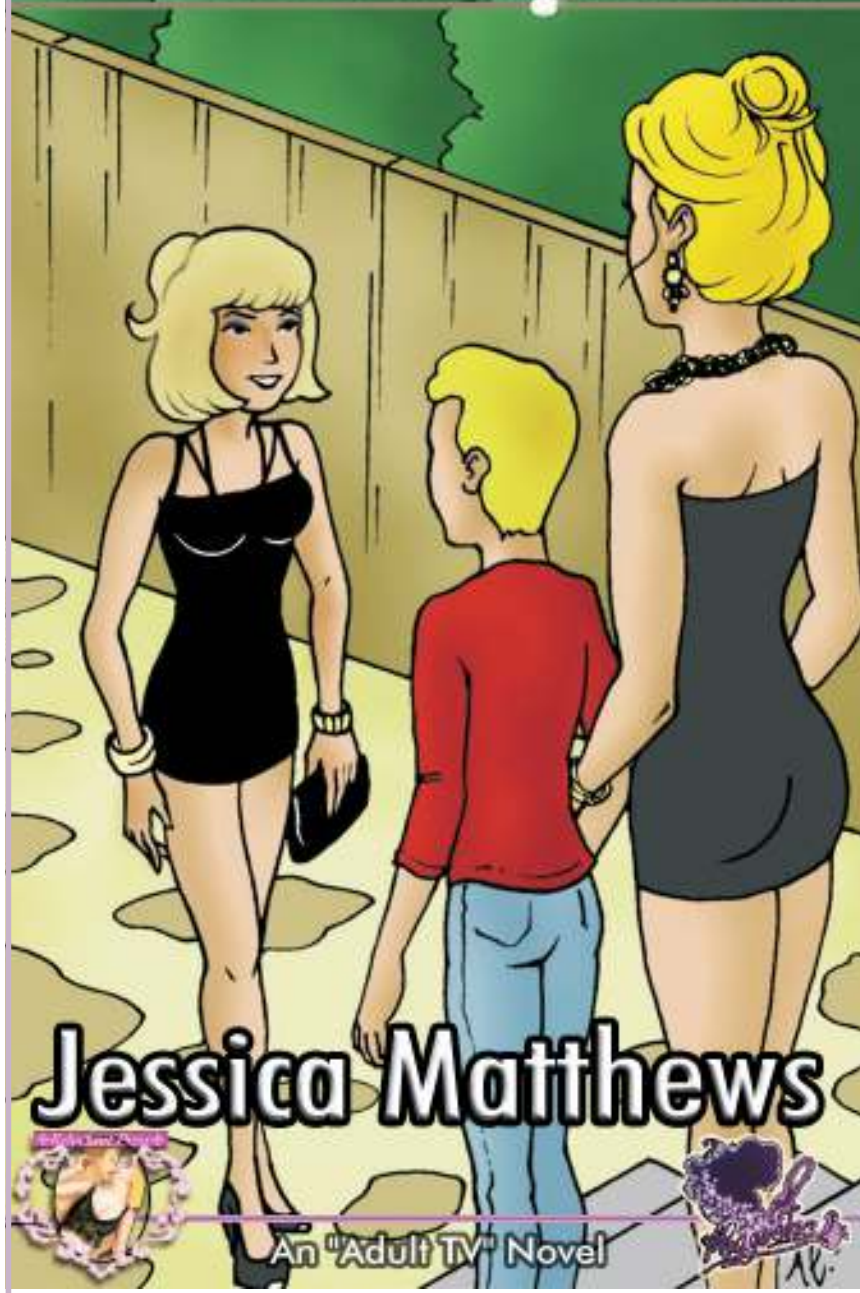


The New Stepfather



Jessica Matthews

An "Adult TV" Novel



Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers

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The New Stepfather

By Jessica Matthews

It's today! Today I'm going to be the bridesmaid. Mom is finally marrying Dannie.

I don't have to worry; I already love my stepfather like he was the only father I'd ever known. That's true by the way. He *is* the only father I've ever known.

Mom's dress is fabulous. She's let me go with her all the way, from exploring the bridal shops to narrowing down the alternatives, and finally choosing the right one.

I loved the dress and the moment she first tried it on, I knew it was perfect. It isn't pure white; there's a hint of oyster pink. Mom looked amazingly good. It was strapless and very tight right down to the hobble skirt which flared into a fishtail, or it would have been a fishtail but it just skimmed the ground when she wore the matching stilettos.

I'm really proud of her. She looks so beautiful. No one would guess that she'd be forty on her next birth-

day. She really works at it. The gym, the nail bar, the hair salon, the diet, all the latest fashions told me that she wasn't ever going to fall into old age.

The week has been such a busy one. We went everywhere together and endured and enjoyed the same treatments.

I'm nearly used to having my body waxed and now that I've had laser treatments, there's not as much pain. I can't understand why it's been so easy to get rid of the hairs on my chin and face, when the hairs on my legs keep growing and growing, but I do love my little 'landing strip' when I see it cleaned up.

Nails and hair were yesterday's appointments. I know it's a bit of a cliché, but we decided to have the same nails; long and coffin shaped in deepest red. We both had our roots retouched and Mom chose a deep golden blonde. I couldn't have the same; that would never do, so I'm a tawny blonde, with some highlights and lowlights.

Jasmine from the salon is ours for the day tomorrow. She's going to make sure our makeup is perfect and she's going to put our hair up. Mine's longer than Mom's but she decided that we should have more or less the same up-dos; casual and romantic was the specification.

I love the way she's done my eyes, with long false lashes and subtle pink shades on my lids over the thin black eyeliner. She's done wonders with my lips too.

Mom was furious when she discovered that I'd had them filled without asking permission, not that she'd have agreed anyway. She always said that I shouldn't grow up too fast which, given the way I was growing up, was a bit ridiculous.

My lips were filled to a Russian Pout so that the middle of the lips were emphasised subtly, not to trout proportions. If I hadn't experimented with red lips, Mom probably wouldn't have noticed. I usually preferred more subtle colours like peach and dusky pinks.

I'm recording some notes on my mobile as I wait my turn with Jasmine. It's such a thrill of a day; I don't want to miss anything.

The pause when we were both ready seemed endless. All their friends were waiting in the garden, under a bower specially constructed with all white and pink flowers. I saw the car with the celebrant arriving and the ushers were urging people to their places.

Most of all, I wanted to see Dannie. Mom insisted that he had to wear the same dress design and stilettos too. I didn't tell you that he's a professional female impersonator. He looks every inch like a really attractive woman.

When he keeps his voice soft and high, no one would ever guess that he's not female from birth, not that he's female now. He said that he may have had some things added but nothing had been taken away.

I think he's the same age as Mom, although given the way he always looks, you'd never know. He's been a dark blonde all the time I've known him. His hair is the longest of us all, and I know that Jasmine's assistant has been working on his hair too. Mom said that he's having the same look as ours.

She wouldn't have to help with his makeup though. He's always the epitome of style. He always helps me with my makeup and never tires of teaching me more techniques. I wonder how he keeps up to

date with it all. He's the one with the eyelash extensions and the longest nails.

He's about four inches taller than Mom and as slim, but with more curves. I've been to fittings with him and I love the way the dress hugs his figure and his fuller breasts fill the bodice. I think the wedding pictures will be fabulous.

And I'm the bridesmaid. My dress is very similar to theirs but it's a pale pink and not strapless because I don't have my own breasts yet. I did try one but it didn't look right and my breast forms would show. There's semi-opaque gauze from the bodice of the dress which goes over my shoulders. It has a round neck and is cut lower at the back.

I was worried in case my bra strap would show but the dressmaker was ahead of me. And I've got the tallest stilettos, just because I can.

Like I said, I don't have breasts of my own yet. I was desperate to get my implants, but Mom insisted that I had to wait. I was eighteen. She thought that I'd regret the size if I chose too early. I told her that I'd be happy with a small cup size but she wasn't to be persuaded and I didn't have the money to ignore her.

Mom didn't notice but I'd slipped in breast forms slightly bigger than my usual ones. I think she was far too excited. I knew she'd have told me not to draw attention to myself but what competition? Between her and Dannie, I knew I'd never be noticed but I thought I did look pretty.

"Vanity, thy name is woman." Shakespeare came to mind. I might not be a woman but I looked like one and I sure was vain.

But I'd better get on with describing how this all started.

I couldn't believe my eyes. There it was in the driveway of our house. Our house; that's the one my mother and I lived in. It wasn't grand but it was in a decent area, paid for by my father who'd bailed out on us when I was little; conscience money maybe.

I saw my father, usually with a new wife whose name ended in a 'y' or an 'i' but who struggled to string a thought together into a full sentence. I wondered if it was his car but then he didn't come around casually. The last time I saw him was on my sixteenth birthday, almost a year ago.

We always had a warning when he was coming and we hadn't gotten one recently.

I was going home early that day. School had finished for the summer and my relief at the gas station where I was trying to earn enough for a vacation had come in early. I took advantage and left as soon as I could.

But there it was, gleaming red and so low on its suspension; ready to go anywhere in style and at speed. It was gleaming new model red Corvette Stingray. I stood across the road and marvelled at it. The power and the thrill of it all overwhelmed me.

I was going to cross the lane and touch it but some movement behind the frosted glass of our front door made me hesitate. I stopped and stood still, watching and wanting to be inconspicuous.

I saw the door open and a woman came out. Mother stood on the step and they seemed to kiss. It couldn't be true; they were both women but there was *something* about that kiss. I ducked behind a hedge. I really didn't want them to see me.

I watched this unknown woman. She was tall and elegant, in a blue dress that looked like it was sprayed on. I remember noticing her matching stiletto heels and wondered how she could balance and walk along the drive so smoothly

She turned to the car and got in. She opened the door and, with one hand, tossed her long dark blonde hair over her shoulder. I watched as she put her purse onto the passenger seat, then she waved and started the engine. It didn't roar; it purred with a throaty power.

She waved and blew a kiss. Mother did the same from the doorstep. The car reversed from the drive and after another wave, the car roared away towards the highway.

I stayed hidden for a few minutes and then walked to the house. I don't exactly know why I hesitated but there was something about the scene which ran an alarm in my mind. I knew I wasn't meant to see it, so I kept quiet.

"Did I see a car driving away from our drive?" I asked casually.

"Oh, that was probably Dannie from work," Mother replied. "You must have heard me mention her. We often share lunch together."

"I don't remember." I tried to sound casual. "It looked to be a really nice car."

"I didn't notice," Mother prevaricated. "She always drives something powerful. The way she drives scares me sometimes."

I filed it away in memory and didn't ask more. She must have ridden in this car a few times, but she wasn't saying. Mom worked in sales for an upscale

food distributor and travelled all over the state and further. Her job was to deal with the fancy restaurants and clubs at the premium end of the market.

When there were promotions or presentations, she was often away for a few days or a week. I used to hate that because I'd always be shuffled off to stay with some relative I didn't like or one came over to babysit me. Now that I was older, I was allowed to stay home alone. It was much better.

She liked the job and it made decent money for us, along with a company-provided Toyota SUV. The only problem being that I couldn't drive it and I couldn't afford a car of my own. Girls like boys with cars rather than those with a cycle.

"How come Dannie from work has a Stingray and you get a Toyota?"

"Dannie's a client," she replied.

"So she doesn't have to settle for a Toyota then?"

"Of course not; they're company issue."

I didn't see the car again for a few weeks.

"I'm going out for dinner with a few friends at the weekend," Mom announced about a month after school started. "I may stay over."

"That's great, Mom." I was pleased for her; she didn't have much of a social life.

"I'll leave you some cash in case you want to do anything."

"That's all right," I replied. "I can get on with some school work without interruptions."

“Caleb, you really ought to be seeing friends.” She came to sit with me. “A boy your age should be enjoying himself more.”

“I’m happy,” I said truthfully. “The guys don’t want a little guy like me hanging with them when they’re trying to pick up girls.”

“Maybe you should try to pick one up yourself.”

“I should and I do but I’m not in their league. I’m too small for football, I don’t have Daddy’s car or one of my own to run around in and most of the girls are either impressed by stupidity or taller than me anyway.”

“Goodness, you are down on yourself,” Mom replied. “Look on the bright side. You have nicer hair than most of the girls.”

That hit a nerve. I did have nicer hair and I was very proud of the way it hung, sandy gold and shining between my shoulder blades, my thin shoulder blades. I used to get teased about it. Guys can be so mean if they think there’s a weakling to pick on so I always wore it in a low pony and tucked it inside my jacket when I could.

I continued working at the gas station after school started in the Fall. I worked Friday evening and a day shift on Saturdays. Mom didn’t ask for any money from me and it gave me enough to buy my own clothes with a little to save each week.

Mom’s weekend away turned into something of a regular event. She’d usually go on a Saturday afternoon and arrive back early on Monday morning in

time for the conference call which set up her work for the week.

It wasn't every week that she was away, but after Christmas it got more regular. I didn't mind. She seemed to be happy and I was left alone with the TV remote and my homework. I wanted to do well in my final exams but I'd no idea what to do next. I figured a year off might be good.

My first inkling that there was something different about these weekends came when Mom's Toyota was totalled. It wasn't her fault and she wasn't hurt but while she was waiting for a replacement, she didn't have a car.

"It's okay; I can still go away this weekend," she told me. "Dannie's picking me up."

She was still at home on Saturday afternoon when I got home. I think she was nervous, waiting for her ride to arrive. I saw the Stingray turn into our drive at the same moment that she did. She grabbed her bag, gave me a little hug, and was out of the door in a trice.

I saw her get in, then saw her lean over to Dannie, who I presumed was driving. If I didn't know better, I'd swear that they kissed before the car set off, leaving me with only a glimpse of the driver. It wasn't what I expected from my previous sighting. She had lighter blonde hair and I remembered the driver having darker hair.

Then it dawned on me. Women change their hair colour and hairstyle all the time.

It was a few weeks later when Mom and I were sitting together after dinner on a Saturday evening.

“Is Dannie with you every weekend when you stay over?” I asked innocently.

I saw Mom’s face colour and knew I’d asked something she didn’t want to be asked.

“Quite often,” she replied, not meeting my eye. “It’s been good for me to have some social life now that you’re older. I never wanted to leave you when you were younger.”

“I was okay.”

“I know but you didn’t like having to stay with someone when I was working.”

There were a lot of other questions that sprang to my mind. I really wanted to know more about these trips away but something told me that it was better not to ask.

It was a Saturday morning some weeks later. The gas station had some sort of problem and I was sent home after a couple of hours. The Stingray was in the driveway. Something told me to be quiet as I approached the house.

Ever so quietly, I let myself in. Mom’s bedroom door was closed and from the sounds, she wasn’t alone in there. I knew the sounds of sex and these were sounds of sex being enjoyed. How would I know? Heck, I was a teenage boy and television, movies, and the internet tell you almost all you need to know, except how it feels.

I felt a flush run through me. Clearly I wasn’t going to knock on the bedroom door. I thought of going quietly to my room, but decided that it would be better if Mom didn’t know that I’d been in there and heard the things I’d heard.

I tiptoed through to the lounge for no particular reason other than to get away from the bedroom. It wasn't what I expected. There was a dress and some heeled shoes on the floor. The ballet flats that Mom wore around the house were there, next to her denim skirt. As I turned to go out, I saw a something on the side table. It was a long blonde wig.

I left as quietly as I had entered, jumped on my cycle, and pedalled away.

I thought and thought. Should I pretend not to have seen anything? That was one idea. Should I say something, start an innocent conversation and see what came out?

I just pedalled away and tried not to think.

When I came back a couple of hours later, the Stingray was gone. Mom was in her robe, with her hair wrapped in a towel like she'd just come out of the shower.

"You're home early." I don't know if she was shocked to see me.

"There's a problem at the gas station. They sent me home almost as soon as I arrived."

"You didn't come home."

"I only came to collect my cycle."

There was a silence as if Mom was thinking what to say next.

"Dannie came by to... drop off a book," she stut-tered.

"If you say so." My grin gave me away.

"Oh no. Tell me you didn't come in when..."

“...when you and she were doing something in your bedroom,” I finished her thought. “It didn’t sound like you were reading aloud from the book.”

“It’s not what you think.” Mom’s face reddened.

“I don’t know what to think. I’m not old enough.” I think I was a little petulant and softened it. “Should we talk about it later, after dinner?”

I think Mom avoided me through the afternoon. I made it easier for her by retreating to my room, my computer, and my homework.

Dinner was lovely, even if the conversation was a little slow and awkward. We were obviously avoiding the any mention of the elephant in the room. She cooked my favourite; Italian style with a ciabatta baked fresh from the freezer. She even opened a bottle of Italian red wine.

She made Italian coffee for us both, cleared the table, and poured us a second glass of wine.

“I was in bed with Dannie,” she started. “I know you saw the car and came into the house. I didn’t see you or hear you.”

“I think you were distracted.” I couldn’t help grinning there.

“So you know we were having sex. It was fun and we were enjoying it.”

“I’m not being critical,” I said softly. “You’re entitled to....”

I paused; I didn’t know what she was entitled to.

“Is it serious?” I asked.

“It’s getting that way.” Mom smiled at her thoughts as she paused. “I’ve been calling at Dannie’s restaurants for a couple of years and a casual acquaintance developed, and if I’m honest, I’d like it to develop further.”

“I’m happy for you, Mom,” I said. “I know you’ve put me first forever and you deserve something more.”

“You’re a good kid,” Mom said. “I don’t want to hurt you and if this does develop, I’m still going to put you first.”

“And I’ll support you even if you’re having an affair with another woman.”

“I don’t know what to say.” Mom wiped her eye as a tear seeped out. “I think you need to meet Dannie.”

“I’d be happy to.”

“I think you’ll be surprised. Dannie’s not a woman.”

My jaw dropped to hear this. I didn’t know what to say next.

“I know about the duck test.” Mom smiled. “If it walks like a duck and if it quacks like a duck, then it’s probably a duck. Dannie’s not like that. He’s a female impersonator who happens to own a successful chain of restaurants.”

“I’ve only seen glimpses,” I replied. “I saw a dark blonde driving away in the fall and then a few weeks ago, it was a lighter blonde driving the Stingray.”

He's usually a blonde." Mom laughed. "But he likes mixing it up with wigs. He's sometimes the cabaret in his restaurants, singing with a soft jazz trio. He's good and very convincing as a woman."

"He fooled me... at a distance."

"He fooled me for a couple of years, until he asked me to stay for dinner," Mom confessed. "I only accepted because I felt safe with another woman."

"He was that good?"

"He had to take it slowly and let me work it out before he confessed," Mom said. "By then I think I was falling in love with him, whoever he was."

"When do I get to meet him?" I asked.

"I think you should, and probably as soon as I can arrange it."

"Do I get a ride in the Stingray too?"

"I'm sure that can be arranged." Mom filled my glass again and we raised them in a silent but happy toast.

"Donnie's picking me up this evening after his slot with the trio." Mom announced the following Saturday. "Would you like to meet him?"

"You don't have to ask," I replied. "It's not often I get to meet someone as pretty as you."

Mom blushed. "You can be a charmer too. Why you don't charm the girls, I have no idea."

"I think it's because they're taller than me," I replied. "That and because I do my homework and don't hang around the mall."

“Is it that simple?”

“I think I’m too shy.” This time I blushed.

As Saturday evening approached, I got more nervous. It’s not every day that a boy meets the guy his mother seems to like so much. I have to admit that I googled him and his restaurant and looked at the pictures.

They were a bit formal and even when I enlarged them, Dannie the woman looked flawless. He was by turn a brunette, a redhead, and several shades of blonde; always beautifully made-up and always with nice feminine jewellery on fingers and wrists, ears, and round his neck.

There was nothing to suggest that here was a man in a dress. If I didn’t know, I’d have pinned his picture on my locker at school. Well, maybe not, but you know what I mean.

Mom really dolled herself up to be ready for him. I’d never seen her quite like that. She had the full makeup and jewellery too; a little black dress which hugged her figure and the highest stilettos that I’d ever seen her wear.

Her blonde hair was loosely piled up in that way she liked to wear it. It looked as if it would fall down at any moment, but she was a better hairdresser than that. As I looked at her, I wondered if Donnie had been teaching her a few tricks.

Then the moment arrived. I heard the car engine burbling as it pulled into our drive, then stop. Mom heard it too. We exchanged a glance. She went to the door and I stood at the back of the room and tried to act casual, even though I was nervous.