

# The Room



**Olivia Evans**

A "New Woman" Novel



## **Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers**

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# “The Room”

**By Olivia Evans**

It was the largest house Robert Smith had ever seen. The two-story Spanish style mansion was set well back from the street, guarded by both a high wall and two ornamental wrought iron gates; one for vehicles and one for pedestrians.

The young man walked to the larger of the two gates and studied it for a second. It might be ornate, but it was also functional. No one would get through that thing without either a key or a cutting torch.

*Or an invitation*, Robert thought, moving over to a small box mounted on a pipe next to the road. He pushed the black button centered in the middle of a shiny brass plate. He studied the mansion as he waited for a response.

He couldn't believe his luck at finding the small ad:

“House Sitter Wanted.”

The situation was perfect, the owners needed a house sitter while they took an extended vacation and he needed a place to stay and study during the summer break. He hurriedly called the owner of the house, a Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson asked him to send a resume and a brief note about himself.

Robert had thought it a little odd to send a resume for a house sitting job, but he sent one the following day. Nearly a month later, he finally received a reply. Mr. Johnson had made some inquiries and had decided that Robert was the sitter he and his wife wanted.

“Yes? May I help you?” a woman’s voice came from a speaker artfully concealed in the low bushes between the two gates.

“Uh, my name is Robert Smith. I called you about the house sitting job?”

“Oh yes, Mr. Smith, you’re right on time. Please use the small pedestrian gate to your right and close it after you enter. You will find a golf cart in the small building just inside the wall. You may use it to come up to the house.”

“Thank you,” Robert answered as the lock on the gate clicked and the small pedestrian gate opened. Robert found the golf cart and backed it out of the small shed-like building.

Driving up the long curving driveway, he busied himself looking at the well-tended grounds. Everything looked like it had just been cut or trimmed, like a well-managed and well-staffed park.

He parked the cart at the front door, next to a car that was almost but not quite large enough to be a limousine. The trunk was open and a few suitcases

were waiting inside. Leaving his small suitcase on the seat of the cart, Robert adjusted his tie and walked up the steps to the front door.

The door opened just before he could push the door bell. Standing inside the doorway was the most beautiful woman he'd ever seen.

She was nearly as tall as Robert, about five-eight, with a figure that should have been illegal. She was wearing an expensive pair of tan slacks and a white blouse that emphasized her figure rather than concealed it. On her bare feet was a pair of loafers, also expensive looking. She appeared to be in her mid-thirties, but may have been slightly younger.

"Come in please," the woman smiled. She stepped back and Robert caught a whiff of her perfume. He struggled not to become as aroused as he suddenly felt.

"My, uh, husband, Mr. Johnson, is waiting in the study for you, please go on in. I've got more suitcases to take out to the car," the woman smiled.

Robert smiled back. It was the same in his home; his mother always packed the car also.

Robert nodded and walked in the direction the blonde had pointed. He walked into the room and over to an ornate desk where Mr. Johnson was waiting. Unlike his wife, he appeared to be older, by about ten years or so. It wasn't an uncommon for the wealthy, male or female, to have younger partners, so Roger carefully refrained from commenting.

"Ah, Mr. Jones. You're right on time. Good, I like that trait in the people that work for me," Mr. Johnson said, standing and offering his hand.

“Yes sir, so do I.” Robert smiled and shook Mr. Johnson’s offered hand.

“Please sit down and we’ll go over a few things you’ll need to know.”

Robert sat down and listened intently as the man gave him his house sitting instructions. “I know that’s a lot to remember, so if you have any questions, just refer to the typed list here on the desk.”

“I won’t need the list, sir,” Robert said confidently.

“You won’t?” The man sat back in his chair, wondering if his wife had made the right choice in house sitters. All of his references, including his exceptional grades in school, had been thoroughly check by the agency. The detectives could find nothing that would indicate that Robert Jones wasn’t exactly what he appeared to be; a nice, honest and reliable young man who needed a place to live during his summer vacation from graduate school.

“No, sir. I have what’s sometimes known as a photographic memory. Once I hear or read something, I never forget it.”

“I see. Mind if I test you?”

Robert shrugged his shoulders; he’d been through this so many times it no longer bothered him when people expressed their disbelief. Before the man could pick up the typed instructions, Robert began reeling them off point by point.

“Amazing, truly amazing,” the man said, checking his accuracy. Robert’s recital was virtually word for word.

“What’s amazing, honey?” Mrs. Johnson asked as she walked into the room.

“His memory, dear. It’s photographic.”

“That’s nice, but you have some more suitcases to bring down if you’re through,” the blonde said.

“May I help?” Robert asked.

Mr. Johnson shook his head smiling, “No thanks, I’ll manage.”

“Now then, I suppose my husband gave you the instructions,” Mrs. Johnson said as she sat down in her husband’s chair. Robert had the strange feeling that she was more comfortable in it than her husband had been.

“Yes ma’am.”

“I have a few others that you should be aware of. We don’t want any parties. No one is to be on the grounds, other than the service people, the gardeners, the maid service and the pool boy, while we’re gone. You are free to use anything you might need, but we expect to find the house in the same condition we left it in, understand?”

“Yes, ma’am. Your husband already covered that. I will treat your home as though it was my Grandmother’s.”

The attractive blonde seemed satisfied. “Fine. Any questions?”

“No, I don’t think so. I’m curious, where are you going on your vacation?”



“It’s a kind of second honeymoon, dear, ” Mrs. Johnson corrected. She smiled faintly, “Julian and I thought it was high time we both got something we wanted for our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. He wanted to see Europe.” Mrs. Johnson smiled and lowered her voice, “and I want a baby. With any kind of luck at all, we’ll both get lucky. I just hope I’ve allowed enough time. Six weeks should do it, don’t you think?”

Robert could feel himself blushing. “Yes ma’am, I would think so.”

“Wanda, are you ready or not?” Mr. Johnson’s voice came from the hallway.

“All ready dear,” Mrs. Johnson called back. “Enjoy your stay here, Robert.”

“Thank you ma’am,” Robert rose as the attractive blonde did. He followed her out to the front porch and watched as she got into the car. Her window rolled down and she waved goodbye as Mr. Johnson pulled away.

Robert watched the gate swing open as the car approached, then slowly swing shut after the car had passed thorough it.

Robert looked around and laughed to himself. Six weeks of nothing to do but work on his Doctorate in Psychology and relax.

“Speaking of relaxing,” he said to himself, “I think now is the time to find the most comfortable bed in the house.”

He walked to the golf cart and retrieved his small suitcase and computer case. Reentering the house, he closed the door behind him. Smiling to himself, he

pulled off his tie, kicked off his shoes, wiggled his toes in the thick carpet, then began to explore.

He knew the instant he walked into the library that he would be spending most of his time in it. Three of the four walls of the large room were lined with rich dark walnut bookcases. Concealed in strategic locations on the ceiling were small spot lights to illuminate the thousand or so books. Scattered about the room was a variety of chairs, a single large, comfortable-looking couch, and what looked like an antique library table.

The forth wall, actually a series of French doors, opened out on to a little tree-shaded patio. Located not far from the house, and barely visible through the shrubs surrounding the patio, was an Olympic-sized swimming pool. He would spend some time there too, he knew.

“A comfortable, clean and well-lighted place to read,” Robert mused, looking around again. “All it needs is a fireplace and a rainstorm outside to make it perfect.”

He found his fireplace and the bedroom he knew he would use when he entered the third one he'd inspected. Only about a third of the size of the master bedroom, it was still larger than the living room of his parent's house. Intended to be a long-term guest suite, it had a fireplace and a balcony that overlooked the backyard and the pool.

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By the end of the third day, Robert had read all of the text books he'd brought with him. With his photographic memory, which was both a blessing and a curse, he'd never have to open them again. He knew

he should have broken out his computer and started on his dissertation, but wasn't in the mood.

Like most exceptionally intelligent people, he loved to read and there was a whole library of books that he hadn't even checked out yet. He wandered down to see what he could find.

He was walking slowly down one wall, reading the titles. Searching the titles, he couldn't find anything that sounded interesting. Most of the titles were light fiction, and few showed signs of having ever been read.

There was no reason why he should have picked that particular book. It wasn't the title, nor was it the fact that it appeared to be the only one that had been read more than once. Maybe it was the color of the binding, sort of an unusual pinkish brown that attracted his attention.

Whatever it was, he reached up to pull it out and discovered the secret room hidden behind the wall of books.

Robert watched in open-mouthed amazement as a section of the bookcases moved back into the wall about a foot, then swung aside, exposing the dark interior of another room.

"Well, well, well, how about that. What do we have here, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson?" Robert asked himself softly.

With a sixth sense he didn't know existed, Robert knew there were no exotic booby traps or even an alarm system. The room was too well concealed to require either. Still, he proceeded cautiously.

Wishing he had a flashlight, Robert stepped gingerly inside the dark interior. As he entered the room, an automatic sensor turned on the lights, slowly bringing the room from pitch black to full light in a few seconds.

Robert was vaguely disappointed. A secret room was supposed to hide great treasures and riches, or failing that, rows of file cabinets containing secret files of long hidden Nazi war records.

Instead, the windowless room looked like a much smaller version of the larger library it was attached to. Walnut bookcases lined two of the three walls. The third wall, the one to his immediate left, had a large screen television and a VCR recessed below it. On either side of the television were bookcases containing video tapes.

All very ordinary, except sitting in the center of the room was the most unique item in the entire mansion; a old style dental chair, complete with a swing-away exam lamp and instrument tray mounted on a detached upright post.

What did they *do* in this room? Robert wondered as he ran a fingertip around one of the padded circular head rests.

Inspecting the dental chair closer, Robert discovering that the normal plastic upholstery had been replaced with soft, high quality furniture grade leather. Even the instrument tray had been padded and covered in the rich leather, rendering it useless for sterile instruments. Several faint coffee cup rings marred the otherwise smooth surface, further confirming it was not used for what it was designed.

Hanging from the upright rod that held the instrument tray and exam light, where the suction hoses

would normally be located, were a pair of ear phones and goggles.

He flicked on the examination light. The normally powerful bulb had been replaced with a dimmer one. It was still bright, but more suited for reading than dental work.

The chair, while unusual for a private residence, wasn't anything out of the ordinary. It wasn't as if there were straps or clamps to secure hapless prisoners for some strange modern version of medieval torture.

Robert ran his hand over the smooth leather of the seat back. Whatever they did in this room, it certainly wasn't amateur dentistry.

Determined to discover the secret of the room, Robert turned his attention to the books that filled the bookcases. Most were slim tabloid type, consisting of ordinary sheets of paper folded in half and stapled in the fold. A few were thicker, and had the tailor made appearance of being manufactured by a major publishing house.

The slim tabloid covers were in different colors, some pink, some yellow, while the majority had lavender covers.

Growing more and more curious, Robert removed one at random from the shelf. The slim volume was entitled "*Future Perfect*" and written by some author Robert had never heard of. He opened the book and began reading.

*"It was a dark and stormy night..."* Robert groaned at the cliché but continued to read just the same. Before he realized it, he was in a semi-reclined position on the dental chair, the exam/reading light on and

dozens of the slender books scattered around the floor.

He'd never read anything like the small books. In nearly every story, the reoccurring subplot was someone, usually some poor schnook of a man, ended up having a sex change forced upon him. Or if it wasn't an actual change of sex, the hero usually ended up wearing a dress or worse by the end of the story. The most ludicrous part was that the transformed male ended up loving, or at least accepting, the idea that he was to remain a female forever.

Fiction where the underlying theme was transsexualism or cross dressing was something new to Robert. While he'd known about pornographic books and had even read a few, he didn't really think that these were porno in the generally accepted sense of the term.

Most, like the ones in the lavender covers, were fairly sensitive stories dealing with human relationships, adversity and final acceptance by a man of a rather unusual (for a man) handicap.

Simply put, most were "boy-meets-girl, boy-becomes-girl and finds true happiness" plot lines. Erotic stories written for a very limited market. Some, however, even with the underlying plot similarities, were really quite good. They could have been written by professionals.

Robert closed the covers on the twentieth book and glanced at his watch. He was stunned to see that he'd spent nearly five hours in the small room, reading the erotic books. He now knew the purpose of the room.

Mr. Johnson used it to hide his secret past-time, perhaps not as much from his wife—the room was too large for that—as from the rest of the world.

Robert wondered if Johnson was a secret crossdresser as well as obviously enjoying reading about it. He tried to imagine the husky Mr. Johnson in a dress. Shaking his head, Robert laughed and turned out the light.

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It was three days before he found himself in the room again. Drawn to the bookcase, he selected one of the thicker commercially published books. He found that it was not fiction, but a rather serious treatment of the transsexual phenomenon. His original opinion about the subject matter, gained through dozens of poorly researched, and therefore biased, psychology text books, slowly changed as he read.

Smiling thoughtfully to himself, Robert laid the book on the leather-covered instrument tray and stared at the blank television screen.

The books, even the text book, had strangely excited him. While he was neither a transsexual or transvestite, the stories of men changing into women had fascinated him. He wondered if the video tapes were as interesting as the books had been. There was only one way to find out, he thought, and that was to slip one into the VCR and watch.

Robert couldn't figure it out. The tape was moving and the television was on but all that he got was a picture that looked a lot like Technicolor snow and static through the speakers.

He sat on the dental chair and thought. The television couldn't need adjusting, and even if it did, there were no knobs to adjust, just an on/off switch. He was about to give up when he noticed the faint sounds coming from the earphones hooked on the upright support.

Curious, Robert removed the earphones and placed one against an ear. Instantly the faint sounds became a man speaking as though he were the narrator of an educational tape. On a hunch, Robert picked up the goggles and held them up to his face. An image of a man, obviously the same one who he'd heard on the earphones, appeared.

Intrigued, he slipped the goggles and earphones on. They were electronic filters or de-scramblers of some sort, Robert thought as he adjusted the devices' straps to fit his head. The slightly out-of-focus image and voice suddenly became clear and distinct. The television had a built-in scrambler!

Now that he knew the secret of the television, Robert settled back to watch the show.

Within a few minutes, Robert had seen enough to know that the program was a tape of a lecture based on the text book he'd just finished.

Robert was fascinated by the conclusions drawn by the narrator. According to the both the tape and the book, it would be possible, if medical research could only unlock the secrets of genetic engineering. The injection of a single mutated gene, and poof, every XY gene would be converted to an XX gene.

He wondered what it would be like to be "magically" changed into a woman. As he thought about it for a few minutes, he happened to glance down at his body for the first time since he started to watch the tape through the goggles. He was stunned to see the front of his T-shirt tented out by what appeared to be a pair of female breasts!

Suddenly terrified by what he had seen, Robert's heart started pounding in fear. Adrenalin raced





through his body as his hands shot to this chest to feel — nothing!

“What the Hell,” Robert said to himself as he jerked off the goggles to look at his chest again. The firm-appearing breasts suddenly disappeared, leaving his chest normal and, thankfully, flat again.

Robert suddenly realized that the cordless goggles were more than just a de-scrambler; they were part of a very sophisticated virtual reality device.

Robert laughed at his initial fear. Now that he knew what they were, he decided that they were harmless and slipped the goggles back on.

He felt again for the breasts he could see under his shirt. Still nothing! He allowed his gaze to travel further down his body to his cut-off shorts. They, too, appeared to be different, as though they were stretched to their limit over a pair of women’s broad hips.

His bare legs, however, looked more or less normal, if you discounted the fact that they were long, slender, and cleanly shaven. Even his feet looked normal, much smaller and more slender, but still they were his own feet. How odd, he thought, as he experimentally wiggled his toes. The toes that were not his own appeared to follow his commands.

Robert watched the rest of the tape wearing the goggles; occasionally he would glance down at his tented T-shirt and giggle. When the tape ended, he removed the goggles and earphones, got out of the chair and closed up the room.

After eating a light dinner, Robert cleaned up the kitchen and mentally checked Mr. Johnson’s list. According to the schedule, the cleaning and gardening

services would be arriving tomorrow. In the meantime, he still had his dissertation to complete. Robert wandered back to the library where he'd set up his computer on the antique library table. As he typed on the keyboard, part of his mind was busy thinking about the technology involved with the virtual reality goggles and earphones.

With only part of his mind on what he was doing, Robert worked quickly, managing to add another ten pages of text to his paper. A few minutes after midnight, he found himself falling asleep at his computer. He saved his work and went upstairs to bed.

Robert's sleep was disturbed by strange dreams. Dreams of himself turning into a woman. A woman that looked exactly like the attractive Mrs. Johnson, only a younger version his own age of twenty-five.

When he awoke the next morning, his mouth tasted like used sweat socks and he had a slight headache. He hadn't brought any aspirin with him, so he pulled a pair of his cut-offs on over his nude body and wandered through the master bedroom and into the master bath, hoping to find a bottle.

When he'd checked out the bedrooms the day he'd arrived, he hadn't bothered to look at any bathroom other than the one next to his room and the small half-bath by the library.

The master bathroom was nearly as large as the bedroom he was staying in. Every conceivable device known to man for personal hygiene was represented in the tiled room. There were two bathtubs, one large enough for two, was a deep ebony black with gold fixtures. The other resembled an old-fashioned claw foot tub. Deep and narrow, the bather would be submerged up to their neck. There was even a bidet with gold-plated handles on the water valves.