

EVENING FALLS

Tracy



Lane

Cynosure

COLLECTED FICTION

TRANSGENDERED FANTASY



WHAT HAPPENS

when pretty young men are
CAUGHT in *girls'* LINGERIE?

All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental. All events portrayed in this work are pure fantasy, existing only in the mind of the author.

WHITE BALANCE

Tracy Lane

1.

Summer in Ridgewick was hazy and idyllic. The city had the down-home atmosphere of a Norman Rockwell print; a sleepy patchwork of tree-lined avenues and painfully green lawns. The streets droned with cicadas and the ponds with dragonflies, their streamlined bodies glittering like emeralds in the morning sun. Its picket-fence suburbs were perhaps the most American of the regional townships. On a fine, clear day, you could smell the heady aroma of apple pie drifting down the sidewalk; a cinnamon wave exhaled from a thousand kitchen windows.

Kings Domain extended over the eastern ridge of the city, bordered by Memorial Drive on one side and the Midland Ranges on the other. A large, rambling parkland crisscrossed by jogging paths and pine groves, it claimed a history dating back to pre-revolutionary times (hence the anachronistic title). The Commemorative Fountain at the middle of the Park was a favored meeting place with the Sole Parents Society, mainly due to its close proximity to the Adventure Playground.

Bradley Wilson couldn't be described as a sole parent, although he'd recently inherited responsibility for a somewhat rambunctious orphan. His younger 'cousin' Angie Raymond had adopted him as a defacto brother over the past few months, a role he'd grown to view with a kind of rueful satisfaction. Overworked, under-paid and barely seventeen on his last birthday, Brad had originally joined Sole Parents hoping to free up his weekends via the care-giver exchange.

Much to his surprise, he'd discovered a network of support entirely missing from his immediate family. He'd already made several friends within the Society - mostly single women in their mid-forties, quietly sympathetic towards his unusual situation. His weekends were still as busy as ever, but the hidden

benefits were more than adequate. If nothing else, it had provided numerous playdates for Angie, the proverbial blessing in disguise from Brad's viewpoint.

The air was crisp and still as they made their way through Memorial Gardens. They were cutting through the Wildlands, a low, rolling pine glade riddled with bike tracks and mystery walks.

Most Saturday mornings, the Playground was overrun by hordes of yowling children. Brad could hear their excited howls echoing along the trail. Sounded like a full scale riot, even at this distance. The majority would be little girls from the Heights district; pixie-faced angels decked out in pastel pinks and yellows.

Angie scampered along beside him, swinging happily from his right arm. Her bright red sun-frock clung to her waifish figure, hemline sweeping about her knees with each capering step. She'd been looking forward to this outing all week; most of her friends from playgroup were going to be there, along with some of the girls from her school.

It was shaping up to be a wonderful day. They were going to have a picnic on the grass with the ladies from Sole Parents, followed by a splash in the Fountain and a game of hunt 'n' catch in the Fort.

Best of all, Bradley had brought his *DIGITAL CAMCORDER* (that was how she actually thought of it; in capitals and italics), the one with the LCD *DISPLAY* and the *AUTOZOOM*. Brad had bought it down at Radio Shack a couple of weeks ago so he could tape her playing on the swings and slides and monkey bars. They often watched it on Brad's DVD before she went to bed; it was becoming something of a family tradition.

"Are you going to film me playing in the Fort?" she chortled, betraying her impatience to get the morning underway.

"Sure will," Brad replied offhand, glancing off into the pinewoods.

"What about Lindy? Are you gonna film her too?" Angie demanded, tugging energetically at his hand.

"Sure," he answered.

"What about Jane?" she inquired, bouncing about at the end of his arm.

"Who?" Brad asked, raising a laconic eyebrow.

"You know - *Jane!*" Angie exclaimed in all seriousness, "the one who wears the blue Scottish skirt with the big safety pin!!"

"Oh, *that* Jane" Brad nodded, in vague amusement. He knew exactly who Angie was talking about, but he never tired of feigning ignorance to raise her ire. Anyway, he could be forgiven for misplacing the odd face or two; all of Angie's friends looked identical to him.

"Let me swing on your arm again!" Angie suddenly demanded in a complete non-sequitur.

"OK, then," Brad agreed magnanimously, as if conferring some vast favor. Flexing the tendons along his forearm, Brad hefted the girl off the ground, dangling her from his wrist with her legs waving in mid-air. He carried her along the trail for some twenty odd paces, then dropped her lightly onto her feet. She skipped along the path singing a hopscotch chant he recalled from his childhood:

"Tom-and-Becky, sitting-in-a-tree-K-I-S-S-I-N-G! First-comes-love, then comes-marriage, then-comes-Tom-with-a-baby-CARRIAGE!"

"What are you - *six?*" Brad asked, raising another eyebrow in wry amusement.

"You already know how old I am," Angie replied without breaking stride. They walked on a little further until they came to a sunlit clearing with a log bench at one side. Bradley took a seat, turning the digicam over in his hands and flipping the cover off the lens. Angie ambled on for several paces, then looked around when she realized she was walking alone. Turning back to join him at the bench, she scrutinized the tall boy with a quizzical expression.

"What're you doing?" she asked.

"I think it's time we took a white balance," he answered, looking experimentally through the viewfinder. Angie knew what he was talking about, he'd been teaching her how to use the camera around the house. The white balance was the first thing you did after you switched the power on. Trouble was, they couldn't set the highlights out here on the bike trail. Everything was the wrong color.

"We forgot to bring the big white card," she said, absently kicking her feet through the woodchips.

"Well, we'll just have to use something *else* then, won't we?" Brad replied, snapping open the LCD.

Angie's expression changed. Her little mouth gaped open, her cheeks flushed with surprise as she registered his words. Her skin started to tingle, a storm of butterflies erupted through her belly. Her fingers dropped protectively to the front of her dress, as if it was preparing to spring up by itself. She knew exactly what he wanted her to do, and it made her head spin with embarrassment.

"Jeez, Brad!" she cried, looking 'round the pine-glade, "you're such a *prevert!*"

"Pervert," he corrected absently, then continued: "Anyway, what's the big deal? I've seen your undies before." Brad adjusted the settings with nimble fingers, testing the auto focus.

"Yeah, well THAT'S different!" she protested in righteous indignation (although he was completely right: he HAD seen her underwear like a zillion times before).

"How?" Brad retorted, arching one eyebrow inquiringly.

"I don't know, it just is," Angie sputtered in girlish exasperation, "anyway, you can't set the white-balance off my panties."

"They're *white* aren't they?" Brad asked reasonably enough.

"Well..." she replied, blushing wildly, knowing he was teasing her, "yeah, they are." She shuffled from foot to foot in an agony of indecision.

"Well, I guess it's settled then," Bradley said, lifting the camera to eye-level.

Angie could feel her defenses crumbling; Brad was waiting expectantly, and part of her secretly wanted to play along. She was already tugging at her hemline, raising the dress to mid-thigh.

Her arms were buzzing with gooseflesh, her heart drum-rolling with anticipation. It was so incredibly naughty: despite her apparently tender years, Angie knew that young girls didn't just lift their skirts in public.

Not on *purpose*, anyway. But then again...

It wasn't much different to when Bradley filmed her hanging upside down from the Jungle Gym. Or when she came down the High Slide with her frock sailing around her waist. Or when she showed her friends how to do cartwheels on the grass. As a matter of fact, Brad had a small library of AVIs dedicated to his cousin: Angie getting dressed in the morning. Angie putting on her babydoll. Angie doing handstands in the backyard. Angie modeling her new underwear in front of the mirror; Angie *dancing* in her new underwear in front of the mirror.

"OK - little higher now," Brad said, dropping to one knee in front of her. Angie looked down and discovered that she'd been twisting the frock between her fingers, unconsciously hoisting the curtain, so to speak. The hem was less than an inch from the tip of her panties. Her legs were trim and rather shapely, the skin as pale as an English carnation. Angie stared up in round-lipped surprise, struggling to suppress her high, tinkling laughter. What was she DOING?!

"Bradley!" she sniggled breathlessly, unable to believe she was actually doing this. The front of Angie's skirt began to rise, just the barest fluttering of red cotton. A sense of exhilaration filled her veins. She glanced away in childish denial, her cheeks glowing maraschino red. This was soooo embarrassing! Why did he always do this to her?

"Come on, no need to be shy," Brad coaxed, gesturing with the camera, "we'll show all your friends next time they come over."

This was too much for Angie. Sputtering with repressed mirth, she hiked her dress up over her waist, dissolving into a stream of helpless giggles. White satin panties flashed into view, gleaming with an alabaster finish in the sunlight. Tight elastic trimmings dimpled her pearly flesh, floral lace insets embellished the hips.

"All right - big smile for the camera," Brad instructed, pressing the zoom, "skirt right up to your chin."

"Noooooooo!" Angie moaned, but the dress climbed up her bare torso all the same. Waves of sweet humiliation rolled through her tummy. He only needed her panties for the white-balance: why did she have to hold her frock so high? He didn't need to see her *whole* body, did he? Giggling uncontrollably, she posed for the digicam with her sleek, supple figure on exhibition. Brad tracked

the camera up and down, marveling at the lush expanse of naked midriff spread out before him.

Well, a promise was a promise, and Angie had earned her reward. He didn't want to disappoint her. Besides which, he needed new footage for the archive. Lowering his sights fractionally, Brad zoomed in on the girl's navel.

Angie had one of those painfully cute belly-buttons that curved in like a tiny thimble. He'd always found it one of her most appealing features, and never lost an opportunity to explore it with a gently probing finger-tip. Even now, he couldn't resist tracing an index around its softly pursed rim. Reaching out with his right hand, he dipped his pointer inside her tummy-cup. Angie jumped in galvanic reaction.

"Bradley, don't!" she squealed, jiggling her pantied hips, "that *tickles!!*"

"Really?" he inquired politely, "well, how about this, then?"

"Noooo!! Stop it! Dooooon't!!" Angie screamed at the top of her lungs. This was out and out torture (though she made no attempt to run away; that would have spoiled all the fun). The skirt remained poised at her shoulders, waving from side to side like a can-can dancer's petticoats. Chuckling under his breath, Brad continued spidering his fingers around her tummy, ignoring her shrieks and pleas. Stamping her little feet, Angie whipped her head from side to side, golden ringlets swishing around her face.

"Bradley! Stop! Don't! It TICKLES! Noooo!"

The torture went on for close to a minute (and would have gone on considerably longer if not for the imminent risk of discovery). By the time they finished, Angie was trembling from crown to heel, pink-faced, short of breath and somewhat short of temper. He hadn't needed to do a white-balance at all! He'd just wanted to tickle her belly button while her skirt was up.

"You ain't no pervert!" she said crossly, dropping her frock back to a more dignified position (for some inexplicable reason, this hadn't occurred to her earlier), "you're just *mean!*" Her hair was a mass of wild blond curls and her left shoulder strap had slipped half-way down her arm. She slid it back over her shoulder, pushing out her lower lip in a classic teenie-pout. "You *always* tickle me too much, Bradley!"

"Hardly tickled you at all," Brad remarked, closing the LDC with an echoing click.

"Yes, you did! And it wasn't funny."

"You look so cute when you're sulking."

"I'm *not* sulking!"

"Come over here."

"No!" she refused decisively, but her eyes were twinkling with anticipation. She hadn't really been angry with him: like all girls her age, she adored a good tickling in the arms of big, strong man; especially when she had no choice in the matter. She just wanted him to make it up to her was all. And yes, she wanted to give him a kiss - along with a cuddle and a great big hug - but first, she wanted an apology. Fortunately, Brad could read her mind as easily as he could read her expression.

"All right, that's it!" Brad said, rearing up off the ground with his arms outstretched, "I think it's time for a SPANKING."

Angie screamed and ran down the path, woodchips scattering in every direction. She wasn't sure if he was really going to spank her, but the only thing better than being chased was being caught. Her toes scarcely touched earth as she bolted out of the clearing, but fast as she was, Bradley was on her in an instant.

He swept her up in his arms, tossing her high overhead in a twisting spiral of arms and legs. The world turned upside down for an amazingly long moment, then she was plummeting into his hands, her dress flapping in the updraft. Gathering her voraciously against his chest, Bradley angled her head up so that her face was only an inch from his. She struggled in his grip like the heroine in a Victorian Romance - though she didn't struggle very hard, all things considered.

Angie wrapped her arms around Bradley's neck and kissed him square on the mouth. It was neither chaste, nor virginal, and would never be mistaken for an innocent peck on the cheek. It was immediately followed by a series of full-blown lip-smackers, the kind that fogged up windscreens in 1950s drive-ins. They smooched, they snuggled, they kissed, they hugged for minute

after minute until Angie remembered why they'd come down here in the first place and asked to be put down. Brad placed her carefully on her feet.

It was a sight to shock the unwary and confound the incredulous. However, to quote a great gothic poet of the mid-nineteenth century: *'Believe only half of what you see and nothing that you hear.'* This was, after all, the city of Ridgewick, where nothing is ever quite what it seems and the most extraordinary events pass for everyday occurrences. Some cases in point:

Angela Raymond *wasn't* Brad's cousin, she was actually his *girlfriend*. And if that didn't sound extraordinary enough, there was also the issue of her *age*:

Contrary to all appearances, Angela certainly wasn't a child; she was almost as old as Bradley himself.

And perhaps most extraordinary of all: Angela Raymond wasn't even a girl.

She was a *tranzie*.

2.

Ridgewick was literally flooded with tranzies these days. It sometimes felt like you couldn't turn sideways without tripping over one - although you probably wouldn't have known, not unless you happened to be a local. Hell, Brad had lived here his entire life, and he hardly noticed they were even there half the time. Not until he'd met Angie.

Tranzies were transgendered children - kids who were neither male nor female. They were also known as transfems or T-girls, depending on which part of town you came from. They seemed to have a lot of different names, actually. Chamberlain Central News referred to them as "The Transsexual Generation" (the one that came after the Pepsi Generation, evidently). The Ridgewick Advertiser had labeled them "The Third Sex," while the *North American Journal of Genetic Research* described the phenomenon as Toxically Induced Sexual Morphosis; TISM for short.

Angie Raymond was a third generation transfem - tranzie in the local vernacular - a genetic male who had transformed into an anatomic female shortly after her eighth birthday. The process had taken around three years to complete; a

smooth, almost unimpeded glide between genders, as young Anthony Raymond had shed his male attributes.

Unfortunately, the transition had not been without consequence; The Change always extracts its toll in one form or another. Angie's father had cut and run shortly after her ninth birthday, unable to deal with the 'humiliation' of raising a transsexual freak. There had been no warning, no letter, no last second message or note of remorse. He'd simply vanished into some long-forgotten night as if he'd never existed.

Angela's Mother had ultimately fared no better. Left alone to pick up the shattered remains of a fractured marriage, Mom had drunk herself into oblivion. It was a death spiral, a kamikaze run fueled by valium and everclear, ending with a spectacularly anti-climatic overdose on the eve of Angie's entry into middle school. Again, there had been no farewells, no final words, no explanations. She'd simply taken the door marked 'Exit' and left her daughter to face the nightmare of child services.

And there Angela had remained in a kind of hopeless, gray limbo, surrounded by hostile strangers, indifferent caregivers and grinning, feral predators who laughed but never really smiled. As the months piled up into years and the years into a sort of living purgatory, Angie had burrowed into darkest tunnels of her mind, blotting out each new crisis as it arose. It became interminable: an endless, empty wasteland that stretched off into infinity...

...until the day she'd started matriculation college.

It was an odd thing - despite all of the horror she'd endured during her youth, Angie had never viewed herself as a damsel in distress. But when Bradley Wilson had sauntered into her life with his tapes and spools and digital cameras, she'd never seen a more outstanding Knight in Shining Armor.

3.

"So - ready to get going?" he asked, picking up the camcorder and slinging the strap around his neck.

"Yeah," Angie replied, taking his hand as they set off down the trail.

Rounding a long, sloping bend, they emerged on the far side of the Fountain and were immediately engulfed in a drove of stampeding children. They surged past in a rush of knees and elbows, almost dragging Angie off in the deluge.

Brad steered a course through the human tide, navigating towards the picnic benches beneath the weeping willows. Four or five regulars from Sole Parents - aka *TransParents* for the uninitiated - were reclining in the shade, sipping fruit juice and trading the week's gossip. Two of them waved in Brad's direction, beckoning him forward.

Four of the usual suspects were present; Mary Glover and Deborah Lambert from the Westside, Carol Thompson from Newtown Playgroup. Cathy Everett sat to one side, keeping watch on the 'kids.' The Rituals of Greeting were observed, the obligatory wisecracks made.

The whole process lasted around a minute, then Brad was planted comfortably in the center of the group, basking in their good-natured acceptance. He'd grown quite popular over the past few months, being one of the Society's few resident males.

However, it was Angie who was the definitive center of attention. Kisses were lavished on her freckly cheeks; teasing fingers skittered over her neck and shoulders. Angela squealed with pleasure, lapping up the attention, then ran over to hide behind her cousin, blushing to the roots of her hair.

Brad nodded along in casual satisfaction. None of it was empty flattery, Angie was an unusually pretty 'little' girl. He'd noticed that young, single mothers were particularly susceptible to her huge, liquid eyes and baby-soft features. Any one of them would have been happy to pack her up and take her home for the weekend.

"You want a soda, honey?" Deborah Lambert offered, trying to coax her out from Bradley's shadow. Angie wasn't budging (she knew full well that Debbie only wanted to snatch her up and *gobble* her *tummy*), but her smile melted every heart within visual range. Brad checked the settings on his camcorder while the drink was poured, glancing out towards the Playground.

The Indian Fort was swarming with sun-dappled figures, clambering over the rope bridge and body surfing down the high-slide. A small party of boys congregated at the bottom of the monkey bars, yelling taunts out to the girls and

making half-hearted attempts to chase them around the teeter-totters. Business as usual, in other words. Brad raised the digicam and clicked on the power.

"There you go, sweet-heart," Debbie said, handing over a cup of garishly bright orange sludge. Angie stepped tentatively forward, reaching out for the saccharine horror.

"What do you say?" Brad prompted without looking up.

"Thank you," she trilled in her fluting soprano, then retreated before those girl-snatching hands could descend on her. This was, in fact, a much beloved game, one she'd played countless times before. Deborah Lambert was a world class tummy-gobbler; half the fun was evading her clutches until the end of the picnic.

Angie stepped back behind her protector, placing a hand on his shoulder while she solemnly emptied her cup. Brad finished his preparations and slid the LCD into position, tracking slowly across the playing field.

Just at that moment, Angie heard her name being called in high, keening tones. Everyone turned towards the Playground, grinning at the source of the disturbance. Two little girls were approaching at breakneck speed, their voices overlapping with exhilaration. Abandoning her cousin without a second's hesitation, Angie ran out to meet them, her hair whipping out in albino streamers.

Lindy Thompson and Janey Glover came racing over from the swings, faces glowing like a pair of storm lanterns. Knees pumping and ponytails flying, they threw themselves onto their small, blond friend in a veritable gale of affection. Faces were kissed, bottoms were patted, and gigantic hugs exchanged all round. Words tumbled over each other in a geyser of liquid childspcak: *Hi Angie we been playing over on th' swings and on th' slides and on th' big spinny thing and Alison Miller was doing cartwheels and Tommy Norbert fell off th' highslide and Tracy Dwight said this and Jeannie Salter said that-*

And so on.

Brad caught them on the display, tinkering with the contrast to capture their delicate skin tones. Both were wearing skirts and dresses, just as Angie had predicted. He panned slowly down their lithe figures, taking in the lush curves,

the trim, supple limbs. Both girls were extremely pretty - not quite as beautiful as Angie, in some respects - but sweet, saucy and endearingly cute all the same.

All three girls looked strikingly similar, seemingly cut from the same cloth. It was a tranzie thing: most transfems had a hyper-feminized appearance, characterized by large eyes, small mouths and slender proportions, giving them a fragile, child-like appearance. It almost amounted to a family resemblance, kind of like those weird telepathic kids from *The Village of the Damned*.

And of course, none of them stood more than five feet tall. Given their diminutive status and juvenile features, they could easily be mistaken for adolescent children, despite having concluded puberty some years before. Tranzies tended to age far more slowly than the rest of the population; there were some within the scientific community who believed that their complex bio-chemistry held the key to eternal youth (though this was dismissed as little more than an urban myth).

Brad scanned across each girl in turn, documenting their outfits for posterity. Lindy was wearing a canary-yellow sun frock, the kind with a high, nipped bodice and a key-hole neckline. Jane's ensemble included a loose white top and a blue plaid skirt clipped at the waist with a big silver safety pin.

All three were standing in a conspiratorial huddle, exchanging whispers and naughty girlish snickers. Their bottoms poked out at comical angles; Brad zoomed in to record each one in turn. Lindy's dress was so brief that it barely covered her underpants, Angie's so sheer that her pert, ripe cheeks were visible through the fabric. Jane's skirt was neither brief nor sheer (though the blue tartan was indescribably cute).

Well, he'd find out what color her panties were soon enough. The conspirators had almost finished their scheming; whatever they had planned, they were almost ready to begin. He could tell by the furtive glances they kept casting over their shoulders. Fingers pointed, feet shuffled and eyes twinkled as a decision was reached.

What was it going to be this time? The Indian Fort? The Fireman's Pole? The Spider's Nest?! Under normal circumstances, Brad would have laid odds on the Swings. Little girls have a scientifically documented preference for swings, he'd

read about it in the *Harvard Journal of Medicine*. Of course, Bradley knew better on this occasion. He knew his 'cousin.'

"OK, let's go play!!" Angie declared, practically bursting from her skin. Lindy and Jane squealed their approval, dancing back and forth in barely suppressed enthusiasm. Linking hands from left to right, the three girls spun towards the playground and tore off toward the JungleGym.

4.

"Last one up has to kiss a goose!" Lindy yelled.

Screaming with laughter, they streaked across the turf, hemlines whipping about their thighs. Angie's heart was racing in her chest; a warm, mellow glow pervaded her features. Releasing her grip on Janey's hand, she sprinted forward as fast as midnight lightning, eager to reach the bars first. Her frock molded around her girlish form, the front kicking up over her waist. She made no attempt to hold it down, she was completely swept away in the excitement of the moment.

The Climbing Grid was a complex iron scaffold at the center of the Fort. A tall, looming structure fully ten yards long, it was teeming with children, mostly girls from Angie's neighborhood. Close on a score swung precariously through the trellis, chortling with pleasure. The older ones wore oversized t-shirts and those awful spandex bike shorts that had grown so popular this summer.

Only a few had deigned to dress *au femme* that morning, but they seemed to be attracting more than their fair share of interest. A smattering of boys bolted to and fro underneath, grabbing at their heels and daring them to cross the gauntlet.

Reaching the Grid slightly ahead of her friends, Angie hauled herself up two bars at a time: two-four-six-eight-SLAP. The Jungle Gym seemed implausibly steep, a vast, rambling tower overlooking most of the Domain.

Once at the top, the three girls perched together, gazing out towards the weeping willows. Somewhere in the middle distance, Brad stood at the edge of the playing field, filming the scene in meticulous detail.

The girls swapped shy, giggly smiles, their eyes positively gleaming with anticipation. Who was going to go first? What they had in mind was so

indisputably naughty they couldn't decide one way or the other. Jane and Lindy finally ganged up on their pretty blonde accomplice: the whole thing had been Angie's idea, so *she* had to go first.

Nibbling on her lower lip, Angela dropped through the bars and made for the center of the Grid. A chill breeze seemed to flutter up her dress despite the heat of the day. In a few seconds she'd be hanging upside down with her flimsy white panties on full display! Every boy in the world was going to see what she was wearing!

Looking back over her shoulder, she noticed her cousin kneeling on the grass about thirty feet away, his face masked by the camcorder. The zoom was tilted upward and the little red light was blinking.

Angie giggled with a kind of embarrassed pleasure. This was all so unfair: why did she have to go first? She pendulummed back and forth beneath the bars, grinning impishly as the dress rode up to the tops of her thighs.

Brad fine-tuned the resolution, bringing the gauzy satin into sharp focus. The hem skipped a little higher, revealing the tight elastic trim encircling her waist, then the frock dropped back down into place.

Angie swung nimbly across the Grid with the boys nipping playfully at her ankles (one almost made off with her left shoe), dodging through the crowd with practiced ease. Pausing half way across, she threw Brad another elfish glance, then kicked her feet up over her head. Hooking her knees over the bar, she slung herself upside down - and the show began.

Thick blond tresses swept towards the ground as Angie's dress billowed inside out. Her panties went on public display; sheer white full briefs with dainty lace trceries on the front and sides. The gossamer fabric shimmered like platinum in the mid-morning sun. Angie wriggled her hips. The frock slipped another four inches down her midriff, baring her torso far as the belly-button. Half a dozen boys gawped up at the spectacle, their expressions dazed and startled.

Brad zoomed in for an extreme close-up, capturing the creamy smoothness of her thighs. Her flesh was unbelievably soft, particularly around the tummy and bottom (the latter of which was going to be spanked bright pink the moment he got her home).

He panned back to a mid-shot, scanning for her full figure (if only those damned bars weren't blocking the view) and discovered that her dress had inverted all the way down to her throat. Having no real waistline, it clung to her shoulders by nothing more than a hope and a prayer, threatening to fall off her body at the merest touch.

Returning the lens to her underwear, Brad noticed some movement off to the right and moved the camera to investigate. Lindy and Jane were clambering over to join her.

Lindy went over first.

Tilting her head back, Linda drew her knees up to her chin and slipped her feet through the rungs. Easily the youngest of the three (seventeen last spring), she had reached that slim, coltish stage where her legs looked impossibly long and limber. Their length was further emphasized by the stripy black stay-ups she habitually wore. She really was one sassy little miss...though at her age she was entitled to wear whatever she chose.

Voicing a high, giggly squeal, Lindy doubled her legs over the bar and dropped herself into position. Her short yellow sundress inverted over her head, unveiling her flimsy cotton panties in the wink of an eye. They were high-cut bikini briefs with a rather spicy floral pattern; seemingly too mature for such a petite young thing.

Lindy had recently developed a preference for cheeky, feminine underwear, and appeared to be taking great pleasure in showing them off. Pawing lightly at her dress, she toggled her bottie-cheeks from side to side, bubbling over with excitement. The inside lining of her frock slid down another six inches, peeling away to her rib-cage -

And then it was Janey's turn to uncover her panties.

Jane Glover was a slim, lean-legged 'child' with an alabaster complexion and red-gold hair. Normally rather demure, the thought of hanging upside down from the Jungle Gym made her head spin with embarrassment. As Brad had noted earlier, she usually wore shorts to the Playground, careful to safeguard her dignity from wandering eyes. Yet here she was, dangling from the grid in her long blue skirt with half the boys in Ridgewick looking on! The temptation had

simply proven too much for her. Well, too late to back out now - her friends would never let her get away with it.

Folding sinuously from the waist, Janey swept her legs up in a graceful arc, pointing her toes at the sky. Her kilt fell away at the back, exposing her panty-clad bottom in a flutter of indigo pleats. Locking her knees into place, she released her hands and hung topsy-turvy from the bars. Tinkling, girlish laughter floated through the Playground: the front of Jane's skirt was caught between her thighs; only HALF her panties were on display! Face burning beet-red, Janey reached down and started pulling the kilt up at the sides.

Such shamelessly modest behavior couldn't go unchallenged. Lindy's hand darted out, snatching at the tartan wrap. Jane slapped it away with a shriek, then turned to fend off Angie's sneak attack. A brief struggle ensued. The hapless redhead never stood a chance, needless to say. Two sets of fingers snagged the plaid material, and the skirt was finally (and irrevocably) dislodged. All three screamed in delight as Jane's silken panties were revealed in all their glory.

Brad leaned forward and zoomed in for another close-up. Candy-bright nylon suddenly filled the LCD. Janey's full-brief undies clung to her skin like the world's mildest sunburn, glittering with iridescent highlights. A dainty pink frill encircled the waistband, intricate lace trceries adorned the hips. He tracked the digicam 'round in a wide circle, targeting her shapely thighs, her snowy white tummy. She had one of those impudent little belly buttons that poked out like a ripe raspberry.

Brad lowered the camcorder, momentarily checking the battery. He still had to get through this morning with its Indian Forts and picnics and endless games of tag. He stood up and stepped back a couple of yards, trying for a wide-angle shot to capture the whole scene: the wrestling battalions over by the merry-go-round, the mad scuffles in the Lookout Tower. He panned across the entire playing field, focusing on the Midland Ranges, before circling back to his adopted 'cousin' and her friends, still oscillating under the Grid with their fresh little panties on full exhibition.

Once again, Angie was the cynosure, the center of attention. Seemed like every gaze in the park was directed at her. Lindy and Jane looked utterly mesmerized by her presence. Who could blame them? Angie's charms were little short of captivating. It had taken her only a matter of seconds to persuade them to bare

their underpants on the Jungle Gym - even Janey, who hardly ever wore skirts to the Playground.

5.

Brad re-adjusted his settings and glanced over at the Mother's circle. They were relaxing on the picnic benches, chatting idly amongst themselves and not paying much attention to anything. They were well aware of what their children were doing, but none of them seemed particularly concerned. Their 'daughters' were all over the age of consent and transies were known to be natural exhibitionists. It was another weird side-effect of the TISM mutation: transfems frequently lacked normal social inhibitions, it was well-documented in the scientific literature. Brad wouldn't be surprised if they stripped all the way down to their panties to go splashing around in the fountain later on. He'd seen Angie do it before on more than one occasion.

The videos were surprisingly popular with the Sole Parents community. Mary Glover and Carol Thompson were regular customers, putting in orders for edited tapes on an almost weekly basis (Brad and Angie spent much of their free time sorting through the rough footage looking for the most 'artistic' angles - Angie had an intuitive grasp of film composition and understood the technical processes far better than he ever would).

Brad supposed that wasn't particularly unusual; everyone wanted home movies of their kids growing up, even if their child had been born male and took two or more decades to fully mature. Nobody seemed to mind the high-jinx, panty-shots and wardrobe malfunctions, because it came with the territory.

Brad suspected that some of the women treasured this extended childhood, the knowledge that they wouldn't have to send their 'girls' out into the world too soon. Because what woman really wanted to let go of her offspring when the time finally came? Not these ones, who had struggled through broken marriages, vicious social rejection and outright sexual prejudice. All they had left now were their children, and they weren't ready to give them up. Not yet, anyway.

Yes, there might be a few extra years of financial hardship and sacrifice, there might be bickering and arguments over curfews and skirt-lengths, but in the end, it would all be worthwhile. Adult life was often a place of fear and uncertainty.

Their children would experience simple happiness for just a little while longer. And maybe that was the only thing that truly mattered.

"Can I put in my order now?"

Brad turned to see Carol Thompson - Lindy's mom - standing beside him.

"Sure," he replied, focusing the camera for another long shot, "we'll have it ready for you by next Wednesday."

"Mary said she'd like a copy too."

"We can do that. Angie's a wizard with the film-editing software."

"They all are," Carol remarked with a slight rolling of the eyes, "I still have trouble programming the remote, but Lindy's been writing her own computer games since she was twelve."

They looked at each other for a moment, sensing the irony in her casual observation. 'Since she was twelve.' How old did she look now? How old did *any* of them look now?

"Maybe you'd better call them in," Carol said, placing a light hand on his shoulder, "nearly time for lunch."

"OK," he nodded, clicking the lens cap back into position, "may take me a minute or two to chase them over." He handed the camcorder over to Carol, knowing what 'chasing them in' would most likely involve.

"Don't worry, you've got it covered. We trust you."

Yes: they trusted him. Everyone in the group trusted him. They knew that he kept his hands to himself and was completely devoted to Angie: two *extremely* rare qualities in any man, at least from their perspective. They were even prepared to let him share in the child-minding roster. Deborah Lambert had broached on the subject a few times, asking if he'd like to register for the babysitter's exchange. From what Brad could gather, most of them would probably have sold their souls for a night out on the town, free from the domestic grindstone.

"Angie!" he called out, raising his hands to his mouth to form a megaphone, "time to take a break."

The three girls stared back at him for several seconds before Angie gave the inevitable reply:

"No! I don't wanna!"

"Now, Angie. Lunch time."

"No! I don't wanna and you can't make me!"

Bradley grinned: *oh, can't I now?*

"Do you want that SPANKING I promised you?"

Pause. Two seconds. Five seconds. Then:

"Yes!" Angie called.

Bradley instantly broke into a long, rolling sprint, lowering his head and rushing towards the Jungle Gym at break-neck speed. All three girls shrieked at the top of their lungs and plunged off the grid in a tangle of flying skirts. As Angie had noted earlier, the only thing better than being chased was being caught, and evidently, she wasn't the only 'girl' in the park that day who happened to agree.

All three fled for their lives towards the picnic tables, screaming in mock terror as if the devil himself was at their heels - one which, for the moment at least, seemed very likely to catch them.

Overhead, a perfect summer's day beamed down from a faultlessly blue sky.

The End