

Stepmother: Psychic Nights



Jenny Winters



An "Adult TV" Novel



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Stepmother: Psychic Nights

By Jenny Winters

As soon as I walked into the restaurant, I saw him. He looked exactly like the man in my dreams. Even though there were two other girls with him, hanging on his every word, I knew I'd get him. I knew he liked girls like me.

After all, he'd been "doing" me in my dreams for ages. I only had to let him see me and I could tell that he'd be mine.

Taking a deep breath, I set off towards the end of the bar where he was holding court. I stood as tall as I could on my heels, tugged down the top of my dress so that my new cleavage was on display.

I was proud of my breasts, even though I'd only had them for a couple of months. They were the

best that money could buy. If implants could be natural, these looked entirely natural. They moved and felt natural and the nipples were so sensitive, but that was for him to explore later.

I moved in closer. My breasts were almost pressing into his back. I knew he'd step back and bump into me. I knew what he'd see second, and it wasn't my breasts.

I was made up to kill at forty paces. My hair shone and flowed over my shoulders. Chanel perfume, a big smile, and I was ready.

He moved and collided with me. I dropped my glass, deliberately of course.

He apologised, called for a towel from the bar, and ordered another of whatever I was drinking. The two other girls looked at me and looked at each other. They walked away.

We talked awkwardly at first, then like we'd known each other for ever. I was very tactile, letting him do all the talking and keeping my eyes on him.

"Would you like to go somewhere less comfortable?" he asked.

I knew exactly what he was asking and stood to take his arm. This wasn't a dream. This was for real.

I told you that he'd be mine.

I should have known. No one calls this early unless it's bad news.

“Lachlan, this is your mother.”

“You're not my mother; you're my stepmother,” I replied.

“Please don't let this turn into one of those confrontations on the telephone,” she said. “I always did my best for you.”

“We may differ on that,” I replied, remembering that because we weren't friends, we got on better with less contact.

I remembered how happy I was when I was able to move away from the home she shared with my father, especially as several of her friends had moved into the converted barn on the property. They were “New Age” people with all kinds of weird beliefs.

“Please let bygones be bygones,” she said. “I'm calling with sad news.”

“Don't tell me that Father's trust fund has gone bankrupt.”

“Now you're just being spiteful.” She paused. “Please can we start this conversation again?”

“I'm sorry, Angela.” I used her name this time; after all, she was only ten or so years older than I.

I pictured her from a few years ago when I'd last been at a family gathering. I'd tried to like her after my father passed. She had been good to him, even

if we'd never really become close. I could hear her taking a deep breath before she spoke again.

"I have bad news. Your Aunt Morgan has passed away."

"I'm so sorry," I said. "I never knew she was unwell."

"She wasn't until she collapsed after last night's performance. It was so sudden."

I remembered Morgan. She was Angela's older sister, or cousin, or maybe even no relation at all; it was all so vague. I liked her, even if I didn't believe that she was psychic. Angela was the queen bee of this group of women who fascinated my younger self.

"It must have been if she didn't predict it."

"If that's a joke, it's in very poor taste," Angela replied.

"I'm sorry, it wasn't intended."

Angela, Morgan, and a few others had formed a psychic circle. Somehow, Angela had turned it into a decent business. They did readings and tarot, fortune telling and spiritual healing, whatever that was. That sort of thing has always been hogwash as far as I'm concerned. I try to have an open mind but their beliefs were just too much for me to pretend to go along with.

As a business, it seemed to be doing well. It gave me a bit of an air of mystery at school and at college when people asked about my parents. It also gave me a host of "aunts" of varying degrees of eccentricity.

I was always a sceptic, but maybe some of them were for real. Morgan was always the star of the show; all faded glamour and an exaggerated femininity. I liked her best of all, but I didn't believe her when she said she'd sensed that I had extraordinary powers.

As fortune tellers, their palms were certainly crossed with silver many times. Maybe it wasn't all bad?

Dad had been fascinated by it all and left his fortune to them, with only a small allowance coming my way. His share in the business came to me when he died and that really boosted my income.

I didn't mind. It was enough to keep me in more than modest comfort while I took a few jobs as I tried to get a writing career off the ground. The income from Angela's business was always welcome.

As I've already said, I wasn't a believer. I didn't ask them to contact Dad on the other side to ask how he was doing. I knew what Morgan would have replied. She'd have looked at me with those huge eyes looking sad.

Her hand would have been placed comfortingly on mine with all her bangles tinkling. I'd watched her doing it so many times to grieving spouses at their roadshows.

"It's for the soul on the other side to want to send messages back," she would have said. "Usually all they want is for me to assure them that their dearest ones are doing as well as they may, so it helps them to cope with their grief." How convenient.

I didn't say any of this to Angela.

"Please let me know and I'll fly back for the funeral," I said, not knowing what else to say.

"We need you more quickly than that," she replied. "Can you fly today?"

"I guess I could try," I replied. "Is it really so urgent?"

"Yes we all think it is. Please hurry. I'll explain everything when you arrive."

"I'll call and let you know when my flight's due," I said. "Could someone pick me up?"

"Of course we will," Angela said. "You can travel light. I'm sure that everything you need will be here."

I didn't think anything more about the way she said that, although with hindsight I should have asked a few more questions. Instead, I called and made a reservation on a flight later that morning and a connecting one which would take me into the sleepy backwoods where the old family home lay.

I didn't take much time to pack. I didn't have much to pack anyway; just a few toiletries, a change of T-shirt and a few things from my nightstand. I didn't need to pack a razor. The family inheritance hadn't included much in the way of whiskers. I couldn't grow a beard, and didn't have much body hair either. I wasn't planning on staying there any longer than I had to.

I didn't have much to show for my twenty-five years but I wasn't going to tell the family that.

Late in the afternoon, I walked out of the small airport and saw that old station wagon that I remembered so well. I craved one just like it, but they'd become collectors' items and way beyond my budget; not that my budget would stretch to anything on four wheels back then.

I waved and then walked over. I put my small bag on the back seat and flopped onto the front bench seat – yes the station wagon was that old. Angela leaned across as I leaned towards her. A perfunctory hug and kiss and we were on the way.

“You're looking well, Lachlan.” She looked at me closely. “I swear you can't have put on a pound of weight since I last saw you.”

“It's healthy eating and exercise,” I replied.

“You're lucky to stay so slim,” she said. “I always have to watch everything I eat.”

“You're not looking bad yourself,” I said, wanting to keep the conversation light and easy. I was willing to be pleasant but I'd rather not go any deeper than that. I would be back on my home turn in a few days, able to put this detour behind me.

“Thank you, I have to look the part when we're on the road. People expect it.”

“I guess it goes with the territory; eccentric psychics on the road.”

“We're not a bunch of Gypsy Rose Lee imitators.” Angela laughed. “The modern image is for

glamour and usually a bit of excessive glamour.” She waved her hand expressively, red nails flashing in the sun’s reflection. “Our public expect a show and that includes seeing us looking like their fantasies too.”

“I saw one on television a few months ago,” I remembered. “She had an impossibly big blonde hairstyle and amazing makeup.”

“I think I know who you mean,” Angela interrupted. “We’re not friends. She was probably wearing a dress that was far too tight and low-cut.”

“And finger nails that could never do the dishes,” I replied and we laughed together. I guess the ice had been broken between us.

“We’re not quite like that, but you get the idea. The paying public expects to see something as well as hear something.”

The car fell silent for a few miles after that, neither of us having anything more to say right then. I was fine with the silence but I hoped it wasn’t uncomfortable for her.

“I’m not sure I remember the landscape like this.” I said. The countryside passed us by as we travelled through the dusk.

“I don’t think you’ve been back here since your dad passed,” Angela said. “I’m sure you must miss him and all the memories you shared.”

“It’s been a few years,” I agreed, leaving it unsaid that part of the reason I’d not been back was Angela herself. I didn’t say it, but I guess she

knew. I hoped this wouldn't become a recurring theme of my visit.

"I know that we really never bonded." Angela must have been reading my thoughts. "I hope we can put that behind us."

I smiled across the bench seat, agreeing but yet not quite in harmony with her. The journey took us through the small town where I went to High School, then out through the fields and farms, some of which were rented from my father's estate.

A turn off the highway took us onto a stone track where dust from the dry landscape under the wheels was thrown up and carried away on the wind. Suddenly the old house was there, looking fresh and friendly as only a childhood home can.

"The house looks good," I said, breaking the silence.

"It's lovely," Angela replied. "I've kept all the features you'll remember, but you've not seen the improvements to the old barn out back. It's where some of my colleagues live when we're planning our public appearances."

"Is that the old psychic circle?" I asked.

"Yes, we've developed it and now we take it on tour. To be honest, that's what keeps the family trust viable since interest rates and dividends have fallen so low."

"I didn't realise," I replied. This was an awkward turn in the conversation.

“Well, you’re so out of touch, you wouldn’t as long as your share gets paid.”

She got out of the car, slamming the door to end the conversation. I watched her march to the door and by the time I’d collected my bag, she was out of sight. She left the door open for me to follow.

“I’ve put you in Aunt Morgan’s old bedroom,” Angela said. “Don’t worry; she was a few hundred miles away when she died. She was staying with a friend before we were to meet to work out the next tour.”

“Isn’t that...” I started to protest.

“It was the room your father liked best,” Angela said. “You’re there because it’s got a sitting room so you’ll be able to stay out of the way when you need to. There’ll be a lot of people staying over for the funeral and all the rooms are going to be used.” I appreciated the accommodation but things felt slightly tense to me.

“I guess the funeral’s here then?”

“It’s where she wanted it,” Angela replied. “And don’t think you can escape immediately after. There are a lot of things to discuss and plans to be made.”

“But do they involve me?” I asked, wondering why this should be so.

“You’re the most important part,” Angela replied. “Morgan’s role was huge and we need someone to help replace her.”

I didn’t know what to say next. I wasn’t one of the psychics and I couldn’t see why this had any-

thing to do with me. Angela wasn't going to explain. She smiled and pointed to the stairs. Things had taken an odd—and cryptic—turn.

“I'm sure you'll want to get settled in,” she said. “You'll find it a bit crowded, but don't worry about all Morgan's things. It's all been left to me.”

“All Morgan's things” was what she said. I couldn't believe my eyes once I got into the room and switched on the lights. The room was all soft pinks and muted greys, inescapably feminine; even the air held scents of perfumes.

I stood there, taking it all in. I don't know why but I could feel something in the room. It was as if it was welcoming me. I know that doesn't make sense, but there's no other way of describing the feeling. It was like I'd come home.

The dressing table was cluttered with bottles and jars, trays which held jewellery discarded in a tangle and a huge blond wig on a stand. I knew the drawers would be full before I opened the first one. They was full of lace and silk in all hues and patterns.

I turned to the closets, again knowing what I'd find. Sure enough there were dresses and shoes, coats, jackets and boots. Other things were neatly folded on shelves and it seemed to my untrained eye as if they'd been arranged by colour and feel. There was an organization to things that bordered on the obsessive.

Needless to say, the bathroom had a strong feminine scent, with luxury brands which even I

recognised as expensive, on the shelf beside the shower cubicle. There were soft towels on the rack, a hair drier beside the mirror, and a pale pink robe hanging on the back of the door. It felt like silk.

I went back to get my bag. The bed where I'd tossed it felt so clean and freshly made. I ran my hand over the sheets and again the lingering perfume was there.

I hadn't asked about dinner and Angela hadn't said anything so I stripped off and headed into the shower. I took the band from my hair and felt it fall loose across my shoulders. Suddenly I yawned and rubbed my face; still no hint of whiskers there despite my years.

I sniffed the shampoo bottles in turn and selected the least flowery one. It had the scent of fresh citrus. Finding the matching conditioner and body wash, I stepped into the cubicle.

It felt good to allow the hot water to flow over me and the gentle lather soon soothed away the tensions. I hadn't realised that I was so tense until it fell away. I guess it was the journey and the lingering apprehension that always came with any interaction with my stepmother. I always wanted things to not be awkward but comfort just didn't seem to be on the menu.

I felt really refreshed and relaxed as I stood with the towel wrapped round my waist. I sat in front of the mirror and on a whim, looked through the sprays and aerosols of hair products. One promised shiny straight hair, so I squeezed some onto my hand and spread it through my hair.

I brushed it through so that it hung wet, dark and flat over my shoulders. Then I started to dry my hair with the drier there. I brushed it as I dried it and quite soon I could see the light brown shades shining as the hair became lighter and smoother.

I ran my fingers through it, and brushed it. It seemed to shine and fall so much more naturally than when I washed it at home. Not that I had any of these fine products to use at home. This level of luxury was well beyond my financial capacity.

I had no idea of the time but didn't want to lose the feeling of such complete relaxation. I took the robe from the hook and slipped my arms through, then tied the belt. The lacy edges of the sleeves and the collar were soft against my skin and a little disturbing in a way that I couldn't quite put my finger on.

They were forbidden really but there was no one but me there, so I went to sit at the dressing table. I looked idly through the cosmetics there and sniffed the perfumes. I don't know why, but I sprayed some of the Calvin Klein under my chin and over the front of my shoulders. This was completely out of character for me and, if pressed, I wouldn't have been able to explain exactly why I was doing this. No harm, no foul, I told myself.

It was delicious and had hints of lavender. I pulled a face at myself in the mirror. What would Angela think if I appeared for dinner in a cloud of Aunt Morgan's scent?

I sat on the bed and then lay back.

“Can I come in?” Angela’s voice said after a knock on the door and then it was opening.

I woke from a deep sleep and took a moment to realise where I was, what I was wearing, and the way she was looking at me. When my senses cleared, I realized what a strange tableau I was presenting.

“I’m glad you found something to make yourself comfortable.” Angela grinned wickedly as she looked at me in the pink robe. “It suits you. You smell nice too.”

“I had a shower,” I said. “I must have fallen asleep.”

“I came to tell you that dinner’s in ten minutes. There’s only you and I so you don’t need to dress.”

I sat there for a few moments after she’d left, feeling a little stupid and exposed. I stood and stretched and that’s when I saw myself in the mirror. I posed and turned, then stuck my hip out and lifted my hair with one hand. I watched it fall back heavily into place and couldn’t help smiling.

“What does it matter?” I thought and turned to look if some of the shoes in the closets would fit me. I retied the robe and kept it on.

I sort of clumped my way down to dinner. The shoes I’d chosen had a wedge heel and were held on by a single pink strap across the front of my foot, with nothing to secure them around my ankles.

I had the feeling that at any step, I could lift my foot and the shoe would stay on the ground. I walked very slowly and very cautiously, wondering how women managed these things.

“Nice.” I expected more but it was all that Angela said, glancing at me as I perched on a stool at the high table in the dining area of the kitchen.

“I didn’t think you’d mind since there are only the two of us here,” I said as I tucked my hair behind my ears. I did it as if it was the most natural thing in the world, which it decidedly wasn’t.

“Of course I don’t mind,” Angela said. “All your aunt’s things are still in the room. You might as well use them since you came with so little.”

“I don’t really remember her well.” I failed to picture her. “I really liked her but I don’t think she was really my aunt.”

“She was some sort of second cousin on my side of the family,” Angela replied. “I can’t really say how we were related, but we had a lot of interests together.”

“I guess she got called Aunt Morgan because that was an easy way to include her,” I said. “I think you said she looked like me though.”

“I’ll show you some pictures and video later. She was a lot like you in build; you probably guessed that by the way her things fit you.”

“I’ve only borrowed her robe,” I said. “I haven’t been trying on her dresses.” As the words spilled out of my mouth, I had a vague sense of how inappropriate they were.

“Of course you haven’t.” Angela stared at me closely but there was a twinkle in her eye that was saying something different, like she didn’t believe me. “But you’re both tall and slim, and apart from the obvious curves, I think most of her things would fit you. You could have such fun, playing a dressing up game with yourself.”

“I couldn’t.” What the hell was she suggesting and why?

“I’ll come and help you, if you like.”

There was something in the way she said that and the way she looked at me. I let it go as she served a green salad with tuna. We ate in silence. Only occasionally did I had a fleeting sense that I was dressed inappropriately for a man.

“Thanks, that was really good.” I said, pushing my plate away.

“I’m happy you were able to come,” she replied, pouring some white wine into two glasses, one of which she handed to me. “The funeral is the day after tomorrow and then we really need to have a meeting with all the girls who make up our psychic nights.”

“You won’t need me for that; I’ll head home.” Yes, I was looking forward to making my escape.

“No, you’re an essential participant,” Angela said. “You have to stay. If it all collapses, then my income, your income, and theirs will be hit.”

“I never knew it was that important,” I admitted and we fell silent for a while. “I don’t have anything suitable to wear to a funeral. I thought she died miles away.”

“She did but she’s coming home for burial in the churchyard here. It was what she wanted.”

“But I’ve still nothing to wear.”

“There must be something in her closets. It’s a girls-only funeral anyway.” Angela smiled as she said it. “Your aunt would love it that you attended in something of hers.”

“Now you’re being silly,” I snapped. This was getting very weird. What the hell was she driving at?

“No, I’m being serious, deathly serious if you’ll forgive the pun. Angela starred at me. “I’ll help you pick out something in the morning.”

Her stare was so hard that I daren’t say anything more. “She’ll realise that it’s not possible,” I thought and put it to the back of my mind. I just wanted to do the least I could while not being rude and getting back home ASAP.

I stood and carried our plates away and then went back to Aunt Morgan’s room with as much dignity as I could muster in those difficult shoes.

As I switched on the light, I saw that the covers on my bed had been straightened and turned down, ready for me to get into. A cotton pouch with a flower pattern lay on the pillow. I picked it up and immediately inhaled its scent.

I opened it and allowed a pink nightdress to fall onto the sheet. I know it had been placed there to tempt me. It was the same shade as the robe I was

wearing, trimmed with delicate lace, and shaped to fit a woman's body.

I was really tempted, especially when I touched it. If a piece of clothing can be described as seductive, this one was.

I knew it was wrong but the temptation was too much to resist. I knew I shouldn't but I was unable to leave it alone and I put it on, over my head. It slipped smoothly over my body and fell almost to the floor. It had spaghetti straps which sat on my shoulders.

I looked in the mirror and for an instant thought I saw an elegant lady looking back at me. She looked a little like a younger version of the Aunt Morgan I vaguely remembered. I blinked in shock and then the reflection was all my own.

I walked closer to the mirror and watched as I lifted my hand to my face, as if double checking that it was really me in the glass. I suddenly felt really tired. I went to the bathroom, then tumbled gratefully into bed, feeling the nightdress slip over my skin as I settled down to sleep.

Sleep came easily that night and so did the dreams; vivid dreams that transported me several times during the night but which faded as soon as morning came around. I could only retain snapshots of what they had been.

Maybe it was something to do with my staying in Aunt Morgan's room, sleeping in her bed with all her personal things around me. Maybe it was because I was wearing her nightgown, with the aromas of her scent all around me.



Or maybe it was something else, something supernatural; after all I was staying where all their psychic services were planned, if not delivered. Whatever it was, I didn't have any feelings of fear or awe. If it was a ghost trying to contact me through my dreams, it was a very friendly one.

It was too friendly. In my dreams, I dined and danced but my companion was male and handsome with a magnetic smile. In one scene, I had a distinct impression that I was playing with rings on my fingers as he spoke. We drove in an open top car, with my hair blowing in the wind. We sped across a lake in a speedboat but I'd tied my hair back and felt the spray from the water. In the dream, my emotions were somewhat ecstatic in a way I had never felt outside of sleep before.

Then it got rather erotic. We were somewhere really opulent. It was after dinner and we'd had wine and now brandy as we sat together. We kissed and his hands were exciting me as they explored my body. I wanted more and giggled as he undressed me.

His hands explored my naked body. He licked my nipples and nibbled them, sending chills through me. I wanted him and could feel the size and hardness of his penis.

I started to guide him into me, feeling that first touch. He was gentle. He was teasing me and I gave up every sensation but that one. He pushed gently, then a little more firmly. I knew where he was going. I wanted it; I wanted that feeling.

Then I woke up. That came as a shock to my senses.

I lay still as I collected my thoughts that morning. I can remember all the sensations as the light came slowly through the drapes. It felt strange at first, but then my hands began to explore my body in the nightgown.

One hand held my penis which was as big and hard as ever I remember. The other played with a nipple through the lace of the bodice. I drifted away again. Another dream; this time I was dancing with Aunt Morgan, but we were both in antebellum crinolines.

She leaned in and kissed me. Then in an instant I was awake. If there was any message in all of this, I failed to understand it, but I remembered how wonderful and erotic it had been. OK, what was going on with me? I had never had thoughts or dreams like those before. What did this all mean?

I showered and went in search of coffee. My mind was a fog of swirling emotions in the mist of knowing nothing. It had all seemed so real, yet all was unreal except the lingering traces in my mind, which seemed to be fading fast.

But the main feeling of wanting something so much, only to have it snatched away, stayed with me.

“What on earth’s the matter?” Angela took one look at me sitting there with an untouched cup of coffee in front of me.

“There’s nothing the matter,” I said.

I could feel my face crumple and my voice stumble. She sat beside me and took one of my hands in hers. I looked at her and burst into tears.

“Lachlan, I’m your stepmother. You may not like that but I’m the one who knows you best and there’s something very wrong.”

Angela’s face said she wasn’t giving me false sympathy. “Is it that room you’re staying in?”

“No, I’ve been comfortable,” I said. “It’s nice to have all those things around me, reminding me of her.”

“I’m not sure I understand.” Angela squeezed my hand. “You didn’t know her at all well.” She was right and I was feeling trapped.

“I remember she was kind.” I stumbled over my words.

“She was and she really liked you. I remember she told me that you had an old soul.”

“What does that mean?” I was so struck by that comment that I was able to stop my tears.

“I think she meant that she could see something that you shared with her. She thought you were sensitive to the things that only she understood.”

“Did she really say that?”

“Yes and I was sworn not to say anything to you, but now that she’s gone, I don’t think she could hold me to that.”

“But what does it mean?”

“Only you can know that,” Angela said. “We have to talk about the future without her in a day or so after the funeral. Maybe some of the other ladies can help, or maybe it will come to you if you let your mind free and don’t try to force it.”

“It was so vivid.” I couldn’t help myself; the words slipped out before I had time to think about them.

“Was it a dream?”

“It was so good.” I didn’t want to go into the details. “I didn’t want to wake up, but just as... just as... I can’t say, but that was when I woke up.”

“Was Aunt Morgan in your dreams?” Angela asked quietly.

“Yes, but she wasn’t in that one. It’s all hazy now. I think she came into one afterwards. We were dancing but it seemed to belong to a time long ago.”

“I sense that you remember far more than you’re telling me,” Angela said. “That’s all right. Remember that you’re in a safe place and if I can’t help you, then one of the other ladies may be able to.”

“Do you mean dream interpretation?”

“If that’s what you want. Amongst us we have fortune tellers and a tarot card reader. One lady does hypnosis and past life regression if your problem is previous events troubling you. There’s a conventional psychologist and counsellor as well.”

“You seem to cater for every need.”

“We all try to help people,” Angela replied. “And we’re always open to learn new techniques and new ways of bringing peace into people’s lives.”

“I don’t think I’m so complicated.”

“You don’t have to be complicated.” Angela smiled at me. “All you have to do is open your mind to the fact that someone may hold a key to help you understand the things you don’t understand.”

“Like quantum physics and the secret of life, the universe and everything?”

“Now you’re being silly,” Angela laughed. “But you know what I mean and all you have to do is ask.”

I hung around listlessly that day. I couldn’t help remembering my dreams and the feelings. I felt really guilty for wishing that it hadn’t ended the way it did, and consoled myself with the thought that it may come back when I went to sleep.

“I think it’s time that you chose something to wear for the funeral.” Angela roused me from my torpor.

“Do I have to?”

“Yes you do. You said you hadn’t brought anything and even if you had, this is an all-girl affair,” Angela insisted. “That means you have to dress up like the rest of us.”

“But there’s a difference,” I argued. “I’ll be the only one dressing up.”

“No you won’t; we’ll all be dressing up out of respect.”

“That wasn’t what I meant.”

“Don’t be like that. One day in a nice dress and shoes won’t harm you.”

“It seems disrespectful.”

“If we thought that, I wouldn’t be saying that we should find you something suitable,” Angela replied. “The girls all know that you’re here; they’ll expect to see you.”

“Do they expect to see me in a dress?”

“What part of girls-only funeral do you not understand? If you tell me, I’ll explain it slowly for you.”

The tone of her voice said I shouldn’t argue any more. I got up and followed her to the bedroom.

“We’ve all decided to go with black,” Angela announced. “No heels because we may be on soft ground for the burial and no hats because Morgan disliked them.”

She opened the doors of Morgan’s closets. They were full of all kinds of clothes, mainly in blacks and greys although there were some muted pastel colours. I could tell from looking at them that there were a lot of flowing fabrics; dresses with lots of material in them. They ranged from short to the full length. Most were plain colours and right

at the end of the closet were a few that were clearly more fitted.

“I don’t think we want to scare you with something tight and sexy,” Angela said, looking at me. “That could be for the wake afterwards when we all drink too much and tell stories.”

“But...” I started to interrupt.

“You’ll be attending that as well,” Angela said firmly. “You need to get to know the girls before we have our meeting.”

“I’m not part of your business though.”

“Yes you are; you’re our major investor.”

“I never knew.”

“You didn’t have to and probably never cared to either.” Angela searched through the dresses. “Your father believed in me, so part of the profits goes into your trust fund. I’m sure you like receiving that every month.”

“I never realised.”

“I know but now you do, and the future of all the girls depends on the decisions we make soon.”

“Won’t I have enough without that?”

“Yes probably, but it’s the girls who worry me,” Angela replied. “This is my life and their lives so please take it seriously.”

“Okay, but don’t make me look like any kind of fool.”

“What kind of fool did you have in mind?” Angela laughed and I did too; the tension evaporated as I got the joke.

Angela turned her attention back to the closets and pulled out a black dress, with long sleeves and a modest round neckline. It had frills down the side of the bodice and on the cuffs. It hung quite heavily from a tight waist with lots of material in the skirt.

“Morgan loved this dress,” Angela said. “She’d always liked things that were very feminine. She didn’t mind if things were too young for her or too frilly either. I think you should try it on.”

I looked at her. “I’m the wrong shape.”

“That doesn’t matter; we can fix that with some proper underwear and padding. I think it’s ideal and all the girls will recognise it.”

“Won’t they think it’s disrespectful?” I asked.

“They’ll think it’s a fitting tribute.”

“If it fits and that’s another pun for the day.” I couldn’t help but grin. I took the dress from her and shook the hangar out. “It feels like it’s nice material.”

“Try it on.” Angela pulled down the back zipper. “If it’s near, we can sort out the padding easily.”

I stood, looking at her like I wasn’t really hearing her.

“Go on, get undressed.” She pulled at my shirt. “I promise not to watch but even if I do, you don’t have anything I haven’t seen before.”

I stood again in front of that mirror. I struggled to take it all in. Angela insisted that I do it all properly. I agreed, not really understanding what that meant.

Now I did. I had been dressed entirely from Aunt Morgan's closets. I tried to protest but my objections fell on deaf ears, so I gave up. I decided to go with it. If this is what the girls wanted me to do, if this was how they expected to see me, then I would do it.

"They really want you to be there, but they really want it to be an all-girls affair," Angela said. "I'm so pleased that you've decided to agree. It will make everything so much nicer for everyone."

I'd almost gone back on my agreement when Angela produced the lingerie. Of course it was from the closets and very feminine. I pulled on the panties, feeling my boy bits being squashed more than in my usual underwear.

"The bulge won't show when you get the dress on." Angela patted it in a manner far too friendly.

I excused myself and went to the bathroom where I relieved myself as best I could. If she knew what I'd been doing, it didn't show in her face.

"Arms out and I'll help you with your bra," she said, noticing that I was taking a deep breath to object. "You'll need it, so don't argue. It will have to be padded or the dress won't fit."

What could I do; I'd accepted that I'd be wearing the dress. I complied and felt the unfamiliar con-

striction of the bra around my chest and the straps over my shoulders.

“You’d better sit and I’ll help you into your tights,” Angela said.

“I can put on my own stockings.”

“Probably you can, but these are tights. They’re joined at the waist and if you don’t do it carefully, you’ll not be able to get both legs in easily and you’ll end up with ladders or you’ll tear them.”

Angela held the black dress out and I stepped into it. She helped me put my arms onto the half-sleeves and zipped up the back. It sat comfortable over my shoulders but as she had said, the slack fabric in front of me looked horribly wrong.

“You can see what I mean about padding.” Angela saw me looking, and went to loosen my zip so that the dress hung loose.

She reached into a drawer and returned with two flesh-coloured wobbling objects. She held them out for me to look and touch.

“They look like breasts without a body behind them,” I said holding one. “They’re cold and feel as if they’re real.”

“They’re meant to feel real.” She put one into each of the bra cups. “Morgan wasn’t very big so she used these to make her figure look more mature.”

“What do you mean by ‘more mature’?”