I have learned that he may have re-enrolled. Could you put me in touch with him again or furnish information as to how he might be reached? (Signed) T. L. Carpenter."

Linda's first name was actually Theresa, but she'd never liked it.

The dean must have seen the puzzled expression on my face, for he said, "If you wish, I can return this letter with a note to Mr. Carpenter that the College does not know of your whereabouts—in case you don't want him to find you."

I smiled. "May I keep this? I'll answer it myself. Carpenter and I are old friends."

For the next two days I wondered what in the world could have happened to make Linda try to get in touch with me again. There were all sorts of possibilities. I didn't want to get myself out on a limb, and make a fool of myself again. But I couldn't ignore her letter.

I answered it. In two words: "Dear T.L.: Whats up? L.A.W."

Then I went back to the more important business of semester finals.

Anyway, pretty soon she wrote me a long letter—more like a novel—in which she assured me that she was still madly in love with me, that she couldn't live without me, that she and her husband had definitely split up and that she wanted to see if we could pick up where we left off. There was a lot of other stuff, but that was the gist of it.

I wrote her a long one in return. I picked apart everything she had to say, point by point. It was cruel, it was almost sadistic the way I attacked her in that letter. She was two thousand miles away, for one

thing, and for another, I didn't want to get involved again. She'd made me miserable twice—first by marrying another guy while pretending she was in love with me, and then by getting pregnant by him later, cheating on me in order to do so. I was still pretty hurt, and frankly I didn't want her back.

But love is blind, I guess. It has a funny way of smoothing over the hurts.

By the time we'd exchanged about six more letters I was talking to her long-distance and we were making plans for her to join me. She'd have a vacation coming up in June, and she'd started saving money for the trip already. We spent a long time trying to decide whether or not it would be practical for her to bring the baby, and finally decided against it—she'd leave the baby with her mother and come alone. I was relieved, but at the same time I was a little bit disappointed. I wanted her all to myself, but I also wanted to know if I could learn to love a child that wasn't mine.

The college town wasn't far from the ocean, so I went to a nearby small town and rented us a little apartment near the beach. I arranged to take a couple of weeks off at the sign shop, and then I went to meet Linda's bus.

The minute she stepped off that bus, the minute I saw her again, I knew I was just as much in love with her as I'd ever been. I was so overwhelmed with emotion that I didn't even try to kiss her in the bus station—I just stood there for a moment and looked at her. She was wonderful, she was mine, and now there was no question about what we would be doing in that little apartment I had rented for me and by "bride."

In the next couple of hours, I would cross the threshold, long overdue, between childhood and man-

hood. It was almost impossible for me to believe that I was still a virgin at this point, while Linda had been married and had borne a child already, but it was true.

Proudly—and I guess a little bit nervously—I took her to our “honeymoon” apartment.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### BURNING THE PRECIOUS LACE

*(Leonard related the story of his first intercourse—for illustrative purposes this section of his case history was used to open chapter one, and might profitably be referred to by the reader at this point. At its conclusion, I asked him if he had told Linda anything at all about his transvestism or his sadistic fantasies. "Of course not," he replied. Apparently he sincerely believed that now that he "had become a man" these childish pastimes were all behind him and would not recur. This seems to be a common self-deception among transvestites.*

*Dr. Charles Prince, in reporting his own early experiences with cross-dressing, recalls: "I was so sure that the whole business was just a substitute for a girl of my own and that I'd forget it after marriage that I disposed of all my things the day before my marriage. How wrong can you be? The constant reminder of my deeper feelings on seeing all her pretty things around me only made it worse. Finally, I broke down and*

*wore some of her things. Eventually she discovered, condemned me for being a homosexual and in due course divorce followed." Unfortunately, Dr. Prince does not elaborate upon the quality of his sex relations with his first wife, which prevents any valid comparisons with the frustrations which always seemed to precede and presumably to trigger Leonard Wheeler's transvestic "binges."—L.M.)*

For two years Linda talked about getting a divorce. I stayed in school for a while, exchanging letters with her and keeping myself broke with long-distance phone calls to her two or three times a month. I wanted her so badly that I could taste it—I even suggested that she quit her job and join me while I finished up school, but she resisted that idea. I think she called it foolish. Some of my friends told me I was letting her dangle me on a string, and I resented talk like that. Linda and I loved each other, I thought. It was just that she was a bit more practical than I.

There was no cross-dressing during this time at all, although I'll admit to some sessions of bondage fantasy in my masturbating. But the frequency had fallen off tremendously, and most times all I had to do was imagine myself in bed with Linda, and recall the details of the times we had spent in intercourse. It was a good feeling—I felt that at last I was developing some healthy fantasies, and I was sorry I'd let myself remain a virgin for so long.

We spent part of the Christman and Easter vacations together—or as much together as we could manage, and when summer finally came I quit my sign-painting job and hitchhiked to (the city where Linda resided). I remember I got there about five o'clock in the morning, and found a nearby all-night cafeteria

and drank coffee until seven, when I walked over and rang her doorbell. I hadn't told her I was coming and she was appropriately surprised to see me. She was sharing an apartment with her mother. We'd never met before but we hit it right off.

In fact, her mother liked me so much that she later advised me against marrying Linda, because she said Linda wasn't good enough for me.

The romance was going along full tilt, and I figured I'd find a job in the city somewhere, and when fall came I planned to enroll in a famous art school. The best job I could find was washing dishes in the same restaurant I told you about a few minutes ago. I slept on the couch in their apartment—I guess Linda's mother knew we were sleeping together at that time, but she didn't say anything. She'd been divorced two or three times herself and was involved in an affair with another guy she was trying out for her next husband, so I guess it didn't make any difference to her anyway. Both Linda and I were over twenty-one.

Linda's husband lived in the same city, and he'd come over sometimes to visit the baby. He'd call in advance, of course, and I'd go out somewhere for a few hours. I was very jealous of his visits, and sometimes I'd be just half a block away, watching, although I knew that everything was finished between Linda and him. He had another girl he was living with at the time, anyway, and it looked like the divorce between him and Linda was going to become a reality. But it didn't. I don't know if he was using his marriage as a way to stall off the other woman or not, but a year later Linda was still talking about getting a divorce. There always was something coming up to use up the money she'd put aside for attorney fees.

I enrolled in the art school then, and I did well

there.

It's funny how we broke up. Well, not exactly funny. For quite a while she'd been hinting that she wasn't as much in love with me as before, because she was disappointed in me. She insisted that we'd been growing in different directions—we no longer had so many interests in common as we seemed to have had before. One day she told me that about all that was left was sex, and even that was beginning to pall.

I, of course, tried every way I could to rekindle the flame, and purposefully made my actions even more impulsive and romantic, trying every way I knew to win her back.

I wanted to prove to her that the old fire was still burning brightly. I guess I hoped some of it would rub off on her. I don't remember her ever turning me down when I wanted to go to bed with her, but she seemed listless about it. Her attitude was that she was tolerating me. It hurt.

One time I woke her in the middle of the night—woke her up by making love to her. She was still half asleep when it was over. She remembered it in the morning, of course. She wanted to know if I'd used a rubber.

"Of course," I lied.

Naturally, she got pregnant, and it was mine, and it was all my fault, but since she was still married to her husband it could be a disasterous situation. She told me she'd been stalling the divorce until he started making some real money—she figured she could clip him for a bigger chunk of alimony and child support that way. Now, being pregnant, she didn't even dare file for divorce, because she wouldn't get *anything*—he could prove the kid wasn't his.

"I'd try falling down a flight of stairs if I thought

it'd do any good," she said. "But I'm too damn healthy."

She asked me to find her an abortionist. I tried to talk her out of it. Abortion would be murder, I argued. She insisted. I asked around a bit, and I was told that sometimes if a woman drinks gallons of epsom salts it will produce an abortion. We tried everything we could think of but nothing worked.

Finally we got in a fight over it, and she told me she never wanted to see me again. I offered to help financially, but there wasn't any way I could. I didn't have any money or any prospects of making any. I was still a student, working part time for peanuts.

She wouldn't have accepted my help, anyway.

I learned later that she had the abortion—her mother paid for it—and I never made any further attempt to see her again.

As far as I know she's still married to her husband. Our child was never born. The love which had meant so much for so long was now a bitter memory, a mockery of love, an emptiness inside me.

Eventually I learned to laugh, to take it in my stride, to bury the emotional embers which still glowed feebly in times of loneliness.

*(Leonard's account of the breakup of his love affair with Linda raises several questions, which I asked in a later session on his attitudes and opinions about love, sex and women. Linda had always insisted upon their using a contraceptive during intercourse. She owned a diaphragm and used it on those occasions when she had a part in the planning of their bedroom encounters. At other times she insisted that he wear a condom, and would force him to go out and purchase some if he didn't have any at the moment. This sensi-*

ble and rational precaution conflicted with everything Leonard had been taught to feel about love, romance and the sex act itself.

His romantic beliefs prevented his being able to go about the mechanics of contraception without feeling odd about it—sex, to him, in order to be “good” [i.e.: to live up to the romantic ideal] must be impulsive, unplanned, a completely emotional thing devoid of practical considerations. To be carried away or transported by one’s emotions regarding compliment he can pay her and the most effective way he can demonstrate the depth and the reality of his love. Love, to him, is a passion which knows no rules—and therefore, presumably, intercourse is an act about which he is forced to feel neither responsibility nor subsequent guilt.

Viewed from this standard of romantic values, his impregnation of Linda was not necessarily rational, but it was completely logical. He became so carried away with his emotions that he “forgot” to use a contraceptive—not through any conscious desire to impregnate her, but through a compelling desire to live up to his fantasy image of what love-sex ought to be. He literally wanted to prove that he was so much in love with her that he couldn’t control himself.

“The sex act ought to be completely unplanned,” he told me. “Totally spontaneous. It ought to spring from sudden and uncontrollable urges—instead of being the Monday, Wednesday, Friday routine of so many married couples. In order to be beautiful, it has to have the element of romance continually present—otherwise it’s an insult, a mere animal relief from pressure. When it’s something that happens, unplanned, unscheduled, it’s wonderful. But saying to yourself, ‘I’m going to screw this doll tonight at ten thirty,’ is just as bad as if the two of you got together and made a

*businesslike agreement that tonight at ten thirty you would have intercourse. What's romantic about that?"*

*Planning your sex activity in advance, he contends, makes the girl no better than a prostitute. This attitude doubtless is directly connected with his childhood belief that no girl would ever willingly go to bed with him—which finds ample support in our cultural fiction that no girl should ever willingly go to bed with anyone.*

*Leonard recalls that he was in his twenties before he so much as suspected that girls might enjoy the physical aspects of intercourse. Until that time, he believed that love-play was something a girl "allowed" her boyfriend to do only if she liked him a lot and was afraid that she might lose him if she didn't let him have his way. The idea that a girl got any pleasure at all from the sensations involved was alien to his romantic upbringing.*

*He had a strong contempt, in his teens, for those of his contemporaries who could think of nothing better to do than try to "feel a girl up" when they took her out. It was a point of pride with him that he could be interesting and entertaining to the girls he talked with [but never dated] without ever "getting physical." He preferred the sort of girl who he was sure would refuse to have anything to do with necking and petting—yet he felt enormously rejected when he was turned down by them. He was unconsciously selecting girls who could practically be guaranteed to be afraid of sex and fearful of getting into a potentially "dangerous" situation—girls who dated little if at all. His own fear of competition kept him from approaching the very partners who would likely have gone out with him and who might have taken an aggressive role in his heterosexual development.*

*The third and final break with Linda had the results which might be expected—Leonard once again withdrew from the heterosexual world.—L.M.)*

I felt very bad about what I'd done to Linda. But even worse, I guess, was the realization that the one girl in the world who had ever been able to fall in love with me was out of the picture. I'd had my chance and I'd bungled it—just as I managed somehow to bungle everything else that was important to me. The thought that any other girl could love me was preposterous. I was still the same weak-chinned, unromantic, unattractive failure that I'd been when I started out. My romance with Linda had been based on a series of flukes. She hadn't fallen in love with *me*, I now realized, but with my *letters*.

When you write a letter it doesn't make any difference what you look like, whether you've shaved that day, whether or not your shoes are shined. A letter goes where you want it to go—the ideas in it, I mean—but when you're talking face to face with someone you don't have that kind of control. In a letter, if you say something wrong you can go back and change it, and you don't send it out until it's exactly what you want it to be. You can take an hour figuring out just how you want to say something, but the person you're writing to thinks it came out of you in a flash. It's like a good drawing—the artist can keep changing it until he gets it right, but the viewer sees it all at once.

I didn't want to go to all that bother to get another girl. I could live my life without girls in it. At least I thought so. I'd forgotten all about Connie.

But Connie was still there. I tried to deny her. I tried to force myself to ignore her. I still thought that her desire to dress up in women's clothes was a horri-

ble perversion, a sign of homosexuality or worse.

But what can you do when the feminine side of your nature is so strong? Run to a psychiatrist and have it cured? Or try to cope with it yourself? I chose the latter course.

I was still in art school, and I had an opportunity to take a course in fashion illustration. It's a perfectly legitimate field, and I had a perfectly legitimate excuse to go into it—I was an art student. Nobody would question my interest in women's fashions, because as far as everyone at school was concerned, my real interest was getting into a field of commercial art where I could make a living.

But what do you do when you find the female part of you isn't satisfied with just drawing pictures of pretty clothes? You walk down the street and you seem to be drawn to show windows of department stores, and as you look at all the lovely outfits you imagine what you'd look like wearing them. You see a display of frilly nightgowns and you want to go in and buy one. You want to feel the softness and the silkiness of fine fabrics against your skin.

You look at bras and girdles and you ache to have them on.

Eventually you buy something. And you wear it. You may hate yourself for it, but you feel better when you're wearing it. So a little while later you buy something else. It's like a disease, or an addiction—you've got to have more and more pretty things, you've got to let the female inside you indulge in her craving to wear pretty clothes.

Connie had come back full force.

And she was demanding recognition, insisting on her right to exist in the world, not just in my bedroom, not just in the mirror, but in the world itself.

Fortunately, almost every city which has a good art school also has some sort of an Art Student's league—and an annual costume ball. There aren't any taboos at an art student's ball. The wilder the better. And what better place, I wondered, could there be for Connie's debut?

The beautiful thing about it was there it didn't have to be perfect. If I made a slip and was found out it would be excusable—I wouldn't be trundled off to jail as a pervert. I worked hard, once the decision had been made. Now that I had an excuse for it I could go into a shoe store and buy some heels for my costume—and actually try them on in the store! I was still embarrassed, a little, but that was normal. Once I'd explained my purpose I was actually surprised at the shoe salesman's attitude—he helped me select a pair of high heel pumps in the right size, very feminine things, for less money than I'd expected to pay. He seemed impressed—almost envious—of my status as an art student. And there wasn't a hint of suspicion regarding my motives.

The rest of the stuff was easy—it was Christmas season, and I was just a guy buying presents for his girl.

Even in the corset salon of one of the big department stores I didn't have any trouble. I had already acquired a waist cinch from one of the mail-order places, and what I needed now was a panty girdle and a bra. I gave the saleslady my "girlfriend's" measurements and let her suggest something appropriately pretty within the price range I'd set for myself. I wound up spending three dollars more than I'd planned, but it was worth it.

The bra took some ingenuity to make it work right, but when I'd finished with it everything looked as real

as if I'd been born that way. I was using tape in those days to accomplish cleavage but since then I've discovered that a band of wide slastic works almost as well and it's a lot faster. I still use tape, though, on special occasions. Essentially, it's a two-inch wide length of adhesive tape that runs from one armpit to the other, just under the nipple line, and pulled just as tight as I can stand it, with a couple of shorter lengths to complete the job. The entire chest is either shaved or depilated beforehand, of course.

It took me quite a while, experimenting with various materials, before I found a falsie that would act like real breasts. The most effective thing I've found are those little plastic sandwich bags they sell in supermarkets. They're watertight, and a cup and a half to two cups of water in one of those bags has the same weight, inertia and bounce as real flesh. And it stays at the right body temperature, too—which is more than you can expect from sponge rubber.

The most expensive item in the wardrobe for that night was the dress itself. I shopped around quite a while until I found one that was just right, a figure-hugging job with a tight skirt and a neckline just low enough to reveal all the real "bosom" I had, with puffy sleeves in a filmy fabric, and lots of lace in front. It cost me forty-five dollars and it was a sexy, eye-stopping red.

I'd bought the shoes in red, too, because that was the only appropriate color for Connie's debut into the world.

Then I rented a wig and a fur stole, the only rented items in my entire wardrobe.

For a week, I dressed every night, from the skin out, in order to make sure the impersonation would come off perfectly. First I'd shave everywhere that it

was necessary—a big job when you consider that not only your face must be hairless, but your legs and every other part that shows when you're in costume.

Then I'd shower, and after my shower I'd dry myself completely and tape my cleavage into existence. Then the bath powder, and I'd begin to smell and feel like a girl. With every step, Connie's presence was more definite.

My waist is normally about twenty-nine inches, but with the cinch it's a tight, exciting twenty-six. My normal chest measurement is thirty-eight, and with the bra and falsies it comes up to a breath-taking forty-two. I'm a little flat in the behind for a girl, but that's easy enough to pad out with sponge rubber, which I sewed into the seat of the panty girdle. The girdle, of course, takes care of any other contours which might prove to be embarrassing. And it has garter straps to hold up my sheerest black nylons. When I check myself in the mirror at this stage the effect is lovely.

As an artist, you'd think I'd have a natural flair for makeup, but it was harder work than I'd expected it to be. But finally, the night of the ball came and I was ready. I spent two hours getting dressed, checking my makeup, making sure the wig was done just right. With powder and cologne I even *smelled* like a girl.

And I was scared. Unlocking the door to my room and walking out into the world was a terrifying step, and for half an hour I battled with myself over whether or not I should do it. Once it was done, I knew, there could be no turning back. It wasn't like a letter you write and then change or tear up completely.

Finally, though, I went outside. I don't know just how to describe the feeling of relief that came over me.

It was as if this was the moment Connie and I had lived for since the day I was born.

I walked the three blocks to the bus line where I'd make connections to get me to the hall where the costume affair was being held. For the first block I tried to walk quietly—something that's very difficult to do in heels—and then my confidence increased and I realized that if I was going to look like a girl and smell like a girl I'd have to sound like a girl, too, and I relaxed. I remember I met one person, an old man, on my way to the bus stop. For a moment I had a surge of panic and I imagined that he was looking at me oddly, and then I realized it was just a normal male's reaction when he sees a pretty girl.

I took a deep breath, threw my shoulders back and walked proudly the rest of the way to the bus stop.

I was right on time for the bus, and didn't have any trouble getting on, although the skirt was pretty tight. I knew everyone was looking at me and I blushed. The bus driver smiled like he would at any other pretty girl. I got my fare from the little red evening purse I was carrying and dropped it in the fare box. I sat down near the front door, next to a middle-aged woman. It seemed to take forever to get there, but nothing happened on the way to alarm me at all, except for the worry that one of my garters had come loose and my inability to do anything about it on the bus.

Gradually I realized that they were all accepting me as a girl. It was a great feeling.

There was a good-looking girl wearing a leopard costume at the entrance to the hall. I handed her my ticket and she looked at me. "I'm not supposed to let anyone in who isn't in costume," she said.

I had to laugh. "Thank you," I said, pinching my voice as low as it would go. "But I *am* in costume."

Her expression of surprise was better than applause.

Connie was a complete success—for the first couple of hours, anyway. Part of the time I just walked around, pretending I was a girl, and I sat for a while and drank a little bit, until somebody would come up and kid me about not being in costume.

Finally, though, I approached a girl who was in one of my design classes. It was obvious that she didn't recognize me, although we'd had coffee together several times. I made my voice soft and I called her by name.

I kept her guessing for about five minutes, telling her things about herself while she was trying to figure out where we'd met. Then I used my regular voice, and told her who I really was.

"Good heavens, you make a pretty girl!" she exclaimed.

"Thank you," I said. "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right."

She stepped back a pace or two and looked me up and down, then shook her head in admiration.

"I always thought there was something odd about you, Leonard," she said. "Now I know."

"Now you know what?" I demanded.

She laughed. "You ought to be a girl more often—you do such a beautiful job of it."

"I'm a perfectionist, that's all," I told her, feeling another blush coming on. "Pardon me a minute," I said, and turned away quickly, heading for the bar. I figured that seeing me getting red around the ears would be all the proof she'd need to know exactly what I was and how much I really wanted to wear female clothes.

I left a little while after that, as soon as I could disappear without making it obvious. If she could see

through me so easily . . . !

I was miserable. When I finally got back to my room I threw myself across the bed and cried. I just couldn't seem to stop. It was like I'd had it all bottled up inside me for years and I had to cry myself out. Connie had gone to the party so confidently—and had come back such a miserable failure.!

Finally there just weren't any tears left. There's an old song—"The Party's Over"—it pretty well summed up how I felt. I found myself humming it mentally—I just couldn't get it out of my head.

I took off the wig and put it back in its box. I folded the rented stole carefully back into the furrier's carton.

Then I ripped off everything else and threw it in the middle of the floor. I wiped off the makeup and took a shower and scrubbed myself to get every trace of the cologne off. I hated myself at that moment—I'd proved myself to be an absolute failure at everything. I'd reached rock bottom. There was no direction left to go but up. No more childishness. Never more. Not for me.

I decided that night that from here on in I'd be a man.

I put on my own clothes and took Connie's out back, along with some newspapers, and I made a fire in the incinerator and I fed all of her stuff into it—including the shoes. It made me feel dirty just touching the stuff.

And when it had all gone up in smoke I felt horribly empty inside. Connie was dead. I'd killed her this time for good. She was a bad habit I was going to cure myself of.

I knew enough about bad habits and how to get rid of them to know just what to do about it. You

don't just quit. You substitute a good habit for the bad one.

The good habit would have to start immediately—no delays, no back-sliding. I'd put off being a man for too long.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CURE THAT FAILED

The good habit, of course, was to make out with girls. BROADS. They didn't have to be beautiful. They didn't even have to be young. Just as long as they were willing. I took a long hard look at myself and figured out where I'd made my mistake. I'd been a perfectionist for too long. I'd insisted that a girl had to live up to my standards of what she ought to be. Looking back, I could see where I had probably passed up chance after chance to climb in bed with various girls, simply because I had insisted on their being the sort of girl I could fall in love with.

That's what had been wrong with my approach to girls from the start. Instead of taking what I could get, I'd turned away from it. Now I decided to make up for lost time.

There were two or three likely candidates at school.

They weren't the popular ones and they weren't especially good looking. They were the kind of girls who spend most of their time in the company of others of their kind. I decided that step one would be to cultivate them for all they were worth.

This decision made, I realized that I didn't have the slightest idea of how to go about it.

Fortunately, another avenue opened up for me at that time. Although pre-registration for the next semester had taken place a week before the masquerade, I found that I still could get in a life class which was being organized. A life class is simply a class in which you draw from life. Most of the time we'd draw each other, fully clothed, but part of our fees for the course included hiring an occasional girl from the city to pose nude. It didn't happen very often, and there were a number of us who expressed our disappointment. It took us about two weeks to get together and organize a "life club" on the basis that we'd hire a professional model each week and split his or her fee among us. There were six or seven guys and almost as many girls, so it came to about a buck each.

The trouble was, the very first week our model chickened out. The whole group had assembled at the apartment of one of the members—with all our equipment and everything—and the girl just never showed up. I don't know if she thought there was something off-color about the idea or what. Anyway, someone suggested that if things like this were going to happen, we'd be better off being our own models. After all, we were serious art students. To most of us it didn't make any difference whether we drew males or females, and since we were ready to paint right then we agreed to draw lots to see who would be our first model.

The one with the short straw that first night was a

cute redhead named Elaine—I can't remember her last name. Of the half-dozen girls there that night, she had the best figure, and everybody seemed happy with the way it worked out.

"You can leave your clothes in the bedroom," suggested one of the fellows whose apartment it was.

Elaine blushed and tried to pretend that she hadn't understood that she'd let herself in for nude modeling. But it was just an act, and few minutes later she was in the altogether, rather self-consciously posed on a footstool our host provided. The rest of us took our places in a circle around her and began to sketch.

The little redhead's figure looked even better without any clothes on. I was particularly impressed by her. Her skin was silk white, with faint freckles all over it, and soft pale down that caught the light wherever an edge was in silhouette. Elaine seemed embarrassed at first, but she got over it quickly, and I had the idea by the time the evening was over that she'd enjoyed herself tremendously. All the time I was sketching her I was daring myself to proposition her and to hell with the consequences.

While Elaine was in the bedroom getting back into her clothes our host suggested that we draw straws again to determine in advance who next week's model would be. A couple of the girls protested that since it had been a girl this week, only the men present ought to draw straws, but we voted them down.

This time *I* got the short straw!

"Look at him blush!" somebody laughed.

"You can do it, Len!"

"Well, I guess a body's a body. We've all got ot take our turn."

"All right," I agreed.

"Don't chicken out," somebody else said.

"I'll be here," I promised.

Elaine came back into the room and one of the others told her I'd been elected it for next time. "Congratulations," she said.

"Thanks," I told her, and then, realizing that this was what I'd been waiting for, I added, "You look as if you'd had experience modeling before."

"I mean—you were so natural about it."

"No," she said.

"Thank you."

"It's too bad we'll have to wait ten weeks before sketching you again. That's the only trouble with taking turns."

Elaine smiled. "I'm sure I'll enjoy doing you just as much."

"You're a hard act to follow," I said. "Can I buy you a cup of coffee or something?"

"Sure," she said.

It kind of surprised me how easy it was, but now that I knew what I wanted I was determined to carry it through all the way. It was about half an hour later, over coffee in a little donut shop near the school, that I broached the subject again.

"Seriously," I told her, "I'd like to sketch you again if you'd let me."

She looked at me for a while like she was trying to read my mind. "Okay," she said at last. "Where?"

"Wherever you'd like," I said cautiously.

"Not Charlie's again—it's drafty. And my place is out—they don't allow men there."

"I guess we could smuggle you up to my room," I suggested as casually as I could. "That way we wouldn't have to cart an easel anywhere. Tomorrow afternoon too soon?"

"Fine by me," she agreed, and we talked a little

more, and then I took her home to the girls' rooming house where she stayed. I debated kissing her good night, but decided not to since after all it wasn't a real date and I didn't want to give her the wrong impression.

The following morning I bought some rubbers, just in case things worked out the way I hoped they would, and that afternoon she accompanied me to my room.

We did very little sketching. The details here are hazy, although I remember I had her posing on the bed while I worked in charcoal on the other side of the room. Then all of a sudden we were both on the bed, and in a few minutes it was clear that she was just as eager for it as I was.

I remember one thing—I went to get the rubbers and she said to forget it, because she'd already taken care of that end of things! Imagine! It was a pretty good feeling to know that she'd had this in mind all along.

It was a big discovery for me, really, finding out that there are girls who look forward to it, who really want to go to bed with a guy. Of course, she wasn't the sort of girl you'd want to marry, but that was all to the good. She was just what I'd been looking for, what I'd needed for a long time. I made myself promise that I wouldn't fall in love with her, and it's a promise that I kept.

But I'll admit I was a bit overwhelmed. The difference between her and Linda Carpenter was a revelation in itself. I'd thought that Linda and I had had some pretty good times in bed, but Linda was nothing compared to Elaine.

Elaine's breasts were smaller, firmer, and her hips were narrower, and her features were more pointed than Linda's. But she'd had ten times Linda's experience and she wasn't at all shy about passing it along to me.

Just for example, I think it was the second or third time we went to bed together, after we'd finished (I thought!) she invited me to take a bath with her, because there was something she wanted to teach me. I'd imagined what it would be like to take a bath with a girl, but I'd never done it, so I agreed right off the bat. Once we got in she lathered up a washcloth and washed me all over—and I mean all over. Then when she was finished she handed the washcloth and soap to me and told me, "Your turn, honey. Don't miss any of me." I washed her very carefully, letting my hands linger here and there until finally there just wasn't any place left to wash and we both stood up and dried each other off.

"Now let's get all warm again," she said, and took me back to bed. Under the covers we snuggled close together and she started kissing me. She started at my face, then my neck, and by that time she was tickling my skin with the tip of her tongue, nibbling with her teeth, caressing me with her lips.

I tried to do the same thing to her but she put me off with, "Your turn will come later—I'm not finished yet."

She swarmed all over me and I just lay back and enjoyed it. She told me later that this kind of love—making is called, "Around the World."

It was different.

Elaine cuddled close to me again and we just lay there for a while, me getting my breath back while she squirmed and twitched against me. She was plainly excited by it, she was all worked up and impatient to go on, and after a few minutes I knew that she expected me to do her the same way.

The affair lasted about six months. We'd spend a few hours in bed together at least once a week, generally

two or three times a week. I knew she was sleeping with at least one other guy, and I was kind of glad about it. I know it sounds screwy, but that's the way I felt. She was just somebody to have sex with, and neither one of us wanted any strings attached. We knew that the major purpose of every date was to go to bed together, so there were no pretenses about it. She was damn good in bed, and I guess I owe her a lot for everything she taught me, but actually she was kind of shallow after I got to know her, and when we finally stopped seeing each other it was sort of a relief.

I was still sleeping with Elaine when I made the acquaintance of another girl who wasn't connected with the college at all. She was a waitress, a girl about twenty, and beautiful. This one I can't even remember her first name.

Anyway, she was stacked, with just as good a figure as Elaine's, and she made the most of it. You know those nylon uniforms waitresses wear? Well, she'd wear a nylon slip, too, or petticoat, white like her uniform, and underneath she wore red and black plaid panties. I was going to the coffee shop where she worked quite frequently, and one night business was slow and I did a sketch of her, while she worked. It's not hard to do at all, really, it just takes a little longer than if you're sketching a stationary model—and she passed by and saw it.

She wanted to know if she could have it, and I figured nothing ventured, nothing gained, so I told her she could on one condition, that she'd pose for me.

Now I remember—her name was Ginger, and she looked a lot like Liz Taylor.

Anyway, Ginger said she'd think about it, so I told her okay and let her have the picture. It was about a week later that she asked me if I still wanted her to

pose and so that night, after she got off work, she came with me to my room, and I put her on the bed the same as with the others, and this time I did a complete sketch—it took about twenty or thirty minutes, and damned if she didn't suggest I lie down with her because I looked tired!

Well, I did, of course—I stretched out alongside her, on my back. I didn't touch her, I wanted her to make the first move.

"I bet you talk a lot of girls into coming up here with you, just to draw pictures," she said after a minute.

"A few," I admitted. "Not many of them are as good-looking as you."

"Looks aren't everything," she shrugged.

"An artist can only paint what he sees," I said.

"Talent counts, too," she said.

"That's where the plain ones sometimes have it over the beauties," I told her.

"You think so?" she taunted.

She had propped herself up on an elbow and now she sat up next to me, kneeling on the bed, sitting on her heels. I was looking straight up at her breasts, and they were beauties. She gazed down at me, looking around one nipple, and she smiled and leaned over me until it brushed my face.

The next thing I knew she was unbuttoning my shirt, and then taking the rest of my clothes off for me, all the time dragging those lovely nipples across me wherever she could. After she had my shirt off I laced my fingers behind my head and let her do the rest.

I don't know how long it took, but she proved she had talent that night—I didn't have to move a muscle until it was almost over with. Afterwards, I found out she did it to get even with her husband, she'd had a

fight with him that day.

*(These accounts are related here in some detail, to illustrate the actual mechanics of Leonard's relationships with women. Each encounter is substantially as Leonard recalled it, although there is some basis to question whether or not the episodes occurred as smoothly as he reported them. Considering the super-romantic nature of his involvement with Linda Carpenter, it is doubtful that he was as completely devoid of romanticism in his affair with Elaine, which lasted a reported six months.*

*A significant part of each of these last two relationships is the non-aggressive nature of Leonard's approach. Both Elaine and Ginger initiated their own seductions—seductions in name only—while Leonard effectively "lay back and enjoyed it." It is highly doubtful that either one of them would have shared his bed had they put up even a token resistance. Although Leonard stated at the outset that his objective was to "make out with girls," he admits that he didn't have the slightest idea of how to begin, and his subsequent actions clearly establish a pattern of passive availability.—L.M.)*

Another one who was kind of wierd was the wife of an instructor at the school. He and I had struck up a friendship and he began inviting me over to his home to chat and play cards. This had been going on for a couple of months when one night his wife slipped me a note as I was leaving. It came as a total shock to me. Once I was alone I read the note—she wanted me to call her the next day while her husband would be at work.

I thought maybe she was in some sort of trouble

and wanted to borrow money without him knowing about it, or something like that, because she was one of these mousy middle-aged women nobody looks twice at. She wasn't fat or really ugly, just sort of the old maid librarian stereotype. I never could figure out why Dan married her, but they'd been married about twelve or fifteen years and had two or three kids.

Anyway, I called her, and she gabbed about everything and about nothing, like a high school girl. She wouldn't tell me why she'd asked me to call, and she insisted that I destroy the note and forget about it.

The next time I went over to play cards she slipped me another note. This one just said, "I must see you."

On my next free afternoon I stopped by the house. It was about one o'clock and she was alone—Dan would be busy until after four, the kids were all in school. She invited me in and gave me a cup of coffee and I asked her point blank what she wanted to see me about.

She blushed and stammered and then she told me that she liked me an awful lot and she was afraid she was falling in love with me. "I know it's just a crush," she said, "but I dream about you at night, and sometimes in the daytime, too. Last week, Dan and I were making love and I found myself pretending it was you. I know it's silly, but I don't want to pretend."

I kept my face straight, although it was ridiculous to imagine myself in bed with this woman. She had no sex appeal at all, her face was plain, her voice wasn't pleasant, her body wasn't bad but it was old. We sat on the couch for a few minutes, and I tried necking with her. I put my hand inside her dress and felt her breasts. They were soft and flabby—only the nipples had any appeal to me. Her nipples were as hard as Elaine's, only bigger. I rolled one around with my

fingers and it puckered harder.

I kissed her and her tongue came out and touched mine.

We went into the bedroom, on Dan's bed, and she fell back and hiked her skirt up around her waist. I played with her for a couple of minutes with my hands but she didn't need any turning on. I don't think we spent more than five minutes on the bed and it was all over. She cried a little, and begged me to forgive her for being such a silly fool. I told her she'd get over it, she had a hell of a fine man in Dan, and that I was glad it had been me instead of someone else who might have caused trouble.

Then I put my pants back on and left.

I kept coming over from time to time for the next couple of months—always when I knew Dan would be there—and played cards with them. We both acted as if nothing at all had happened. It was about a week later that I had a chance to talk to her alone for a minute. She told me she'd got her foolishness all out of her system and that she, too, was glad it had been me instead of someone else.

I don't think Dan ever did find out. I hope not, because I liked him as a person—he didn't deserve anything like that.

And then there was Ruth. I guess it was with Ruth that my real destiny began to catch up with me, because Ruth wasn't like most of the other girls. She was worse.

Ruth was a blonde, and a big one. In stockingfeet she was half an inch taller than I am, and in heels she towered over me. She liked to wear her hair piled up on top of her head, which made her look even taller, and she never wore anything less than a three inch heel. But she was built—broad shoulders, big melon-

sized breasts, so big and pendulous that when she leaned over they'd fall out from her body and hang down about six or eight inches. She wore a tight cinch to make her waist look tiny, her hips were broad and her legs were long and muscular. One extra pound and she'd have looked fat; as it was, her flesh was doughy to the touch. Still, she made a great model, even if the nudes I did of her did somewhat resemble some of the stuff by Reubens.

I ran into Ruth at a party. She was wearing a low-cut dress with a tight waist and full, frothy skirt, and there were about six guys around her. I was there with Elaine, and I'd brought along some charcoal nudes I'd done of her to show to some of the people. After everyone, including Ruth, had seen the sketches, and the party began to grow a beard, I found myself in the kitchen with Ruth.

"I liked your sketches," she said. "But why do you use such a skinny model?"

"I'll admit my preferences run to women with a little substance to them," I told her, "but I draw whatever I can find."

"Do some of me, then, will you?" she said. Just like that. It was so unexpected that I didn't know what to say. When I didn't answer she sort of sneered. "You were just being polite when you said that, I can tell," she laughed.

"Not at all," I assured her. "I'd like very much to have you as a model. Let's go."

It was her turn to blink. "Where?"

"To my place, of course. Or were *you* just being polite?"

"I thought you brought a girl."

"I did. She knows her way home."

Ruth's eyes twinkled. "Let me get my coat," she

said.

"I'll call us a cab," I said.

"No need for that," she told me. "I've got a car."

I could see, as we left, that Elaine would have no problems finding a ride home, as she was making out with a bearnik who looked like he'd know what to do with her, so I got in Ruth's white Jaguar and told her how to get to my place. I could pick up my charcoals of Elaine later.

"Want a cup of coffee first?" I said, once we were in my room.

She nodded, looking around. "Chilly in here," she observed.

"You'll get used to it. But I'll turn the heat on, okay?"

I put coffee on and turned on the wall panel heater while Ruth looked through a couple of sketchbooks. One of them was full of stuff I'd done in the life class at school, so there was a nice variety of models, both male and female.

We had our coffee and then I said, "If you'll get your clothes off I'll get set up."

"Help me with the zipper, will you?"

Under the frothy dress she was wearing black everything—a black lace bra, a black cinch belt that doubled as a garterbelt, and black nylons—no panties. The bra was a halter—strap affair that fastened with a single hook in front. She hesitated a moment before taking it off. Her breasts were even larger than they seemed to be when her clothes were on. Their weight made them pendulous, and Ruth seemed kind of self-conscious about it.

"There," she said, once the bra was off.

"You want to keep the girdle on?" I asked, puzzled.

"I've got a better waist with it on," she said. "And

I—I won't feel quite so naked."

"Okay," I shrugged. I frowned at her breasts. "They're going to be bigger problem than the waist-line. Let's see what we can do about posing you. I like the effect of the nylons and the girdle—it adds some contrast."

We tried out several poses and I played with the lights for a while until I was satisfied, then I settled down into a chair with the sketchbook on my lap and started to work. I did one drawing, about fifteen minutes work, then let her put her coat back on while we had another cup of coffee, because it was getting chilly in the room despite the heater.

For the second sketch I had her lying on the bed, on her stomach, propped up on her elbows, with her full breasts resting on the sheet. It was a quick one.

"Okay," I told her, "get warm again. I'm going to make some more coffee."

She pulled the covers up over her and snuggled down in my bed. "Why don't we save the coffee for breakfast?" she suggested.

It took me about ten seconds to get out of my clothes, douse the light and slide in bed beside her.

"Why don't you take the girdle off?" I asked.

"I'd rather make love with it on," she said. "Do you mind?"

Inside of ten minutes we were both asleep, exhausted, still locked together in an intimate embrace.

When I woke up Ruth was still asleep, still wearing the tight black cinch girdle and the nylons. Her hair was a blonde tumble on the pillow. Her lipstick was gone and her face was relaxed in sleep, her mouth partly open. She was lying on her side, with her two breasts stacked one on top of the other, the uppermost nipple rocking back and forth as she breathed.

It was mid-morning by now, about ten o'clock on a Saturday morning, and the day was warming up nicely. Ruth had apparently kicked most of the covers off earlier, and she was perspiring a little. I eased myself out of bed and padded nakedly over to the wall heater and turned it off. Then I picked up my clothes and went into the bathroom. When I came out, dressed, Ruth's eyes were open and she had a funny expression on her face.

"Good morning," I said. "I'll have coffee ready in a few minutes."

She just smiled oddly at me for a minute. "I had the queerest dream," she said at last.

"Oh?"

She sat up in bed and rubbed the sleep out of her eyes. "I dreamed I was tied up."

"Your girdle's too tight," I told her. "That's probably what caused it."

She looked down at her nylons and the black garter straps that led from them to the cinch girdle and shook her head. "I've gone to sleep before in more clothes than this, and I never had a dream like that before. I dreamed that *you'd* tied me up, with my hands behind my back, and you were making me do things. You had a little whip, maybe it was a belt, and if I didn't do them right you'd hit me with it. You wouldn't untie me for anything, not even to eat, you just kept me tied up for a whole day and you did anything you wanted to with me. Wasn't that the queerest dream?"

"Yes," I admitted cautiously.

"I believe in dreams," she said. "Not that they predict the future, or anything like that. I believe they're a person's subconscious mind expressing that person's hidden desires."

I forced a laugh. "You think you subconsciously

*want* to be tied up for a day?"

She mulled it over for a minute, and then nodded. "Yes," she said. "I think so. I realize this is an awful lot to ask of somebody you've hardly met, and you probably have other plans for the weekend, but would you? Please?"

"Right now?"

"That's what the dream said."

I found a head scarf that Elaine had left behind, and tied the blonde's wrists together with it, behind her back. "You'll have to feed me," she said. "You will, won't you? Please?"

"I'll think about it while I have my coffee," I told her, smiling.

For a minute she looked scared, and then I realized that my reaction was just right. And a moment later all the sadistic fantasies I thought I'd left behind came back, full force, and I was tremendously excited. "Tell me, sweetheart," I said slowly. "In your dreams, did I let you talk to me?"

"Only to answer questions. And only when spoken to," she said.

"That sounds like a good enough rule." Then, remembering my own impulses upon awakening, I grinned. "I think we'd better get you, ah, washed up for breakfast."

"Please," she said.

"Follow me, slave," I commanded.

I spent the rest of the morning ordering her to do things and dreaming up suitable punishments for her when she failed. By noon I tied her up even more securely, covered her with a sheet and went out to buy rope, adhesive tape, gauze, plaster of paris and other assorted supplies. When I returned I lashed her into a chair and made a plaster cast of her breasts. That

finished, I trussed her up in various uncomfortable but highly vulnerable positions and teased her until she begged me to make love to her—that's what she'd been waiting for all along, of course.

Then, while there was still daylight to work by, I did a series of quick sketches of my bound blonde and finally, when the light was failing, I untied her completely except for a four-inch hobble just above her knees and ordered her to put her clothes on. After that we went out to dinner.

Ruth seemed to enjoy the day as much as I did. It was shocking to me, in a way, to realize that there were girls like Ruth in this world who actually got a kick out of having the things done to them that I'd been doing to the paper-dolls in my imaginary harem years before.

"Thank you, Leonard," she said when we'd finished our steaks.

"My pleasure," I told her. "Any time you feel like acting out a dream again, let me know."

She looked penetratingly at me. "You enjoyed it, too, didn't you?"

"I'm always happy to give pleasure," I said.

"I wonder how you'd like it if the shoe was on the other foot?"

I laughed. "Was that in your dream, too?"

"No, but it sounds like a good idea. Are you game?"

I regarded the blonde amazon across the small table from me and I shuddered. I'd enjoyed torturing her, degrading her, making her my helpless slave for the day; what sort of humiliations would she be capable of inventing, I wondered, if I should consent to be her slave? I was suddenly very nervous but I didn't let it show. "I'm game," I said.

She smiled. "Good. It was about eight hours, wasn't

it?"

I nodded.

"Finish your coffee, lover," she commanded. "For the next eight, I'm in charge."

There was no point in arguing with her—she outweighed me. "All right," I agreed.

She went to the ladies' room, still taking delicate mincing steps because of the hobble around her knees. When she returned she walked with a firm, determined stride.

In my room once again, she ordered me to strip, then bound my wrists painfully behind my back. "Undress me," she commanded.

"How?" I said.

"With your teeth!"

It turned into quite a night. When it was over I had decided that it's much more fun to be the master than the slave, although both sides have their advantages.

At midnight she untied me, and we made more normal love, without restraints, from then until about two a.m. Again, we fell asleep in an embrace.

When I woke up in the morning she was gone. I saw her a couple of times after that during the next two or three months, but she obviously wasn't interested in a repeat performance.

After a while, all that was left of her was the batch of sketches I'd made, and she gradually became no more real to me than any of the other paper dolls. I'd use her now and then—the sketches, I mean—when I was alone and didn't have a girl lined up.

And I grew to dislike her intensely, because she'd revived my interest in bondage, and I found myself drawing more pictures of that sort.

But I'd proved my point. I wasn't queer. I'd made out with quite a few girls. Elaine and I had broken up,

but that wasn't anything to cry about because it hadn't been anything but a bedroom understanding from the beginning. The others were incidents more than anything else. I knew I could do it again if and when I wanted to, but the whole thing had begun to pall. It was fun, in bed, but it was sort of pointless, too.

I was about ready to graduate from art school, anyway, and my time and attention were needed to finish out the final term with the right sort of grades, so I called a halt to the search for casual partners and contented myself, when my body need it, with the solitary satisfactions I had grown to know so well when I was younger.

The big difference was that now I didn't worry about it, except that some of my more violent fantasies bothered me. But I knew that once I was out in the world, with a good job in an agency somewhere, with enough money and enough time to start looking for a serious affair, I'd have no trouble shelving the fantasies.

I just didn't realize, then, that Connie was as strong as she is.

*(Leonard's accounts of these various affairs must be viewed in the psychological framework of his personality. There is no guarantee that all of it actually happened at all. Although most of the people he tells about probably exist, it is difficult to separate his fantasies from the facts. Just as his lack of romantic involvement with Elaine is questionable, his recollections of the conversations with Ruth reveal a suspiciously uncharacteristic degree of sophistication on his part. The reader must bear in mind at all times that Leonard may be lying to us.—L.M.)*



## CHAPTER SIX

### "CONNIE" RETURNS

*(I met Leonard Wheeler at a party where there were a number of writers, editors, artists, photographers and a bevy of models. Someone asked me the question: "Why do you keep writing books about sex?" to which I answered, "Because I think they're necessary. We're a nation of neurotics when it comes to sex. If one of my books can help just a handful of readers to come to grips with their own guilt feelings I've served my purpose."*

*From this grew a conversation in a corner, in which Leonard Wheeler participated. We discussed sex education, the public silence about fetishes, and the fact that a number of books were on the newsstands today with the apparent purpose of exciting a fetish audience, but that very few of them could be expected to be of any practical help in assisting the fetishist to understand, live with or overcome his fetish.*

Leonard contacted me a week later by telephone. "I don't know anything about writing a book," he told me, "but I've got the material for one if you're interested. I was impressed with your idea of helping fetishists understand themselves. How would you like to write one with me, about transvestism?"

"You're a transvestite?" I asked.

"That's right."

"Why do you want to write such a book?"

Leonard paused a moment, then answered, "Maybe I'll learn something about me in the process."

We arranged a meeting, worked out the mechanical details of the book, and agreed that Leonard would dictate his own case history into a tape recorder, I'd edit it, organize it into chapters, and incorporate whatever additional material was necessary—assuming a publisher could first be found who would be interested in such a book.

It was not until our fifth taping session that I actually met "Connie"—until that time she had been a phantom, talked about but never seen.

Although I had been asking to meet Connie, Leonard had been evasive, and I was therefore surprised when "she" walked into my office. It was a few minutes before the time for our regularly scheduled tape session, and I had the material we had covered in the previous interview typed up in semi-final form, ready for Leonard's inspection. The brown-haired girl who had just stepped through my office door was attractively dressed in a slim gray skirt, black patent heels, a subdued pink fingertip jacket with a frothy little hat to match. Her hair was sleek and well-brushed, worn in a loose pageboy style. She carried a black patent purse and her nails were pink, matching her lipstick. She seemed to be in her early twenties, and nicely built.

*"Leonard decided not to come today," she said softly. "I'm taking his place."*

*Only then did I realize that this was "Connie," Leonard Wheeler's transvestic alter ego.*

*"The effect is stunning," I said. "If I didn't know who you were, I'd never suspect."*

*Connie removed her coat and draped it over the back of a chair. Underneath, she was wearing a short-sleeved print blouse that advertised her contours without seeming blatant about it. She sat down, crossed shapely nyloned legs and smiled at me. Every movement was gracefully feminine. "May I see what you've done?"*

*She read it over, made a few minor revisions and handed it back. "I like it so far," she said.*

*"Are you ready to record?"*

*Connie nodded, so I turned the tape on.*

*"Everything so far has been from Leonard's point of view," she began. "I think I deserve a hearing, too, don't you?"*

*"We'll see how it works out."*

*"Leonard tried to kill me more than once, you know," she continued . . . and the following account is substantially as "Connie" dictated it that afternoon. —L.M.)*

. . . he knows he'll never succeed, now. He can't kill me. I'm too much a part of him. The only way to get rid of me would be for him to kill himself, and I would never let him do that. We've been through too much together.

When he graduated from art school he got a job immediately with an agency which handles two of the big department stores and several rather exclusive shops. Leonard's portfolio of sample drawings landed

him a spot in the fashion illustration section, and it was sort of exciting, getting previews of the latest styles before they were released, working on ad campaigns and all that. It took him a while to get used to the job—an advertising agency is a fascinating place to work.

For a time, I just sat back and waited. I knew that sooner or later he'd need me.

The time came about three months after he started working there. He was keeping very busy because there was a lot to learn, and he really didn't have time to devote to girls. He'd become quite disgusted with himself, anyway, on account of his experiences with Elaine and Ruth and the others. Oh, he'd daydream a little, about how nice it would be to be having an affair with one of the models or one of the girls in the office, but most of them were out of his reach—executive property, so to speak, while Leonard was only an illustrator. And sometimes, at night, in his little apartment, he'd draw those bondage pictures—when he absolutely needed them.

But then he met a girl who was ready for an affair. She was one of the models—fashion illustrators work with models sometimes, you know—and the two of them seemed to get along perfectly. I allowed this to happen, because she was just my size, and I thought she might come in handy. Her trouble, of course, was that she insisted on falling in love with Leonard, and he didn't want that.

He played along with her, of course, figuring that he could break it off whenever the affair got too sticky. Her name was Miriam and she worked as a lingerie model, because her figure was too good to properly showcase most of the high-fashion creations which come along. But for bras, slips, foundations and sleep-wear she was ideal.

They hit it off from the start—she was fascinated by art and artists, and when Leonard suggested that he'd like to do some figure studies of her she was flattered. One thing led to another and before long they were sleeping together.

Physically, she was everything that I wanted to be, and every time we were with her I'd look at her lovely clothes and want to try them on. Leonard realized then that I was still there, and it panicked him and he tried to deny even to himself that I had ever insisted. His relationship with Miriam became more and more physical. She loved it. She must have figured he was becoming addicted to her, and that the more different ways she could please him in bed the stronger his addiction would grow. For a while he felt that way, too. But I knew better.

The trouble with real girls—is they've got all this wonderful stuff and they don't appreciate it. They don't know how to use it, even. Take Miriam, for instance. Her breasts were nice, not too big, about like fists, not large and floppy like some, but nice and firm and finished off with this gorgeous pair of nipples.

Leonard made love to her once in the regular position and he could feel them pressing against him, and then a little later he talked her into doing it in reverse, with him lying on his back.

Real girls don't appreciate what they've got. At least Miriam didn't. She kept pressuring Leonard to marry her, but he told her no, he wanted her to know what she'd be getting into if she married him and that she might not like it, and it was better to know in advance. He'd figured out a way to get rid of her without having to break it off right then, because she obviously was very much in love. But she was like all the rest, empty underneath. Spending a lifetime with her was

out of the question. But Leonard knew how to get her to leave on her own accord. It might wear him out, but he was sure it would work. He'd just be more and more demanding in bed, until she'd had enough of the whole thing. Then, he figured, she'd walk out on him.

Well, she went along with it at first because she loved him, and whatever Leonard wanted was all right with her. And then she went along with it because she'd learned to like it. He was forcing himself to take her to bed more and more frequently, until even thinking about it was getting to be a drag. Leonard was getting jaded, but Miriam was just getting turned on. The more she had the more she wanted—which, I discovered some time later, is a typical response of most women. They can get along without it for long periods if they're not getting it regularly, but when they *are* getting it regularly they want more and more and more. It's just the other way around with men. You give a normal man too much and he's not interested any more. But deny him a bedmate or some kind of sex outlet and that's all he can think about.

Obviously, Leonard's plan to make Miriam walk out wasn't going to work. So he decided that if all else failed, he'd change the form of his sex demands until she was convinced he was the most depraved and perverted man alive. He tried whipping her. She didn't enjoy it, but since it gave *him* pleasure it was still okay by her. He tried the most disgusting things he could think of, but she was still eager to please him. It got so Leonard was the one who was becoming disgusted, with *her*, instead of the way he'd planned. Finally, of course, he insisted on making love while he was wearing her clothes. If she could accept *me*, he figured, maybe he'd change his mind about not marrying her.

She accepted, all right. She dressed me in her loveliest things, and made me up, and made all sorts of suggestions to make me more beautiful. She said it was exciting to make love to me with me wearing her things, and after a week or so of it she insisted on making me up before she'd even consider going to bed with me. She'd already started buying me presents—panties and nylons and a lovely black chiffon nightgown.

She'd help me shave my legs and she'd do my nails for me and it was fun for a while. She brought me my first wig, with my money, of course, when I told her I wanted one.

And then I insisted that we go out together. That finally soured her. A couple of weeks later, after we'd gone out in public as a pair of girlfriends, we finally broke up. I didn't see her again for almost two years. Leonard missed her, sometimes, but I was happy—he couldn't deny me any more.

All he could do was try to perfect me.

As I said, real girls don't appreciate what they've got. You'd think they'd be proud of it, but not very many of them are. Take clothes, for instance. There's nothing much more wonderful and feminine than black lace. But how many women today wear it? They'd rather put on jeans and a sloppy shirt—a *man's* shirt, at that, or a man-tailored blouse, which amounts to the same thing except the buttons are on the feminine side. Instead of wearing shoes with a high enough heel to make their feet look lovely, they put on tennis shoes or other god-awful flats.

And they chop their hair off to look like a boy who's overdue at the barber shop. I'd like to force some of these so-called "dolls" to wear what they ought to wear, you know? High heels, sheer nylons, tight skirts,

girdles and cinch belts, bras that would make what they've got look simply fabulous. But the average girl isn't interested. And as a result she isn't interesting, either. At least not to me.

The women complain that they're not comfortable when they're dressed properly. I wonder how comfortable they think I am when I'm dressed the way they *ought* to be? I haven't found a pair of heels yet that didn't hurt my feet once I'd walked in them for half an hour or so. I wear a girdle all the time, and tucking myself into that is certainly no picnic. Most of the time I've got a cinch belt on, too, just as tight as I can stand it. I still have to pad my fanny to get the right contour in the hips.

They bitch about brassieres—that's a laugh. I have to wear a tight three-inch band of elastic under mine just to give me what they were born with, cleavage. It's either that or adhesive tape, and the tape always leaves marks that are hard to get off.

I have an added shaving problem that most women don't encounter—and believe me, I shave so close every day that my skin is almost raw. And I spend more in depilatories than most people do on cigarettes.

After we broke up with Miriam, I was all that Leonard needed. There was no more interference from outside—that's what he resented most, I think, Miriam's trying to boss me around. Yes, we learned things from her, I'll admit that, but she was trying to run the show. She didn't understand that Leonard runs the show, nobody else. Not even me. I exist when he wants me to exist. And when he doesn't want me he just tucks me away in our dresser drawers and in the closet until I beg him to let me come out again and dress up.

Any other woman would complain if he treated her

that way, but I don't mind at all, because he buys me the nicest things to wear and most of the time he's absolutely faithful to me. What more could a girl ask?

He considered, once, letting me take over completely, and living as a girl around the clock. But that would mean giving up his job, and I couldn't make as much money as he does, even though I've got every bit as much talent and ability. And let's face it, he's a man—he likes to play around with other girls now and then. Nothing serious, not any more. He learned his lesson well. With Annabelle. But we'll get to her later.

You asked me some time ago if I would ever consider having a sex conversion operation, like Christine Jorgenson. I thought about it very seriously after we broke up with Miriam. It would have solved a lot of problems. For one thing, with hormone injections there'd be no more of this daily scraping to get the whiskers off—the beard just disappears. The contours become more round. The breasts grow like a real woman's. The voice becomes softer and more feminine. And with the surgical conversion, too, there'd be no need to wear girdles all the time . . . a garterbelt and panties would be plenty. Or just the garterbelt.

But that would mean banishing Leonard forever, just so Connie could exist. That's too big a step. To me, that's the homosexual way out, because when they do the surgery they create an artificial vagina, and some of these "convertibles" actually get married—to men. That's the most disgusting thing I can think of. Leonard loves women too much for anything like that. If we had such an operation, the only way we could ever be happy, sexually, would be for me to become a Lesbian.

But actually, I think we're better off without it. I mean, I exist just for him, when he wants me. We can

be either one of us he wants us to be, and enjoy the best of both. That's the only right way, don't you think?

It took Leonard a long time to realize that this is the right way, though. At first, he felt awfully guilty about it. I was growing stronger, and he hated me sometimes for it. He'd swear off, and for weeks I wouldn't exist, and then all of a sudden he'd be walking past a department store window, or making a sketch of some lingerie, and he'd want to be me for a while. It got to be a compulsion with him, almost.

But it was such a wonderful relief when he'd let me dress, and go out. And then when I'd come home to the apartment, I'd stand in front of the big, full-length mirror and pose for him, and take my clothes off for him, like a strip tease dancer, and his hands would be all over me and we'd get all excited and . . . you know. He's told you about that.

Only afterwards, he used to feel so guilty about it that he'd strip everything else off and rip off the cleavage tape and stuff me back into the drawers. And he'd wonder what he was.

He'd wonder what in hell he was.

He knew that there were other men like him, other men who felt the same strong desire to dress up in girls' clothes and to wear makeup and be lovely, and he didn't know whether he wanted to meet any of them or not. He was a little afraid of them. I think he was afraid he might find out he was a homosexual. He knows better now, of course, but it worried him then. He didn't know what he was, and he didn't know where to go to find out. And when he was me he enjoyed being me so much that he didn't want to lose me, because I was all he had.

Finally he decided he was being childish. Leonard

hates being childish. He figured at last that he knew the truth, and that it was time for him to grow up and become a real man. The poor boy—he didn't know how wrong he was.

He banished me again. This time he didn't destroy all my pretty things, like that other time in art school, after the masquerade ball. You don't burn up a seventy-five dollar wig. He packed all my clothes into a big suitcase and put it in storage for one year. He figured he'd give himself one year in which to "grow up"—and at the end of that time he'd be able to open the suitcase and have no desire to dress in my clothes again.

How little he knew about me.

*We were approaching the end of the tape so I called a halt to the afternoon's session. "Connie" seemed relieved, and suggested that we go out for a drink, some sandwiches, or at least a cup of coffee. The impersonation was so excellent that I was almost believing by this time that she was an actual girl. As I wanted to see how she'd conduct herself in public, I agreed to take her to lunch. I doubt if anyone who saw us even faintly suspected that the lovely, animated young girl who was lunching with me was actually not a girl at all. Leonard enjoyed the role of Connie, and played it beautifully. The only misgivings I had during the entire time occurred when "she" excused herself to go to the powder room.—L.M.)*



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### MARRIAGE AND DISASTER

*(When next we met, Leonard Wheeler was quite concerned with my impressions and opinion of Connie. Only after I had assured him repeatedly that the effect "she" created had been flawless did he consent to narrating the next segment of his life, concerning his abortive marriage to a woman named Annabelle. He described the courtship of this woman in great detail, and dwelt upon the petty grievances which had built up between them during the brief period of their marriage. It was my impression, during this prolonged recital, that neither Leonard nor Annabelle had a clear idea of what they wanted to accomplish with the marriage, and that Leonard's preoccupation with his history of failure had a great deal more to do with their breakup than either he or, presumably, she would admit. The account which follows is considerably condensed.—L.M.)*

Miriam dropped out of sight, for which I was grateful. She could have caused me trouble, I realized, if she had wanted to. I heard that she had given up her "career" as a lingerie model and had taken up with a photographer. In the meantime, I'd put Connie away for a year and was casting about for someone a little more respectable than any of the women I'd known so far.

I knew better than to look for her in the fashion industry or in an ad agency. I wanted to make a complete break with the past, anyway. I was tired of everything I'd been doing up until then. I decided to look for another job and to move to a new apartment. I'd have changed my name if I hadn't needed references in getting a new job.

The new apartment came first. After I moved my stuff in I put in my application with an agency that specializes in advertising personnel and let them worry about it.

The new place was nice enough, newly decorated, and suited my needs perfectly, although the rent was almost more than I could afford. But it was a change from where I'd been before, and I was determined that Connie would never set foot inside the place.

Annabelle was sharing an apartment with another girl in the same building. We met in the corridor one weekend when her roommate was away. She asked me if I could help her replace a lightbulb in a ceiling fixture—afterwards she fixed coffee and sandwiches and we talked. She seemed to be a charming creature, and I soon learned that she was helping design costumes for a little theatre group she belonged to. When she found out I was a fashion illustrator she begged me to take a look at her work.

Annabelle was five years older than I and she'd al-

ready been married. She announced at the outset that she had absolutely no desire to get involved with anyone else, because her first marriage had been a miserable experience. I agreed with her that marriage was for the birds, and told her a little bit about my affair with Linda—although, of course, I didn't include all the details. I also let her know that I was a serious artist and that fashion illustration was just a way to keep the rent paid.

Her roommate wasn't in very often, so I hardly got a glimpse of her at all except to discover that she was a fairly attractive but rather cold career girl. Annabelle could never be described as "cold." Her most obvious trait was her enthusiasm, no matter what she was doing it was the most important thing in the world.

Annabelle was also an exceptionally good cook. One night, after a particularly delicious dinner which she served at my place, while we were sitting on the couch watching TV, I kiddingly suggested that there must be some truth to the old saw about the way to a man's heart being through his stomach, because I was feeling the warmest of glows towards her.

"Forget it," she told me. "I like you very much, but let's not spoil it."

"Spoil it?" I said. "Or enhance it?" I'd already decided that it would do no harm at all to have a friendly bedroom relationship with the girl—if her enthusiasm carried over into the sexual side of her nature it could be very good indeed. All I had to do now was convince her of it.

Having learned a thing or two from the other girls I'd been with, I switched the conversation around to sex, and told her how I felt that most men had the wrong attitudes about it, considering intercourse a one-sided proposition. But, I added, when a man knows

what he's doing it can be just as enjoyable for the girl as it is for him. But most men don't bother to learn.

I worked on her for three weeks before I got her into bed, and it was the greatest.

She had a beautiful figure, considering that she was already in her thirties when we met. Her breasts were good, her waist was relatively small, her hips were designed for pleasure—and I was delighted to learn that she knew how to use all of it to the best advantage. I was absolutely right about her enthusiasm.

But what was even more important was her enthusiasm for me as a person. She was impressed with my work as an artist. She felt a closeness with me as an individual. We seemed to be the perfect foils for each other. Annabelle was explosive at times while I took things slower and considerably easier.

Within a week or so I came to the rather amazing conclusion that I'd fallen in love with her. It shocked me. I found myself daydreaming about her at work, and hurrying home so I could spend more time with her. I gave it another week, wondering if it was just an infatuation, but at the end of the week I was just as far gone as before.

When I proposed to her she shook her head.

"No," she said flatly. "I don't want to get married again."

"But I love you," I said. And I meant it.

"I think I love you, too," she confessed. "But marriage is out."

"Why?"

"Let's just say I've been burned," Annabelle answered. "I love you but I don't want to get married again. I'll be your mistress if you want me to."

It wasn't what I wanted, but it was better than nothing. Frankly, I was surprised at her use of the word—

although I'd had affairs with other girls, this was the first time I'd considered anybody my "mistress." In a way, it was enjoyable. I still wanted to marry her, but having a mistress seemed kind of swashbuckling, you know?

"All right," I said.

It was just a day or so later that Annabelle moved in with me. Her former roommate accepted the change in status with a shrug. Within a couple of weeks she moved out too.

For quite a while I wasn't aware of the little changes Annabelle was making in my life—I was too much in love with her, or with the idea of marrying her, or something. I spent every minute I could with her; I didn't have an action or a thought that didn't include Annabelle in some way. It was wonderful, at first, having someone who really cared what happened to me. I told her everything that was going on at the agency and what my hopes and dreams were.

We'd been living together for about four months when she discovered she was pregnant. I'd been after her to marry me all along, and now I went at her again. No, she said, she'd go away. She'd have my baby somewhere else and give it out for adoption, there was no need for me to marry her. I insisted, I told her I wouldn't hear of it, I wanted to marry her whether she was pregnant or not.

She finally said okay, she'd become Mrs. Wheeler just long enough to give the baby a name, but if either of us wanted out after that she would have no objection to a divorce.

We took a brief trip to another state and got married very quietly. It didn't change anything—I was still in love with her. And she was still the most fabulous woman I'd ever had in bed.

Then, gradually, the accusations began. First she accused me of tricking her into marriage, of getting her pregnant on purpose so she'd have to marry me. Then, as her belly began to swell, she imagined that I was flirting with other women behind her back. She accused me of having affairs, of lying to her, everything.

She miscarried in about the fourth month of the pregnancy. She was hysterical then. Somehow, it was all my fault. We had a big scene when she got home from the hospital, but I managed to smooth it over.

It seemed that now, all she could do was criticize, pick me apart. I wasn't making enough money, I wasn't doing the right kind of work, she knew I was a better artist than that, I ought to branch out into something else if I ever wanted to amount to anything, the whole works. It was Annabelle who introduced me to some magazine editors and urged me to ask for illustration assignments. For a while I thought she was honestly concerned about me and my career, but now I realize she just wanted to be boss.

We had fights about other things, too—mostly money. She insisted on handling the money. She tried to convince me that I wasn't any good at it. Then she began telling me how to handle people—according to her, I wasn't any good at that, either, I was just a babe in the woods and I invited people to walk all over me. I got so I almost believed that, too.

Our sex life wasn't so hot, either, after that. When we started out we were going to bed two or three times a day, now I was lucky if it was two or three times a month. I was doing a lot of work by then, my regular job at the agency and a steady stream of magazine illustrations at night, and it got so every time I made a move to have sex with her Annabelle would say, no, Leonard, you're too tired, it'd be bad for your health.

And if it wasn't that she had six other excuses ready.

For some reason, it got so I felt guilty about everything I did, whether it was worth it or not. If I read a magazine article or stopped somewhere and had a beer all by myself I felt guilty because I hadn't asked her permission first.

I was nervous and jumpy, and I didn't know then what was the matter. Oh, I knew it was the fact that Annabelle and I were fighting all the time, but I didn't know what to do about it. I loved her, but I hated what was happening. We were getting further and further apart, and worst of all I was losing my identity. The only part of me that she didn't control was locked up in a suitcase in storage.

But then I discovered that I was wrong even there. Connie wasn't locked up. Just the clothes were. Connie was deep inside me, waiting for a chance to live again.

I found that out one day when Annabelle was out shopping, on one of the rare shopping trips when I wasn't dragged along. I was supposed to be working on an illustration.

I was feeling quite hungry—sex hungry—when she left the apartment, and for a while I tried to fight it, but then I went into the bathroom and started to masturbate. I felt guilty as everything about it, and I wasn't succeeding. So I got some of her clothes and put them on and it worked. Still feeling guilty, I returned the stuff to where I'd taken it from, washed up, and got back to work at the illustration.

That was all the start Connie needed.

Inside of a week I was wearing Annabelle's things every chance I got. I didn't dare buy anything for myself, because I'd have no way to explain where the money went. So I had no choice but to wear Anna-

belle's.

And within a month Annabelle caught me at it.

She called me everything in the book. A fake. A failure. A half-man. A homosexual, naturally. A weak, miserable nothing. And when she ran out of things to say, she walked out.

I tried to follow her, but I couldn't find her. She'd vanished. The next I heard from her was through her lawyer. I didn't contest the divorce.

I realized then that I didn't really love Annabelle, that I'd been kidding myself all along, that she was just a habit I'd acquired and I hadn't known how to break. It was such a great relief to be rid of her, to be free of her nagging and her accusations and her suspicions. To be me again. It was wonderful.

I took Connie out of the suitcase and I've never tried to kill her again.

Connie isn't bossy, she isn't demanding, she doesn't fly into jealous rages. She exists only for me, and she knows I'm her lord and master. I like it that way.

I don't expect many people to understand this. Most of them will think I've got bats in my belfry. But they haven't lived with Annabelle.

I prefer living with Connie.

Keeping her lovely is a full-time job. It literally takes several hours a day—but when I look in the mirror and see what we have made, it's worth every bit of the hard work and discomfort involved. When we walk down the street, our feet flying in their tight patent leather pumps because Connie's skirts are so narrow at the knees, our heels clicking in precise feminine rhythm, it's a great feeling to know that heads are turning. The women look, and they envy Connie her wardrobe; the men look and they envy whoever she belongs to, and maybe they think she doesn't be-

long to anybody, but they're wrong. She belongs to me. I'm the man whose hands run over her body, the man who touches her where only a lover is allowed to touch.

Yes, quite frankly, I get great pleasure from her body. It's more than just sex, I know that now. It takes the place of sex. It's a tingle that I feel through me. It's how I suppose sex feels to a woman.

Women have it easy in this world. All a girl has to do is pay attention to her face and her figure and she doesn't have to worry about anything. Some sucker of a man will come around and do the real work for her. She doesn't have to be smart, or particularly good at anything—just reasonably pretty, and with makeup, proper corsetry, a good bra, and the right clothes any woman can be pretty. Grace and grooming are far more important than glamour.

Today it's almost ridiculous how far a girl can go simply because she's female. If she's lucky enough to have an over-sized pair of breasts the only problem she'll have is finding clothes that fit. And if her breasts are not only big but reasonably firm, she can make good money just letting people look at her. Take the models who pose for men's magazines—they get twenty-five to fifty dollars a day. Or if a girl really wants to make a killing and doesn't care who she sleeps with to do it, she can make three or four hundred dollars a week with just the talent and the equipment she was born with, as a prostitute.

But when you're unfortunate enough to be born male, you've got to work for everything. It's not enough just to be good looking, or graceful, or well groomed. You've got to produce. And you've got to make enough money not only to support yourself but if you want to take a girl out you've got to pay, pay, pay.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### NEW HOPE FOR THE TRANSVESTITE

The exact number of transvestites in America is unknown; furthermore, because of the secretive and solitary nature of the aberration, it is even difficult to estimate. Charles Prince speaks in terms of thousands. Harry Benjamin has said, "there could be several hundred or more." Of the *transsexual* sub-group alone, which Prince feels represents not more than 20 to 25 percent of all transvestites, R. E. L. Masters ventures "as many as two or three thousand." At least 270 admitted transvestites have responded to the current

*Transvestia* questionnaire. There have been an estimated 200 sex-conversion operations performed in the United States—the cost of such surgery would indicate that this figure represents only a small portion of the transsexually wistful population.

It does not require any great leap of the imagination to postulate the probability that there are upwards of 50,000 practicing transvestites in this country. How many thousands more who have transvestic urges but are blocked by their sex fears and superstitions from acting upon them is anybody's guess.

It is precisely since transvestism is generally such a violently secret "vice" and can be accomplished without the assistance of a partner, that no widespread "transvestite society" has come into being which would fulfill the function of the existing homosexual "world." As a result, the transvestite generally views his deviation with a profound sense of guilt, even after he discovers (which some transvestites apparently never do!) that other people with the same deviation exist. As noted by Drs. Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen, "most people feel more personally answerable for their sexual fantasies than for their sexual activities, for which it is much easier to make others or the influence of environmental forces responsible."

Transvestism falls more readily into the realm of sex fantasy than into any other category. As such, it has few apologists, fewer publicists, and not any pious, crowd-inciting enemies, for there is no danger of anyone seducing a young person into this "vile perversion." And there has been far less research into this particular phase of unconventional sex activity than into any other deviation known to man.

Still, basing our thinking upon what little research has been done, we must attempt to summarize and to

put forth at least some tentative recommendations. First, a description of a fairly "typical" transvestite, incorporating emotional, physical and behavioristic factors:

### **Emotional Joys and Satisfactions**

He is fascinated by women. The Eternal Female is the central deity in his religion. Aphrodite is his goddess. No pagan supplicant experienced greater depth of worship, love, adoration, fear or hopeful frenzy than does the male transvestite towards his idol, Woman. He not only worships the ground she walks on but the shoes she walks in as well, along with the clothes she wears, the makeup and perfumes she uses—in short, everything about her is divine, wonderful, magical.

As a worshipper he is a fanatic in his adoration of Woman. Just as a "true Christian" attempts to live as Christ-like a life as possible, the "true transvestite" tries in every way to imitate his Goddess. Whatever she wears, he will wear, in hopes that the transformation will be so complete that once he has donned the vestments of his idol he will *be* a woman.

It matters not that his waist is too thick, his breasts

too small, his chest too hairy, his face too infested with whisker stubble, his voice too deep and his hair too short. Women themselves are artful and deceptive in this respect, with countless devices to enhance and in many cases to actually create the illusion of femininity; the tranvestite sees this as a precedent for his own use of the same deceptions.

A tight cinch girdle will take four to six breathless inches off his waist, a padded bra stuffed with additional falsies will give him breasts, a razor (or better yet, a depilatory cream intended for use by *females!*) will remove the hair from his chest, a particularly close shave overlaid with femininely-scented makeup will turn his male face into a thing of feminine beauty, a husky whisper will put his voice in the right range (he doesn't dare practice anything louder for fear of being overheard and found out), a wig will mask his crew cut beautifully.

He may wish, in moments of disillusioned anguish, that he had the courage of a Christine Jorgensen or a Coccinelle to have himself altered with surgery and hormone treatments to eliminate the pulsing reminder that he's really not female at all, and he experiments with ingenious and probably painful ways to at least make the visual effect as completely feminine as possible.

## **The Circle of Intoxication**

There is a feeling of impending faintness and a shortness of breath which accompanies the transvestite's first attempts to mold his balky male physique into an approximation of the feminine ideal. The process is often accompanied by an accelerated pulse rate. It is interesting to speculate upon which of these symptoms might actually be a cause of any of the others, and just how much of a feedback principle applies. The confinement at the waist makes deep (diaphragm) breathing difficult, with the result that the relatively shallow upper chest breathing is substituted, which lowers the intake of oxygen and triggers more rapid breathing. The faint feeling might come from that—certainly the racing pulse does—and both are interpreted by the brain, which is already in a state of anxiety over the danger of possible discovery, as symptoms of excitement.

The adrenalin content of the blood could possibly have been upped, too, from the "fight or flight" mechanism, but the subject is not prepared to do either. Further nervousness is then produced, making the solar plexus, which is already under physical pressure, feel queasy. Odd reactions are to be expected: flightiness, jumpiness, acute nervous awareness of outside sounds, etc. Paranoid feelings, if normally at all present, are intensified.

## **The Impingement of Reality**

Like the evil queen in the Snow White story he consults the mirror on his wall to see who is fairest of them all, and although the mirror assures him, yes, he's fairly lovely himself in his heels, hose, panties, girdle, bra, slip, gown, makeup and wig (or, for low-budget worshippers, skirt, blouse and head-scarf), Snow White still lives, real girls are lovelier still.

Humiliated and dejected by this news, he sees his reflection as a pathetic parody of ripe young womanhood, and quickly strips off the clothes, scrubs his face thoroughly to remove all traces of his failure, dons a T-shirt to conceal the shameful lack of manly hair upon his shaven chest and, his worship service over, hides the evidence of his pagan rites under the mattress or in the darkest recesses of his closet where it will be safe from heathen eyes.

Unsuccessful as a woman, he is also far too often a resounding failure (in his own eyes) as a man, without the courage or the confidence necessary for achieving a "normal" heterosexual sex relationship.

Convinced of his own unworthiness, as evidenced by his inability to achieve his goal of complete femininity and his uneasiness and subsequently inept handling of the masculine role a cruel Nature has thrust upon him, and feeling tremendously guilty about the whole thing, he has two courses open to him: he can become a sexual recluse, a serious and probably quite respected Dr. Jekyll during the day and a miserable, lonely Mme. Hyde when he's by himself at night and there's really no place left for him to hide; or he may wear lace panties or even a girdle to work, under his

normal male attire, so the textural thrill and or the restraining pressure can remind him throughout the day that he is secretly stealing into the biologically forbidden world of his goddess. His nights, in either case, are spent in solitary worship, ending almost always in the release found in masturbation.

### **Fighting the Symptoms**

His alternate course often resembles that of a guilt-ridden homosexual trying desperately to prove his manhood in the heterosexual manner—he compulsively indulges in promiscuous affairs, largely one-night stands, generally with girls who are beneath his social station and with whom he stoutly refuses to become romantically involved. The greater his success as a Casanova, the less pressing is his need for transvetic sex expression, but on the occasions when he does revert to what he considers his “true” nature he finds that the imitation of femininity is every bit as exciting as it ever was.

If anything, his increased intimacy with the female body has provided him with an opportunity to study it in greater detail and become more familiar with the differences between it and his own—and in the proc-

ess, more dissatisfied with his own, despite the physical pleasure it brings him during intercourse. As a result, his strivings to imitate female perfection can become fanatically complex, involving expensive purchases and complicated alterations in the foundation garments necessary to his approximation of femininity.

Rarely will a practicing transvestite allow himself a degree of involvement with the opposite sex strong enough to make him seriously consider marriage (except as an attempted "cure"), for in defending his fear of all women he has developed a contempt for individual women, and any female he might marry would necessarily be second-rate, compared to his fantasy image of his own potential as a woman. Often, however, he seeks and frequently finds women who are content to be his mistresses, treating himself to sexual orgies for as long as each such affair might last.

His reluctance to marry springs from an understandable fear that a really long-term relationship (romantically, he thinks of marriage as a lifetime proposition) might expose his "perversion" to his wife's eyes, while it is comparatively easy for him to conceal it from a relatively temporary mistress.

Transvestites *do* marry, however, and some of them remain active in their transvestism after it is disclosed to their wives, turning it into a mutually erotic extra kick in the marriage relationship itself.

Such marriages, however, are relatively rare.

The above portrait of the "typical" transvestite is necessarily hazy, and differs in several important respects from that presented by Charles Prince in his 1962 *Sexology* magazine article "166 Men in Dresses"—based upon results of the questionnaire sent to *Transvestia* subscribers.

Prince's findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Thirty-eight percent went to college; of these, 20% went on to graduate or professional school.

2. Fifty-five percent engaged in active masculine sports while in school; forty percent engaged in drama, music, school offices, etc.

3. Less than twenty percent had any childhood history of being kept in dresses and curls, or of their parents wanting a girl, or of "pinafore punishment."

4. Fifty-five percent rated the father as being the dominant parent.

5. Less than one in three found the problem disturbing enough to seek psychiatric help.

6. Only a third of them had had homosexual experiences.

7. Ninety percent considered themselves exclusively heterosexual.

8. Seventy-two percent of them were married; about twenty percent for the second or third time; twenty-six percent of the total had been through one or more divorces.

9. Of the married respondents, seventy percent have children.

Basing his conclusions not only upon the questionnaire but upon the contact he has established with *Transvestia's* readers, Prince paints a picture decidedly at odds with the findings of medicine and psychiatry. "Cases coming to a doctor's attention," he contends, "are usually persons who have either gotten into trouble with the law and are sent to a psychiatrist, or persons who are so upset by their activity that they go seeking support or help."

He challenges orthodox psychiatric theory regarding the causes of transvestism and the subsequent classification of symptoms.

I do not question the honesty of Dr. Prince, nor his attempts at objectivity, but I feel that there are several factors which limit the validity of his conclusions. Prince seems to recognize some of the self-limiting factors which determine who responds to a questionnaire, and is critical of the medical profession for basing its conclusions upon the "small portion of the transvestic group" who seek medical or psychiatric help.

Yet he blithely assumes, on the basis of his questionnaire, that "the educational and cultural level of transvestites may be well above average." He further states that, "You wouldn't know a transvestite if you saw him because on the average he is married, usually a father, and is well integrated into society. He is effective and adequate in his business relationships and to all intents and purposes is a 'regular guy.' "

These conclusions: (a) above-average educational and cultural level, (b) married, usually a father, (c) well integrated (d) effective and adequate in business relationships and (e) a "regular guy"—might well be just as *atypical* of transvestites as is their actively seeking professional help. These five qualifications are undeniably typical of Prince's respondents but there is reason to suspect that they also are in a large part determining factors in the selection of his sample.

The economic factor alone would weed out most transvestites who had *not* attained an above average educational and cultural level and its resultant higher income level. An examination of the Chevalier price list of publications and transvestic accoutrements reveals the relatively high cost of "qualifying" for the survey. If an individual were not (b,c,d,e) fairly effective and adequate, well integrated and considered a "regular guy" he probably could not afford the added

luxury of belonging to the *Transvestia* in-group. For this reason I seriously doubt that Prince's survey sample is any more representative of all transvestites than are those who get in trouble with the law or seek psychiatric help.

It is logical to hypothesize that transvestism is viewed by many budding (adolescent) transvestites as such a solitary vice or personal perversion that they *never* become successful achievers educationally, sexually, socially or economically. Compulsive and fetishistic transvestism, in this respect, would not be unlike any other compulsive and fetishistic behavior—it would damage and inhibit the development of personality traits essential to becoming a successfully achieving, socially integrated individual.

This criticism is not intended to invalidate the *Transvestia* survey but merely to point out that Prince may have overstepped himself by drawing conclusions about *all* transvestites while ignoring the built-in limitations of his sample.

### **Controversy over Causes**

Similarly, Gutheil may have made a simple semantic error in the following statement: "In my opinion, trans-

vestism is the result of *six psychopathologic factors*. they are: (1) latent (or manifest) homosexuality with an unresolved castration complex; (2) the sadomasochistic component; (3) the narcissistic component; (4) the scopophilic; (5) the exhibitionistic, and (6) the fetishistic component. In every case all six tributaries are represented in varying degrees. In some cases, the homosexual components is conscious and manifest; in others the fetishistic, or sadomasochistic features predominate."

As a statement of the viewpoint of orthodox psychiatry it could hardly be expressed more concisely, and is a good account of those symptoms psychiatrists have found to accompany the *transvestic* symptom. The question, however, remains: Is transvestism *caused by* these factors, or does it merely exist concurrently with them?

Benjamin admits the possibility of a great variety of causes but pinpoints two without which, he feels, transvestism cannot exist. "A constitutional predisposition is essential; then comes adverse psychological conditioning followed by the respective syndromes." He labels as "untenable" either the strictly organic theory or the strictly psychological explanation as an exclusive key to the phenomenon. He believes the organic must come first in order for psychological conditioning to effectively develop transvestic symptoms in the individual.

This reasoning effectively disposes of two flies in the theoretical ointment: (1) the fact that the same early environmental factors are evident in many observed cases of transvestism, transsexualism and homosexuality, and (2) the fact that these same elements are often found in the early backgrounds of individuals who demonstrate *no* symptoms of transvestism, trans-

sexualism or homosexuality.

Presumably, the normal masculine boy is not affected by adverse psychological influences.

"In former years," Benjamin states, "it was quite customary that many boys kept their long curls till they went to school and some of them were dressed and treated more in a feminine than a masculine fashion. That all took place during the formative years of—say—two to five. Naturally not all of them became transvestites or homosexuals. When this kind of conditioning went against their nature, nothing happened. They grew into normal manhood. But when it harmonized with a constitution of a high feminine component, then it was a different story.

Charles Prince, seizing upon the often-expressed concept of "feminine identification" which has been used to explain all three types of cases and trying to fit it into his own opinions about homosexuals, transvestites and transsexuals, was forced to postulate three different facets of femininity with which a young boy might "identify" in order to achieve each of the three presumably non-compatible results.

First, if he focuses upon the *anatomical* difference of the female and her attendant sexual role, he is identifying with "sexual woman" and will later attempt to take the woman's role in the sex act and will develop the passive homosexual pattern, perhaps choosing "not only to act the role sexually but to use many of the feminine wiles of behavior and dress in exactly the same way and for the same purpose as a woman would."

If, however, he chooses to identify with the second facet of femininity—which Prince tags "psychological woman"—and emulates the female mind, the feminine virtues and quirks, he will later say that he "feels" as

a woman, "thinks" as a woman and has the "soul" of a woman—and will emerge a dyed-in-the-wool transsexual.

But if he should choose Dr. Prince's third facet of femininity—"social woman"—as the pattern to emulate, he will become a "true" transvestite, because, as Prince explains it, "his desires are to dress like a woman, act like a woman, go about in public as a woman and be accepted by women as a woman. For him, his cross-dressing is the means and the end at the same time."

Prince then postulates, somewhat defensively, that since a young man's emotional experiences are cumulative and rather unpredictable, the pure forms of any of these three categories might occasionally be corrupted by later experiences—thereby confusing the pattern and rather neatly protecting the theory by providing loopholes for adult behavior which doesn't quite fit the hypothesis. With due regard to Dr. Prince, his reasoning here seems almost as sneaky as that of the psychoanalytic writers who used the "latent homosexual" label to cover those patients who had indulged in no overt homosexual acts.

Dr. Prince, however, does follow up his diversionary loop-holing with a point which I feel is quite pertinent:

"Thus," he writes, "a person who (everything else being equal) would have developed into a simple case of transvestism with a normal heterosexual orientation as far as his sex life was concerned, may have had experiences in school, jail, or in the army in which the feminine aspects of his nature were misconstrued and imposed upon so that he is introduced into the homosexual behavior patterns."

This might be a good point for parents, teachers, youth counselors and transvestites themselves to pon-

der.

Prince continues, with more significance than he perhaps intended: "If a high enough level of aversion to such (homosexual) practices has not been acquired during early years, he may find them an interesting addition to his previously socially oriented identification. He will then become 'bisexual' or perhaps preferentially a homosexual. Other kinds of secondary experiences might give rise to transsexual tendencies."

*Aversion to homosexual practices*, then, might be a vital key to unlocking the mystery of transvestism. If so, we could logically expect to find another factor, as yet undiagnosed, underlying the retreat into transvestic, transsexual or homosexual behavior.

One other explanation deserves brief examination here, and that is the theory held by some psychotherapists that the average transvestite feels thoroughly inadequate as a man and therefore wishes to be treated as a woman. Women, he believes, have it easier in life—not so much is expected of them. It may be significant that even the transsexualists, who want to surgically become ersatz women, usually express a desire to live peacefully, growing flowers in pots, bothering nobody.

The corollary to this, of course, is that they feel nothing will be expected of them—an old maid is not required to be accomplishing or achieving.

Their feelings towards women are significant, too—women have power, serenity, a passive role, social inferiority, helplessness. Women are not expected to be *able* to accomplish anything useful, worthwhile or herotic.

The transvestite, in his escape into the feminine role, is effectively proclaiming to himself and to the world that he has accomplished his dream of not amounting

to a hill of beans, and not being expected to. By making himself pretty, by adorning himself with breasts and female clothing, he has announced his self-removal incapable of effective participation in, or in which failure would be humiliating to him: the competitive life of the male in our culture.

### A Neurotic Retreat from 'Certain' Failure

An examination of each of Leonard Wheeler's heterosexual contacts clearly indicates that he has seldom if ever actually initiated the seduction of anyone. He has, rather than face rejection, couched his few "overt" propositions in terms which could be interpreted as innocent or jocular—but far more frequently he has simply made himself available in a situation which gives his potential partner the *opportunity* herself to initiate the seduction.

Fortunately, the attitude underlying his persistent passivity is easily traceable to his early years, when he was convinced that no girl would ever willingly let him look at her naked body nor would she willingly allow intercourse—unless tricked into it, afraid she would lose him as a boyfriend or paid to do it. He was sure, at that time, of rejection.

And he was also sure that being rejected by a girl was a terrible thing.

The one "girl" who never rejects him today is Connie. "She" is the only one whose acceptance and cooperation is a sure thing.

Even more significant in demonstrating that Leonard's transvestic activity is a flight from rejection is the fact that every instance of Connie's "asserting herself" was preceded by an episode in which Leonard felt himself "rejected" by a female.

When he broke up with Linda he retreated into transvestism. When he received the news from his wife's attorney that she was seeking a divorce, he retreated into transvestism. Earlier in his marriage, when Annabelle rejected his sex overtures (for any number of reasons), he retreated into transvestism. When he discovered that Linda, his "first love," had married someone else without bothering to inform him, his reaction was to retreat into transvestism.

Even his long periods of bondage fantasy functioned as a psychological retreat from rejection—his paper dolls, helplessly tied hand and foot (to be "undangerous to me") were incapable of rejecting him, while he felt that actual girls had no choice, by nature, *but* to reject him.

Lenard's discovery that some girls existed who actually enjoyed sex, looked forward to it and were quite capable of engineering favorable circumstances for it, was a little too late, however, in his psycho-sexual development, for this information to negate the irrational beliefs about girls which he had been taught in his childhood.

By the time he found this out he had already established a fairly firm pattern of sadistic bondage enthusiasm and transvestism, and was effectively indoctrinating himself in the illogical, irrational and

damaging beliefs which had not only set the stage for the development of his neurotic behavior but were largely responsible for the continuation of this pattern.

He could be described as an incurable romantic who, on the one hand, firmly believed that romantic love was the most wonderful thing in the world and that success in affairs of the heart was the prime proof of manhood and individual worth, while on the other hand being convinced that he could not ever achieve romantic success because "girls would always reject him." Irrational as it is, he bought this theory without reservation, and patterned his misery upon it—and upon its logical corollary: that the lack of romantic love was the most horrible thing in the world and that failure in affairs of the heart was proof of individual worthlessness.

More important, however, than his acquired certainty of rejection, is his belief that being rejected is something quite horrible. This is a belief that many parents unwittingly teach their children in an attempt to control them: "Wouldn't it be awful if Mommy didn't love you any more?"

It should be remembered also, in this context, that Leonard's mother taught him to be a perfectionist. "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well," she said. And the childish corollary, "If you can't do it well, don't do it," which Leonard blithely incorporated into his philosophy. Another homily which he hugged to his structure of belief was, "The man who never makes a mistake has never tried anything."

Both statements are valid and quite rational, but when coupled with his mother's obvious displeasure (rejection of him) when he fell short of perfection or failed in a task, and complicated by his romantic but irrational conviction that rejection was the most hor-

rible thing that could happen to him, he solved the painful problem in the most logical manner possible:

He refused to try anything in which success was not guaranteed. In order to avoid failure, he feigned disinterest in any activity in which he could not succeed immediately. By avoiding failure he avoided the "horrible" rejection which he was sure would follow.

The pattern ingrained itself not only into his sex life (which was consistently passive or "feminine") but into his scholastic and vocational life as well. It was evident, also, in his reaction to his wife's suit for divorce (Chapter Seven): rather than face the possibility that *he* had failed at a vital task (marriage), he immediately pretended that it wasn't important. "I realized then that I didn't really love Annabelle, that I'd been kidding myself all along." In effect, only by convincing himself that his failure at marriage was a positive gain could he avoid the unspeakable horror of rejection.

### **A Psychotherapeutic Approach**

At this point, it should be helpful to quote extensively from an actual psychotherapy session with one of the country's top psychologists in the successful

treatment of a patient whose neurotic fear of rejection closely parallels that of Leonard Wheeler. The following material is from the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, Vol. XV, No. 3, 340-341, July 1959:

**THERAPIST:** Suppose, for the sake of discussion, you had, back in your high school days, tried, really tried, to make some sexual passes at a girl, and suppose you had been unequivocally rejected by her. Why would that be terrible?

**CLIENT:** Well—uh—it just would be.

**T:** But *why* would it be?

**C:** Because—uh—I—I just thought the world would come to an end if that would have happened.

**T:** But *why*? Would the world *really* have come to an end?

**C:** No, of course not.

**T:** Would the girl have slapped your face, or called a cop, or induced all the other girls to ostracize you?

**C:** No, I guess she wouldn't.

**T:** Then what *would* she have done? How would you—*really*—have been hurt?

**C:** Well, I guess, in the way you mean, I wouldn't.

**T:** Then why did you think that you would?

**C:** That's a good question. Why did I?

**T:** The answer, alas, is so obvious that you probably won't believe it.

**T:** Simply that you thought you would be terribly hurt by a girl's rejecting you merely because you were *taught* that you would be. You were raised, literally raised, to believe that if anyone, especially a girl, rejects you, tells you she doesn't like you, that this is terrible, awful, frightful. It isn't, of course: it isn't in any manner, shape, or form awful if someone rejects you, refuses to accede to your wishes. But you *think* it is,

because you were *told* it is.

C: Told?

T: Yes—literally and figuratively told. Told literally by your parents, who warned you, time and again, did they not, that if you did wrong, made the wrong approaches to people, they wouldn't love you, wouldn't accept you—and *that would be awful, that would be terrible.*

C: Yes, you're right about that. That's just what they told me.

T: Yes—and not only they. Indirectly, figuratively, symbolically, in the books you read, the plays you saw, the films you went to—weren't you told the same thing there, time and again, over and over—that if anyone, the hero of the book, you, or anyone else, got rejected, got rebuffed, got turned down, they *should* think it terrible, should be hurt?

C: I guess I was. Yes, that's what the books and films really say, isn't it?

T: It sure is. All right, then, so you *were* taught that being rejected is awful, frightful. Now let's go back to my original question. Suppose you actually did ask a girl for a kiss, or something else; and suppose she did reject you. What would you *really* lose thereby, by being so rejected?

C: Really lose? Actually, I guess, very little.

T: Right: damned little. In fact, you'd actually gain a great deal.

C: How so?

T: Very simply, you'd gain experience. For if you tried and were rejected, you'd know not to try it with that girl, or in that way, again. Then you could go on to try again with some other girl, or with the same girl in a different way, and so on.

C: Maybe you've got something there.

T: Maybe I have. Whenever you get rejected—as you do, incidentally, every time you put a coin in a slot machine and no gum or candy comes out—you are merely learning that this girl or that technique or this gum machine doesn't work; but a trial with some other girl, technique, or machine may well led to success. Indeed, in the long run, it's almost certain to.

C: You're probably right.

T: Okay, then. So it isn't the rejection by girls that *really* hurts, is it? It's your *idea*, your *belief*, your *assumption* that rejection is hurtful, is awful. *That's* what's really doing you in; and that's what we're going to have to change to get you over this silly neurosis.

The therapist in this case was Albert Ellis, whose somewhat unorthodox approach to psychotherapy has startled some members of the psychological fraternity—and whose violently liberal and iconoclastic viewpoints and antagonized many of the conservative elements in counseling ranks, particularly those who attempt to accomplish therapeutic results while allowing the patient to cling to certain socially-approved albeit irrational (neurotic) beliefs.

The approach used by Ellis is one which he developed after years of practicing orthodox psychoanalytically-oriented psychotherapy. The technique is called *Rational psychotherapy* (later, *Rational-Emotive Psychotherapy*) and grew out of Ellis' conviction that most significant human emotions and actions, including neurotic feelings and behavior, stem from basic assumptions, beliefs or philosophies which the individual consciously or unconsciously holds.

Neurotic symptoms, Ellis contends, are caused and maintained by illogical or irrational ideas and attitudes. Furthermore, the symptoms tend to reinforce these il-

logical beliefs by a system of automatic re-indoctrination. Just as people tend to subscribe only to those newspapers which are likely to reflect or agree with their own political views, moral attitudes and social prejudices, the neurotic patient closes his ears to all ideas which do not agree with the basic assumptions, beliefs and philosophies which helped make him neurotic in the first place.

In the case quoted above, Ellis not only uncovered the fears of the patient and demonstrated how the patient was continually re-indoctrinating himself with the seeds of his own neurosis, but forcefully attacked the basic assumptions, beliefs and philosophies which heretofore the patient had never seriously questioned. As Ellis describes it:

“The patient’s fear of rejection was brought to light again and again in the course of the therapy; and it was not only revealed, but it was forcefully consistently attacked by the therapist, who kept showing the patient that it is silly and self-defeating for anyone to care too much about what others think, since one is then regulating one’s life by and for these others, rather than for oneself.”

There were nineteen sessions in all, at weekly intervals, in the course of which the patient was given specific “homework” assignments which consisted of making dates with girls, so that by actual practice he could overcome his fears concerning them.

This patient was not a transvestite—he was 35-year-old male who had been exclusively homosexual in all of his adult life. The detective work which pinpointed his neurotic fear of rejection as the outstanding motive for remaining homosexual was the simple fact that in sixteen years of homosexual activity he had never actively approached a male himself.

“He was so convinced that he might be rejected if he made active sexual approaches to either men or women, and that this would be terrible,” Ellis observes. “that he arranged his sex life so that no active approach of any kind was necessary—he just put himself in a position where aggressive males could pick him up.” (A more detailed discussion of this case is found in Ellis’ book, *If This Be Sexual Heresy*, Lyle Stuart, 1963.)

The parallel to Leonard Wheeler’s behavior in each of his reported heterosexual contacts is rather startling. Interestingly, the homework assignments given to Dr. Ellis’ are strikingly similar to Leonard’s own attempt at self-therapy following the artists’ ball (see Chapter Five).

Significantly, however, once Leonard decided that the thing to do was to “make out with girls” he realized that he didn’t have “the slightest idea of how to go about it.”

With his fears of rejection operating full force, he had no choice but to fail. Each of the sporadic sex contacts which followed operated to reinforce his fears and his irrational assumptions, leaving fertile ground for the re-emergence of “Connie.”

Had Leonard, at that time, been in the hands of a competent psychotherapist, he would have been given specific instructions in how to make dates; what to expect from females; how to understand them and their problems; how to avoid being discouraged when he was rebuffed, etc. His mistakes and blunders would have been discussed in an objective, constructive manner; and he would have been shown how, instead of blaming himself for his mistakes, he could put them to good self-teaching uses.

Equally vital, the irrational ideas and attitudes he had

developed or acquired concerning men and women would have been consistently undermined by the therapist.

This is not intended as a guide for armchair therapy; nor is it included here to support the contention that passive homosexuality and transvestism stem from the same causes; but to suggest that there is at least one psychotherapeutic approach which would presumably produce good results in the treatment of certain transvestites.

Transvestism is a compulsive behavior pattern differing in no great respect from any other sort of compulsive behavior pattern—from compulsive eating to compulsive poker-playing. It is similar to compulsive masturbation and compulsive homosexuality in that all three are erotic in nature.

It is the compulsive and fetishistic element in transvestism which is corrected by psychotherapy—and the most effective psychotherapeutic approach to the problem is to sidestep the transvestic desires and symptoms and go after the underlying causes of the disturbance—coupled with an active program of de-propagandization to correct the patient's irrational beliefs. When this is accomplished, when the neurotic fears are dissolved, when the blocks to full enjoyment of heterosexual contacts have been removed, the patient ceases to be so self-defeating in many other areas of his life and the compulsive, fetishistic *symptoms* disappear, seemingly "spontaneously."

It's the psychological equivalent of "Span-town," the nightclub comic's mixture of Spanish Fly and Miltown: "It makes you go out looking for it but when you don't find any, it doesn't bother you."

## **Transvestite Social Groups and Magazines**

It is argued by their publishers and organizers that magazines and social groups edited for or organized by transvestites can be of considerable value in helping the lonely, guilt-ridden transvestite to better understand himself and his problems by learning about and meeting others who share approximately the same symptoms. This is the primary reason given for the publication of such magazines and the formation of such social groups.

The fallacy in such thinking is that it ignores the basic dynamics of all special interest groups.

The one assumption common to almost every special interest group in history is that its members are in some way superior to people who do not share its particular interest. The most universal of these claims to superiority is that the membership is "above average in intellect, educational and cultural levels." The claim seems to become more strident as the special interest of the group in question departs farther from the accepted norm.

Thus, the Ku Klux Klan, the Knight of Columbus, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the John Birch Society, the Committee to Abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee,

the Communist party, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Humanists—each of these organizations, many of them diametrically opposed in principle to others on the same list, is equally proud of the fact that its membership consists of “above average” people.

The implication, of course, is that membership in the group is proof of the individual’s own superiority, and perhaps the fact of his membership can even increase his intellect.

It is sometimes not exactly clear whether this superiority is a cause or a result of membership in the group.

Snob appeal is one of the oldest recruiting dodges in the world. The prospective member, subscriber, endorser or what have you is first assured that the people already involved are the salt of the earth, the sort of individuals with whom he would naturally want to associate. Subtle flattery is then applied, with the implication that the prospective recruit is a fortunate person indeed to possess those qualifications which set him apart from the vast majority of people. He is complimented for his courage, his honesty, his intelligence, his appreciation of this and that. As he becomes a member, he is presented with what amounts to a creed, a standard of behavior, a set of opinions and complete instructions as to how to best maintain active membership in the group.

This process is a conscious or unconscious part of the recruitment program of almost every group ever successfully organized, for whatever purpose. It works as well for charlatans as it does for sincere crusaders. It is neither good nor evil in itself.

But it is of questionable value to the emotionally disturbed individual—such as Leonard Wheeler and many

other transvestites—when it is used to induce him to join a group or subscribe to a magazine “in order to learn more about ourselves and each other.”

One of the first things he is told is that his condition is incurable—medicine and psychology have given up. Therefore, his only hope is to learn to live with the condition, to try to get others to accept him for what he is.

Any individual who, by some fluke, experiences a cure was probably not a real transvestite in the first place, but as spurious and implicitly undesirable pretender. He is taught, in effect, to cling to his aberration, to become fiercely proud of it, and to resist all efforts—including his own—to discard it, on pain of losing status in the eyes of the group.

The threat of rejection can be a powerful whip indeed.

Furthermore, he is continually re-indoctrinating himself in the irrational beliefs and behavior which are responsible for his aberration in the first place—under the guise of getting to know himself better. He is exposed to a plethora of symptoms which he feels he ought to have in order to be a proper member of the group.

Were a man such as Leonard Wheeler to join such a group, his joy at finding a number of others “just like him,” coupled with his relief that he hadn’t invented a new sin, would be likely to prompt him to take on the coloration of the group. Instead of “learning about himself” he would effectively adapt himself to conform to the accepted standard of aberration shared by the membership. It doesn’t matter that an irrational belief is shared by fifty million people, it is still an irrational belief.

The doctrine of inherent superiority, whether it be Pomeroy’s proclamation that transvestites are “super

normal" in their sex interests or Prince's opinion that the transvestite is a fortunate fellow indeed because he is able to express his total personality, tends to make the transvestite feel that his aberration is a precious asset and that he would lose something quite valuable to him if he were to attempt to live without it. Therefore, he often takes great pains to make himself a more perfect transvestite and resists any suggestion that he try to revamp his basic personality along more effective, less self-defeating lines.

Naturally, if he believes he is superior, fortunate or otherwise a "success" because of his pet symptoms, he will thwart any attempt to cure the underlying cause. His status depends upon how well he succeeds in retaining the symptoms.

Any hope of curing the condition—if a cure is what he desires—would become progressively more remote the further he entangled himself in the activities and philosophies of groups or publications purporting to help him understand himself better.

## The Right to Deviate

Apparently, then, transvestism *can* be cured—which leaves only one question: *should* it be cured?

There is little question, in the medical profession at least, concerning the right of the individual to attempt to be accepted in whichever role he chooses. Benjamin, doubtless as a result of his belief that a biologic predisposition is responsible, not only insists that therapy is useless (“If we are dealing with a constitutional deviation, we can hardly expect to influence it”) but becomes transvestism’s and transsexualism’s prime apologist with the statement: “These people seem to me truly the victims of their genetic constitution, step-children of medical science, often crucified by the ignorance and indifference of society and persecuted by antiquated laws and by legal interpretations that completely lack in wisdom and realism.” Benjamin is at his most vehement best when defending transsexualists: “It is only ignorance, prejudice and bigotry that can deny these transsexualists their right to their particular pursuit of happiness.”

Gutheil, surprisingly, agrees with Benjamin “that a transvestite ‘has every right to be accepted as a woman’ (or man). This is part of personal freedom in a democracy. I also agree,” he continues, “that society should be ‘treated’ by way of public education so that it may develop a better understanding of the problems

involved. I think, however, that to do justice to the transvestites we must also educate the patients themselves. We must show them how, while fantasizing a future physical metamorphosis, they are, in reality, harking back to their neurotic past, to their infantile fears and pleasures, and point out to them how futile it is to try solving one's sexual problems—in effigy."

Recent experiments in England with a psychiatric technique known as "aversion therapy" have prompted an examination (in the *British Medical Journal*) of the ethics involved in applying this technique. In her article, "The Law, the Doctor and the Deviant," Lady Barbara Wooten, an outspoken authority on the legal aspects of medicine and psychiatry, says, in part, that, "in suitable cases the use of these techniques seems highly promising in the treatment of transvestism, fetishism and homosexuality. Yet, if a man's erotic impulses are directed towards his own sex, or if he experiences a persistent urge to dress like a woman, to what extent are we entitled—in the name of the healing profession—to make him thoroughly ill in order to change these idiosyncrasies?"

The ethical aspect of sex-conversion operations have been discussed at much greater length, but need not be examined here as this book is primarily concerned with transvestism, not transsexualism.

## Can Transvestism Be Prevented?

Transvestism, as has been pointed out earlier, is a highly *personal* form of sex expression. It seldom involves anyone other than the solitary practitioner; therefore, the risk of exploiting, abusing or harming anyone else is minimal. No transvestite, no matter how intense his neurosis might be, would be interested in converting anyone else into the practice. The *right* of the individual to indulge in any solitary sex practice is not the legitimate concern of society, but the mental health of that individual might be.

How, then, can individuals safeguard themselves from the neuroses which underlie transvestism, transsexualism and homosexuality? And how can parents inculcate their children against the development of these symptoms?

Space does not permit a detailed treatise on mental health, the prevention of neuroses, or the prophylactic presentation of sex education. However, a few guide lines can be sketched in, briefly.

Albert Ellis, who is perhaps most noted for his contributions to the literature of sexual ethics (*Sex With-*

out *Guilt* and *The American Sexual Tragedy*), states, regarding personal sex behavior, that "a man or woman is most likely to be healthy and happy when he or she holds to something along the lines of the following code."

1. Be perfectly shameless or "unguilty."
2. Be active and adventurous.
3. Be yourself.
4. Be committed.

Ellis' comments on the last two points warrant a brief exploration. "You—not Mrs. Grundy," he says, "are the only real judge of your sex proclivities and pleasures. If John Jones can't fantasize very well . . . that's his problem. What do *you* want? Find out. Try whatever you like sexually, as long as you don't impinge upon the rights of others. If your personal sex longings are not listed in Kinsey, so what? Who's feeling *your* feelings, anyway? You are, I hope—and will continue unabashedly to feel them, whatever the current 'fashion' in sex may be."

And, on the point of commitment: "Life is not a product, a result. Rather, it is a process, a being, a becoming. And without some kind of fullhearted commitment, the process lags, the becoming creeps. So with sex. Be your fully committed sexual self, so long as you do not harm others."

It must be noted that Ellis tempers this enthusiasm with the warning:

"Purely personal sex acts can never be socially de-

structive or wicked, and they are almost invariably harmless. When one of these acts is performed as a substitute for interpersonal sexuality, its performance is still not shameful. But it *may* be neurotic; if so, it should be objectively admitted as such, and should be fought (if necessary through psychotherapeutic treatment) rather than used as a basis for self-condemnation.

“Even if one is a true sex deviate, then the appropriate consequence should *not* be guilt or shame, but a quiet and collected trip to a psychologist or a psychiatrist.”

To the transvestite who is disturbed over his peculiarity, perhaps the most helpful of all of Dr. Ellis' comments is the following:

“When a sex act does not involve others . . . the person engaging in it cannot be immoral in the sense of needlessly harming other human beings. At most, he can waste his time and energies and thereby harm himself.”

“Even then, his philosophy should be: ‘I am doing this senseless act. How can I stop doing it?’ instead of ‘I am doing this horrible act. How can I punish myself for it?’ ”

Transvestism *is* curable—when the patient sufficiently desires a cure.

It is probably also preventable. But to effectively prevent it will require a much better understanding, on the part of all of us, of the social and psychological forces which produce transvestic symptoms or reactions in some individuals while leaving others relatively

unscathed.

The day when such understanding will be universal is, at best, a long way off. Perhaps it will never arrive. Because it is a personal peculiarity which seldom involves other people, transvestism is not a threat to society, although it can be a great problem to the transvestite and his family.

Fortunately, transvestites seem to be great readers. Fred L. Shaw, Jr., publisher of *Turnabout* magazine, contends that, "if one were to name the most common behavior trait among transvestites, apart from cross-dressing, it would most likely be a voracious appetite for reading material . . . which explores the complexities of the TV's dilemma."

In an editorial in issue number two of his magazine he urges his readers to "cultivate an active, healthy skepticism with regard to all literature purporting to explore transvestism. None of it—and this includes TURNABOUT—should be taken as the last word on the subject."

Both Leonard Wheeler and I heartily concur with Mr. Shaw.

THE END









# He wears lace panties under his Ivy League suit!

Leonard A. Wheeler is a "normal" male member of society. He has been married once. He has had numerous love affairs. He worships women, their femininity, their wiles, their soft and yielding natures. So much so, in fact that his greatest desire is to be exactly like them!

So, he dresses like a woman! Under his Ivy League suit, he wears lace panties!

He often thinks like a woman. Yet Leonard is a man in every respect, except when his other self — the feminine side — takes over.

He calls that other self, "Connie."

Leonard is not a homosexual, although psychiatrists may list him as "latent." But one thing is certain:

Leonard is simply not normal, not at all like the accepted image of masculinity in our society!

