

Hiring of Elaine Hall - 10 Supplement

By Rachel B with Jessica C's Blessing

Mom and my sister Ruth came back into the room. Mom cried a lot of happy tears, it was hard to believe what had happened. When I left we agreed to have dinner the three families together again soon.

While Gail had settled into a pattern and the household was settling down after the arrival of two new people, Gail and Elaine, I was becoming increasingly aware of the date I, as Elaine, was due to return to work. I still wasn't sure under what guise I would face Lynn and my fellow workers. Was I going to go back as temporary help---Elaine until my self-imposed commitment to remain as her until some day in the future? That date was nebulous as it was defined as when our project was delivered to the customer. Returning as Dan after this was completed was a door that had not been shut to me by Lynn, although I think that she would be greatly surprised if I went this route. The alternative of course would be to bite the bullet and declare to Lynn my desire to remain a woman and let her orchestrate my re-introduction to her staff and the Company. Even if I choose the latter—there I go again putting me first—let me say if we, Julie and I, decided on me staying a woman, there were still some personal questions we would need to work out as to what kind of woman I was to become.

Julie has been perfectly clear that she loved Elaine, however the questions that remain have not been addressed at all other than hypothetically when I first began this journey. In fact, it was like we were teenagers on a picnic, bragging about how brave we were and expressing bravado about jumping from the small cliff at the lake's edge into the water. When arriving at the cliff, the bravado disappears and seemingly irrevocable decisions had to be made. Some would jump; others would turn around. I loved Julie with all of my being, but I wanted assurance that the lack of masculine attention wouldn't grow wearisome. Many authors have gotten rich exploiting this truth of human nature.

We needed to talk, and soon. But this wasn't something I felt we should do at home. Robin was a smart girl and would immediately sense or feel it if the discussion went badly and besides, if it did, I know there would be at least one meltdown-me. She would be the innocent victim of the consequences of such a disaster; I didn't want to burden herself with such memories. With all of my

soul I didn't want this to happen and I hoped for the opposite. I wanted the discussion to be soul-searching, honest and reaching a conclusion that Julie and I both wanted and would embrace.

Brigitte would be an excellent facilitator of this discussion; her professionalism in getting me this far was obvious, but I didn't want to use her. First, I wanted this to be something that Julie and I worked out for each other by us alone. Besides, I planned on asking her and Ashley to baby-sit while we went out. It wasn't going to be a short evening. If all went well, I knew that there would be two lovebirds getting to know each other anew. If it went badly, there would be damage control as well as the need to begin discussing some of the consequences. I cringed at this thought!

I also knew that a fancy restaurant was out of the question. We wouldn't need the distraction of fending off the attention of men seeing two attractive, unescorted, women. Guiseppe's was the ideal spot, if I was successful in getting Moma G. to realize that we needed to be alone. My plan would be to enlist her aid in orchestrating our service in as non-intrusive a manner as possible. I would preorder the wine that Julie liked and we would develop a signal when to bring the meals that I would preorder. And, just in case, I would have her chill and have ready a bottle of champagne. This left introducing my plan to Julie and getting agreement as to what we needed to do.

Before putting this little plan into action, I wanted to get Julie to agree that a talk was needed and we both needed to be part of the decision. Time was short so my hesitation to say anything was trumped by the need to move forward. As soon as the kids were asleep I started to open up to Julie. The conversation went easier than I thought. I guess we both were kind of ignoring the elephant in the house hoping it would leave of its own accord, but realizing that waiting would just allow the elephant to grow even larger. After I told her of my thoughts about going out to have this talk, Julie commented, "That is certainly not Dan talking, he never would have suggested this. He would have told me what he had planned and that would be it. Elaine is showing remarkable sensitivity of the possible consequences on the kids, and on us and has let me see her own fears. That is why I love her."

When I approached Bridgette about baby-sitting, she expressed reservations about us trying to do this without professional guidance. I told her that if she had faith in her own work in the changes in me, she should have no worry. My love of Julie would be my over-riding concern. I wasn't entering this with any thoughts as to what I wanted; I wanted the discussions to center on accommodating Julie's wants and needs. Hopefully, she would be doing the

same about me. While my fear was natural, I felt we had a good chance to achieve our goals. I wasn't as forthcoming at Giuseppe's. Mama G, being a romantic at heart, assumed it was just a special occasion for Julie and I and gushed at her being allowed to be a part of it.

That left only one loose end for Julie and me to agree on before the big event: what should we wear. I was reluctant to suggest that we dress casually as it could be taken to mean a lack of seriousness. On the other hand, getting dressed up would put too much emphasis on the gravity of the dinner for us. We agreed on skirts as being a good compromise while retaining more of my femininity than a pant suit or slacks would allow. I chose a gray mid calf length skirt and a peach angora sweater with panty hose and pumps. Julie's leather skirt didn't reach her knees, paired with a low cut (for her) robin blue blouse, dark tights and 3 inch sandals. We were ready to go after a light make-up session. She still looked beautiful and she said that I was also. A kiss on the cheek for each of us from Bridgette and we were off. I took it as a good sign that Julie sought my hand and clasped it for the walk into Giuseppe's.

Mama G must have been camped in the restaurant's front window and spied us approaching from some distance, because when we arrived she greeted us at the door with an embrace for Julie and a kiss on the cheek for me. She led us to a booth with some privacy and I noted that the candle on the table was already lit and our wine decanted and glasses were filled. I wanted to sit next to Julie but thought better of it. Communication would be more comfortable facing each other, and besides both of us would be in a position to learn not just from the words spoken but also from expressions and body language. After straightening my skirt under me, I raised my glass to hers with a "here's to us" toast.

Have you ever tried to move a boulder that was in your way? That's what I felt like at that moment. Someone would have to open the dialogue. How do you start? I started talking first, talking about the things we could agree on as a backdrop for what would need to follow. These would be the things that were done that could not be changed. For example, being on the hormones as long as I have been has given me an attractive almost female body, but at the cost of a diminished penis and probably useless testicles. It also meant that I was probably going to have surgery recommended, an orchidectomy to remove them, to minimize the risk of cancer. I then listed what I felt the options moving forward were. I felt that the decision on one of them would be more or less permanent and lifelong.

Before I went any further I asked assent from Julie that we were on the same page so far. She said nothing but looked down at the table and nodded her

head. I cleared my throat and said to her, “Julie, before we go any further, I want to apologize for my actions and lack of actions from the day that we met that hurt you or failed to fulfill you in any way. It would be easy to blame elements in my past for forming me into such an insensitive, selfish being, but I am an adult, I should have been able to see the harm I was causing you and tried to help myself. But I was so self-centered that I couldn’t see anything. I am sorry and I dedicate myself if given the chance to erase the past in both of our memories” I took a sip of wine and continued. “Julie, I love you with all of my being. I’ll love you in whatever form I take in the future. I want you to know that I want you to decide whichever of the forms my identity and my body take. I will be happy as long as I am able to share it with you.” I had to stop; my sobbing which I had struggled to control to finish what I had to say took over and wracked my body. Julie got up and came to my side of the booth and wrapped her arms around me. At some point, she let go with one arm and her hand started to stroke my cheek and then run it through my hair. It was if she was calming an injured child and eventually her soft hand had the desired effect. I was glad that we had agreed on light make-up but I knew that my face was a mess. Fixing it would be a losing proposition as I feared that I might have a repetition before the evening was done.

Julie returned to her side of the booth once the emergency was abated and asked, “Dan, Elaine, I appreciate everything and I do mean everything that you said. I don’t want to dwell on them now, just know your words and actions are in my heart. I understand what you mean about the bodily changes that cannot be undone and I truly appreciate what you have done already for us” She paused before continuing, “What are the options that you see moving forward for you?” I don’t know why but I lifted one finger on my hand and said, “I could return to work as is, meaning a temporary Elaine, but with no end in sight. I would probably have to continue on hormones continuing to develop as a female making a return to Dan that much more problematic.” Up went a second finger, “I could talk to Lynn about negotiating a severance package and resigning. I would make sure that any severance would include care by Dr. Josie as well as any plastic surgery to expedite my return to Dan.” A third finger went up, “Or I could continue my transitioning towards becoming only female and your lifelong female partner. This would need three more fingers so I just started over with the first finger, “I could just continue whatever is medically needed to continue as I have been, but doing whatever is recommended to function fully as a female. There would be no changes to what’s left between my legs; an orchidectomy, of course but leaving my penis shrouded as at present. Or I could let the little guy loose when they do the surgery to remove the testicles, that would be the second option” The third finger went up, “or finally, I could elect SRS.”

Finally, all of the cards were on the table. “We could put each one on an index card, turn them over and shuffle and have you pick one with your eyes closed” I giggled at this as did Julie, adding her own comment “But that would be the coward’s way out and besides it would mean that whatever one is chosen we never would have agreed to it; we just let it happen” Neither of us felt that this would be satisfying as helping us to heal the past and build the future.

I refilled the wine glasses and took a long sip before saying, “Well, which one do you pick” Julie shook her head replying, “you don’t get off that easy. This has to be a joint decision. We, our family, today and tomorrow are to be affected by the decision. Notice I didn’t say ‘your decision’ or ‘my decision’. Someday when she is older Robin will start asking questions and I want to be able to say, this was our decision. I realize that we are capable of going round and round on this, but I’m sure that you have a choice, Elaine, just as I do. I am prepared to make a choice, but not until I have your input”.

I wanted to avoid having to make a choice, but continued evasiveness was not going to get us anywhere. I closed my eyes for a moment and then looked directly at Julie’s eyes, “Whatever the outcome, my principal want is the opportunity to tell you and show you every day that I love you, Julie. Whatever body I wind up with, I want it to be welcome in your arms and in your bed forever. Looking at the past, I can find little in Dan, other than marrying you, to be proud of. Conversely, although it has been a short few months, I am quite happy with Elaine’s accomplishments, being there for you and not causing you grief, being a better parent to Robin and even suckling Gail. I want this to continue and grow. Professionally, I feel that I have become an asset and no longer a liability to my Company and my co-workers. I could go back to Dan, but I would be more at risk and need to prove myself everyday that my demeanor has totally and irrevocably changed for the better. Call it the lazy way, but being Elaine feels better now and to the extent I can see the future, I think I will prosper as Elaine.” I signaled my oratory being completed, at least for the moment by taking more than a sip of wine and hoping that Mama would bring some appetizers soon to balance out the wine being consumed. I didn’t want to become slobbered on this important night. I looked at Julie and saw something that had been missing since early in our marriage, a twinkle in her eye.

Buying time, Julie opened her purse to get out her compact and lipstick and touched up her lips. She took her glass and took a small sip. “Elaine, do you remember when we were out for dinner and we ran into your sister’s friend, Beth? She referred to Dan as a Neanderthal. That hurt me then mostly because I realized I hadn’t come to Dan’s defense. He wasn’t a bad person; he worked hard, was honest and a good provider. But in retrospect, I realize that down

deep I shared this feeling and this hurt even more. Over the past few months, I have grown to know a person who is, if I were to write it down, a poster child for what everyone should want in a mate. You, Elaine, are that person or are showing the potential to grow into that person. I want to be with you as you grow. I want to see my children, our children love and respect you and be proud of you as I am of my parents. I want to tell YOU that I love you, have YOUR arms around me and I want to welcome YOU to our bed.”

While there was still one issue to settle, I felt overjoyed at the harmony of our feelings and threw caution to the wind, stood up and motioned Julie to join me. She slid out of the booth, stepped towards me with a smile across her face and then we embraced, standing as one for what seemed an eternity. I could feel the tensions melt from our bodies as a long journey seeking recovery of our love had yielded riches. That also was a signal to Mama and she soon stood with us with an ice bucket of champagne and flutes. Putting the bucket in a stand that suddenly appeared, she worked to remove the cork which yielded its resistance with a resounding pop that reverberated throughout the restaurant. This alerted the patrons that had arrived that a celebration was taking place for the two women in the corner booth. While not everyone was disposed to approve of what they saw, many rose and began to applaud. I joyously filled flutes for Julie and I and Mama and then asked her to share the rest with those who had stood in support of us. What a joyous moment! This time it was not across from each other in the booth it was as close together as we could on the same side as we sipped our champagne. Our eyes toasted each other. No words were needed.

While neither of us was particularly hungry, we had to eat as the staff outdid themselves to prepare the meals that I had previously ordered. We both had the idea at the same time to share our food with the other as another small sign of our unity. I must say that this meal was beyond delicious even if any judgment was tainted by the euphoria overtaking me. I do know that it did go a long ways to settle the demons in my stomach.

I returned to the other side of the booth to await dessert and to say one more thing. I said to Julie that while the elephant has been vanquished, there is still the issue as to the form that I was to take down below. “Julie, I am still not comfortable with going the whole nine yards for SRS. I am ready to keep myself shrouded to keep the best feminine profile. Besides, I don’t know what contribution that my uncovered and lonely remnant would make towards making me a better lover in bed. If you are in agreement, at least in the short term, any issues related to my transition have been resolved. If you want me to undergo SRS, in a few short months I will have been living full time in my chosen sex for a year and I don’t think any of the medical people involved

would have any objections. If you truly want me to have that surgery, I can get myself ready.”

“Elaine, you now have a completely developed female body with all the curves in the right places, soft caressable skin, shapely legs and everything else except the vagina. I can think of only two reasons to have SRS that would remain. The two reasons would be to prepare yourself to receive a man and the second would be to fulfill your own sense of being a woman. I sincerely hope that I will be able to keep you faithful by meeting your needs and I would be devastated to realize that the pledge of fidelity that we exchanged when we were married no longer exists. That means the only legitimate reason to seek surgery would be to make you feel more complete as a woman. If you feel you are not comfortable, then you wait. I don’t have to wait because you would be doing it for you not me. That’s fine, but please don’t feel that it is something you have to do for me. I love completely the person I am looking at right now” She did giggle a moment and reminded me of my early insistence that my time as a woman would be short and that it grew on me so that we were at the point we were at today. “I suspect that your reluctance to go all the way will also work its way out”

By now, our Tiramisu has been sitting in front of us so we both paused to take and savor a bite. I then said to her, “I see only one loose end. What and when do we tell our parents?” Julie responded, “that can wait until we get home.” but she added, “The last time we saw them we said we would want the families to get together again soon. When we get home let’s check everyone’s availability and fix a date. We will surprise them with our news” When our desserts were finished and the last drops of champagne and wine were gone, I looked at my watch and was surprised how late it was. Julie told me that it would be best if we took a cab home as we probably would be safer that way and she wanted to snuggle on the way home, something that would be impossible if I were driving. She promised to come back for the car tomorrow to give me quality time with Robin and Gail.

Our trip home and the night were very reminiscent of our honeymoon night with a few deviations. We didn’t have to dismiss a baby sitter then. Bridgette was all smiles to see the look on our faces, the glow, and the messed up lipstick. She knew that her job was over, not only the baby-sitting but the redemption of Dan. She gave each of us a vigorous hug before she departed. A second difference was that on our wedding night Julie didn’t undo my bra and caress my breasts and nipples. But most significant was my change when we were in bed, devoting my efforts to ministering to Julie rather than performing only to satisfy my needs. Surprisingly, I later fell asleep fully satisfied and loving the sleeping woman in my arms.

Robin, Gail and I got home from the park shortly after Julie got home with the car. Yes, I was a good mother and applied sunscreen to both the girls. My feminine arms didn't have the strength that they used to and were complaining about the exercise they received pushing Robin on the swing and catching her at the bottom of the slide. I asked Julie if we should begin calling for peoples' availability for a get-together.

She nodded, saying she'd start if I wanted to start dinner "Elaine, it's not fair to us to have to entertain our guests, fix a meal for them and clean up afterwards on a day that we want to be the center of attention. And if we want to invite anyone else like Bridgette, Ashley and Cathy, our table isn't going to be large enough. We'd have to do it buffet style, and that means people balancing plates in their laps.

"Can't we splurge on this occasion and eat out? I was thinking of how Mama G has been so caring for us and she really outdid herself last night, a nice big tab would be a nice thing for them. They're closed on Sundays, but I suspect they would open just for our party." She added as an afterthought, "If anyone wants to continue the celebration here, our door will be open" I did some quick math in my head, winced a little but decided I couldn't refute her logic and nodded my assent.

That was all the incentive that Julie needed, and she quickly got to work. In short order, she had the families lined up for 3:00 PM on Sunday afternoon three weeks from now. That was a week after I was to return to work. I called Lynn to confirm my return and stated that I would want to talk to her as soon as I could after my arrival. She didn't let on that she had heard anything from Bridgette, but I told her we weren't revealing our decision until after my return to work and to please keep any information she received confidential. I knew as a professional she would.

Julie was like a whirlwind getting everything ready. She had Giuseppe's booked. It would be a fixed menu, served family style with plenty of choices for everyone. Beyond that she would not tell me anything. One day, Ashley shows up to help Julie take my measurements. She explained she had gone out to buy a new outfit for the occasion and saw one for me, but since it had been a while since I had tried on anything, and because of the style of the one she wanted me to wear, she wanted to have all the measurements exact. It had to be custom tailored, she said, and there literally was no room for error.

On the Friday afternoon, before the big event, the calm that had been the norm after the original burst of activity was shattered. I heard Julie screaming into the phone. “No, that can’t be. I was promised that the dress would be ready by tomorrow. Somebody should have seen the work stoppage coming and got the orders out of harm’s way before this happened. No, you can’t send me a substitute dress, I haven’t seen it and now we wouldn’t have time for alterations. It is for a special event on Sunday. It’s worthless to me in a week. Cancel my order and I will think twice before entrusting my dreams with your store in the future. Good-bye.”

I could tell she was distraught but I didn’t expect her to turn on me. She looked at my hand and shouted “Where did you get that ring? I never noticed it before. Who gave it to you?” Without waiting for my answer, she continued, “Get rid of it, It’s a fake, It means nothing. I never want to see it again” With that she rushed up to our bedroom and slammed the door. I took off the ring and put it in a corner of my large work purse. I didn’t need it here, but I certainly liked its deterrent effect when I went on the road with Lynn or anyone from the staff. Calm returned and by dinner time, Julie was back to her old self but not another word was said about Sunday.

Sunday morning, we both had salon appointments, Julie first and then we would swap places. I would be done by one, plenty of time for me to get home and get changed. When I was there, Annie my regular stylist was waiting for me, and sat me down and went to work. She didn’t ask me what I wanted, which was strange, and when I questioned her she said, “Julie has left specific instructions as to what was to be done.” Just go with the flow, I thought.

A manicurist whom I never saw before sat down to work on my hands. Before I realized what was going on I had ultra long nails with French tips. My only thought was that I was going to have to take a pass on diaper changing for now and what stir they would cause when I returned to work with them. But I was sure that Julie had all of this in mind.

When Annie was finished I was told to stay seated, they were going to do my make-up. My suspicion that it was not daytime casual was confirmed when I finally got to look at a mirror. My eyes went from my hair to my face. Neither was a look I had ever tried before but I had to concede that I looked stunning. I was tempted to take a photo of myself to use for future reference. I thought I could duplicate the make-up, but Annie would have to teach me how she had achieved such an elegant updo.

I thanked them all profusely as I left and I was somewhat confused as to what was going on. I was now too elegant for the dress I had picked out to wear. When I got to our bedroom, I confirmed that this was the dress I was going to wear and Julie had not picked anything different. I had suspected that I was going to be told to wear my fancy blue gown with this make-up and hair style, but that didn't happen.

'Sometimes domestic peace is best maintained in silence.' Knowing the effort that Julie had put into the day's planning, I wasn't going to question anything. For example, the dress was laid out, but she hadn't weighed in on accessories. I was on my own.

I was in a robe in the kitchen preparing a light lunch when the doorbell rang. It was my sister, Ruth. She was here to pick up Robin to take her to the park before the get together. So a hug for Robin and away she went skipping towards Ruth's car. Julie said that she wanted me to get dressed first and then get Gail ready while she dressed. She said that she wanted to leave early to be sure that we got there before any of the guests.

We arrived by 2:30 p.m. and I was wondering what we would do for the half hour before guests starting arriving. I would normally be able to spend time with Robin but she was at a park with Ruth. Mama G let us in and it didn't appear that any special arrangements had been made. I was fine with that as I foresaw this as a family event, nothing too special. On the other hand, Julie really had outshone me as if she was going to something BIG.

The dress she bought for herself was spectacular. It had spaghetti straps and was form fitting from bosom to its biased hem, just above the ankles in the back rising to just below the knees in front. The dress was silvery gray, and it was accented by a short darker gray bolero jacket. I would have thought that she would have opted for something more colorful. Only her jewelry and the rhinestone buttons on the jacket and the rhinestones in her silvery stockings imparted color as they refracted the light. She went over to Mama G and after a short low volume chat came over to me and took me by the hand. We ended up in the private dining room where all the tables had been pushed to one side and were barren except for a few boxes on the closest ones.

Julie said, "I have a surprise for you and I hope that you like it. Just promise me you'll stay quiet until I finish. At that point, you will probably suspect I have been plotting something to express my happiness of where we are at and where we are going. We don't have much time and you need to strip down to your panties."

Once I had done this, she had me stand with my eyes closed while she put something around my torso, adjusted it and closed it in the back. I could feel it partially cupping and pushing up my breasts, and being very tight on the rest of me down to my hips. She had me sit on a towel on a chair, telling me to remove my panty and handed me two of my favorite silken stockings. When she let me open my eyes, I saw that I was now wearing a strapless bustier in white with garters waiting for me to put on my stockings.

When this task was completed, she gave me a new white silk panty to pull on over the garter straps and then a white half slip. I stepped into the white pumps, at least 3 1/2 inch heels. By now I was beginning to realize what was happening, and I loved it. Julie had an all business demeanor up until that moment. When she saw my smile, she broke into a grin and stepped forward and kissed me on the cheek. "I guess that we're going to have to break the rule about not seeing the bride until the ceremony begins. But we'll have to adjust."

She took the hoops out of my ears and replaced them with glowing diamond chandeliers. Next my watch was replaced with a beautiful diamond bracelet. "The jewelry is rented, they will have to count as something borrowed." With that, she had me hold my hands upward to protect my hair and my make-up as I closed my eyes. Soon I could hear the ruffling sound of a multi-tiered gown being gathered and soon it was falling into place on me. Julie reminded me to keep my eyes closed while she made final adjustments and closed it up in the back. I then felt her adjusting something in my hair. Finally she said, "Open your eyes." Immediately I knew that I had a veil on, my suspicions that the dress was white, strapless and sleeveless were confirmed and I could see my flesh above the dress's bodice heaving with each breath. I knew I was a bride!

I recalled the phone conversation on Friday and asked her how did the dress arrive or is this a different one. She had a wry smile and said, "Smokescreen. I wanted you to be totally surprised. It worked." She added "The veil was mine for our wedding, that it something old; the dress is new, so all that's left is something blue," she announced, "That will come." She looked at her watch and said, "Not bad, it's not 3:00 yet. Sit and relax while I see who is here and who is missing". Without a watch, I couldn't track time, but it seemed like forever until Julie returned. "It's a miracle," she announced, "everyone is here and we can begin."

"Do you have your speech ready?" I giggled responding that I had prepared what I was going to say, but this turn of events has swept almost everything from my mind. I'll have to ad-lib it. I asked, "Will I know when I should

speak?” Julie winked and said nothing. She led me into the hall way which was now blocked from being seen from the restaurant by a make shift curtain.

“You’ll notice the dress has pockets in the folds of the skirt. Put this in a pocket. It will be the blue item you needed” She giggled at that. Before putting it in my pocket, I inspected what it was. It was a beautiful lace handkerchief. It had to be Irish and Bridgette had to have been involved somehow. I folded it carefully, put it in my pocket and said a thank you to the Almighty for providing me with so much love.

With a kiss on the cheek, she was gone and I was alone until someone would come and fetch me. All of a sudden, the curtain disappeared and there I stood in the hallway. I felt everyone’s eyes on me and began to feel terribly self-conscious. From the time we had come in and went to the back, the restaurant had been transformed with a semi-circle of seats facing the bar which was covered with white cloths and a special arrangement of flowers highlighted by two Bird of Paradise flowers. Julie stood alone in front of this arrangement signaling the main stage. Then I looked down and Robin had appeared in front of me. She had on a beautiful floor length dress and white gloves. I wondered what she had to be bribed with to let this much fuss be made about her. My first thought was that I would follow her up to join Julie, when my dad appeared on my right with his left arm open to accept my hand! He was beaming.

It may sound corny, but violin music and a flute began to play and that was our cue to move forward. Robin led and I floated behind her. If I didn’t have my dad’s arm I might have floated all the way to the ceiling. We walked across the back and turned towards Julie at an opening in the chairs. My dad stopped short of the front, turned towards me, lifted my veil and gave me a kiss on the cheek. I must be a woman; he’d never kiss a man!

I stepped forward facing Julie and put out my hand for hers. We stood like that until the music stopped. Sometimes silence can be a worrisome time, but the silence after the music was golden, I could feel everyone’s eyes upon us and looking at us in admiration. Finally, Julie cleared her throat and began, “I think it’s safe to say that any ambiguity as to what was going to happen with the two of us has been dispelled by now. My life partner is going to continue a magical transformation into a beautiful woman and remain a woman for as long as we live.”

“This process began at what was a dark and dangerous time. Only the faith of his employer in his ability prompted them to suggest, nay command, that his behavior be drastically modified. It was their threats as to the consequences of

no change and no acceptance of a novel means of behavior modification that was the beginning of this journey.”

I know that not every man, faced with this ultimatum, would or could accept it. It took a brave man and a man cognizant of his responsibilities as a spouse and a parent that would agree to attempt this process. He did. He did it with the caring guidance of some professionals who were not only earning a fee, but working hard to achieve the ultimate goal. To them for the miracles they achieved, I give my and our undying gratitude. I say also to my loving spouse, that the miracles would not have been possible without your bravery, your humility, and your acceptance of change. To you, Elaine, I am forever in awe and in love and thank you for making the sacrifices that you have made.”

“I must say that the process that you have gone through and continue to go through was beyond your expectations, mine, your employer’s and your help team’s. There are no road maps on how to proceed from here. There are no text books on the type of relationship we will have moving forward in society. But I know you are a woman. I know you are my spouse. I know you are a married woman. In fact, I recently discovered you wearing a ring to tell the world that you were married. I was upset by this because you had to do it by yourself. I would like to change that now.”

That was the signal for Robin to step forward. Julie uncovered half of the small pillow and took a ring from the pillow and motioned for Elaine to put out her left hand. As she put the ring on Elaine’s left ring finger, she said, “I feel that our original wedding vows are still intact so it would be redundant to recite them here.

Julie paused and as she placed the ring on Elaine’s ring finger she said, “Let this ring remind you of the covenant of our marriage. Remember, the circle of the ring symbolizes eternity and unending love. Wear this ring with my love every day of your life.” She then reached again for the pillow, uncovering the other side and lifting another ring, this with a diamond surrounded by other smaller diamonds. When a person receives an engagement ring, it symbolizes a pledge of love, devotion, faithfulness and caring. I wear the ring symbolizing the promises you made to me. With this ring, I give you my promise of continued love, continued devotion, continued faithfulness, and eternal devotion. Let it remind you of these promises each and every day and may the light that it attracts be your guiding light as we face whatever trials come our way. I love you, Elaine.” Julie stepped forward, lifted the veil from my face and we kissed.

Ashley stepped forward, and guided Julie and Elaine to two chairs and had them sit down. Her grandmother, Melanie, who Elaine recognized, appeared

and placed a lace shawl around their shoulders and handed each of them a small votive candle. She then proceeded to say in a solemn manner as when she invoked spirits for Dan becoming Elaine. He still could not understand the words or hear them well, but he accepted them as being something good for her and Julie. Finally, she said in a loud voice, “May the Spirit that made these two people united as one continue to watch over them, help them to prosper and be good mates to each other and good parents to their offspring. May they grow under the eyes of their parents and produce for them grandchildren to continue the legacy of these two loving creatures.” She stepped forward and took the candles and motioned for the two of us to stand and keep the shawl over our shoulders.

Julie winked at Elaine and that was the signal that it was her turn to say something. “I don’t know what else Julie has planned for today but hopefully we are near the end of these proceedings. I had planned some remarks in opening up to all of you with my decision to remain as Elaine, not become Elaine but to stay as her. About an hour ago my mind went blank as I was overcome by the beauty of Julie and more so by the beauty of this ceremony and her creativity in arranging it. The ceremony said it all: that I have decided to stay as Elaine and that decision was welcomed and embraced by the only person whose opinion matters, Julie. Darling, I love you and am forever grateful for this welcome you have given me in coming home”.

“I must admit that at the beginning of this passage, I was hurt, confused and angry at what was happening to me.” “I spent a lot of time on the internet researching the phenomena of men wearing women’s clothing, boys too. One underlying common denominator is the ultimate goal of most men who dress up as woman and that is to own and wear a wedding dress. Look at me. I am wearing a wedding dress, but I am no longer male; I am a woman. I truly am a bride, and I truly embrace who I am. Why? Well, when I look back in retrospect, I was a loose cannon and not a high caliber one at that. I was so totally self-centered that I saw only me, my wants, my needs and that included me in the center of every circle. I was destroying everything I came in contact with.

That is the antithesis of love. Love given and love received means the ability to want the best for the object of that love and to receive the gifts wrought by love from others. I certainly was not capable of giving love, nor could I accept it. What a miserable human being I was; what a miserable life I was going to have.”

“Even Robin, a young child who is only capable of love, knew that I was lacking. She didn’t say ‘Daddy, you’re terrible’ but her innocent observations

touched my heart as I began to listen to her. Robin, honey, I'm so sorry for not being the person you deserved. I hope that I'm doing better now. Look, she's smiling and nodding yes. She is a very smart child. I have apologized profusely to Julie so you don't need to have me re-hash that. It won't hurt her to hear me promise again, that with her help, I'll be a better partner in the future. I love you so much and my love is still growing."

"As Elaine, I have been the recipient of love from all corners, but more important I have discovered the joy of giving love to everyone around me. Instead of destroying, I look forward to building a foundation of caring for my family, my extended family and co-workers and the many friends who appear in my life."

"I also want to acknowledge Dr. Josie as being key to unlocking the demons that possessed me and replacing them with angels."

"I love you Julie, thank you for making me a bride and arranging this day that says so eloquently that I am a woman, a married woman, and that I am loved as a woman. Thank you all for coming and sharing these moments with us. You have added to their beauty. Now, if Mama G. is ready I invite you to enjoy her food, the common bond that unites all men and women. Thanks"

With that I turned and held Julie in my arms and kissed her; everyone began to clap and I whispered in her ear, "I realized the significance of your dress about the time that Ashley's grandmother was praying over us. Its colors are the traditional colors of a groom's tux. You were taking me as your bride. I am so looking forward to being your wife. I promise to exceed your expectations of me".

It seemed as everyone arose as one and flowed forward to congratulate Julie and me, and to congratulate Julie on a remarkable ceremony. Her response was different for everyone but echoed the same idea: Anything is easy when it is motivated by love. In the meantime, Mama G's helpers set up the tables, and delivered the food to the tables. Julie, Robin and I had our own table in the middle of the family's tables so we could see everyone and talk with them.

Mama Giuseppe opened a bottle of champagne with a resounding pop. Julie and I looked at each other; that sound will always have a special meaning for us. Glasses were poured and my dad rose to give a brief toast. "I ask everyone to raise their glass and pledge their love for Julie and Elaine, and to rejoice with me that this story has such a story book ending." The room went silent except for the pings of flutes touching one another as all the adults raised their flutes and sipped their champagne. Someone put down their flute and began to clap and everyone in the room followed suit.

It appeared that everyone had their fill, except me; my tight foundation didn't leave much room for tummy expansion. Given the choice, I'd rather starve to be able to wear this gown than to eat everything I wanted. I still frequently looked at my breasts and wondered at their beauty. Julie had one more surprise: a wedding cake surmounted with two brides. Someone had gone to the trouble of coloring the dress of one with the colors of Julie's dress!

Cameras came out again and I suspect that Julie had arranged for her sister to photograph everything that had taken place this afternoon.

Finally, Gail, who had slept through the whole thing, began to stir and that was the signal for the afternoon to come to an end. I reminded everyone that they were welcome back at our place and extended the invitation to Mama as well. Bridgette had arranged for one of her drivers to be our limo so with a hail of confetti, Julie and I entered our chariot and departed with Robin and Gail. Not too much cuddling this time as the two kids wanted to be entertained. We did agree that we were going to stay dressed in our gowns. I think someone was going to have to knock me out to take it off me.

The house was decidedly more informal; ties were loosened and heels doffed in favor of stocking feet. A couple of Julie's friends had volunteered or been volunteered to serve as hostesses, keeping bowls full of snacks and glasses full of beverages of choice. A few neighbors who knew about Elaine stopped by and I blushed at their comments as to my transformation.

Bridgette tapped the side of an empty glass whose ringing got everyone's attention. She stated that she was going to leave shortly but had a message to deliver that she wanted everyone to know about. "As hard as we could to keep Elaine's decision a secret, the ability of news to find the people who want to know seems to be greater than our ability to maintain the secrecy. In this case, I am happy to be the bearer of greetings from two people who had favorable dealings with Elaine during this time, First, I'm sure that none of you know the veritable heroics of Elaine in rescuing the research project from computer failure of a client's daughter's doctoral research. Damage without this rescue would have meant the failure of her efforts as well as a setback in finding trailblazing medical knowledge. Well, when the researcher's mother became aware of today's event, she wanted to send her congratulations and love. A second person was with Elaine when she got the message that Julie's water had broken and Gail was about to arrive. She saw the anguish reflected in Elaine's face and felt guilty when she tried to talk her into staying at the event at her house. She knew of the history of Elaine and was amazed that this was the same person. She has followed Elaine's progress and Gail's and is elated that Elaine didn't listen to her. Both have sent a note. I am giving them to

Julie and Elaine to open in private. Don't be surprised if there are surprises in them. I'm tell all of you this so you know the positive impact that Elaine made on strangers. Her hard work and suffering has already borne results. Thank you."

After she ended her comments and exited, as is commonplace, the subject were varied in the many conversations taking place and there was a constant din. I had one mission and I kept looking for the perfect opportunity. It finally came and I went to my dad, took his hand and led him to a quiet corner. "Dad, I almost had a heart attack when you appeared to escort me to where Julie was waiting. It was one of the happiest moments of my life. Thank you so much. And then you kissed me; I began to float on air. I know it had to be hard for you. Thank you for doing this for me, I hope someday, you'll understand what it meant to me and the inner peace it gives me"

He smiled and thought for a moment and began, "Elaine, it wasn't hard at all. First, anyone who looked at you would have no doubts that you are a woman. I've never had trouble kissing a beautiful woman", he chuckled.

His smile disappeared and his eyes hinted of serious words to follow, "Since that day here when your mother and Ruth gave me an ultimatum, mom and I have had some sobering conversations. Just like you spoke of having an epiphany, I guess I have had one also. Without going into all the nuts and bolts, I guess I can learn something from your change. I took to heart what you said today about love and I think I could be a lot happier if I adopted the same attitude, or at least worked towards that end. Your mom had even suggested that I resurrect some of my old diversions at least in private. She promised to support me if I did. It looks like I have some shopping to do. Don't be surprised if I come asking your fashion advice. I can see that you've developed quite an eye for fashion". With that his head dropped as in great pain, I stepped closer, embraced him and whispered, "Dad, I love you. We can be sisters whenever you want. Come over dressed up. What's one more girl?" I kissed him hard enough that I left a lipstick mark on his cheek.

Dad wouldn't get himself to ask more about how I got myself to look like woman for another few months. I had already begun to transition by then.

I had more trouble from some of my co-workers when I began to transition then when I was pretending to be a woman. It was mostly men but not entirely. Some people were still angry with the old Dan. Some were alright with it when it was a punishment for Dan.