

Under Cover



Philippa Peters



A "Her Tv" Novel



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Persons seeking gender reassignment surgery, hormone therapy or any other medical and/or body-altering process should seek the counsel of a qualified therapist who follows the Benjamin Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorder. This material is intended for persons over the age of 18 only.



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UNDER COVER

by Philippa Peters

*****I. PROLOGUE*****

I didn't set out, not in a million years, to be a crossdresser, a transvestite. I hardly knew what the term meant, even when I became an adult. When I learned about 'them,' I lumped them all in with sexual deviants as did all my comrades. To fit in, I made queer jokes just like everybody else and thought nothing of it. It was all part of growing up and being part of the team.

When the Lieutenant asked me, after I'd only been six months in uniform, to join the Vice Squad, I was naturally elated. Sue and I were married about that time and the first complaints were being raised about the hours I worked. But since crime didn't sleep, and our crimes mostly happened at night, I asked her to live with it for the time being. I was sure I'd be returned to more regular duties in six months or so.

Oh, and the money I was getting, the extra bonuses. Yes, SueAnn loved those. She even laughed and told me I could take as long as I liked in doing

whatever I was doing, so long as I kept on depositing the bonuses all in our bank account she had access to, which she considered to be hers. Okay, I was manipulating my wife, but, honestly, the cop work I was doing on the Vice Squad was a lot more interesting than my home life with Sue.

It hadn't taken me long, you see, to figure out why they took such a naive guy like myself into Vice. I looked much younger than I really was. Letting my hair grow, I didn't look at all like a cop as I'd used to. I entrapped more gays than I can even remember by strolling through one of the parks in what we called the Meat Market section of the East End. Surprisingly, I didn't get much work on the other side, with the ladies of the night. There, if anything, I was back-up for other operations.

I remember trying to arrest one really tarted-up blonde once, she in a short black leather miniskirt, a tight red sweater and with masses of blonde hair. On her high heel stilts, she towered over me. She smelled of cheap perfume. She had thick makeup on her face and laughed at me when I tried to arrest her.

"They're sending out the kiddie cops now, are they?" she asked in a surprisingly deep voice as she swung at me. I was used to the cracks about my height—thank goodness there wasn't a height restriction on our force—but I wasn't used to the strength with which she hit me. I went down like a ton of bricks and could only watch as she ran off, as best she could in her high heels, down Goldsmiths' Street.

She was tackled, and I mean tackled, by Ed Collins, a former linebacker, and knocked senseless against the pavement. Her blonde wig was knocked free to reveal short, black, slicked back, masculine hair.

"Meet George Rodriguez," said Eddie, getting up and flexing his shoulder. "Also known as Wanda Starr, or Wendy Rodriguez. He's got quite a left hook,

from his boxing days, I think. I should have warned you.”

My mouth must have dropped open a mile because Eddie laughed at me. He told everyone about me going only one round with Wanda, before losing on a TKO. For one night, I was the Kayo Kid to everyone on the Vice Squad.

Wanda was a revelation when she, I mean he, regained consciousness. He wanted to be put in the van with the girls, which was easy to do since we were making a big roundup that night of everyone on the streets, checking IDs and such. When he wanted to be in the holding pen at the station with the girls, the ruckus started.

I didn't blame the girls not wanting a man in with them, despite the way Wanda looked in a dress, but when we took him to the male pens, I couldn't believe the reaction of the men we were holding there. They didn't reject him, or tell us not to put him in there. No, they wanted him in there, with them, for some fun, they said. And he wanted to go, strolling past them like he was a queen or something. Which he was, of course.

We finally put Wanda in solitary, and called his lawyer, showing us he was one of Silk's 'girls,' as they had Henry White exclusively on call for them.

“You got an education tonight,” said Annie Phelan sympathetically, as we went off-shift together. Annie was an undercover, ‘like you,’ she'd told me, but I guessed that she wasn't anything like me at all. She was, after all, a woman, who dressed, when she needed a uniform, in the Women's Quarters, which all the policewomen and female detectives used.

I laughed and told her about Wanda, how I couldn't believe the attitude of the guys in our holding cells.

“It takes all kinds,” Annie said and proceeded to fill me in on all the kinky places there were in town that I

didn't know about. I learned, agog and sickened, about perversions I couldn't credit.

"You watch out," she warned me. Annie looked around Danieli's, the bar cops hung out in, after hours. We'd sort of wandered down there together. That's when she told me that she was like me. She was 'undercover' just as I was going to be. "You're gonna be put out there on some undercover job soon," she said, her voice lowered. "You don't look like a cop, you know. Anyone your size and with your fresh looks is going to be dropped in somewhere, probably in among the gay boys."

"There's a longstanding problem there with drugs coming in. The stuff's still coming in through the gay guys even after we closed down the South Americans and the street merchants. We've lost guys dead on that detail, before now. So, watch your ass, Charley. If I were you, I'd ask to transfer out now, before Polanski sets you up."

I didn't have time to really listen to Annie's advice because it was the next day that I had a one-on-one with Polanski; he recruited me into a bent investigation. I mean, I did think about what Annie had said to me, but when Polanski told me that he wanted me, with less than a year under my belt, to go undercover on the street, I was flattered.

It was only after a couple of days that I learned that I'd have to pose as a real swishy fag, perhaps even a drag queen. That was too much. I didn't want the job then. It was Annie who let me know that I wasn't going to be a 'street gay' for long. She said it was imperative that I be Alice, the alter-ego she and Polanski had cooked up for me. They wanted me to get really close to the ones well-connected to the drug trade whom she'd finger for me.

So my nerves, really affecting me, told me not to listen to or obey Annie. She said I had to pluck my eyebrows a little, affect a few queenly mannerisms, shift my voice up, you know, do a few little things

that made me swish. I realized too why Polanski had told me when I came on the squad not to cut my hair.

It was probably why he waited to set me up for so long. My hair was in a ponytail, a short one by then and, with a decent manicure, I was clearly advertising myself as what I was not. No, I would walk through a park and act gaily, a little bit, or sit in a bar, drink, and exchange queenly sex talk with a silly faggot, but that was all I was going to do.

That's what I said to Annie, who just shook her head at me, and asked me if I would keep getting the bonus she loved me delivering to her so much. No, I should never have discussed SueAnn with Annie, should I?

I tried to explain it all to Sue but she got royally ticked off with me, because the little changes I'd affected. I really had a problem with that. After all she knew I was into police work when we married. I expected better support from her. I was glad we hadn't any children after the rows about what I was doing started.

I stayed away from the apartment for longer and longer periods, claiming to be working. Actually, Annie Phelan and friends were better companions than Sue was for me. I was learning how to be a male hustler on the streets. It was excruciating to be sneered at and mocked by the uniforms on the beat as well as by the studs.

Annie, as an undercover, appeared to me to be a prostitute, a true professional. She told me, frankly, that she was. She made more money from the men she was seeing 'on the street' than she ever did from the Department, even with the bonuses they paid her.

"I can't pose as a drag queen," Annie told me. "I've tried it and I'm sussed out, discovered, each time." "That's why Polanski's thinking of a new way to get into the bent organization. He wants to use a cop,

who can be a hot queen. I bet he's got you lined up for the job, Charley, or should I call you Alice now? It's why he's brought us two together. I'm going to train you for the job, eventually."

If I swallowed once in that meeting with Annie in a gay bar, talking to 'her', I must have swallowed and been shaken up a hundred times. No, I couldn't do this. I couldn't be this kind of policeman, I decided, even as Annie continued giving me instructions on what I was to do, who to talk to, and what about, "nothing serious, just about stuff queens are into; where to buy clothes, fashionable, female clothes, and maybe a good pot dealer. I'll give you the info and you see how the contacts I set you up with react. I really want to know about anyone who talks about recruiting you, and for what, but don't say anything about you being interested in that unless I give you the word."

Some of Alice's 'friends', non-police, were gay. The good gays, she called them with a smile when I asked 'her,' nervously, hardly able to talk to or look at her when one of them, Kate, in a red wig, and green dress, so clearly a faggy queen to me, a bartender, if the gays Kate, who'd joined us for a drink, my treat, was pointing out to me everywhere on the block were good guys. That's when Annie started calling them good gays, as they weren't into the bent organization we were looking for.

When some of them and other guys on the street, laughed at me and taunted me, I wanted all the time to stand up and challenge them but Kate showed me how to embarrass them by coming on to them, in a faggy way. She made me lisp and break my wrist when I gestured to them, taking their insults as compliments and so driving them away.

I just had to get away from it all. Surely, SueAnn, my wife, would sympathize with the predicament I was in.



I snuck into our apartment and slipped into bed with her, and whispered sweet nothings in her ear. She really snuggled up to me as we made love in the dark. But in the morning she almost went berserk when she saw me for the first time in weeks, over my 'slightly' feminized appearance and mannerisms. She called me all the names I'd heard on the street already. I tried to reason with her, to be her husband, and to assure her I'd be over with this job soon. I thought I would be. She said she was going to see the Captain about what the Department was doing to me.

What could I say? I knew what Polanski and the Department wanted. I knew because Annie had told me that I was close to getting a good lead into what Polanski had called the leading drug supply and money-moving gang in the city. He'd called it a bent organization. I didn't know then that it was the Bent Organization, capital letters, organized by one Johnny Bent, a wise guy as they say.

I'd like to have been a fly on the wall at that meeting between the Captain and Sue. I knew, however, that it wouldn't do me any good with the Department. So, I went downtown after I left Sue, as quickly as I could. I hadn't really got close to Annie's or Kate's friends, other queens, as I had been told not to push it. I'd just been blending in, becoming part of the local scenery.

I was a hustling queen (contradiction of terms) who went by the name of Alice. Yes, Annie hung that one on me and started calling me that the last time I was in Kate's bar, *The Duchess of York's*. I wondered if I could speed things up. I knew some names. I could be subtle in my approaches. I could get this whole queen, gay undercover thing over in days, in a week, couldn't I?

Well, that was only true, up to a point, wasn't it?

*******II. FLY ON THE WALL*******

SueAnn Howell had wasted no time in coming in. She'd waited patiently for over forty minutes to see Captain Lou Carson, her husband's boss. Her unsmiling mouth had been set in a narrow line ever since she'd perched herself on the wooden chair outside Carson's office.

Carson, of course, knew she was there and had guessed the topic she wished to talk about. The head of the City Police's Vice Squad, however, needed as much time as possible to compose himself after talking to Jeff Polanski about Charley Howell's assignment.

Carson had not been totally aware of what Howell was up to but he'd approved the operation in principle from the get-go. He'd been made aware, though, of SueAnn's distaste for her husband posing as gay for the Vice Squad. Sue Howell was not afraid to speak her mind over the phone, to other police wives, about that dislike of her husband being on the Vice Squad, even though she liked the extra 'danger' money Charley got for his undercover assignments.

The captain sighed and tossed the file back on his desk. He could think of nothing to satisfy SueAnn Howell's inevitable complaints. He pressed his intercom button.

"Yeah?" came Mulligan's irritating sneer tinnily from the ancient machine.

Carson sighed again. "Mrs. Howell is waiting to see me," he said. "Tell her to come in."

The words had barely ceased echoing from the speaker when the heavy brown wooden door was flung back and Sue Howell stalked in.

Carson scowled to himself. Trust Mulligan, he thought. Couldn't even get up off his butt to open the door for the wife of a brother officer. A 'hard' cop like

Mulligan probably thought very little of someone as undersized as Howell. But with the mob so tight and difficult to penetrate in Eastgate, tougher than anywhere else it seemed, a Howell, with his non-police looks, was worth a dozen or more Neanderthals like Mulligan.

With exaggerated care, Sue Howell caught the door, closed it and stepped forward the one pace necessary to sit down in the chair before Carson's desk. She sat ramrod-straight on one of the two wooden chairs he kept for interviews.

SueAnn Howell was a slender woman, about thirty, older by a few years than Charley he guessed, and not homely. Her wavy hair was light brown, precisely and expertly cut to frame her face with thick, straight lines. Her thin face was dominated by a prominent jawline that made her appear obstinate and prevented her from being really attractive or pretty.

Carson had met her on other occasions when she was relaxed and happy. The strong jawline in a smiling face had seemed to reveal only firmness and strength of character. Her light grey eyes humourlessly watched his assessment of her.

"Charley came home last night," she said briefly.

Carson frowned. "He shouldn't have done that," he said. "He shouldn't be breaking out of his cover when he's on assignment."

SueAnn Howell took out a white-tipped cigarette from her purse. Her hand shook only slightly as she lit it, ignoring the two 'Thank you for not smoking' signs on his desk. She wasn't at all apologetic about breaking the law forbidding smoking on city property. She took a long pull on the cigarette, the shadows beneath her eyes showing the strain and tension she was feeling.

Smoke issued from her mouth as she spoke. "How long is it since you've seen him?" she asked, her voice tight.

"Not for two months," Carson said, grimacing slightly. "But I get reports on his work. Regular reports. One in just today." He patted the folder on his desk.

"So you haven't actually seen him," Sue Howell snapped, her pale eyes boring into his. "You haven't seen what you're doing to him!"

"Well," Carson said, a feeling of apprehension rising in him. "This is a special job and Charley does get special pay. He shouldn't have broken his cover. Is he at home right now?"

"No," snapped the woman again, bitterness tinging her voice. "He went back. Back to his queer friends, just where you want him."

Her eyes challenged Carson to defend himself. He was too wise to fall into that trap. "If you have a precise complaint," he began slowly, waiting for the hammer to fall.

"He looks just like a woman," she flared. "You do know that, don't you? It is what you want him to be, isn't it?"

Only years of experience in interviewing criminals prevented Carson from showing any emotions. "This assignment..." he started to say. Then he tried again as she sneered at his words. "The extra pay. There have to be compelling reasons. It's not easy to explain."

"I understand what undercover work is," SueAnn Howell said angrily. "I knew he had to go in deep and didn't like him to be away so long. I wanted him to quit. Then he came home last night." She glared at Carson over the cigarette smoke. "He looked more like a woman than I do!"

Tears welled in her dark-lined eyes but Carson couldn't tell if they were tears of rage, unhappiness, embarrassment, frustration, or what.

"I did see him close up until this morning," she went on furiously. "I felt so unclean!" She shuddered. "It's as if a woman had made love to me last night and today."

Carson squirmed in his swivel chair. "SueAnn," he said. "Let me assure you about this." Inside he felt his own anger rise at Charley Howell, Jeff Polanski and whatever sick or bizarre game they were playing. If words like Sue's ever got out in public, well, it would be a scandal, for sure.

"You should have seen the way he left our apartment today," Sue went on, ignoring Carson's interruption. "He was wearing more eye makeup than I've ever worn in my life, and his hair," she shifted in discomfort at the memory. "He's had it permed! It's all wavy and curly! I tell you, Captain, that along with his eyebrows all plucked out and his nails so long and polished, he doesn't have to wear a dress to make him look like a woman!"

Carson raised a hand in a helpless gesture. He wondered what in fact he could do.

"You've got to stop him," Sue Howell insisted, tears gone as quickly as they had appeared. "I don't care to think about what he'll be like when he finishes this job, Captain. I only know that I didn't marry a woman! And I won't be married to one!"

"Oh Sue," said Carson, deliberately continuing with his fatherly routine, even though he was seething inside, and for the same cause as she was, though she wore her rage on the outside. "It may not really be that bad. Things do get out of proportion at times when someone needs to do a special job. How can things have gone too far if Charley's come to visit you, his wife? He missed you. Doesn't that tell you something?"