

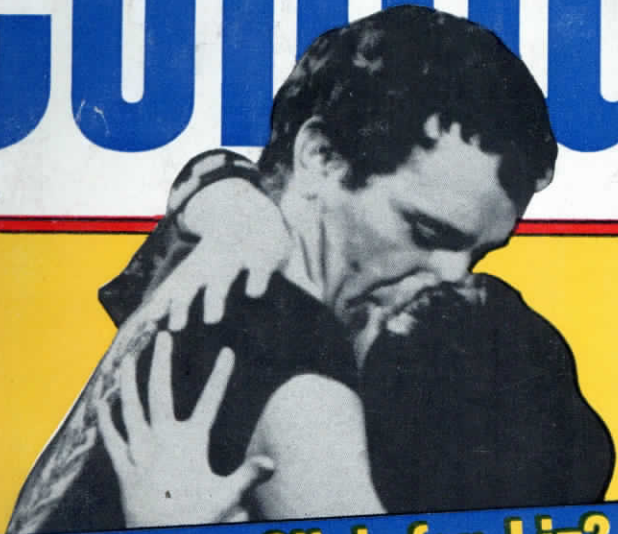
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Tattle-Tape:

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SOMOZA
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ABOUT
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AMERICAN
'AFFAIRS'**



**"HOW THE
SEX CHANGE
OPERATION
WAS
PERFORMED
ON ME!"**

By Coccinelle

**The Boy Who Became One of the
World's Most Glamorous Girls**

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TELLS THE FACTS AND NAMES THE NAMES

Volume 10, No. 9

September, 1962

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Bonus Extra: HOLLYWOOD'S 6 WILDEST LOVE AFFAIRS

Name the era and we'll give you the love affair of the year in Hollywood. That's the way it has been since the first camera started grinding out the first flicker and, with the popularity of movies, fans became aware that ole debbil passion was no stranger to the stars. Did you know, for example, that one of Cloudland's hottest romances ended in murder, way back before Lana Turner's torrid turns erupted in bloodshed? Turn to page 28 for some facts that will amaze you about Hollywood love on the set and off.

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NO FICTION — ALL FACT

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IN A CASABLANCA clinic, in October 1958, a French surgeon made it possible for me to cross the sex barrier.

By a revolutionary technique, perfected by experiments with monkeys, he performed a delicate operation that suppressed the only remaining traces of my original manhood. It opened the way for me to live as a normal woman, normal in all respects except one—I could never have children. But after all, there is always the possibility of adoption. As for the rest, I really am, a woman. A liberated woman.

For years, as you know, my whole being unconsciously sought that solution. Born a boy, I began to hate everything masculine with my first toddling steps. It was revulsion rather than a perversion—a revulsion of nature's terrible er-

ror in giving me the heart, brain and nervous system, feelings and desires of a woman, along with the organs of man.

Had a Problem

Little by little, I became conscious of my problems while I was an apprentice hairdresser, and later a page boy. I found a palliative, but not a solution, by becoming a female impersonator, or transvestite. I made a name for myself in Paris and on the road. Was starred by the "Carrousel," a specialized night club where boys—camouflaged as artfully as possible—perform as girls.

After incredible tragi-comic goings on with the French Army, I'd finally been discharged. I was free to earn my living, surround myself with friends. I shared my Paris apartment, and hotel rooms

on tour with a fellow artist, Robert. Our relationship had become darkened by my special burden, that error of Nature. It was up to me to do something, I felt. But what?

Then luck came to my aid. Perhaps it was more than luck. There is another word, one I hesitate to use, it might sound sacrilegious.

Anyway, I was at Casablanca with the road show, starring at the "Negresco" cabaret. Friends and acquaintances often came to chat with me after my return.

One evening, a young girl approached my table, greeting me. I glanced up. Tall, well-built, elegant, she had shoulder length braids of red hair. I returned her greeting politely but wondered "Who is she?" She looks familiar. But where have I seen her before.

You know, in our profession,

Told for the First Time:

"How The SEX CHANGE OPERATION

Was Performed On Me!"

Bonus Extra Part II



we meet so many people all the time. It's impossible to remember them all. The young lady sensed my puzzlement.

"Don't you recognize me?" she asked.

I made faint polite sounds, but she persisted.

"Then you've forgotten the lad at Nice, the electrician?"

I didn't get the connection. I looked at her closely. No. Not possible. She couldn't be that boy dressed up. After all my years as a transvestite, I can usually spot an impostor a mile away.

A friend called her and she disappeared into the supper crowd. But she came back another time and we talked more. She refreshed my memory.

Three years before I'd worked at "Maxims," a cabaret at Nice, located over the "Whisky a Gogo."

The latter is a drinking spot with continuous music in the background, controlled by an electrician, a high-fi specialist. The electrician, that year, was a very pleasant young man who seemed interested in our show. He came backstage one day to see me, asking if there was any possibility of working with the Carrousel troupe. I told him that, after all, it wasn't up to me; he should see the manager. That was the last I'd heard of the young man.

Boy Was Girl

And here, face to face with me in Casablanca, was the very same person. The pretty redhead girl was none other than that electrician from the "Whisky a Gogo" at Nice.

"How come?" I asked.

"I've had an operation," she

answered.

I jumped. I asked a million questions. She was terribly reserved, at first, almost annoyed. She was very timid. But after a few more drinks, I dared to return to the subject.

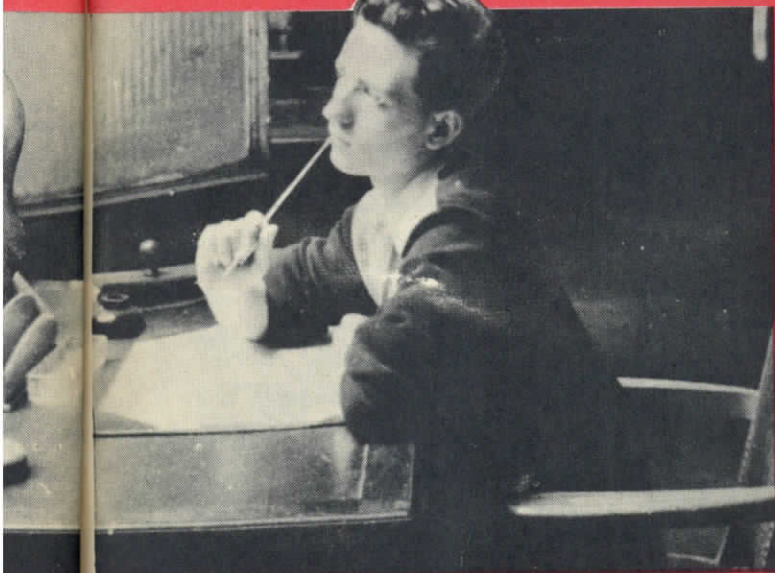
"Come to my dressing room and let me see," I implored.

She refused, blushing. I insisted. Finally she gave in and came backstage. In spite of her embarrassment, she lifted her skirt, slipped off her panties.

One glance was enough. Unless I was dreaming, she was a girl! Back at the hotel later, I couldn't sleep a wink.

Afterwards, I made a point of inviting her to my table. Our friendship grew. We planned to go to the beach together one afternoon.

(Continued on next page)



I was a page boy at the Automobile Club when I felt the first stirrings to be a transvestist.



My marriage. The most solemn, yet most joyous occasion of my life. I married Francis Bonnet. I was a woman fulfilled.

By COCCINELLE

The Boy Who Became One of the World's Most Glamorous Girls

She awoke that morning, early,

all set to switch from boy to girlie!



During the Rose Festival I met the fabulous Bardot but the thrill I felt vanished later when that oh, so gorgeous star, Debbie Reynolds, came to see me.

"It was a horrible awakening for me. My pains resembled those of birth!"

She called for me in her car and we headed for a deserted inlet on the Moroccan coast. Once there, I confessed my doubts to her. I begged her to let me see again. Graciously, she consented.

I looked, scrutinized, examined, even touched her. No. No doubt was possible. She WAS a woman, in every sense of the word.

What a Revelation

My head whirled. I bombarded her with questions. So she told me her story, a story rather like mine, except that she'd never worked in travesty. A native of Casablanca, she'd heard people talk about a clinic there, a private maternity and gynecological hospital where a brilliant surgeon, a Dr. Buroux, performed miracles. Interested in sexual anomalies, the doctor developed a theory. By laboratory tests, through trial and error, he finally succeeded in changing a

male monkey into a female.

The former "Whisky a Gogo" electrician called on Dr. Buroux. Extremely reluctant at first, the surgeon finally agreed to risk the operation but disclaimed all responsibility in advance. He could guarantee nothing. But before my eyes was the conclusive evidence of his success. There and then I decided. I, too, would be operated on.

My redheaded friend went with me to see the surgeon. The doctor examined me, weighed the possibilities. Finally, he accepted in principle, but insisted that, before taking any such drastic step, I must seriously consider every aspect of the problem, including the possibility of accident in such an audacious intervention.

We talked price, too. It was expensive, of course, far beyond my means. There were also long-term contracts I had to fulfill for the

Carrousel. So we set a tentative date for eight months later.

Back in Paris, I pondered the pros and cons. Conscientiously, I discussed it with my friends. In general, everyone understood my motives. But they insisted on the moral and physical risks I'd be running. I talked at length with Robert. After all, I hoped to spend my life with him.

I wrote Dr. Buroux, confirming our date. The time came, and I took off for Casablanca. I arrived at the clinic as expected, I went to sleep in a small room, sparkling in its fresh coat of white paint. Several hours later I woke up, suffering horribly. But I was a woman.

How It Was Done

When Dr. Buroux approached the floodlighted operating table, he had before him an operating field carefully delineated by



Celebrities flocked to the "Carrousel" like that darling Van Johnson of 'Music Man' fame. Norma Sykes—you know her as Sabrina—was another visitor to the club I starred in.



compresses: roughly speaking the lower abdomen.

The intervention had been meticulously prepared beforehand. Laboratory examinations, analysis, X-rays from every angle. The doctor had scrutinized them with careful attention. He had talked to me at length. I'd told him about my life, the various physical and moral reactions that constituted my exceptional case. Because of professional ethics, he had first to convince himself that the operation was useful, necessary.

So now, an assistant handed him the first instrument. Taking the male organ, he slit it lengthwise and removed the unnecessary parts. Isolating the urethra, he placed it where it would have been, if Nature hadn't erred. Forming an opening, he anchored it, then cut off the useless remains of the canal.

Next, taking the organ he'd slit open, he sewed it up, and turned it as one turns a sock or glove finger, inside out. He placed the resulting cylinder where it would exist in a normal female, attached to the wall with catgut which would eventually disappear. To avoid any accident

or deformation, he inserted a metal plug, the shape of a candle. During the next two weeks, it would gradually be rotated (after an injection of oil, of course) to prevent the metal from sticking to the skin. This way the graft would take perfectly.

The rest of the operation was like ordinary plastic surgery. With the male gland skin, he normalized the external area of the operating field. He created folds, *mineur and majeur* which blind Nature had thoughtlessly forgotten and which, later on, developed normal sensitivity. In fact, everything became normal in about a month.

Now the operation was finished, except for the usual antiseptic and pain killing precautions. I was wheeled back to my room.

It was a horrible awakening for me. I was feverish, obliged to lie flat on my back without budging an inch, so as not to displace the metal plug during the first few days. If I'd had the strength, I think I'd have jumped out of the window. My pains, it seems, resembled those of a woman about to give birth.

Slowly, the agony lessened. There were still a few bad moments when the surgeon and his assistants examined me, injected oil and turned the metal plug. Then, one day, they took the plug out. I felt liberated. After came the removal of certain stitches, something one fears dreadfully, in advance, but which lasts only a second. Finally convalescence.

This is the story of my operation. My body has done the rest. Take for instance, my chest. Before, I had followed on intensive female hormone treatment, resulting in beautiful breasts. But they had to be maintained by booster shots. Since my operation, there has been no further need. Dr. Buroux had predicted as much.

"You won't secrete any more male hormones," the doctor told me. "You no longer have male glands. And your female hormones—your whole life proves how strong they already were—, will, definitely become dominant now. Your breasts should stay firm and round."

And he was right. It was the same, locally. For about a year

(Continued on page 46)

(Continued From Page 21)

and a half after the operation. I had to use a rather greasy pom-made at night, if necessary. But no longer. My organism has become entirely feminine. The latent lubricating glands have taken over and function normally. As do all the thousands of tiny nerve ends and blood vessels which permit natural sensitivity.

I must even admit that, one or two days a month, I feel weary, heavy, somewhat congested. No other symptoms, of course, as I can't have children. But it proves that Dr. Buroux's knife only corrected a technical organic error of Nature, reestablished a normal equilibrium in my body. He completed medically the metamorphosis that I'd begun, all on my own and as it were by instinct—as soon as I was old enough to think.

Back in Paris, I told Robert all about the operation. He listened.

Then, a certain evening I knew my convalescence was over. No more pains. My tissues completely healed. The terribly important moment was at hand. After four years of living with Robert, in a somewhat equivocal situation, suddenly I felt like a young girl about to be married.

The lights were off. I was frightened. It was truly my nuptial night. Somehow, with one corner of my brain, I couldn't help but noticing Robert's unexpected roughness. Or was he, perhaps . . . uneasy?

"What is the matter, Robert?" I asked.

Brutally, he replied. "Frankly, I'm no longer interested. Girls? There are millions of them on earth, each prettier and more experienced than the next one. Frankly, this way, it's no longer you. That damned operation was a mistake."

My world collapsed. So this was the result of all that I'd desired, done, suffered.

I became desperate. I began to act like some of the girls of whom I'd always disapproved. I no longer resisted some of the handsome lads who'd importuned me before without success. At their houses, of course, because Robert

sullenly refused to leave mine. Ten? Twenty? Perhaps I exaggerate. But I lost count in my despair.

But I had to get hold of myself. From then on, I lived in a whirlpool of shows, galas, dinner and suppers, and road tours.

In Turin I met Line Renaud, the well-known French TV, radio and music hall singer. At the Alfieri Theatre, I was what's known in France as the *vedette americaine*, that is, I closed the first half of the evening's performance. Naturally, Line was the big star, the headliner, who dominated the second half and closed the show. We met backstage and I have remained her ardent admirer ever since. She is so sweet, so courageous, so talented!

If I'm ever in trouble, I'm sure Line would help and advise me, we've become such good friends. She and her husband, Loulou Gaste, the song writer and band leader, often dine at my place in Paris. And she invites me to theirs—or to the *Colombe d'Or*, a favorite haunt of movie and show people, a simple smart hotel at Saint Paul de Vence, inland from Cannes on the coast. As her guest there, I've met Henri-Georges Clouzot, the French film director, and his actress wife, Vera, the singer Tinon Rossi and his wife. And it was through Line that I got to know the actor Michel Simon, so timid in public but so marvelously witty among intimates. Yes, Line and I are good friends. Thanks to the Alfieri Theatre in Turin.

Italian men are certainly not timid. They walk right up to women in the street, pay them compliments. On my first visit, it so upset me, that I didn't dare go out alone. I had friends call for me. Something else surprised me. Italian men are always in a group—so different from Frenchmen, or any others, for that matter. They're never alone with you, unless one has a "crush" on you that lasts a couple of weeks or a couple of months. No, when they are in an adventurous mood, they're always in a group.



This photo holds poignant memories for me. It was taken just before Charles Trenet was in a crash.

During my trip to Italy, my first film was being shown: *Europe By Night*. Blasetti, the director, did an excellent job, assembling the best music-hall and cabaret numbers from big cities throughout western Europe. I'd had the honor to be included, doing my Paris Carrousel number. In front of the Italian cinemas, the marquees and posters displayed my name and featured me as the leading star!

Finally, my tour of Italy ended. With a certain sadness, I flew back to Paris. Back to an inevitable break with Robert. Back to several months of an emotionally upset life, to moments when I asked myself, "Am I on the wrong road? Have I taken a wrong turning?"

Then one day, Kiki Moustic introduced one of her friends. A tall good-looking lad with wavy hair and regular features. Sweet, kind,

rather timid. A lad who hadn't yet found himself. He was seeking his path in life. He'd tried his hand as a salesman but hated it. He wanted to be a journalist. He was a good photographer.

Little by little, this pleasant lad became an important part of my life. Then, the most important. His name was Francis.

It was easy to go out with Francis. He let me be myself. He let me expand—and he was never jealous. He was always there.

Once I arrived with Francis at the Broche d'Or in Paris. I was very B.B., in a superbly low-cut frock and waist-length blonde hair. There was complete silence. Then a whisper passed from table to table: "It IS her . . . yes."

Impertuable, I ordered my dinner. Then, ten minutes later in walked B.B., the real one, escorted by Sacha Distel. B.B. herself looked at me, startled for a minute, then she burst out laughing. After all, next to her I was but a pale copy. Brigitte's always been nice to me, but I can't say as much

for some of her relatives.

All the big stars, on the whole, have helped me. One of the nicest, is marvelous Marlene Dietrich. I made her acquaintance in my favorite restaurant on the Cote d'Azur, and we've seen each other often since. If I'd been free, it might even have been a question of going on the road with her.

At the Carrousel, all the big stars turn up. There is never a problem about being photographed with them. Some even became my friends. That's the way I got to know Anita Ekberg, before she had such a big success in *Dolce Vita*. She was a bit crazy — not speaking to her husband one day, and madly in love with him the next—but adorable as could be. I also met the slim, beautiful, well-mannered Eva Gabor—and those two great comics, Bob Hope and Fernandel, when they were shooting a film together in Paris. I laughed until I cried. Bob Hope must have seen the Carrousel show at least twenty times.

One unforgettable night at the

Carrousel took place when the celebrated American baseball player, Joe DiMaggio, Marilyn Monroe's ex-husband, turned up. We couldn't exchange three words, of course, because of language. But I think he was quite amused. I was in my Marilyn Monroe period, you see.

Soon I was offered a contract to tour Australia. I had to accept immediately, or not at all. I decided to go, and I managed to include gentle Francis as my secretary.

When I arrived with Francis at the Sydney airport, I figured my impresario, Lee Gordon was really on the beam. An army of journalists, radio reporters, and cameramen was on hand. It wasn't long before I learned the reason.

In 1959, Australia was still marked by made-in-England puritanism. A strip-tease hadn't yet been seen on the boards. A few shows had nude girls, but, to stay within the law, they stood still on a revolving stage, not speaking, not smiling, above all, not making the slightest gesture.

When Gordon learned that my Paris number included a strip-tease, he concocted a Machiavelian scheme. He announced the coming engagement to the proper authorities and described the numbers in the show. At the mere sound of "strip-tease," the authorities screamed. Then Lee let loose his secret weapon. "But it's not a woman," he announced. "It's a man. You can verify that in his passport."

The poor Sydney officials! What could they do?

So little Coccinelle (ladybird) flew in from Paris to open a new chapter in Australian show business.

My famous strip-tease was performed on a bed, surrounded by my chorus girls. My closing number was a frenzied Charleston, in a short dress with fringe, swinging wildly. I also wore a yard-long feather boa, and a very 1925 wig.

I went on twice nightly, at seven and eleven, except on Sundays. The hours being more reasonable than in Europe, I could lead an almost normal life in Sydney. So, after the first few days at the palatial Rex Hotel, I rented a fur-

(Continued on next page)



This is How I Looked After My Sex Change Operation

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nished apartment for Francis and me. Typically American, there was everything from a "fridge" to TV, even a washing machine. So I lived a *la bourgeoisie*, doing the cooking and washing, like almost any wife. And I had time to appreciate Francis, his kindness, patience and affection.

Right from the start, there were advantages that hadn't existed with Robert. First, and most important, I really was a woman for Francis. He hadn't known me as anything else. On that score, there wasn't the least shadow in our relationship. Also, officially, he was my secretary. He had no activity of his own. There couldn't be that terrible jealousy which so often exists between show people and which still astonishes me. No scenes such as Robert had made because he couldn't stand my being a star, when he wasn't.

Also, let's admit it, I am a bit of a martinet. The professional tie between Francis and me, no matter how theoretical, was to my advantage. During our three months in Australia—I could do exactly as I pleased.

Shortly after reaching Australia, Lee Gordon launched me on a whirlwind of dinners and parties.

One of those evenings I met Sabrina, the English starlet, a publicity wonder whose career is entirely built on a chest a *la* Jayne Mansfield... multiplied by three. Monumental! When Francis danced with her he had to shout to make himself heard, he was that far away!

Sabrina... Hmmm. Another typical show business story. I thought she was a good friend.

One day, while shopping in a big store, I discovered some marvelous strass imported from Austria. I bought some, tried it out, saw that it would make an out-of-this-world stage outfit. That evening, I happened to mention it to Sabrina. When I went to the shop next day to place my order, zut! — would you believe it? Not a smidge left. Sabrina had got there before me and bought out the stock. Fortunately, the charming owner re-ordered more for me and had it flown in from Vienna.

When my Australian stay was up, Lee Gordon, pleased by our mutual success, made me a sur-

prise present—a return via the Pacific, with an eight-day, supertuous vacation in Hawaii.

Off on the wings of a plane, arrival at Hawaii and, *voila!* I'm installed in a grand hotel on marvelous Waikiki Beach. What a small world, was my not very original reaction. I didn't know how truly I spoke. No sooner was I stretched out on the golden sand, than an American woman approached me.

"You're Coccinelle (ladybird), aren't you?" she asked.

She flaunted the Paris Carrousel program before my astonished eyes. She'd been there only forty eight hours before! Flying really is fabulous.

I met lots of pleasant people through her. But I must have scandalized them on the Hawaiian beaches. I was absolutely the only woman wearing a French bikini, the tiniest, most revealing one!

Plane time came too soon. Honolulu, San Francisco, Kansas City, New York. At New York, a two day stopover, spent almost entirely shopping.

In New York again I met the American woman of Waikiki beach. She took me to the Club 38, in Greenwich Village. I was warmly received and photographed with the entertainers. I saw the show. I must admit the stage, scenery and costumes are ultra-modern. But the artists just don't come up to French standards. They are too obviously men. Make-up too crude, voices too raucous. But they are very talented. They sing, and above all, they dance marvelously. But I still prefer my good old Paris Carrousel.

Before long, we were back in Paris. Home again!

What a life I had. I have finally gotten everything I have hoped for—even dear, gentle Francis. We were married on March 20, 1962 at St. John Church in Montmartre—often referred to by American tourists as the "French Little Church Around the Corner."

Now, what more do I want? I suppose it is natural, since my dream of becoming a woman has been completely fulfilled, that I should want to quit transvestism.

What I would like is my own restaurant in Paris—a terribly chic one. I'll glide gracefully about

the room, chatting with acquaintances, I'll advise them about the menu, help them choose wines. The name of my new place? But that's obvious "*CHEZ COCCINELLE*."

And nothing would please me more to see you American readers

when you decide to visit France. Americans are so courageous, so adventuresome, and so kind.

So, the next time you stop in Paris, look up Coccinelle. She (only *she*, now) will be either at the Carrousel—or at her dreamed-of *Chez*. • • •

More About

(Continued From Page 36)

Tattle-Tape

- myself about two thousand dollars worth of French clothes, some luggage and French perfume. I think, let me see, I believe I had seven pieces of luggage to carry back the loot. Here (showing writer a rich, brown alligator suitcase), this is one of the pieces.
- Q. Did he give you any money?
- A. No, see, that's why I was smart. He didn't pay me for my time and all the travelling I had to do—just for the same old thing. I like sex, sure, but fair is fair. He didn't pay me any more, so why should I be squeamish about buying things at the best department store in Managua—where they spoke English and they knew who I was the minute I walked in with two bodyguards. They charged it without saying a peep. I didn't even have to sign for it.
- Q. But why did you decide to come home?
- A. It was raining a lot and I don't go for the tourist bit, you know, taking a sightseeing tour of the tobacco farms or the cornfields or the big cattle they breed there. I felt I'd had it, so I told Somoza that I wanted to go home.
- Q. How did he take it?
- A. He was angry. He said that after all the trouble he had bringing me first to Miami and then hopping across the Caribbean to Managua, I was ungrateful.
- Q. What did you do then?
- A. I told him he'd invited me; I didn't ask him. But I realized *toute suite* that if I stayed any longer and he ever got tired of me, I'd end up in a Nicaraguan cat house. So I lied, and lied like hell.
- Q. What did you say?

- A. First I told him that my mother was ill and we didn't know whether she had to go to a mental institution or not?
- Q. Did he react?
- A. He looked at me strangely. Then he asked why didn't I tell him that before. I told him that he never asked me, and anyway, it's not the kind of thing you like to discuss with people, especially a tall, handsome man you are trying to impress.
- Q. Don't tell me he fell for that garbage?
- A. And how! He was so sympathetic, he sent a package to the plane (a commercial airline), for my mother. It was a filigreed silver bracelet made by *mestizos* and earrings to match. It was thoughtful. I still wear them—I'm mad for earrings, must have 500 pairs.
- Q. Get back to the story, please, Daphne.
- A. One other thing, while I cried when I told him about my mother, I said he didn't have to pay me (I already realized he wouldn't, so what the hell), until I returned in a week or the latest two weeks.
- Q. Was it as easy as that?
- A. Yes (here, let me fix you another Martini). He promised that my fee would be doubled when I returned—but I should prepare to stay for a long time—and bring plenty of clothes.
- Q. Did you take off right away?
- A. All I took off right away was my clothes. His farewell scene was as good an Academy Award performance as mine. We made love then and there on a white persian rug with those elephant hoofprints on it.
- Q. Did those two guys watch again?



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