

## Chapter 4

Mary June Cunningham has a positive hunger for me, and I for her. We had each other's panties down, and if Justis MacElhenny, who is a voyeur first and a deputy second, hadn't of blundered along just then with his flashlight, one of us woulda got pregnant.

"What you kids doing in that truck?"

I raised up and stuck my head through the window. "What do you think we're doing? We're minding our own business and each other's business, and we don't need no help, thank you."

"Now, Leroy, you know you can't be doing that here. This land belongs to the county. You girls are just gonna have to move along and find somewhere else to do your lovemaking."

"Unless we let you watch?"

I could see his Adam's apple bobbing up and down in the moonlight.

"Now, Leroy, we just got to make sure you're not up to no good."

"Justis, do you want to watch?"

"Leroy, you know I do."

"Justis, what you want to be watching two girls for?" piped up Mary June. "You rather watch two queers than a boy and a girl couple?"

His Adam's apple jumped up and down again. "Mary June Cunningham, you should ought to know better than to ask such a question of an officer of the law. Of course I would."

Now, at seventeen years of age, I have a pretty

good notion of what a good time is, and letting ol' Justis stand in the bed of the pickup with his face pressed up against the window and his hands doing God-knows-what while I'm trying to have a romantic time is not

high on the list. Fact is, we wouldn't of been up on the bluffs anyway, if there had been a motel within 20 miles that would have let us rent a room, or if we could have gone to my house or to M.J.'s. I can hardly stand my own home; it's no place to even think

about entertaining a guest. Going to her house is an even more unlikely prospect. Mr. Alfred Cunningham knows about me and his daughter and he has threatened to shoot me on sight, which would be quite a trick, seeing as how he's legally blind and confined to a wheelchair. His wife would probably take over for him, though. She used to be a policewoman with a sharpshooter's medal and a .38 service revolver, both of which she showed me back when I used to be a boy and wasn't such a threat to the moral development of her daughter. Justis MacElhenny at the back window of the pickup is preferable to six rounds from a Cunningham gun or the "Goddamn, Leroy's" of my ma and the physical abuse of my pa.

Mary June and I have been seeing each other since we were thirteen years old. We knew each other before that, of course, and had even been pals for a while when we were seven or eight. Mary June had never shown any romantic interest in me, but as soon as I had got into Ma's hormones and started to develop, she was all over me like white on rice. At first, Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham were delighted, as I was well known to be a boy (even if a sexually suspect one), and as they hadn't noticed my rapidly developing womanhood. But once word went out, I was persona-non-grata in the Cunningham household.

Mary June likes me being a girl and all, but she has a

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## **The Problem**

sincere appreciation for my Problem. I hate the damn thing, and would have cut it off long ago if I thought I wouldn't have bled to death, and if they didn't turn it inside-out and all when they do the operation. I hate for it to be touched, and about all she wants to do is handle it. She's determined to get a response out of it. I tell her I don't think it's possible, but that doesn't keep her from trying.

Mary June is the sole reason for me not catching a flight to Belgium so that I can get it taken care of. Her perpetual fascination with my Problem (we've been together for four years) bothers me, but in every other way she appreciates my femininity. I love her, and I love making love to her, so it's worth it to let her have her way with me, just as it's worth it to let Justis fog up the rear window of the truck.

Justis does have a peacekeeping function, which is why we let him watch. Johnny Ray has taken to going out of town on weekends, and rumor has it that he's fallen in with a rough bunch from Atlanta. He and his friends aren't likely to mess with us with a police officer close at hand.

At first, they bothered us in little ways. Once, they opened the hood while we weren't looking and took out the coil wire, and it raining, and all. We never would have got home, but Mary June had the idea of taking off one of the plug wires and using it in place of the wire they had taken. She's got a real mechanical aptitude, does Mary June. When Johnny Ray stole all the lug nuts off of one wheel, she just took one off each of the other wheels and got us back on the road. She got mad after a while and put a burglar alarm system on the truck. It had a siren that would wake the dead. Right after she put it on we went up to the bluffs. We were lying on a big flat rock, looking out over the river and talking about whatever it is that girls in love talk about. Johnny Ray was prowling around in the engine compartment and the burglar alarm went off. We heard the siren, and then an almighty thump, and ran back to the truck and there he was, stretched out cold where he had jerked up and banged his head on the underside of the hood. We put him in the bed of the truck and took him to the Daniel Boone Truck Stop and put him in the back of a southbound semi without his pants. It took him three days to get back home. Things got uglier after that.

One cold night in February, Johnny showed up with three of his rough friends, and Mary June and I would have both been raped if I hadn't of whipped them with karate. Well, Mary June and her tire-iron might have had something to do with dissuading them, too.

Now, at 5'7" and 110 pounds I'm no David Carradine, but I do have a brown belt in karate, and when it went beyond calling me names and one of them laid his hands

on me, I swiveled on my left foot and used the ball of my right foot to move his kneecap around to the side of his leg. Another boy grabbed me and started choking me. I knocked his hands off my neck and then slammed the heel of my hand into his windpipe. By that time, Mary June had laid hold of that tire-iron, sending Johnny Ray and friend number three scurrying into the darkness. Friend number two was gagging and coughing, and friend number one was screaming 'bout his leg, but they managed to shag out of there when Mary June showed them the tire-iron and told them that if they didn't leave she was going to use it to emasculate them.

The other time it was Johnny and one other boy against me. They grabbed me in the dark and pinned me. They had in mind for me to do something that I didn't want to do. So, I just quit struggling and, when the time came, I bit the other boy's parts so hard he yelled soprano. Johnny ran off and I had to take the boy to the hospital where he had one hell of a time explaining what happened. It was right after that I started giving Johnny estrogen to calm him down.

## **Chapter 5**

I usually sleep like a log, but after Mary June dropped me off, I lay in bed wondering what lay in store for me the next day at work. Then I got to worrying about whether I was a boy or a girl, and whether Mary June would ever let me have the surgery, and just what kind of name I could give to our relationship, as we were both girls, but I had a man's thing. I didn't think we were lesbians, exactly. She was more masculine than I was, but she was the one with the hole, and I was the one with the pole. It didn't seem fair.

Mary June is the only one I have gone all the way with. She's the only girl I've ever had any romantic feelings for whatsoever, and I don't guess I would have had her, except that she seduced me. We were lying on the rug in front of the television set in her living room, just before I got the boot from her parents, and she just stuck her hand inside my jeans and laid hold of my Problem and said, "My God, you are a boy!". I didn't know what else to do, so I just lay there and let her kiss me.

It's usually men, or rather boys, who give me that squishy feeling. I go out with boys sometimes, and I've let truck drivers kiss me and play with my breasts, but I'm a virgin except for what Mary June and I do. I'd like to have a husband, and maybe babies (all right, I know I can't have children, even after surgery, but there's such a thing as adoption, isn't there?) Until I do something about the Problem, I'll never be able to have the kind of relationship I want with a man.

## *LadyLike #22*

It seems kind of dumb not to have the surgery. The Problem is out of place on my body, which is that of a normal girl. I've tried to talk sense to Mary June about it, but she just clams up and stops speaking to me.

I can't stress enough that I am a girl with a Problem. There was never anything of the boy about me. I feel cheated, much of the time, robbed of the little things I should have had. When I was small, I would get punished for doing the things that came natural to me: clomping around in Ma's high-heeled shoes, playing with dolls, sitting down to pee, playing with girls instead of boys. High school isn't what it could of been. Should have been. I wasn't allowed to try out for cheerleader, and, although I can spin a baton better than anyone, they wouldn't let me be a majorette. I'm talked about behind my back, called Leroy to my face, and persecuted in a thousand ways. Boys who like me steer a wide path because if they are even seen talking to me, that motor-mouth Johnny Ray will tell everyone they're gay.

It would have been so wonderful to have been born a girl. And it would have been so awful if I hadn't of gotten into those hormone pills when I was thirteen.

Doc tells me that I'm unique in doing what I did. He said that for someone to turn into a girl like me, they would have had to get just the right amount of just the right medicine at just the right time.

Maybe I am a genius, after all.

Finally, I got up and got dressed and got on my Honda and two-wheeled out to the truck stop.

All my life, my parents have bought me things, boy's things: toy trucks, and cap pistols, a Batman outfit, and a G.I. Joe figure (they thought that since I liked to play with dolls, the G.I. Joe might do the trick. I just made a dress for it out of an old sock.) I had a service station complete with a working elevator, and Tinkertoys (which I would turn into hats and earrings), and baseballs and bats, and a B.B. gun, and a boy's 10-speed bicycle that I took a hacksaw to, cutting off the horizontal bar and turning it into a girl's bike (the frame straightaway broke). We didn't have much money, but in hopes that it would make me into a boy, Ma and Pa were willing to get me masculine things. Most of the stuff got put in the back of my closet and never touched. As soon as I felt they wouldn't notice, I would move it down into the basement.

The Honda had been my idea, and Dad, secretly pleased that I had an interest in something that he considered masculine, bought it for me when I turned sixteen. I rode it everywhere for a year, until I got my car, which is a Chevrolet Nova— one of the old American-made ones. I bought it myself, with money I earned at my first real job.

The Honda is not a girl's bike. It has four cylinders, and

six gears, and it goes very, very fast. I'm so small that I look sort of dwarfed on the big old seat, but I can drive it pretty well. It's much more fun now that I don't have to ride it in the rain and the cold weather. On warm nights I like to take it out and charge into the curves.

I was flushed and wind-whipped by the time I got to the truck stop. It was about midnight, and the third-shift manager had gone to town to make the deposit. The place was nearly empty. Bobbo Joe, who seemed to be perpetually at work, a 24-hour Indian cook, greeted me, wearing a greasy apron. After perhaps ten hours behind the grill, his DA was sadly askew.

"White Man come," he said in a monotone. He moved his hand horizontally. "Two suns ago. Heap big White Man. White Man speak with forked tongue."

Now Bobbo Joe can talk as good as anyone else, but when he gets in one of his "Injun" moods, you just have to go along with him. "What did White Man say?" I asked.

"White Man sexually suspect," he stated impassively. "White Man gottum titties."

"What did White Man say?" I repeated.

"Him girley-man White Man," Bobbo intoned. "Him not warrior like Injun." He flexed his chest and a button flew off his shirt and made a dinging sound on the sheet metal counter. "Him eatum too much. Shirikum work."

"Bobbo..."

"White Man driveum iron horse," he continued. "Him spreadum lies about White Squaw."

"I knew it," I said glumly.

"Injun not believum White Man," he said. "Or maybe him believum. Not care."

"Oh, Bobbo," I cried. "Have I been fired?"

He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye. "Squaw not fired. White Man not able tellum Great Chief. Tellum Injun. Great Chief in walk-in cooler with Tally Barnes. Makeum whoopee. Great Chief not want talkum White Man. Injun talkum."

"Just what did he tell you?" I asked, although I knew. It was always the same.

"White man say White Squaw really Little Warrior. Ask Injun tellum Great Chief. Injun not tellum Great Chief."

"Thank you, Bobbo," I said, and hugged him. I was testing for his reaction; he didn't pull away. "You saved my bacon, for a day or two, at least. But he'll be back soon enough, and then I'll be out of a job."

"Heap big White Man not come back," Bobbo grunted.

"He will. His name is Johnny Ray, and he'll be back."

Bobbo's mouth widened into a grotesque grin. "White Man not be back. Injun fixum. Fixum good. Feedum iron horse. Feedum five pounds Domino sugar."

*to be continued...*