**Gal Friday**

a Gjemmelig story

**1. An intriguing idea**

It’s 10:30 on Friday morning, and I’m still looking. I’ve been at this nearly a week. Every morning the same routine—get up, start the coffee and then search through the want-ads in the local paper, all spread out across the kitchen table. My unemployment runs out next week and, if I don’t get something pretty soon, it’s going to be back to mom and dad. Uff! I don’t think I could handle that, and I sure don’t think they could.

My first job was at Drabor’s Heating and Plumbing and it meant an apartment all my own. Okay, it was the second floor of a ramshackle house, but to me it was like moving to heaven. I loved it there for four years, until I switched to a nicer place last year. Then over the summer, Mr. Drabor got sick and had to sell the business. What that meant for me was I was out of a job. Yeah… Bum-*mer.*

Actually the first several weeks of no job were pretty mellow. During the summer I wasn’t taking night courses at the community college so it was, like, this sudden total freedom. I got up late in the morning and didn’t even get dressed. Mostly I just lazed around the apartment. It was a really hot August, and my a/c was on the fritz, so wearing almost nothing seemed natural. Okay, I’ve maybe got a little tummy, but nothing horrendous, and my breasts are pleasantly full. Anyway, I gotta tell you, doing housework in just a pair of undies gave me a sort of a thrill. One day, when I was painting the kitchen, I took off undies as well…

Anyway that’s all behind me, at least I hope so, because I really have to get a job. My skills are good, and Mr. Drabor wrote me a nice letter, so I don’t understand what the problem is. Maybe it’s because I’ve only been at it for a week, but I’ve already been to twelve interviews. Twelve! And this one this morning makes thirteen. I’m headed there now, in my eight year old Toyota. Geez! Interview number thirteen, and not only that, it’s Friday. Well, maybe Friday the thirteenth will be my lucky combination.

“Yo, wow!” I say to myself, “there’s a parking space right out in front.” I see it as I turn down the wide deserted street that the man told me over the phone. I’m in one of these new industrial parks near the edge of town, on a street that has warehouses and depots on one side and farm fields running along the other. As I swing my old Toyota easily into the spacious empty spot I’m like, hey, maybe today really is my lucky day. Straight across from me, on the other side of the street, is the place where I’m going, a low two-story block building with a huge double garage on the side. On top of the building there’s a big sign that reads: “Soda-Rite Beverages—Wholesale and Retail.” Soda-Rite, I pronounce it aloud. Maybe my future *is* here.

I switch off the motor but stay in the car. My appointment isn’t until 11:00, and that’s still twenty minutes away. I pull down the sun visor and check myself in the mirror. Want make sure nothing got smudged since I left the apartment. Probably should have done something about my hair, I’m thinking. But too late for that. Since high school I’ve mostly just let it grow, with a sort of “carefree” look. It’s straight-ish and brown, and trimmed a couple of inches below my shoulders—oh , and it’s parted on the left. But that’s just about all the styling I can bring myself to do. I guess I like low maintenance. But I do keep it clean, and in the daylight it glows with little highlights. And so what if it looks carefree? That’s me. Usually. Except when I’m uptight, like I’m feeling right now.

Ten ‘til eleven. I’m beginning to get antsy. I decide to get up and go in. Over to one side of the building there’s a door that says “Office.” I figure that’s the one I want. As I’m crossing the street I look over through the open garage door and see some guys loading a delivery truck. All around are stacks and stacks of bottled beverages. I go in the door marked “Office” and I’m at the foot of a stairway. It’s all spiffy and clean and it has that new-building smell. The floor and the stairs are in white pebbled linoleum. There aren’t any signs or anything inside the door, but my guess is that the office is “up,” so I that’s where I head—up the stairs.

As I trudge up the staircase, I’m starting to get really nervous. I’ve done this all before—twelve times this week alone. But now time is running out, so I hear myself thinking “Oh, please, I’ve just got to get this one. *Got* to” My heart’s going all thump-a-thump and I’m secretly hoping there aren’t any other applicants, or at least none that are prettier than me. I know, it’s skills that count, and business is business, but you’ve got to be realistic, too.

At the top of the stairs are two open doors, one on each side. Not sure which way to go, I check the room on the right. Some clerical looking guys sit at a table that’s all covered with forms and papers. Through the other door there’s a desk for a receptionist but the person behind the desk is a guy. And he doesn’t look like a receptionist. He’s slightly chubby, in a yellow shirt, and working at a laptop. I walk over. Even though he’s gotta know I’m standing right in front of him, he just sits there for a while, tapping away on the laptop. Then he finally looks up.

“Hi!” I say, maybe a little too eagerly. “I’m Michelle Oliveiro. I’ve got an 11:00 appointment?” (Gotta to stop saying things like they’re questions.) The guy stares up at me blankly, like he doesn’t know what I’m talking about.

“I called up this morning,” I hasten on. “They said I should ask for Pete?”

“Oh,” the guy lights up, as if he suddenly hears something he recognizes. “I’m Pete.” And he pushes back from the desk. “C’mon, Michelle, let’s go to my office.”

Flap! Flap! The corridor is like an echo chamber as my flip-flops refuse to be silenced. Why in heaven’s name am I wearing flip-flops, anyway? Well, obviously I can’t take them off now, so I just continue following “Pete” down the hall, flap-flapping up a racket behind him, until finally he turns and motions me through a door. “Have a seat, Michelle.” I’m wondering what kind of impression I’m making when I notice Pete staring down at my toes. Damn! I knew I should have worn sneakers, especially since it’s October but, hey, this is no time to be thinking of that. “Girls in flip-flops,” I hear him mutter as I angle my way past and go in to take a chair. I can’t tell from his tone if he thinks it’s good or bad.

“Well,” he says once we’re seated, little wrinkles around his eyes. “We’ve had a *ton* of applicants!” He riffles through a pile of papers on his desk, probably applications. “There sure are a lot of good people out there.” He neatly straightens out the stack. “And I think it’s fair to tell you, Michelle, that we’ve pretty much made up our mind. Decided on her yesterday.” My toes are curling in their flip-flops. “But it was too late to pull the ad from this morning’s paper.” I nod. “And now, as you see, here you are.” He flashes me a little half-smile and leans back in his chair, which squeaks.

“Well, fuh-*call*!” I hear myself shouting inside my head. The guy could’ve told me *this* on the phone. Why’d he have to drag me clear out here? “But,” Pete continues, “Mr. Drabor is an old friend of the family.” My ears perk up. “And when you said you worked for him, I thought….” For a moment, Pete breaks off. I feel myself pressing so hard in the flip-flops I’m about to pop a strap. “We know how bad the old man felt when he had to let his people go.” I nod again. “And we’d like to help…” Poff! Dang! There went the strap. “If we can.”

Umph. That last bit doesn’t sound so good. I’m definitely feeling this big sinking sensation as I reach down to push the strap thingy back in my flip-flop. I’m still all bent over when Pete starts talking again. “The least we can do is give you an interview.” I quickly sit straight up. The strap can wait. Pete gives me another little half-smile. Then, lifting up the top sheet from his little stack of papers, he says, “Maybe you’ve got something this other girl doesn’t.”

Twenty minutes later I’ve filled out an application and the interview is proceeding in a more or less normal fashion. Pete turns out to be the son-in-law of the Soda-Rite owner (and founder), but “Dad” is essentially retired. Drabor was actually an old poker buddy of the father-in-law. The job, he says, is a mix of different things because they’re a “small operation and can’t afford a lot of staff.” Since it was advertised as Gal Friday, I’ve already figured most of this out, but I’m trying real hard to look attentive. “Basically,” he tells me, “we need somebody with a lot of flexibility, to fill in wherever the needs happen to arise.” I nod, naturally. “Even out in the shop.” I nod again, assuming that by “shop” he means those garages, but I’m wondering what kind of work I could possibly do out there.

Then the subject turns to me. Pete asks me about college, all 62 credits worth, and which software programs I know, and he makes me do a little typing test. Also, he seems to be checking out if I’ve got enough personality to be a part time sales-receptionist—another “part of the job.” This all seems to be going pretty smoothly, but it keeps running back and forth in my head, what could I conceivably show him that this other girl doesn’t have?

“Another thing,” Pete adds. “We expect our office people to show up to work neat and businesslike.” There’s another glance toward the flip-flops. “Dad’s sort of old-fashioned, that way. So we humor him.” Not much, I’m thinking. All the guys I’ve seen so far look like they just stepped out of a sports bar or something. “But we do have ‘casual Fridays,’” Pete goes on. “Like today.” Ah, that explains it. I’m guessing the flip-flops may not be fatal.

Following a quick tour of the premises, where I meet Orville, Ken and some others, we go back to Pete’s office upstairs. I ask about the payscale, and it sounds really good, more than I made back at Drabor. He asks a few more questions about me but, unless the guy’s buying me lunch, I’m figuring he’s about to wrap things up. Sure enough, after a couple of more minutes and another riffle with his finger through the pile of papers on his desk, Pete leans back, puts on that goofy half-smile again, and says, “I need to think about this over the weekend.”

I’m kind of relieved the interview’s over, but then when I think about it I can’t decide if I’m mad or just despondent. I mean, what’s this “over the weekend” crap, anyhow? Why can’t this guy just say to me “Michelle, you’re hired!” Or “Michelle, it’s been nice.” The point is, if I’ve got something this other girl doesn’t have, it’s pretty obvious that Pete doesn’t see it. That’s the bottom line. Same thing as with *all* those other girls—faster typists, prettier smiles, fuller bosoms or whatever—that’ve been walking all over me all week. Story of my life. Getting that job with Drabor was probably just a fluke. Never to be repeated. So Mom, Dad! Get ready, ‘cause here comes your darling Michelle, flying back to the nest. Michelle Oliveiro, age 23, World-Reject. Crap!

Pete turns to file away the pile of applications in the cabinet next to his desk. I quietly get up to leave.

“Any last questions?” I hear him say behind me. I’m already at the door.

“Questions?” I reply, kind of dumbly. Geez-Louise, I sound like my brain went off duty the second the interview was over. “Oh, yeah…” and I turn myself back towards him, practically twisting myself out of a flip-flop in the process. And to top it off, when I try to catch my balance the other foot hits the floor with a big slap. “Brilliant Michelle!” I’m thinking. “Truly brilliant! Maybe they hire the spastic.” I give Pete a weak smile.

Meanwhile, I see Pete’s gotten up from his chair and stands, not smiling, behind his desk. The look in his eye seems so.. earnest. It’s a boyish sort of gaze, one I figure he’d use when he’s trying to lay on charm. But I don’t think that he’s doing that now. Instead, the thing I’m thinking is, Whoa, hey, Michelle! This-is-your-moment. Now’s your chance to show this guy what you’ve got that the other girl doesn’t. But then, like… I mean then I’m, like, sure. So what do I say to do *that*?

“Mm-m,” I begin, trying to stall for time. “About these casual Fridays…”

His gaze sharpens, and he nods as if to say, “Yes, and what about them?”

“Well, you say everybody gets to work in anything they want?” I glance down at my bare toes and catch Pete’s eyes following mine. In fact, he scans my whole body. Then, after a moment, he looks up and says; “Yeah, more or less. What d’you have in mind?”

Silence.

And then, like out of nowhere I hear myself saying: “How about nothing at all?”

At first Pete looks stunned, like he can’t believe I said it. To tell you the truth, neither can I. But I’ll bet you if there’s one thing that other girl didn’t ask, that’s it. Which, I’m thinking, is why she’ll get the job and I won’t. But then I’m, like, oh c’mon, Michelle. You always gotta be so negative? This guy’s *got* to see you’re just kidding. The lilt in your voice, the smile that you’re smiling—there’s no way he can think it’s for real. What he’s going to see is you’re clever and fun. And what the heck! if it doesn’t work, and now I’m thinking again it won’t, well, my chances were pretty slim anyhow.

But Pete’s face slowly softens, and the half-smile returns. “That’s a really intriguing idea.” He stares into space, like he’s real deep in thought, and keeps drumming his chin with his fingers. Then suddenly he stops, lowers his gaze, and looks at me straight in the eye.

“Michelle, you’re hired!”

.

“You mean…?”

“Yes, Michelle, you’ve got the job”

“Yesss!” it all hits me. I’ll be their Gal Friday and do all of the things that they need. I’m done with those want-ads, I’ll get a good paycheck and don’t have to move back to mommy.… But then I keep hearing “intriguing, intriguing” as Pete’s words break in through my thoughts.

“Yeah,” I laugh. “It’s really a neat one. Wouldn’t be wild if we could!”

“Okay,” he says firmly, still drumming his fingers. “You say you can start right away?” I nod. “Then your first day’s next casual Friday.”

“Start!” “Next Friday!” The words ring in my mind. It’ll be nice to have one last week off.

“So, we’ll see you on Monday, at nine in the morning. A glance at my toes. And remember, be dressed in a businesslike style.

“Monday?” I’m thinking. But he said I start Friday. He must be mixed up on days.

“And that means no flip-flops when you come in on Monday…. And no flip-flops on Fridays here, either…”

Monday? Friday? Wait a minute. Hey! And slowly, so slowly, I’m getting a picture. Surely this guy can’t be *serious*?

But Pete presses on, “…because on casual Fridays, you’ll wear ‘nothing at all.’ Yes, it‘s *such* an *intriguing* idea.”

I’m searching his face for a sign he’s just teasing. But there’s only a satisfied smile. Well, I’m still thinking, he’s got to be joking. There’s no way this thing can be real.

**2. Practicing**

Ah, man! Where do I start? I leave the interview at Soda-Rite, and I’m trembling. Trembling! And this wild mix of feelings is racing around my head. I’ve got the job, that’s the good thing. So now I’m “safe,” as far as that’s concerned. No more worry about moving back with mom and dad—living on squat, having my boyfriends scrutinized, and as for sleep-overs—well, just forget-about-it. But then again, there’s still this thing.. this *thing* about the casual Fridays.

Pete had me fill out a few government forms before I left, so I’d be ready to start on Monday. He also showed me some other stuff, like where I was going to sit. But the business about me coming to work with no clothes on, he didn’t say anything more about that. And, frankly, neither did I. The only thing was at the very end, when he walked me down the stairs to the door, his last words were something like “see you on Monday, and remember, ‘neat and businesslike.’” Okay, cool enough. But then he says, with this slightly sing-y voice and a look in his eye, “And no flip-flops on Fridays!”

“No flip-flops on Fridays?” What’s that supposed to mean? We’ve already got some kind of secret code going on this thing? So anyway, I get in my car and I’ve got the whole trip home to mull this business over. The whole weekend actually. And the thoughts fly back and forth. For all I know the guy’s really serious. Soda-Rite’s depot is near the edge of town. Even out on the street in front there doesn’t seem to be much going on. And I didn’t see a lot of people around the depot, either. The only ones there looked like regular employees, and they could be dealt with. So it’s possible, just possible that Pete wasn’t just putting me on. The thought makes me shudder. But then I’m, like: Hey, Michelle! Get real. Office work in the nude? He can’t mean it any more than you did. The point is you’ve got a job, and this guy’s gotta be goofing on you. He’s just gotta be.

So that night, after my boyfriend lets me off, I have a couple of extra glasses of Chardonnay and go to bed, and I have this really off-the-wall dream. There I am in the upstairs office at Soda-Rite, going over some papers. I happen to look down, and—you got it! There’s my pussy hanging out! The phone rings on my desk and it’s Ken. He’s Pete’s number two. He wants me to stop by his office, down the hall. I get up from where I’m sitting and, ohmygawd!, it’s, like, I realize I’m totally naked. “No flip-flops!” But even though there are all these guys around, nobody’s paying attention. Nobody stares. Nobody comments. It’s just like business as usual, except that I’m running around in the nude. And, I gotta tell ya, I’m feeling sexy as hell!

Next thing you know, I’m awake, lying in my bed and I’m really wishing I hadn’t woken up from that dream. All I want is to get back in that office, back to work at Soda-Rite, where I’m writing up invoices naked. But I can’t get back to sleep, of course. So I just lie there. Like, *yearning.* And even though I’m not wearing anything in bed, it just isn’t the same thing as being naked at the office. (Well, duh!) Besides, sometime or another I’m going to have to get up, and I don’t particularly feel like getting dressed.

After a while, though, I’ve gotta go pee, and also I’m starting to get hungry. So I slide out of bed and I pick up my robe and begin to pull it around me. But then as I’m feeling the robe on my skin, I think, Michelle! Why d’you need this thing? And I’m right, I don’t. So I drop it on back on the chair. I can at least start off the day in the nude. So I go make my stop at the bathroom then, when I’m done, I get up and walk straight in the kitchen, where I put on a pot of coffee. On the way, I turn up the thermostat just a nudge. Hey, it’s not *my* heating bill.

Now I haven’t been going around nude in my apartment, not for extended periods of time anyway, since the heat wave last summer, when the a/c went out for a week. So it’s feeling kind of, like, different. While I’m waiting for the coffee I spend a few minutes puttering around. I straighten up some old magazines in the living room and now I’m washing off the dishes that were in the sink. I’m kind of enjoying the splashes of warm sudsy water on my front, and the little white bubble-froths that catch in my pubic hairs. They’re like this constant little reminder that I’m naked, as if I could forget it. When I see the coffee’s done, I pour myself a mug. But then I suddenly realize as I head off into the living room, the newspaper’s still outside.

My building’s in this fairly large complex and I’m up on the second floor. Like the other second-floor apartments, the front door to mine leads directly outside, opening onto a walkway that runs like a long narrow terrace from one end of the building to the other. There’s a set of red metal stairs at each end. The morning newspaper delivery is theoretically to the door, but the delivery man sometimes gets lazy and tosses it up from the parking lot, one floor below. I’m figuring that if the paper’s right in front of the door, I can easily get it without going back to the bedroom to get my robe. So I open the door a crack, to see where it is. But the paper is not in front of the door. Now I open up the door a little wider and look up and down the walkway. Ah, there it is! About eight feet away, lying half-way to the next apartment, and almost all the way out by the metal railing that runs along the walkway’s outside edge.

Great! I’m thinking. So much for that idea! But then I look again and, actually, there’s nobody out there. It’s still pretty early, and it’s Saturday morning, so there aren’t the usual bunches of people going to work, or wherever. So you know what’s going through my mind? I’m, like, I’d be just as much by myself out there as I am in my own apartment. Hmm. Got to mull this one over a little. So I’m standing here doing that, with the door half open, and man! I’m really liking the feel of the late October air that’s wafting in against my naked skin.

And then it just hits me, like boom! Okay Michelle, let’s do it! So I pull the door wide open, step out on the walkway, and scurry myself over to the paper. As I bend down to pick it up, I realize for the first time the icy chill I’m feeling in the bottoms of my feet, pressed bare against the cold concrete. Bent over and looking down. I see my toes lined up on the gray surface of the walkway, their little pink nails all in a row, a contrast of my skin against hard concrete, of warmth and of cold, of me and the walkway. I’ve been out here barefooted lots of times before, of course. But never totally naked. And my bare feet against the cold concrete seem even more bare, even more exposed, somehow, now that I have nothing on at all. And ohmygawd, do I feel *sexy*!

I straighten up with the paper in my hand and take another quick glance around. Still nobody. So then I, like, saunter, I mean literally saunter, back toward my apartment. The closer I get, the slower I saunter, like I never really want to actually get there. It’s only about three steps, of course, so I don’t get to saunter very far. But now I’m definitely feeling the late October air against my whole body. It’s only a couple of degrees above freezing, and my nipples are starting to tighten. And between my legs, where I guess I’ve gotten a little damp, wisps of wind seem to lick like little tongues against my pussy.

I decide to wear nothing for the rest of the day. It’s Saturday. Why not? No classes at the community college tonight, so I can just hang out inside all day. But frankly, after a few hours of having nothing on it’s getting to be sort of a disappointment. Going for the paper was a thrill and I wanted to feel hot like that all day. But reading the paper is, well, mostly just reading the paper. Watching TV is basically just watching TV, no matter what you have on. Or don’t. On top of that, I started feeling a little apartment-bound. Somehow, all these errands that I’d been putting off for weeks suddenly seemed like they were real urgent, on the one day I couldn’t go out. But, it’d be a lie to say it’s been boring. As I go through the day, there are constant occasions when I catch a glimpse of myself in a mirror, feel an unaccustomed draft against my body, get up from the bathroom and *just walk straight out*, or even just notice my bare toes, and that hot little shiver comes back again. Okay, I guess I gotta admit I’ve been pretty hyped up all day. Just not as hyped as I thought I’d be.

So here’s the deal. There’s this growing little piece of me, deep inside, that doesn’t want Pete’s insinuations about ‘casual Fridays’ to be a joke. In this little piece of me, I really, truly want it to be for real. Then there’s this other little piece of me that cringes in terror at the very thought it might be real. And then there’s this other little piece that says, C’mon Michelle, get a grip. The main thing is you’ve got a job, and lots of people have jobs where they have to take their clothes off. Actors, models, dancers, strippers…. They just don’t happen to work in an office, that’s all. But it’s not such a big deal doing your job completely naked. “Strippers!” Gads, what am I thinking?

But anyway, says this third little voice, if it has to be that way, until you can find someplace else to work, then just grit your teeth and do it. What I’m getting around to is this. The point of going naked at home is not whether I can stay, like, “hot” all day in my own apartment. The point is, if I’ve gotta go naked at the office, I’d better start ‘practicing’ at home. The more used I am to not wearing clothes when I’m alone, the easier it’ll be to go around naked when I’m with other people. At least, that’s what this other little voice says.

\* \* \* \* \*

It’s about 5:30, and I get a call from my “boyfriend.” I guess he’s not really a boyfriend. I only just met him two weeks ago. But we’ve been out a couple of times since then, and he’s pretty nice. I think he’s more interested in me than I am in him, but that’s another story. Anyway, he calls me up and asks if I want to go out. Panic! I’ve made this promise to myself, and I really do want to keep it, to stay naked all day. I mean this is only the *first day*! If I start wussing out already, I’m like nowhere. On the other hand, and I gotta say it, I wouldn’t mind doing something other than just lying around alone watching TV. But in the end I tell him that I’d, like, kinda planned to stay home tonight.

So then he says to me, why doesn’t he come over here? Well now, that was a thought. He’s only been here once before, the first night we met. Without getting into the gory details, it was one of those things where we get back here late, have a couple of drinks, and then crash. The next morning he’s gone, had to go to work or something. I guess we had sex but, to be honest, I hardly even remember. That’s how good it was. But, as I say, he’s nice, in a friendship sort of way.

Anyhow, so I’m sitting here naked, and he’s saying he wants to come over. Pff, why not! I’m telling myself. He’s seen me naked before. Well, actually, maybe he hasn’t. Not very well, anyway. It’s not as though I went prancing around in the nude that first night he was here. Maybe he caught a glimpse of my buns as I went out to the bathroom or something, but what we’re talking about now is a whole different proposition. But then I hear this third little voice again, and it’s saying: “Hey, Michelle, think of the great ‘practice’ it’ll make for next week’s casual Friday.” There’s something to that, I guess, assuming the whole thing’s not really just one big goof. Which, at the moment, I’m thinking it is…

“Sure, Jeff,” I tell him. “Why don’cha do that? Maybe you can stop on the way and pick up some chicken at KFC and go rent a movie?” We discuss some possible titles.

“Should I stop at the drugstore?” Jeff asks. Drugstore? Geez, these guys. Push, push, push. Fact is, I don’t like making these kinds of commitments in advance. But he does have a point, I suppose, assuming he doesn’t already have some. If I let him come over here and find me completely naked for the whole night after I tell him not to “stop at the drugstore,” I guess it could get a little ugly.

“If that’s what you need to do…” I reply. Even at the moment I say this, I don’t know why I’m trying to be so non-responsive. It’s stupid. I know exactly what’s going to happen tonight, every step of the way, and it’s just plain jerky to pretend anything different. Maybe it’s what’s left of my old-style female prudery.

\* \* \* \* \*

I still haven’t taken a shower today, so I’ve gotta do that, and wash my hair. What else? He’s bringing the food, so nothing to do there. Just make myself pretty, I guess. I don’t wear a lot of makeup, but I like a little eyeliner and lip gloss, and maybe a little something under my cheeks. It makes me look more dressed up. “Dressed” up!?

By the time I’ve blow-dried my hair it’s ten after seven. Jeff’s supposed to get here in about 20 minutes.

I’m leaning over the bathroom sink putting the last touches on my eyeliner, when it suddenly hits me. Fresh from the shower, and not smashed down flat from wearing panties, my pussy hair’s gone positively crazy. I step back from the mirror to get a better look. This unruly black bush is practically exploding out of my crotch. It looks huge. And, I’m thinking, it maybe looks bad.

The time is ticking away. Now the guy’s due in less than15 minutes. And here’s me, in front the mirror, staring at my pussy. And I’m, like, wow, this really is a new one. Sure, I’ve done some trimming here and there for my bathing suits during the summer, but now we’ve got a whole other dimension. Twenty after seven. Shit! Finally I settle for some minor neatening up around the edges, plus I lather up and shave the insides of my thighs. But my pussy itself, I leave it pretty much covered in its usual luxuriant growth. I’m wondering if this is what I should do next week “for the office,” but there’s no time to think of that now.

Ri-i-i-ing! Ri-i-i-ing! Oh, sheess! There he is already! I quickly wipe the rest of the foam off my inner thighs with a towel while yelling “just a second!” in the general direction of the door. Ah, crap! I still haven’t put on lip gloss. Geez-Louise, here I am about to entertain company wearing absolutely nothing , and I still can’t manage to get ready on time! C’mon Michelle! Get your shit together! Someday you’ve gotta grow up.

I stop and take a deep breath. And I decide that, all things considered, Jeff’s probably not going to notice whether I have lip gloss or not.

I do take a moment to neatly fold the towel and hang it on the rack, but I conclude that the rest the stuff will have to wait. So I just give myself a few spritzes of fragrance and hurry out of the bathroom toward the front door, all the while shouting out “I’m coming!” Then at the last second, just when I get to the door I’m, like, frozen in my tracks. “Ohmygawd!” I scream in my mind. “Ohmygawd, ohmygawd, ohmygawd, ohmygawd…. “

So how do you say hello to someone when you’re totally naked? I’m glad I didn’t have time to think about it. As my fingers touch the cold brass of the doorknob, a charge goes through my loins and nearly knocks me down. And I suddenly, like, contract—down there—and, like, I totally don’t be*lieve* that this is happening. Pulsations build and grow and tighten, and finally subside, and then I feel a cool sensation completely covering my body, and a total sense of well-being fills my mind. I blow a stream of air through my tightly pursed lips like the pressure coming off some kind of boiler.

“You okay in there?” I hear through the door.

“Yeah, Jeff. Everything’s fine. Just having a little problem with the knob.”

Okay Michelle, I’m telling myself. The thing is just to do it. Like diving off the high board at the pool. You push up into the air, and your feet leave the board, and the rest is all taken care of. So I “push up into the air,” give the knob a good twist, and swing the door wide open to greet my guest.

**3. Laundress**

After he got past the initial shock, Jeff turned out to be just great. What I mean is, we had a real nice evening together, not that he was “just great” in, you know, that other sense. Okay, maybe this isn’t fair. Not that I wanna be “kiss and tell,” or anything, but after what I said before, maybe I should at least say this. It was memorable.

Anyway, here it is Sunday, my last day of “freedom,” and I’m thinking about tomorrow at work. Jeff left after breakfast. I’ve just finished my shower, and right now I’m trying to plan out my day. Well, one thing for sure is laundry. Most of my dressier things that don’t have to go to the cleaners have been lying in the hamper for months. Since I stopped working at Drabor’s. But now I’m going to need them. So that’s one thing.

And it looks like I’m going to have to get dressed. After nearly 36 hours in the nude, I kind of hate to break the “spell.” But I don’t think I can go down to the laundry room naked. It’s not like just jumping out to grab the paper. And then there’s the food shopping for next week. I usually did that on Sundays when I had a job, and I guess I’ll be doing on Sundays again. And I sure can’t do that in the nude. Finally, maybe I should go over and see mom and dad. Again, clothes aren’t optional there, to put it mildly.

\* \* \* \* \*

Okay, I’m back from mom and dad’s. They’re fine—their usual selves. They were glad to hear I’ve got a job. Glad and relieved. They wanted to hear all about it. Naturally, I left out the part about casual Fridays, though I did talk about how I went to the interview in flip-flops and how the guy there seemed to be a little freaked out. “Well, Michelle, I’d ‘a thought you’d ‘a had more sense ‘n that,” my mom commented, in her usual endearing way. But she was fine, and I gotta admit I was probably trying to freak her out a little, too.

When I got back to the apartment, I flicked off my flip-flops (yeah, still wearing them), and threw my nylon jacket on the chair. All the way home I practically obsessed on getting naked again, but I’m still in my T-shirt and jeans. Since I’ve gotta go back outside, down to the laundry room, staying dressed seemed to make sense. But now I’m thinking, wait a second. Today’s my third day on this T-shirt, and we won’t even say how many days I’ve got on these jeans, so I suppose they both need to go in the wash. And my panties should too, I guess. And my bra. Well, crap! I’m going have to get naked before I do the laundry anyway, so I might as well get naked now.

Oh, man, it feels good to get out of that bra. It binds me under my titties. I don’t know—did I grow, or did it shrink? Or what? Probably just that it’s cheap. I got it at OddLots or something for a couple of bucks. I pull down my panties at the same time as my jeans and, yuck, are they gross. I don’t think I can blame it on Jeff, since he did make his “stop at the drugstore.” So I guessing that it’s just I’m getting a little wired lately. Coming back from mom and dad’s I was, like, reliving my dream about casual Friday. And trying to add on to it. Oh, man! what a panic! Is this thing going to be real? Or am I just going nuts?

I make myself spaghetti for dinner, and a nice red sauce with lots of meaty mushrooms and smooth al dente onions. Succulent. Normally, I worry about red sauce with spaghetti because no matter how careful I am, it seems to end up getting splattered on my clothes. But tonight there’s nothing here but little naked me, just my rounded little tummy and nicely filled-out breasts (if I do say so myself), so splatter’s not an issue. In fact I even think of doing something really kinky, like dipping my breasts right down in the plate, but I decide that’s too wacko even for me. Yet.

After dinner, I wash up the dishes in the sink (I rarely bother to use the dishwasher unless I’ve been cooking for guests). I’m still completely naked, of course. Again I enjoy the occasional splashes of sudsy water against my bare tummy, and again I notice the little flecks of bubble-foam alighting and hanging in my thick pubic thatch. I’m not feeling particularly “hot,” but I’m not exactly in neutral, either. What I feel is this steady, low-grade hormonal buzz which, more and more, I’m able to recognize. I like it.

Dishes done, I’m ready for the laundry. I decide to put off getting dressed again until the last possible moment. I empty the hamper on the bed, and start sorting out the whites from the darks, and the low-temperature whites from the rest, each in a separate pile, Then I stuff each of my piles in a pillowcase. I find the bottle of detergent, and throw it on the bed. Okay, that’s done. Time to put on clothes. Ugh. I head over to the dresser to get some panties, but then I’m, like, why do I need to put on panties? I’m just going down to the laundry room. But then I think about my gross crotch from this afternoon and decide that, if I don’t put on panties, I’d better not put on pants. So I settle on a skirt.

I go the closet to look for a skirt. What a mess! Don’t see one immediately. But, hey, what’s this thing hanging on the door? Turns out, it’s Jeff’s shirt from last night. He must’ve forgot it. I was really impressed that the little cutie had been planning ahead and had a change of clothes in his car. But then, in the his excitement (me?), he left his other shirt behind. So, hey cool, I can borrow it. I mean, like, what are girlfriends for?

Inspiration, they say, is the daughter of opportunity sired by need, or so says my psych prof over at the community college. Anyway, right now I‘m feeling a strong need to stay as naked as I can. So instead of a skirt and a T-shirt, Jeff’s shirt will be just the ticket. I pull his shirt off its hook on the closet door and thread my arms through the sleeves, pulling it together in front. Just to be sure, I check out the length in the mirror. No problem! It reaches at least an inch below my crotch, maybe a little more. Heck, I’ve had miniskirts that were shorter than this. Still watching myself in the mirror, I start doing up the buttons in front. But then I think, who needs that? I’m only going down to the laundry room. For that little distance I can just hold the thing together with my hand. I strike a couple of poses in my new laundress outfit, and admire myself in the mirror. I’m feeling really inspired.

Okay, gotta get going here. I grab my stuffed pillow cases and bundle them in my arms, hook the handle on the detergent bottle with my little finger, and head out to the living room, where I’ve left my flip-flops. I try to wiggle my toes into the first flip-flop but they don’t want to go. I’ve had these things since way last spring, and they’re practically falling apart. All the time (like now) the straps flop down and get in the way of my toes when I try to put them on. I need to reach down and use my hand, but my arms are all full and I don’t have an extra hand. And then I’m thinking, so why do I need to wear these things anyway? The laundry room is at the end of the building and one flight down, but it’s after 9:00. It’s really not likely I’m going to run into anybody on the way and even if I do, it’s no big deal. The worst that could happen is they’d think I’m little strange going barefoot in late October, with the temperature close to freezing.

So without putting down my bundles, I grab my key and change-purse from the little table by the door and go out to put the laundry in the washers. It’s cold outside, more than I’d expected, and Jeff’s shirt does nothing to cut the biting wind up here on the second-floor walkway. But the feeling is, to me, totally invigorating. Again I’m surprised to feel how cold the concrete is under my bare feet. It really is very… noticeable. But after a few steps the pain is not so sharp, and the numbing effect of the cold makes my soles feel slightly inflated. The metal stairs at the end of the walkway provide a whole different sensation. The treads themselves are made of little grids and the metal bites, though not painfully, into the bare soles of my feet. At the base of the stairs, I dash around the corner toward the entrance to the laundry room. I pull open the door and walk inside. The air is damp and warm.

I empty each of my pillowcases into one of the washers, and adjust the dials to their settings. In the process, of course, the shirt I’m wearing has fallen totally open, since I didn’t bother to button it. As a result my front is completely exposed from my head to my toes, but it really doesn’t matter much. I’m in here all alone. Even so, it gets me feeling hot as I slide the coins into their slots and the machines begin to fill with water—first the one with the darks, then the one with low-temp whites. I’m reaching up to close the last washer door and start the regular whites when I notice a largish grease stain on the cuff of Jeff’s shirt, probably from the Kentucky Fried Chicken. Hmm. A little careless there, Jeff. But then I get another inspiration. Wouldn’t it be nice, I’m thinking, when Jeff comes back to visit me if his shirt’s all nice and clean and starched and ironed?

My regular-white laundry load is pretty small. There’d be plenty of room for Jeff’s shirt, even after I’ve tossed in the pillowcases.

Whoa, Michelle! I see the red lights go off. This is really making me hot. I swish my bare foot on the linoleum floor of the laundry room. And I’m thinking, can I really pull this off?. The apartment complex looked deserted when I came down here, but then again it’s only 9:00. People come and go, and I could run into somebody at any time. But hey, this isn’t helping, I realize. The thought of the risk only makes me hotter. I could run back up to the apartment and get something else to put on, but pfff! What am I talking about? The thing I want is to go back up there naked.

I scurry over to the door and peer out of the laundry room. Not a person in sight, just rows of empty cars in the sulfurous glow of the parking lot lights. I step totally outside onto the freezing pavement and look around the corner at the long row of first-floor apartment doors, facing out on the lot. Still nobody. In the crisp night air, I try to be calm. But my mind is made up. Feeling the cold concrete under my bare feet, I know there’s only one way to go. I slowly pull off Jeff’s shirt and let it hang for a moment from my fingertips.. A couple of steps later, I’m back in the laundry room. I stuff the shirt into the washer, under some other clothes. I push the last coins into the machine, and I hear it begin to fill. I watch until the shirt is under water. I’m completely naked.

Same routine as before: First, I peer out the door. Nobody in sight. Now I’m all the way out and looking around the corner. There’s the long row of apartment doors, but still I see nobody. Then I glance out at the parked cars. Uh-oh! Where the hell’d those two come from? Walking directly toward me in the parking lot I see this young couple, and it looks like they’re carrying bags of laundry! People from the neighborhood sometimes use our machines even though they’re not supposed to. Mostly it’s immigrants who live in places that don’t have laundry rooms of their own. Stepping back around the corner to the side, I can’t actually tell if these people have laundry or something else. But I don’t need to take the chance. I can go around the back.

So I turn around and shoot past laundry door and head away from the parking area toward the back of my building. Unfortunately, in that direction the concrete pavement gives out almost immediately and is replaced by crushed rock Uff! I can’t believe I’m running barefoot on crushed rock. But since the soles of my feet are a little bit numbed from the cold concrete, the sharp stones don’t really hurt. Yet. Anyway, a few seconds later I’m past the crushed rock and out in back of the building, walking on damp grassy earth. The sensation is, like, unbelievably nice. Only problem is, back here there’s not a lot of light. It’s a little scary to go barefooted where you can’t even see. So I crouch down by a shrub and let my eyes adjust. I can feel the quiet here. The air is like crystal. As my eyes adjust, I can see my breath in the glow of a distant street light. God, do I feel *alive*!

Pretty soon I can see enough to walk without crashing into bushes and whatnot, and I start moving along the back of the building. Unconsciously I trace the palm of my hand around my buttock as I’m walking and feel almost an amazement that it’s bare. And oh, god, am I loving this soft grassy turf, so soothing to bare feet after running on pointy crushed rocks. And the grass doesn’t seem cold like the concrete. I sense that my nipples have gotten very hard, but I don’t really feel the cold. Too much on my mind for that.

I get to the far end of the building with no major mishaps. I stepped on a pine cone or something, and that didn’t feel great, but otherwise, being out here naked is like ecstasy. At least for the moment. I pad my way around the far end of the building and soon reach the front and, seeing nobody, I quickly run up the stairs. My apartment is a good way from here, much further from this end of the building than the other. But I decide that I’ll walk and not run. When I see my door, I have this funny sense of “home at last” and it’s not until I’m standing right in front of it that I remember my key. Oops! Even I have to laugh. This is turning out to be such a disaster. My key’s still on the laundry room table.

Okay, I admit it. I’m starting to get rattled. The last time I came this way, I didn’t actually know there were people wandering around someplace out here, and I at least had a shirt. Now I’m running around completely naked and know for a fact that there are other people. Or at least there were. What I really, really want to know is where the hell they are, those two I saw walking in from the parking lot. Probably they went in one of the apartments. But what if they went to the laundry room, and what if they’re still there? Do I just say, “Oh hi!. Sorry. Forgot my key. Ha-ha!,” and leave? What if they’re some kind of nut cases, and they use their cell phone to call the police? As I pad along on my slightly puffy soles down the icy concrete walkway, the “what-ifs” are driving me crazy.

But already by the time a reach the stairs, I decide there’s no reason to worry. That couple’s probably not in the laundry room. And if they are, they know they don’t belong there. Either way, they’re not going to cause a problem for me. Maybe they’ll see me naked, but frankly? Do I give a flying R.A.? Still, I ought to be cautious.

As I slip down the grid-surfaced stairs. I suddenly notice that this is, like, a really well-lit stairway, but even at that my heart is getting calmer. I’m nearly back to my key. At the base of the stairs I turn toward the laundry room but then walk right past the door. Several steps further, and back on the crushed rocks, I crouch down to listen under the laundry-room window. I think I hear voices. Better wait a sec. As I try to adjust my feet around in the sharp-edged rocks, all I can hear is the rumble of washers. I decide to wait a while longer. Time passes. Still nothing, and I’m waiting maybe five minutes. The biting breeze kicks up again, and I hear leaves skittering across the nearby pavement. Meanwhile, the rocks in the pathway are digging in the soles of my feet, and not only that I’m starting to shiver. Shit! I try to move my feet to a better position in the rocks but that just makes them hurt even more. And the shivering is starting to make me, like, jump up and down in my crouch. I huddle my arms as tight around me as I can for warmth, but it doesn’t much help. And you want to know the honest truth? At this point? I’m really not much caring if those people are in the laundry room, or not. I’ve gotta move…

Okay, here goes. Still half-crouched I carefully step along the crushed stone pathway toward the laundry room entrance. I slowly pull open the door. Empty.

Whew! I stand straight up and walk into the warm, damp room. And I gotta tell you, it really feels good. I’m still shaking all over the place but the air in the room is, like, bathing my skin in warmth. I go over and hunch myself up by the radiator and just stand there all stooped over for at least a couple of minutes. I gotta recharge my strength, I’m thinking, so I can go back out there in the cold. Pretty soon the heavy shivering stops, and standing here by the radiator is feeling oh, so nice, just naked little me and this big warm thing. I’ve still got some shakes, but they’re not so bad now. Bent over and looking down, I see my pink-nailed toes all in a little line on the laundry room floor. And after those rocks, these tiles in the laundry room are positively luscious. But I don’t want to stay here too long. Somebody still might come in and see me and get all freaked.

A little while later the shivering has just about stopped, so I decide that it’s time to go back. I pick up my key and the little black change purse, and go straight out the door. This time I don’t even bother to check for people until I’m all the way outside. I look around and the coast seems clear, and I’m refusing to be bowed by the cold. Slowly I saunter toward home.

**4. Thursday Evening**

I’m sitting in the back row of my psych class at Fremont Community College, and my heart is, like, beating away something crazy. It’s not anything the prof is saying. To be honest, I don’t even know what he’s saying. Hardly heard a word for the past 20 minutes. (How much is it again I pay per minute for this stupid course? Whatever…)

The thing is, ever since it popped back in my head that tomorrow’s Friday—‘casual’ Friday—at my new job, I can’t think about anything else. And thinking about casual Friday, and what I’m going to do, is like making me totally nuts.

Actually, I sort of like this job at Soda-Rite, and I’d really like to keep it. But the problem’s this: What do they think I’m supposed to do tomorrow? I just don’t know. For something that’s so.. major, it’s all been pretty vague. Okay, I guess Pete made it pretty clear last Friday at the interview. But since I actually started on Monday nobody’s said one word about me being, you know, naked.

Pete was sure right about one thing: the guys in the office really do try to look business-spiffy. The sports-bar look that I saw the day I interviewed was definitely gone. I decided to wear high heels and a gray wool suit for my first day at work, and I was glad that I did. Okay, maybe the skirt’s a little bit, uh, form-fitting, but hey, I’ve got a pretty nice form to fit. Anyway, the color and the jacket style went perfectly with the rest of the office. What I’m trying to say here is that all week I’ve been in a very definitely “no flip-flops” mode. Not that I could’ve worn flip-flops with pantyhose even I wanted to. And the upstairs office at Soda-Rite is definitely a pantyhose kind of place. If you know what I mean. But tomorrow…?

“Miss Oliveiro, are you paying attention?” Oops, I hear my professor’s voice. He’s a youngish guy for a professor, in a rumpled corduroy jacket, a plaid shirt and a dark solid tie. He’s practically piercing me with his intensive brown eyes.

“No—I mean *yes*!” I blurt out, then feeling like I better say more: “I was just thinking about what you said about that poor little baby monkey.” Some experiment he told us about—it’s the only thing I can think of that has anything to do with the course.

“That was over a half hour ago, Miss Oliveiro, And you look like your mind’s on some other planet.” He pauses for a moment. “Does it have a name?”

“The little monkey?”

“No, Miss Oliveiro. The planet.” They’re all laughing, even this shlub sitting next to me. He hasn’t listened to a word the prof’s said, either. Until just now.

Fortunately for me, the prof tries to take off some of the heat once the laughter dies down. He starts up again, in this big philosophical tone: “I know that you night students have a lot on your minds, with responsibilities, full-time jobs, and …”

“Ho-ho!” I’m thinking to myself. “This guy doesn’t even have a clue.” I feel a pang wrench through me as it hits me again about tomorrow, and I happen to glance over at the laptop screen of the shlub sitting next to me. The latest football spreads. Sheess! Every night he sits here looking at sports scores, games sites and sometimes even pictures of naked chicks over the college’s Wi-Fi, and I’m the one that gets called on for not paying attention. Crap, what a friggin’ world.

“…but I wouldn’t be doing *my* job if I didn’t remind you once in a while of the reason why you’re here.” Blah, blah, blah. As he looks back at me, I try on my sweetest of smiles, like, “oh, thank you, professor. I’m so glad you’re doing your job and I’m so, so sorry if I’m making it harder.” Finally, he turns back to his subject. And I turn back to mine…

So tomorrow, what’s it going to be? Was Pete really serious about me being naked? Or was he just kidding, like I was. Oh, god, why’d I ever ask him if it was okay for me to work there wearing nothing? This thing has been going back and forth in my head all week, and I’m still not sure. What’s worse, I still not sure what I even *want* the answer to be.

Twice again during the past week that dream’s come back again, the one where I’m going around naked at the Soda-Rite depot. There I am, running all over the place, without so much as a hair ribbon—in the office upstairs, down in the shop and even out on the trucks. God, it makes me so “hot” that it wakes me right up with this, throbbing, down there. And then all I can think about is trying to go back to sleep so I can get back in the dream.

Other than dreams, though, my little naked adventures have been pretty much on hold since last Sunday, and that business with the laundry. The main thing’s been time. With the new job, night school and all the other stuff, I haven’t spent much time around my apartment at all, naked or otherwise. So that’s another problem. I really haven’t been able to do much ‘practicing’ for casual Friday. I tried a couple of times to repeat the running-out-for-the-newspaper thing, but every time there was a problem. One day there were too many people, and I chickened out. Another day the paper was right in front of the door. Whatever. And then there’s this part of me that still gets totally freaked when I think how easily I could’ve got caught last Sunday night when I ran all the way around my apartment building in the nude. I still can’t believe I did that. Must’ve had too much Chianti with the spaghetti.

“Miss Oliveiro.” Shit! there goes the prof, coming after me again. And look! That shlub sitting next to me is looking at *porn*! I think I’ll tell the prof. It’s time to get his mind on somebody else. At least it’ll take the heat off me.

“Could you tell us, Miss Oliveiro, what the role of… “ Brrrrrng! Ah, man. Class is over. Saved by the bell again, as they say. I look up at the prof and smile, like, apologetically.

Right outside the classroom I run into Jeff. He’s taking a course in accounting or something, and he also has class on Thursday nights.

“Hey, Michelle!” he says. “Still lookin’ great! Real professional!”

“I didn’t have time to go home and change after work.” That’s how it’s been all week. I have to come to class in the ‘dressy’ outfits that I’m supposed to wear at Soda-Rite. “Neat and businesslike.” But, then again, a lot of the students at the college come to night school directly from jobs where they have to look professional, so me being all dressed up this way doesn’t much stand out. For me personally, though, it’s been a big switch. All Jeff’s ever seen me in is tank tops and shorts or, since it got a little cooler, t-shirts and jeans. He’s wearing khakis and a sweat shirt.

“So, tomorrow’s the big day!” says Jeff, a bright smile forming across his face.

I really want to swat him. Hard.

“Hah-hah, wise guy,” I respond flatly. Okay, maybe I’m not angry, but I feel like I ought to be. “I never should’ve told you about it in the first place. It’s probably not even true.”

“Oh, c’mon Michelle, you couldn’t *wait* to tell me. You were so proud I thought you were going to pop, right there in front of me.

“Bull.”

“No, really. I mean it. You should’ve seen yourself last Saturday. You were all, like, ‘ooh, look at me, lovely naked me,’ all giggling and squealing. ‘And this is how I’m going to go to work next week. No clothes, no shoes, just pure little me,’ and you’re, like, stretching out your legs and pointing your toes and cooing all over yourself. ‘Because this is the way my new boss wants me when I’m working at the office,’ and on and on you went. I didn’t think you’d ever stop. It was kind of cute, actually. But don’t go trying to say that you didn’t want to tell me.”

“I didn’t say I didn’t *want* to tell you. I said I never *should*’ve told you. They’re two different things. And I was right. Just listen to you. I never should’ve.”

“Okay, okay. Timeout. Let’s not make a bad memory out of a nice moment. And for me anyhow, last Saturday was nice. But you gotta admit, you did sound like you were sort of looking forward to it. Change your mind?”

“Yes—I mean I don’t know. Like I told you Saturday. There’s this part of me that wants to, and there’s this other part….”

“Yeah, okay. You did say all that. But I guess I thought it was all just a bunch of your typical female, I dunno, indecisiveness? You know, pickin’ the petals off the daisy kind-of-thing.” I’m glaring. “So which part’s on top right now?”

“I honestly can’t tell. I really and truly can’t. And on top of that, I don’t even know if it’s for real. Maybe I’ve been making myself crazy all week and it’s absolutely for nothing. Because this whole week at Soda-Rite nobody’s said a thing.”

“Oh, I think it pretty much has to be real…”

“Don’t be an asshole, Jeff. How can you say something like that? You weren’t even there. You don’t even know the people. I wish you’d quit ragging on me. This is serious. I want to keep this job, and I’ve got a real serious problem here.”

“Look, Michelle, I can see it’s serious. I’m just saying it’s obviously real.”

“Oh, geez! I said get outta my face. What do you mean ‘obviously’ real?”

“I mean it’s, like, look at it this way. They’d be all in this big huge mess of trouble if they were just playing games on you. It’d be sexual harassment. That’s why it’s gotta be real. When you’re the boss, especially if you’re a guy, you can’t just go kidding around like that with the female employees. Everybody in business knows that. The only way it’s not harassment is if it’s, you know, consensual. And, from what you told me you said at the interview, it sounds to me like they really think you want to do it. So to them it’s gotta be part of the deal. It’s just logical”.

“Geez, Jeff! Logical!? Logical that I’ve gotta take off my all clothes in front of my whole office?” He shrugs, and looks somber for a second. Then he suddenly lights up again.

“So, d’ja shave it?”

I’m stunned.

“None of your fucking business!” I finally reply. “Sheess!” But in my head I’m still back on what Jeff said about “logical.” He might have a point. Maybe that really is how they’re thinking, because of what I said. The harassment thing never occurred to me….

“So, you didn’t?” Jeff pushes the question.

“I can’t believe we’re having this conversation.”

Just at that moment, my psychology prof walks out of the classroom, talking to the icky guy that sits next to me, the one with the laptop. The prof gives me a funny glance. How much of this has he been hearing? I wonder. We weren’t exactly talking softly. They move on down the corridor.

“Well, Michelle, you’re the one that brought the subject up.”

“What subject?”

“Shaving.”

“Me-e-e?”

“Yeah, you. Last Saturday night. At your place. In fact, last Saturday you gave me the distinct impression that you really cared a whole lot what I thought about it.”

“And just how’d I do that?”

“You don’t remember? The way you kept asking me ‘What do you think, Jeff ? Should I shave it all? Should I leave it all? How about making a little landing strip? Or maybe I could just trim it real short. Medium? Buzz-cut?’ Gee, I don’t know. And I really tried to make some helpful suggestions, too….”

“Like?”

“Like check out the internet. Get some ideas. I even gave you a few sites…”

“Oh, puh-*leaze*.”

“Honestly, doesn’t all that give me a sort of an interest?”

“Shit no! Jeff. Get serious. Nobody’s got an ‘interest’ in my pussy hair but me.” Good god, these guys! You share a little bit of yourself with them and next think you know they think you’re, like, some kind of private property. I gotta change the topic.

“So how ‘bout you, Jeff? You gonna shave yours?”

He doesn’t even blink.

“Guys don’t.” he replies. “At least straight guys don’t. And besides, my boss will be very happy, thank you, if I come to work fully dressed, every day, including Friday.”

I can’t blame him for the little zing. In fact, I’m kind of surprised he even dignified my question with an answer. It was dumb. And I feel myself softening. Why am I picking a fight with Jeff? It wasn’t him that got me into this mess. As usual, I did it myself. And it’s true, I did make him talk about it, maybe not an hour, but it was a while. And I did check out some of those websites. So maybe he does have a little bit of a right to know what I decided. Sort of. So, okay…

But before I can tell him, he’s like: “Well, I was going to ask you for a lift home. But the way you’re wound up tighter than a you-know-what, I guess I better try somewhere else.”

“Hey, hey! I’m just having a sort of moment. It’ll pass. Of course I’ll give you a ride home. What’s wrong with your car?”

“Took it in this morning for brakes, and I had to leave it overnight. I get it back tomorrow afternoon.”

By this point we’re already moving slowly down the corridor and heading out toward the student parking lot. I realize I’ve been so “alone” with my thoughts for this whole week that I’m kind of relieved to have somebody else to talk to about it. I’m feeling good in Jeff’s company. We reach the end of the corridor and head outside.

“Sexy shoes!” Jeff says as he follows me through the outside door. The ones I’m wearing are black patent leather with a little bow on top and strappy heels that happen to make my feet look really great. But after having them on for 12 hours, I’d like to get them off.

“I’d like to get them off.”

“Well, I’m not stopping you.”

“You know, Jeff, I sometimes don’t think you’re a very constructive influence on me. Besides, I’ve got on pantyhose, and I rather not ruin them.”

“Why? You’ve got all the way ‘til Monday to get another pair”

Another zing. Sheess! This naked thing is getting closer and closer.

“And anyway,” he goes on, “You can always take the pantyhose off, too.”

I’m tempted. It’s still a little cool out, but tonight it’s not nearly as frigid as it was last weekend. In fact, I’m getting along just fine with just my suit jacket and no coat. But my mind‘s spinning ahead. I’ve gone practically this entire week without ‘practicing.’

Okay, walking barefoot across the community college parking lot isn’t exactly ‘practicing,’ but I’m thinking if I don’t have it in me to do a little thing like that, what kind of shape am I going to be in tomorrow morning when I’m gonna have to show off the whole shebang? Hmm.

“Wait just a second,” I say to Jeff, turning back into the building.

“Wha-a?” he says, confused.

“Well, you don’t think I’m going to pull down my pantyhose out here do you?”

“Oh, yeah,” he replies. “I guess you can’t do that.” From the look on his face I can tell exactly what’s in his brain. A picture of me standing here, right outside the door to the main college building, with my skirt hiked up around my middle and my hands feverishly pushing down on the waistband of my pantyhose, gathering them as I go, down and down, until finally, me leaning on my guy for balance, I pull them off one by one, first from one foot and then the other.

At least that’s the picture that’s in *my* mind.

I go inside.

A few steps inside the door, almost at the end of the corridor, there’s a women’s restroom. I go in. The stalls are all empty, and I pick one at random. Once inside, I set down my book bag, a dark blue canvas affair, on the floor. There’s plenty of room in the bag for my shoes and, of course, for my pantyhose. I take a deep breath.

What happens next is pretty much the same as I pictured it a couple of minutes ago, except now it’s for real and, instead of being out in front of the building, I’m inside a stall in the women’s restroom. First I hike up my skirt. Then, thumbs in the waistband, I’m pushing down on my pantyhose.

Only this time, as I can feel all too clearly, my thumbs must be hooked not just under the pantyhose but also in my panties—‘cause they’re coming off too. Grr! I start to tug the panties back up. But then I think, Hey! Why not? Okay, it’s not being naked but at least I’d be naked under my clothes. So now everything’s going down, panties and all, down to my ankles, around my toes and into the bag. The only thing different is I’m leaning on the stall wall instead of on Jeff. The terrazzo surface of the women’s room floor feels cool against my bare feet. It’s a refreshing feeling. No, it’s maybe more than just refreshing…

It’s not exactly disreputable to be barefooted in November (yeah, now it’s already November) but, then again, bare feet don’t exactly go with my business-spiffy outfit. So I’d rather not have anybody see me, especially not in here, where they might actually say something. So when I hear somebody coming into the women’s room just as I’m about to leave, I decide to wait. I hike up my skirt again and sit. Whoever came in latches one of the stalls, then there’s silence. I haven’t spent a lot of time sitting on a toilet when I’m not, so to speak, doing anything, so this seems a little weird. Actually, I think the word is “boring.”

I hear another person come in the outer door. Crap. I could be here all night. And then it hits me, oops! People can see my bare toes under the door. I don’t want to get into any tedious conversations (“Are you okay in there?”), so I raise up my legs and plant my feet on the stall door for support. I take the opportunity to examine my toes. Still, okay—good. I redid the polish last night, so they’d look their best for Friday morning. Ee-gad! That’s, like, *tomorrow*! I’m not even thinking any more that it might not be real. Okay, I’m not convinced by Jeff’s “logic.” But Pete, my boss, has never given even a hint that it’s not for real.

And to be honest, sitting here looking down my legs at my bare feet pressed against the stall door, and thinking about tomorrow, I’m starting to get in this... mood. Bang! There went the outer door to the women’s room. Then more silence. Crap, was that the first one out or the second? Or what? All this daydreaming about tomorrow and I’ve completely lost track. Maybe I’d better wait a little while more. Anyway, as I’m sitting here I’m starting to get more and more focused on this idea that’s out of, like, nowhere coming into my head. What’s going through my head is that, y’know, if I think I can get out of this place without anybody seeing me barefoot, it’d be just as easy to get out with nobody seeing me naked.

So now this plan is forming, and it goes something like this: First, I’ll put my shoes back on and go tell Jeff to get the car. Meantime, while he’s off doing that, I’ll come back in here and strip. “Strip!” Ohmygawd, I really must be losing it. But, yeah. Strip. Anyway, when Jeff gets back with the car, he can run inside and knock on the ladies room door, We can use some kind of code, so I’ll know it’s him—maybe, like, two knocks, then a space, then a third. That’ll tell me it’s all clear. Then I’ll just get up, walk out the door and get in the car. Nude. It’s a plan!

I take my strappy-heeled shoes back out of the book bag and put them on. When Jeff sees me walking out of the building a moment later, he looks totally bewildered.

“It took you 10 minutes in there and you still have your shoes on?” he asks.

“Shh.” I tell him. “I’ve got an even better idea.”

“I’m listening.” Point by point I tell him the plan.

“You gotta be nuts!”

“Yeah, for going out with a guy who tells me it’s ‘logical’ I gotta go naked at work. But I’m not nuts for wanting to ‘practice,’ so it’ll be as untraumatic as possible.”

“Practice? What are you talking about, ‘practice’?”

“Courage through challenge. They teach us about it in psychology. If I go naked from inside there and out to the car tonight, it’ll build up my courage to go naked all day tomorrow at work. It’s, like, almost the same thing.”

“Oh, Michelle, it’s totally *not* the same thing.”

“Yeah, name one way it’s different.”

“Okay. How ‘bout: This is the main building of a public community college, with classes just let out and all kinds of strangers still around who aren’t in on it and who might freak out and call the cops.”

“Okay. That’s one. Now name me another.” Jeff looks exasperated. “Hey, you’re the one that said ‘totally.’”

Jeff smiles. I can tell that he really likes my idea in the abstract. Only thing is, he just doesn’t want to have anything to do with it personally. Big chickenshit.

“Look, Jeff. The point is nobody’s going to *see* me. Unless you fuck up. This is just purely for my own edification.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Okay, I’m back in my stall in the women’s restroom, shoes off again, my bare feet flat against the terrazzo floor. Jeff’s gone to get the car. Do I really want to do this? It’s funny, I feel sort of like.. committed, like I can’t back out. But committed to who? Not Jeff. To myself? Anyway, here goes—first, the jacket.

This happens to be a really nice suit, probably the best I have, so I want to be careful. I fold the suit jacket as best I can, given the somewhat cramped space, and put it in the book bag on top of my shoes and books. Next I unbutton my blouse, reaching up under the little frilly thing that hangs down from my neck in front. But before I can get my arms out of the sleeves, I have to unbutton them, too. So I do that. Okay, finally it’s off, folded and in the book bag. Bra’s next, unhooked and off in a snap. I feel my breasts fall free and, as the cool air surrounds them, it suddenly hits me again, What if somebody sees me? I’ll be like toast. But then Pff! I blow out through tightly pursed lips. “Quit worrying, Michelle!” I tell myself. “It’s perfectly safe. Jeff’s going to make sure there’s no one in sight.”

It’s just like going to Six Flags and riding the scary rides. It only *seems* risky.

Okay, now we’re down to the real stuff. I twist around to unhook my skirt on the side and pull down the zipper. Carefully I step out of the skirt trying to make sure it doesn’t touch the floor. A quick double fold and my skirt joins rest of the stuff in the bag. My panties are, of course, already in the bag, rolled up in my pantyhose. I am completely naked.

And with nowhere to go, for the moment. So I sit down to wait. I try to listen closely, hoping to hear my old Toyota’s grumbly muffler as Jeff pulls up out front, but I don’t hear a thing. After a while my mind starts wandering again, thinking about tomorrow. One big question mark: How’s it going to start? I guess everybody expects me to have clothes on when I first get to the Soda-Rite depot. I mean, I can’t exactly drive out all the way out there from my apartment in the nude. But then what? Do I wait for somebody to say something? Or do I just go ahead and get myself naked without even being asked?

And then, what if nobody says anything at all? Hmm. Because I gotta figure on the possibility, what if it’s not for real? I’d really feel like this major moron if they told me it’s all a joke after I, like, come strolling out of the restroom totally nude. But, if it’s not a joke and I don’t go ahead and get naked on my own, somebody might get pissed. ‘Cause they’d feel like I forced them to ask. They hired me and not that other girl for a reason, and this maybe is the reason. To be honest, this probably *is* the reason. I’m not totally clear how I feel about that but, hey, I’ve got the job, and she doesn’t, and it’s not like I fucked somebody or something to get it. I think I’m getting paranoid again. I’m sure if it’s real, Pete will give me some kind of a signal…

Knock! Knock! (Pause.) Knock! Oh god, there’s Jeff! Ohmygawd, ohmygawd, ohmygawd…

“Anybody in there?” I hear a male voice from the door.

“Coming, sweetie!” I try to sound firm. “You’re sure the coast is clear?”

“Nobody in sight. I’m parked right out in front, ready to go.” My stomach tightens, my mouth goes dry and my heart’s about ready to explode right out of my chest.

“Well here we go!” I say under my breath as I unlatch the door to the stall. “Here we go.”

When I open the outer door to the women’s room, Jeff’s standing right there, smiling. It’s somehow a comforting sight. Like I’m safe, and in good hands. I notice that he obviously can’t resist giving me the once-over from head to toe. And then he says: “Beautiful as always.”

Oh, gwarsh! I’m thinking. I know he’s just saying it, but it sounds so reassuring all the same.

“Well,” he then adds, “I see you didn’t…”

I look up at Jeff’s eyes, totally not getting it. Geez, did he miss the fact I’m naked?.

“Shave.” He completes his thought, with a glance down at my pubes. Oh. That. Then it suddenly hits me, I guess I never told him.

“Here, Michelle. Let me take that.” he then says, reaching for my book bag. Without even thinking I let it go. Then I think, How gallant! And me on my first naked date. I take his arm as he starts moving quickly down the short stretch to the exit, his leather shoes echoing through the empty corridor and me scooting along barefoot at his side. Out of my high heels, Jeff suddenly seems so big, and I’m leaning up against him real close, loving the smell of his body. A moment or so later we’re through the outside doors. I feel the cool night air against my skin, and the gritty pavement underfoot. I take a deep breath and stop to look around. The sky is black and the rows of lights in the parking lot sparkle into the distance. The cool fall night is beautiful. But then, all of a sudden, I’m, like:

“Geez, Jeff! Where the hell’s the car?”

I look to my left and see nothing. On the right, practically in front of us, there’s this big, dark monster SUV that somebody’s got parked there, illegally. But it’s sure not my Toyota.

“Over on the other side of the street,” Jeff says, like the answer ought to be obvious. A couple of steps and I see it, past the SUV. But, geez…

“Criminently! Jeff. Couldn’t you have made it any less convenient? Why the hell’d you park way over there?”

“’Cause I was coming from that direction, Michelle. Otherwise, I would’ve had to go all the way down to the end and turn around.”

“What do you mean? Look, the SUV guy’s parked backwards over here. It didn’t seem to bother him.”

“Yeah, but…”

God! What a shithead! I’m thinking to myself. Here I am bare-ass naked, it’s not allowed to park here anyway, and he’s all worried about being on the wrong side? Sheess! Maybe he was right, it goes through my mind as I step off the curb to cross the street. Maybe this actually was a bad idea. Maybe…

“What the…!” My thoughts are interrupted as the big dark SUV suddenly comes alive, motor roars into action and the headlights—the biggest, brightest set of headlights I’ve even seen in my life—come on and shine. And I gotta tell you, I’m there about ten feet in front of it and those headlights are, like, lighting up my poor little naked body unbe*lievably*. Without even thinking, I stop in my tracks and stare, as if I could possibly see who’s behind the windshield looking at me in the beam of those amazing halogen lights.

The first thing I think is to cover myself with my hands, but that seems stupid. So then I’m, like, Oh, what the hell. I guess there’s no way they’re gonna miss what I’m doing here. Might as well be up front. So I give the SUV a big cheery smile and wave toward the driver’s side of the windshield. There’s a tiny brief toot, in response.

A few steps later and I’m across the street, hunched down by the passenger side of my Toyota. And I don’t mind telling you that I’m getting increasingly pissed as Jeff keeps fumbling and bumbling with the keys.

“What’s going on over there?” I shout. “You counting them?”

“No. It’s just it’s kind of dark. And I don’t know which one’s your car key.”

“Why don’t you try the one marked ‘Toyota’?”

“Ha. Ha.” I guess he’s not amused.

“And for chrissakes!” I can’t help adding. “Why’d you have to lock it in the first place?”

More fumble and mumble, and I’m, like, sheess! I can’t take this anymore. So I tell myself, the hell with whoever’s in the SUV—let’m look—and I walk around to the other side of my car, grab the keys from Jeff, and…

Ah! Finally! The door locks snap open. I go back over to the passenger side, pull open the door and get in. And ee-yow!. The vinyl or whatever it is in these seats is really cold. The sudden sensation against my bare skin sends a bout of shivering running from one end of me to the other. Fortunately, it’s not so bad after a couple of secs, once I twist around to get it so the vinyl’s not touching my bare skin and I’m mostly just sitting on fabric. Still not great, but not so bad. But now where the hell is Jeff? I look around, can’t see him anywhere. Then, Bam! I hear the trunk lid slam shut behind me. And, a moment later, Jeff is back, climbing in the car.

“What was that all about?” I ask. “Where’s my stuff?”

“I put it in the back…”

“In the back! Whad’ja do that for?

“Why not? Do you think you want to put ‘em back on?”

“No, not necessarily. But I might’ve felt better if my stuff was, like, up here, with me, and not locked back there where only you can get at it.” Jeff ignores the dig.

“Boy, those headlights sure were a real surprise,” he says, changing the subject. “But I don’t think they saw me.”

“Saw *you*!” I scream in reply. “You!” I can’t believe he’s saying this. “Why don’t you see if you can maybe think for one whole second, you big prick. Who cares if they saw you? You’ve got clothes. You look normal. I’m the one that’s totally naked. Remember? I’m the one they saw dancing though the headlights in the nude!”

I think he’s getting my point. At least, he tries to soothe me down.

“Well, don’t worry. Michelle. I’d say the chances are about one in a million that they even bothered to look at your face. They probably don’t even know who you are.”

I’m staring across at Jeff. Glaring is more like it. I gotta admit, he’s got me speechless. I feel like I want to get out of the car and just run. But shit! It’s my car. And besides, I’m completely naked. Where would I go? Meanwhile, as I’m sitting there pondering these totally useless thoughts, Flick! On goes the dome light inside the SUV, still idling at the other curb. I move my head a little to look past Jeff’s, trying to see who’s in there. But whoever it is, he’s looking down at something, and his face is in a shadow. Finally, Jeff sees what I’m trying to do and bends his head forward to give me a better view. Just as he does, the person in the SUV turns, reaches up toward the dome light and turns it off. And as he does this, for a split second, I am getting the clearest of views of the person that’s in there. Dark tie, plaid shirt, corduroy jacket and the intensive brown eyes of my psych prof.

**5. Thursday Night**

We’re in my car driving toward Jeff’s place. He’s at the wheel and I’m on the passenger side, still naked. But I’m hardly even thinking about that. The heater’s on high, so I’m comfortably warm, and there’s this other thing that’s dominating my thoughts. By now, I’m guessing you’ve probably figured out what the big topic of conversation is between Jeff and me as we drive away from the community college. But just in case…

Basically, the thing I keep asking myself, over and over, is how in god’s name did this friggin’ knucklehead piece of crap that’s driving my car get me caught running around naked in front of my psychology prof? Not in front of just anybody, mind you, but my psychology prof! I really want to find this out. So, as politely as I possibly can, I ask:

“Jeff, listen. The one thing you were supposed to do here, the one important thing, was to make sure the coast was clear. Make sure there was nobody around. So what I’m wondering is,” and by this time I think my voice is up to about a scream,” why in the fucking name of flying shit did you go in there and get me out when there were people all over the place?”

“I didn’t.”

“Didn’t?

“Didn’t. There was one person. One. Person.”

“Oh, and you don’t think one person was enough? God! What kind of a dickhead are you?”

“No, Michelle, of course I think one was enough. What I meant was, there weren’t ‘people all over the place’. You said…” Stop. Stop. Like, I think he might be playing with me. And if he is, after what he just did, I’ll kill him, literally kill him. But I’m not sure, and besides, right now I’ve got other things on my mind.

“And on top of that,” I cut in, “it turns out that the ‘one person’ just happens to be my psychology prof! Do you understand what I’m trying to say here? I mean, this guy was already on my case big-time during the class we had tonight. I can’t even imagine what it’s going to be like next Tuesday. Geez, I don’t even know if I can *go* to psych class next Tuesday. I don’t know if I can go back there ever.”

“Why not?” My god, men can really be obtuse.

“Well try this: What if the guy decides to stand up in front of the whole friggin’ room and say, ‘Now class, you’ll never guess where I saw Miss Oliveiro last week.’ And then he tells them. Aw, man! I’ll have to drop the course. And it’s a pre-requisite for my major. So I’ll have to change my major. And that means I’ll have to plan a whole new career. Geez-Louise, Jeff, you’ve really made a complete major mess out of, like, my whole friggin’ life. You know that?

“I think you’re getting a little dramatic, Michelle. Besides, it wasn’t really my fault. I mean, I really did look around, and the coast was clear. I looked everywhere, and even stopped and listened. I honestly didn’t see or hear a soul.”

“Holy g'shmoly, Jeff! You mean to tell me you didn’t see that big, black humongous SUV that was sitting right there?”

“Of course I saw the SUV, Michelle. But I couldn’t see anybody in it. I looked, but didn’t see anybody. What was I supposed to do, go up and tap on the window? ‘Oh hello! Sorry to bother you, but my girlfriend’s about to come walking out here nude and I was just checking….”

“I’m not your girlfriend, prickhead!”

“Ooh, sor-r-ry.” He tries to sound sarcastic, but he looks hurt. Anyway, I didn’t mean for that to come out as heavy as it did. Almost, but not quite. So now I swing over to the soft approach, probably too soft. I lean my head toward his shoulder and reach across the console thingy that sits between the bucket seats. As I begin to stroke up and down on his arm with my fingertips, my voice lowers to a soothing purr:

“Look, sweetheart, all I’m trying to tell you is that you weren’t supposed to come in and get me until you were sure everything was, like, totally clear.”

“But honey, I *was* sure.”

“Yes, but sweetheart, you do have to admit, you were wrong.”

“I know that.”

“And as a result, my sweet, you’ve got me swimming naked in some really deep brown stuff.

“I know that, too, honey. But honestly, Michelle, I’m really, really sorry.”

“I guess so.”

“I truly am.”

Hmm. I don’t see what more I can accomplish with this right now. So I just keep quiet.

The traffic’s fairly light this time of night, and we’re moving right along. I’m kind of enjoying the novelty of riding around naked on streets I’ve known all my life. At the traffic lights, when we stop, I look over at the people in the other cars. I wonder what they’d think if they knew that I wasn’t wearing any clothes. They can see my shoulders, and uncovered shoulders aren’t exactly normal for November, but nobody seems to notice. I shift my position and slide my bare feet around the dusty rubber floor mat, enjoying the gritty feel of 8 years of accumulated dirt. It’s strangely nice, like this sensual reminder that I’m totally, completely naked. Just me, and nothing else, nothing between me and directly touching the world

Before long we’re at Jeff’s apartment. He pulls the car over to the curb right in front of the entrance. It’s a big blocky two-story brick building that, from the looks of it, has four apartments, two on each floor. It’s right on Hammond Avenue, a four-lane main thoroughfare, so cars are going back and forth all the time. And I’m *very* aware that I’m naked as I lean over toward Jeff for the usual good-night rituals—you know, the mournful eye contact, a few tender words, a kiss. It’s something I’ve probably done a thousand times, but never in the nude. I rest my head on the side of his seatback and, bringing my hand upward, I gently cup his shoulder and caress it. He’s sitting straighter and higher than I am, so I’m looking up to his eyes. His head is turned toward me, his eyes looking down into mine. We sit silently in this pose for a while, motor off and hearing only the sounds of the passing traffic until I softly say:

“Oh, Jeff, I’m sorry I got so worked up back there. Honest. It’s just that this whole situation is kind of, like, blowing my mind.” He smiles, and lowers his head slightly, and answers me with a kiss. As our lips touch, I move my hand from his shoulder, grasp it around his arm and pull us closer together, trying to make it so my breast will touch his arm. But without a bra on I’m not quite so, um, pointy and the Toyota’s center console dividing the seats is just a little too wide, so I can’t quite manage it. Then, as though he senses the difficulty, Jeff leans further towards me. Maybe he’s not such a big dummy after all..

Now when I pull on his arm I feel my nipple brush lightly against his sweatshirt and, then, as he leans even more, my whole breast in mashing hard into his arm. Our kissing is getting more passionate now and naked little me is getting pretty hot. A few minutes of this go by with the usual caressing and a lot of the, you know, hands-up-and-down-the-thighs kind of thing, except that, with me being totally nude, it’s all a little bit more… well, you can imagine. Let’s just say I’m more “accessible.” But obviously, nothing’s going to happen right out here on Hammond Avenue, not with all these cars going by. And Jeff and I had more or less agreed that, since both of us have to go work tomorrow, we’d call it an early night.

Finally, we pull apart, and get ready to say good-bye. “Well, he says, “I’m really sorry I wasn’t more careful before.” Then he hesitates, like he’s unsure he wants to bring up another touchy subject, but finally he does, saying: “And Michelle, I really do wish you the best for tomorrow at work. I promise I’ll be thinking about you and keeping my fingers crossed. And I’m dying to hear what happens.”

“I’ll call.”

“Please do that,” he says. “I’ll be waiting, with bated breath.” One last quick kiss on my lips, then another on my forehead, and he turns to get out of the car. It’s a tender ending, and I’m glad to see the evening finish up on this gentle note. As he bends out the door of the car I glimpse a sliver of his skin where the sweatshirt pulls away from his khaki slacks, and feel a twinge of affection, and regret. But then, all of a sudden, it hits me what’s happening, and I’m like:

“Hey, wait, Jeff!”

He already has one foot out of the car and planted on the ground. He stops.

“What?” he says, turning his head back in my direction, his leg still out the door.

“Two things,” I say, then quickly add, “No, three things.”

He turns further and looks at me in silence, like waiting for me to get started on a list.

“First, shut the door so this friggin’ car light won’t be shining over me with all these people driving by. I’m still naked, you know.”

“Oh, sorry, Michelle. I guess I wasn’t thinking,’ he says, quickly pulling his leg back in the car and closing the door..

Yeah, he ‘wasn’t thinking,’ I’m saying to myself. Like, no shit. Why would he wanna start now and ruin his perfect record for the night? But it’s a mild thought, and I decide not to say it out loud.

“What’s number two?” he asks.

“Okay, second, sweetie. You’ve got the car parked here right under a big streetlight, and this is a busy street. Could you maybe you pull it up a little, to a darker spot?”

“Why? You’re leaving in just a minute.”

“Not sitting over here on this side I’m not. And I wanna be able to run around the car and get in the driver’s side when the red lights are holding up the traffic so nobody will see me. That’s gonna be pretty hard to do with this big streetlight making it look like daytime…”

“No, I meant I thought you’d just scootch across.”

“Scootch across? What, are you kidding? Haven’t you noticed, there’s this big fucking gearshift lever sticking straight up in the middle where I’d have to go over.”

“Well, Michelle, technically it’s only a ‘fucking’ gearshift lever if you choose to use it that way, while you’re on your way over.”

“God, you sure are a literal prick, aren’t you? Is this why Matilda threw you out?” She’s his previous girlfriend.

“Melinda.”

“What?”

“Her name’s not Matilda, it’s Melinda. And, no, that’s not why she threw me out.”

This is getting nowhere. We just stare at each other’s eyes. Then:

“Okay, okay,” Jeff gives in. “I’ll pull the car forward.” He reaches for the key and starts up the engine.

“Now, what’s number three?” He waits for me to answer before moving the car.

“Okay, third, could you get my bag out of the trunk before you go?”

“Sure, be happy to. But …”

“Yeah.”

“I just wanted to say one thing..”

“I’m listening.”

“It’s just that I was having this sort of daydream of you staying naked ‘til you got all the way home.”

“My god, Jeff, you sure are a brave S.O.B. when you won’t have to be personally involved.”

He says nothing.

“I mean, I don’t know what you take me for. You think I can just go walking around through my own apartment-complex in the raw? In front of people I have to see every day? Sheess, Jeff! I’m not some kind of exhibitionist.” But even as I’m saying this, I know it must sound a little hollow. He glances down at the little tuft of black pubic hair that’s poking up where my tummy meets my thighs. But he says nothing. Well, okay, shit! I guess sitting here naked on a busy street, with a guy I’ve known less than 3 weeks and no personal access to my clothes must make me a teeny little bit of an exhibitionist. But I’m not ready to give him the satisfaction of saying so. Not yet.

“So, you can just go ahead and daydream all you want, mister. But first chance I get, I’m going to pull into a side street, stop the car, and put on my skirt and jacket.”

“And shoes?”

“And shoes.”

“Okay, your call,” he says and shoves the car into gear. Instead of pulling out into the traffic lanes, he creeps up the empty parking lane to a spot more or less in the middle between two streetlights. He stops and pulls up the hand brake.

“Tell you what,” he says as he starts getting out again.. “I’ll be a lookout, and help make sure there’s nobody that’ll see you when you run around to this side. How’s that?”

“Great!,” I say. “I really mean it, Jeff. Great. And I’d really appreciate it. But with your help I’d probably run right smack into my psychology prof halfway around the car.”

“Aw, c’mon, Michelle. That wasn’t necessary.”

“I guess not.” Jeff swings his door the rest of the way open, switches the inside light so it’s off even when the door’s not closed, and gets out. A minute or so later, when the traffic lights in both directions are keeping this section of street free of passing cars, Jeff sings out “okay,” and I jump out of the car and run around to the other side.

Once I’m behind the wheel, I pull the door shut and roll down the window to talk.

“You wanna give me the keys?” Jeff asks.

“What for?”

“So I can get your stuff out of the back. Like you said.” Hmm. Oh, yeah. That. I guess I did tell him that I wanted my bag up here in front. But he doesn’t need the keys for that. There’s a trunk latch lever right here next to my seat. But then I conclude, in a sudden rush of thought, that I’m not going to mention this. Fact is, I’m kind of getting to like the idea of Jeff’s little daydream. Maybe I really can stay naked till I get all the way home, and even all the way until tomorrow. Anyway, there’s no reason a girl can’t try.

“Oh, never mind, sweetie. It’s not that important,” I tell him. “I mean I’d have to turn off the motor and everything, and I guess it’s not worth all the bother. Let’s face it, if I get dressed now I’ll just have to take them right back off again a few minutes later, when I get to my apartment.. So what’s the point?”

“Yeah, you’re right, Michelle. What’s the point?” He’s giving me that wide smile of his. It’s strangely reassuring.

“I think I’d rather go home just the way I am.”

**6. First Friday**

*a. On the way to the office (and remembering yesterday)*

*When interviewing for a ‘gal Friday’ position at a soft drink distributor, Michelle Oliveiro jokingly asked if it would be all right for her to come to work naked on casual Fridays. She got the job. Later, she can hardly believe she could have said such a thing, but decides to see how it goes. The first week at the office seems to go normally enough. Even so, Michelle has been trying to build up her courage, preparing herself for the worst. Today is the first Friday at her new job. Although basically ready to face the music, she’s still not sure what the day will bring.*

Eight thirty-five, ‘casual’ Friday. My trusty old Toyota is grinding its way through traffic, twenty minutes from work. And yeah, I’m wearing clothes. Just before I left this morning I threw on some jeans and a t-shirt. And, of course, my flip-flops. But I’m figuring it won’t be for long. Once I get to the office, they’ll make me take it all off.

Oh *gawd!!* How’d I ever get myself into this stupid thing? I mean, right now I’m just feeling so-o-o not into running around the office totally nude. It’s not that I’m scared or anything. Really, I’m not. All week I thought I might be, or else at least a little.. hot? Aw geez, I wish! But nope, what I’m feeling right now is just plain wiped—like, totally can’t-hold-my-head-up tired. I hardly slept a bit last night. (Bet that’s a surprise.) Anyway, I didn’t. And today, I’m paying.

 Okay, I know. What did I expect? First, I drive naked all the way home from Jeff’s place after the little sweetheart locked up my clothes in the trunk. And on top of that, I pass two different cops on the way. Sheess! how do I *get* so lucky? The second one, he’s like just sitting there staring at me when I practically run this red light. But cripes, what was I supposed to do? The friggin thing was practically already yellow when I got there. I tried to hit the brakes, but my foot slipped off the pedal. *Oh gee, sorry officer. Guess I’m not used to driving with no shoes on.* Yeah, sure. That’d been terrific. Anyhow, I slammed down on the gas at the last second and I guess I made it through. Barely.

*Barely*, hah! Boy, wouldn’t that have been some traffic stop! They’d be talking about it down at the police station for the next ten years. “So then I says to her.. Hey Cinderella, didn’t the fairy godmother tell you to get home before your clothes all go poof? Ha!-Ha!” Aw man, what in the world am I talking about? That cop would’ve taken me in for sure. Like some kind of a souvenir.And then they’d be all like: “Hey Sarge, d’ja see what Louie brought in!? You gotta go down to the cells and take a look!” *Sheess, what a holy panic!* The whole thing is making me wide awake just thinking about it.

And it wasn’t like I was naked just driving home from Jeff’s place, either. That would have been enough, but no… No, I had to be totally naked all the way from that friggin restroom at the community college. Right in front of my psychology prof and everything! No wonder I couldn’t get to sleep. (Come to think of it, wonder how *he* slept?) Aw shit! Why do I have to keep thinking about that? I mean, I’d almost managed to forget about it for, like, ten whole seconds. Oh well… I guess it’s all water under the dam now anyway, or whatever. So’s my whole college career, probably.

Okay, at any rate I’m guessing that all that’d be plenty of naked for most people for any one night. Don’cha think? Probably. But for me? Ha! Not quite. So to top it all off, I went and stayed naked all the way from my parking lot back up to my apartment. I did. But you know what’s really weird? After all that, here I sit, on a day I’m supposed to wear nothing at all (I think), and I’ve got, like, not just one but *two* sets of clothes. One’s on me and the other’s back in the trunk, still there where Jeff put them last night.

*Last night!* Ah, last night… I must’ve been out of my frickin mind..

Anyhow, by the time I got back to my apartment complex I’d basically already made up my mind to get upstairs without covering up. After everything else that’d happened last night, it just seemed like the right thing to do. Not only that, I really didn’t see how it’d be any big deal. It’s usually pretty quiet around my complex after ten o’clock or so. And I figured getting upstairs naked would be a breeze—just like last Sunday, when I did the laundry? But then I go pulling into the complex, and you know what? Hah!

Of all nights it looked like they had to pick last night to make everything go crazy. I mean, the second I pull in the lot all I can see is, like, these cars and stuff all over the place, five or six of them at least, driving up and down the rows, people walking around, doors slamming, headlights going on and off, voices shouting and god knows what-all—like they had some kind of convention going on there or something. And me, one look and I’m all of a sudden like, “Ooh, gee. I don’t kno-o-ow….” and I start getting this durpy feeling, like I maybe oughta, you know, chicken out?

But then as I’m inching along looking for a spot, these two women go walking by, right next to my car, and one of them glances in the window. Well, *that* really got me spooked, I’ll tell you. But anyway, I turned my eyes, so’s not to look at her head on, and shit! Right down there between my thighs, right under my tummy, hello-o-o! There’s this major tuft of pubic hairs poking out, just as chipper as can be. *Oh-my-god, is she seeing that?* But by now the two women were already now way behind me, and I really gotta laugh. The look on her face! And right there, I knew. No way I was going to chicken out. No way! Sitting in my warm Toyota, looking out at all those cars and people, I guess I was feeling just a little bit too raunchy. I knew it was all Jeff’s fault, of course. But I mean, what did I expect, all those hormones still swimming around inside me from when he’d been diddling me in the car out front of his apartment—me sitting there totally naked and him all over me like flies on a peach. God! is that guy good with his hands! No, seriously. He had me, like, practically helpless. But I digress.

Anyway, what I’m trying to say here is basically this. At that particular moment, the way I was feeling, I was totally like, I’m going to my apartment in the nude. People or no people. And when I managed to find a parking spot in the second row, almost right by the outside stairs to my unit, that clinched it. From where I sat, I figured by the time I ran around to the trunk of the car, fished out my clothes, and then got back inside again to put them on, I could practically be home. So what’d be the point? Besides which, I really had to pee. Maybe I could hold it a little while, but I definitely couldn’t just sit there in my car half the night trying to wriggle myself into a bunch of stupid clothes. And, a minute or so later, when things got sort of calmed down at my end of the parking lot, I was like, Okay, here’s my chance. Let’s go! And next thing I know, I’ve got the car door open, my feet are on the ground and I’m strolling naked toward the outside stairs leading up to my apartment.

Wow, was that a feeling! The night air seemed cooler than before, especially compared with riding around with the heater going full blast. But the coolness just added to the sensation. And even though there were all these little gravelly bits on the blacktop biting at the bottoms of my feet, I gotta honestly tell you I was feeling absolutely fresh about this whole naked thing. I even thought seriously about taking the long way around again, back through the damp grass behind my building, instead of going straight to my apartment—like when I did the laundry last Sunday. But then when I got about halfway to the outside staircase, an itty-bit of reality clicked in. Pfft! I’d forgot to lock my car. “Aw crap,” I thought, with a sort of pretend irritation. “Now I’ve got to go back.”

Not that this seemed bad, mind you. It was more like “Hey, cool. I get to be naked even longer.” But just as I turned to go back toward my car, all at once I’m seeing these, like, four people, two guys and two women, several car lengths away. One of the couples I’d seen around the complex—I think they live on the ground floor of my unit. The others I didn’t recognize. Guess they all must have gotten out of their car about the same time I got out of mine But up to that particular moment, I honestly hadn’t noticed them..

But I stopped the instant I saw them and just watched. And I remember thinking, maybe I should be going into some kind of panic or something? But for some reason, I wasn’t. Instead, I was just sort of like “Eh, so what.” Okay, they weren’t moving in my direction or anything, so at least there wasn’t that to set me off. Besides which, there were several rows of cars between me and them, and no way they could get a clear view. But the basic point was still this: I was out there in the parking lot, completely naked, and they were there, too, just a few cars away. And I was just, like: Hey, I’ll mind my business, and they’ll mind theirs—really smug and nervy as all get-out. So I just stood where I was and watched them a little while more, until finally I figure it’s time to get going. And then coolly, ever so very coolly, I start walking again, back toward my car, savoring the gritty blacktop, keys jingling from my hand. Not fast and not slow, but just… normal. Everything completely normal.

Except there’s nothing on me. Nothing.

It’s only a few steps and I’m back standing at my car, bare feet flat against the blacktop, and twisting the key in the door. The keyhole’s a little sticky and I have to give an extra little push before I hear the throaty clunk when the power locks drop down. Ah, the little satisfactions. I pause to take a look around. And, as I’m standing there next to my car door, peering over the roofs of the other cars and looking at the traffic on the distant highway, I’m really okay with this. But then all at once I’m like, wait a second! Where’d those other people go? Really. *Where the hell were they?* I look over to where they were heading, and they’re, like, not there, Nowhere. And now I’m starting to panic. Until all at once, like, woops! And there they are. While I’d been standing there all entranced by the thunk of my power locks, they’d made a right-angle turn behind this big white van and now they were coming directly towards me. And I’m like: *Oh! My! Gawd!*

I quickly stooped down. This was good, because down between the cars they couldn’t see me, but I could see them. Looking through the windows of my Toyota, right across its interior, I could follow them perfectly and keep track of where they were going. But I was totally.. invisible. And for some reason I really thought this was *so-o-o cool.* But see if you can get this picture. There’s me, all hunched down, totally naked, spying across the inside of my car, and over there, three or four cars away, there’s this bunch of middle-aged strangers, all dressed up in swanky clothes, jibber-jabbering away and walking straight in my direction. Even so, at just that moment I was feeling pretty safe, all hunkered in my narrow little slot between the cars. But about two seconds later, when I heard them getting real close, I all of a sudden had this rush of ooh-hooey! Basic. Fear. And without even thinking I held my breath, like maybe that’d keep them from noticing me? Then this woman’s voice starts laughing hysterically, and I hunch down even tighter, trying to lean myself against the shadows. If I could’ve crawled in under where the front wheel was, I would’ve. I sure was trying. Meantime, though, my eyes are fixed on the opening at the far end of my slot. And I wait.

But then, even though I still hear their voices, I don’t see them coming past. “Now what?” I’m thinking. “This is weird.” But then I figured they must have turned again. So I cautiously stretch to take a look. Sure enough, through my car’s interior I can see they’ve made a turn, and now they’re filing their way between my car and the next one over. Holy g’moley! I’m thinking. What a fricking riot! There they are, all prancing along in their clothes and shoes and everything, like they’re going to a party, and here I am, all squatted down on the ground leaning against my car wheel, bare-assed naked! *Not so much as a flip-flop.* I watch their heads as they go bobbing by. Obliviously. And all at once I start to get this major urge to giggle.

But giggles would have been nothing compared with this other little thing, that I’m like, really starting to feel. But sheess! There I am, all stooped down, knees up to my chin and my tummy scrunched together with these waves of stupid giggles bubbling up inside. I’m trying to hold them down with everything I’ve got, but that just makes me press harder on my scrunched up little tummy and … Oh, shiss-ola! Why am making excuses? The thing is this: All hunched over in my gritty little slot, like all at once I’ve really got to *pee*. And I mean, not just soon, not in a few minutes, but right exactly now. And, it’s not like I can wait until I’m, uh, a little more alone? No, I gotta do it then and there, with these four uptight dorkos so close I can practically touch them.

So at first, naturally, I’m like, *Aw crap, why this? Why now?* and I’m trying to hold it in. But geez, I mean, it was pushing hard and I’m squeezing for all I’m worth. I thought I felt it coming down and managed, just, to stop it. But it felt all tingly, and I knew I couldn’t wait. I tried to squeeze still tighter but could tell that I was slipping. It pushed my groin and as I squeezed, the tingling was electric. But then, I’m wondering, all at once: Why this pain and strain? How come I don’t just go ahead and do what’s coming naturally? I mean, there I was already nude, squatting and “wide open.” There was nothing in the whole wide world getting in the way. All I needed was just, you know, just to let it go. And, heck, I’m wondering seriously, what was wrong with that? Obviously, I wouldn’t loose it all, or something really nasty. Not out there. That’d be gross, like what a guy might do. But, just a couple little squirts? Just let off some pressure? I mean, how could it matter. Who could it hurt? And before I even know what’s happening, I’m like… h-h-h-h-h-h-uh. And all the while, I’m looking over, straight across my car, and watching my four dorkos go bob-bob-bobbing by. Me there making tinkle, and they don’t have a clue.

When they got close to my building, the foursome turned again. They were heading for the ground floor apartments, and away from the outside stairs.. I got up and made a dash for it. I don’t know why, but I ran. Maybe my courage was shaken. And then, too, I still needed to finish my pee. But anyway, in seconds I was standing on the metal stairs. The edgy feel of the stair steps felt good against bare feet. Maybe not major awesome, but better than the blacktop. I noticed the bright outdoor spotlights shining on the staircase. I liked the way their bluish hue made my bare skin seem to glow. I wondered what I’d feel like if someone out there saw me—naked little me aglow, climbing the steps to home. Just the thought of such a thing sent shivers through my groin. I slowed my pace to a crawl.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you’ve never done it before, let me tell you. It feels a little strange. I mean, the first thing I normally do when I get inside is (this time of year) take off at least a coat. Usually I kick off my shoes, too, and sometimes I take off even more. Lately, I totally strip. But to walk into my apartment after a day at work and school and to be, like, totally ready for bed—that was really weird.. But there I was, just inside my door, hooking the chain and already completely naked. I mean, what else was there? Okay, brush my teeth, but other than that?

Anyway, I went padding to the bathroom for that one last thing and all at once, standing there in front of the mirror, boobies jiggling slightly as I brush, the thing hits me. What do I see poking up over the washbowl rim? In all its hairy glory?

One look at that mass of curly black hairs going every which way and I’m in this instant total recall about Jeff. Wow, he sure did get intense over my “hairdo” plans when we talked after class tonight back at the community college. Hard to believe that’d been only a couple of hours before. So much had happened in the meantime. When it all first came back to me, the whole stupid discussion we’d had in the hall outside my psych class, it seemed pretty hilarious. *God, that guy can be such a dork!* But, then, as I was looking down at myself in the bathroom mirror, I started getting, like: Whoa, Michelle, you know?—maybe the guy had a point. I mean, there I was, with just a few hours to go before my ‘big day’ at the office, and my pussy was this major crazy mess. *Can I really let them see me this way?* Uff! I had some decisions to make.

Just leaving things the way they were didn’t seem to work. For sure, my pubes weren’t the complete disaster that they’d been last Saturday night. They still were pretty well mashed down from being in my pantyhose. Even so, Jeff’s diddling had made them a little rough. And that bothered me. Maybe the thing that bothered me most was I didn’t look “in fashion.” I’d checked some sites on the internet, and I didn’t look like them. Okay, I know those internet chicks aren’t exactly completely “typical.” But then again, most typical girls don’t go nude around the office. And I’ll bet if they did let their pussies hang out, they wouldn’t just let them grow wild. Let’s face it. Women care about their hair and want to have it look nice. It’s like my mom is always saying, “Michelle, the way a girl keeps her hair says a lot about her.” *Right.* I definitely needed to do something. But what?

For starters, I knew I wasn’t up for a total shave. Too artificial. I know, I know—some girls do it, especially on the net. But, then again, some girls shave their heads. That doesn’t mean its for me. The thing is, I was going to be naked at *work*. And it kept running through my mind what my boss said during last week’s interview. At the office, Pete told me, we should always look “neat and businesslike.” *Neat and businesslike.* It was obvious I needed to come up with something less extreme than the pussy equivalent of a shaved head.

No, what I needed to be thinking about here is what would be, you know, “right” for this situation—for a professional young woman who just happens to do office work naked. What would people expect? In this day and age, it’s a little hard to know. I mean you don’t see a lot about it in *Vogue* or *Elle.* Not even in *Cosmopolitan*. But I’m guessing that the guys at Soda-Rite have been looking at the internet. I mean, you gotta figure. So what I’m thinking that they’re going to expect is, when a girl goes nude at the office, she’s gonna be styling her hair. All of it. Upstairs and down. Like they do on the internet. Not a total shave, not in a business, but definitely some sort of ‘do. Isn’t that just common sense?

Anyway, as this stuff was going back and forth in my head all week I pretty much leaned toward the idea that, if I was going to do anything, it’d be to make what they call a landing strip. You know, one of those little furry patches an inch or so wide that goes straight down the middle of the mons? You see them all the time on the web. Yep, I finally decided, a landing strip is for me. So it was time to get down to it. First I trimmed the long stuff using a pair of scissors. I carefully placed the cuttings in an empty box of tissues (why, I don’t know). Then, once that was done, I lathered myself and was ready for the razor. But I guess I’m not very good at this. My landing strip was cock-eyed. I ended up with this triangular thing instead of a neat narrow strip. Okay, it’s basically a landing strip, it’s just mine’s a bit wider up top.

I hadn’t thought about my other pubes, the ones that’re underneath. Actually, they didn’t look that bad, and I thought I’d maybe just leave them. But they did obscure the lips and folds, and that seemed to me like a problem. If my pussy is going to be out on full view, the main part at least should be seen. I didn’t want all this crinkly fuzz in there blurring up the picture. Also, if there’s one thing the internet chicks all tend to shave, it’s their “intimate” regions down under. So I lathered my nethers and used a small mirror, and my vagina was soon smooth and clean...

I carefully wiped off the cream with a towel and checked myself in the hall mirror. And you wanna know honestly?—seeing myself all bare and smooth underneath was actually kind of a shock. It’d been many years since I’d seen myself bare, and I hadn’t known what to expect. Mainly, I saw, that my smooth outer lips were a lot, uh, *puffier* than I’d realized. They sure looked lots puffier than those that I’d seen when I’d checked out those internet chicks. *Like this regular little handful.* But you know what? I figure, that’s totally okay. I think that they’re totally me. Same with my clit that pokes out real obvious now that my lip hairs are all gone. Even if I’m standing, my clit can be seen, but I’m figuring that too’s okay, too. If I learned anything looking at internet chicks, it’s there’s a lot more shapes than I’d dreamed of. (Not that I dream about pussies, of course. But you know what I’m trying to say.) Anyhow, I didn’t know whether to be happy or not, but then thought, “Well, shit! It just *has* to be fine.” This is what I *am.* And if those guys at Soda-Rite don’t like it, well they can just cram it up theirs.

But basically, I figured they’ll like it.

\*\*\*\*\*

I pull into my usual parking spot at Soda-Rite at about five till nine, switch off the motor, and take a deep breath. Okay, now I’m maybe a little scared. But oh man, am I psyched! Thinking about last night during the whole drive over here has really pumped me up. I mean, I am *ready*. I almost want to take off everything right now, right here in the car. Then I could just walk into the office already completely naked, and ta-*dah!*

But that’s not what I’ve decided to do, at least not today. Just in case. Okay, I know what the deal is, but still and all… I’d just want to get some, well you know, just some teeny-weeny little signal from Pete. Deep inside I know it’ll happen. And I know that Pete’ll know just how to do it. One thing’s for sure. Guys definitely know how to tell girls when it’s time to get naked. At least unless the guy’s a total moron. And Pete’s no moron. But it’s just that, I guess… I’m still not, you know, *totally* completely sure. And on something like this, you want to be sure. But ooh-wee! It’s got to be true. The way I’m feeling right now, I truly can’t imagine what I’ll be like if it’s not, if this all turns out to just be some big dumb mistake. No, I know that it’s true. I’m supposed to get naked, and Pete’ll let me know. In fact, he already has. And when he does it again, I’ll be ready.

Okay, one last deep breath. Why’s my heart pounding? I let the breath out slowly, like I’m putting off the inevitable. Then, in a burst, I’m up and out of the car and on my way upstairs to the office.

**6. First Friday**

*a. On the way to the office (and remembering yesterday)*

[See Part 6a in separate file]

*b. Getting the signal from Pete*

*[Introduction from Gal Friday 6a]*

*I pull into my usual parking spot at Soda-Rite at about five till nine, switch off the motor, and take a deep breath. Okay, now I’m maybe a little scared. But oh man, am I psyched! Thinking about last night during the whole drive over here has really pumped me up. I mean, I am ready. I almost want to take off everything right now, right here in the car. Then I could just walk into the office already completely naked, and ta-dah!*

*But that’s not what I’ve decided to do, at least not today. Just in case. Okay, I know what the deal is, but still and all… I’d just want to get some, well you know, just some teeny-weeny little signal from Pete. Real deep inside, I know it’ll happen. And I know that Pete’ll know just how to do it. One thing’s for sure. Guys definitely know how to tell girls when it’s time to get naked. At least unless the guy’s a total moron. And Pete’s no moron. But it’s just that, I guess… I’m still not, you know, totally completely sure. And on something like this, you want to be sure. But ooh-wee! It’s got to be true. The way I’m feeling right now, I truly can’t imagine what I’ll be like if it’s not, if this all turns out to just be some big dumb mistake. No, I know that it’s true. I’m supposed to get naked, and Pete’ll let me know. In fact, he already has. And when he does it again, I’ll be ready.*

*Okay, one last deep breath. Why’s my heart pounding? I let the breath out slowly, like I’m putting off the inevitable. Then, in a burst, I’m up and out of the car and on my way upstairs to the office.*

At the top of the office stairs I head toward the conference room where I leave my windbreaker. It’s also where I sometimes work. So far they haven’t given me any special cubicle or anything, so mostly I just sit wherever somebody happens to want me. That’s pretty much what ‘gal Friday’ means, around here anyhow. But sometimes I’ve got little projects to do on my own, and then I generally use this conference room. It’s just down the hall from Pete’s office. And it’s got a glass-top table with four or five dinette-type chairs. You know, the modernistic kind with fake black leather and chrome? I use the glass table for my desk—perfect for when I’ll be naked, eh? *When I’ll be naked?* Anyway, on the wall somebody’s put up some hokey photomontages—mostly snapshots of Pete’s family on vacation. They’ve also got this cheap painting of mountains and pine trees. All in all, it’s not my first choice for decorating. But hey, who am I?

An hour and twenty minutes later I’m still in here, perched on one of the dinette chairs and leaning over the glass table. And, like, *nothing* has happened. *No*-thing. Nobody’s said anything. No signals. No signs. And I am still *totally* dressed. Some advertising samples came in from the agency this morning. I’m looking them over when Pete sticks in his head, gives me his quirky smile, and says “Sa-a-ay, Michelle!” I half look up, a little surprised at his exuberance. “Could you come down to my office for a sec? Something I need to show you.”

“Sure,” I reply. And for a briefest instant I’m like, “Aw man, here we go! This has gotta be it.” But it takes me only a second or two to realize that this isn’t “it.” I’m still just learning the job, of course, so Pete has done this all week. Three or four times a day he calls me in his office, sits me down, and shows me something-or-other I’m supposed to need to know. This is just another one of those.

I follow Pete the short distance to his office, flip-flops slapping away. The sound reminds me of last week, during my interview. The only thing is, this time Pete doesn’t seem to notice. Actually I’d planned to come to the office barefoot today, but then at the last minute I wriggled my feet in the flip-flops, so I’d have something in the car. At least that was my excuse. And okay, I guess that business last night with the cop kinda freaked me out on barefoot driving. But to be honest?—I really never thought I’d actually still have the things on now. Or anything, for that matter. I mean, Sheess! It’s already 20 after ten! And I’m starting to wonder, like, what the heck is going on here?

Maybe I’m just not being realistic.

Anyhow, we get to Pete’s office and I stop in front of his desk while he walks around behind. Nobody says anything and I just stand there watching him fumble around with some papers, like he’s hunting for something. Finally, Pete looks up, reaches across the desk and hands me a calendar. It’s the kind with lots of pretty color pictures—lakes and seashores and stuff like that. He gives me that funny half-smile of his…

“Do you know what day it is, Michelle?” My heart leaps. Oh! My! Gawd! Did he just say ‘*do you know what day it is?’* Yep, no question. Ohmygah-ohmygah-ohmygod! This *is* it! So this is how it happens. I’m thinking. Just boom! Totally outta nowhere. Just like that!

And then I’m all like thinking, well hell, Pete. Of *course*, I know what day it is. It’s casual Friday, my day to get naked! And finally, you big lump, you finally say something, after making me hang in the frickin wind for half the frickin morning! Like, where’ya been? But geez-louise, was that a weenie way to bring it up, or what? ‘Do I know what day it is?’ I really want to ask him, Is that all you can say? But, then again, at least the guy’s said *something*. Finally.

And now that he’s said it, you know what? As I feel it sinking in? I am all at once going into this, like, totally major panic.

Okay, fine. This is what I wanted. Really. It’s what I honestly, truly wanted. And all week the very thought of it’s been eating on me, making me crazy, like I can’t get it out of my head. And all morning today, I hardly could wait. But now all of a sudden, now that the time has finally come, it’s just I’m like, um… Okay, let’s see if you can get this picture. Here I am, me, standing in front of this 45 year-old guy, or whatever, his shirt all stretched over a puffy little paunch, a goofy half-smile, and thinned out strands of combed-over hair. And I’m supposed to get naked? Right here in his friggin office! In my boss’s office? *Aw, c’mon, you can’t be serious!* this little piece of me keeps saying. *Hey Michelle, you losing your mind?* And to be totally honest, I guess I’m starting to wonder if, uh, right now maybe we can like, you know, just not do this?

I don’t say this, of course. And I’m hoping I don’t show it, either. Instead, what I basically do is just freeze. Pete’s words “Do you know what day it is?” keep bouncing around my head, my chest keeps constricting, and my stomach gets all twisty, and I’m like, holy craps! He’s actually doing it. My boss is actually telling me to take off all my clothes. Not in those words, of course, but it’s obvious what he means. That was our deal, last week, at the interview. And me? I’m like not moving a muscle. Instead I just go on standing there, staring down at the opened calendar with its pretty mountain lake, and act like I’m trying really hard to figure out what day it is..

But then as I’m standing there, staring down like some kind of total inarticulate moron, I sense there’s something else. Pete’s not even looking at me, at least not in the eye. Uh-huh, for sure. There is definitely something else, and I can feel it clear as day. My t-shirt’s pulled up, way up, away from my jeans. I’m afraid to look and check it out, but I don’t actually have to. From the breezy feel, there’s not a question about it. It’s this major sized gap between my t-shirt and my jeans. I almost can’t believe I didn’t notice it before, but I sure do now. And judging by the way Pete’s all focused in right down at my middle, it’s obvious he’s noticed too.

I stiffen my body and try not to move. I’m guessing that at this particular point in time my tummy’s hanging out from about the level of my navel on down. Not that that’s any big deal in itself, of course, at least not as far as I’m concerned. I go around bare-midriffed all the time. It’s great. Just not in the office. Not when I’m in one of my stodgy gray suits. But that’s not the issue, either. After all, this is casual Friday. I’m not in a gray suit. The thing is something else. The thing is that these are my very lowest low-rider jeans. And that means I’m probably not just flashing the round of my belly, no big deal, but the yellow elastic waistband of my thong top besides.

Aw crap, who’m I fooling? I *know* my thong is showing.

I desperately want to peek down and have a look for myself, but I’m way too rigid to move. Meantime, Pete’s favorite words from my interview last week keep swirling around my brain. “Neat and businesslike.” Hmm. “Businesslike?” I ask myself. Is letting your thong top ride up above your jeans “neat and businesslike”? Even for a casual Friday? And then I remember how two days ago Pete really let loose on a guy down in the shop because he’d let the waistband of his underpants poke up an inch or so in back. Not a pretty sight. But all at once I get this panic. Does that apply to me, too? Is it different for girls? *Oh please. Let it be different for girls.* My stomach constricts even more. My toes scrunch tight in their flip-flops. But then, an instant later, I’m like, Hey, Michelle. Quit making yourself crazy. Considering what’s going to be showing here in about five minutes’ time, this is gonna be, like, nothing….

And for sure, that’s gotta be right. Compared with my whole naked pussy, a little bit of panty-top is *nada*.

So, okay, maybe that’s not a *completely* comforting thought, but I do start to feel a little calmer. Even so, I’m still just standing here in front of Pete’s desk, still holding the calendar, and still haven’t budged the slightest smidge. It seems like about an hour’s gone by since Pete asked me what day it is, but it’s probably been more like 2-1/2 seconds. And even though I’m not totally calmed down, there’s this other piece of me that starts clicking in, and it’s going, like: Okay Michelle. You know the deal. You knew it when you took the job. Right? You need to get a grip. *A grip.* I give my head a brisk little shake, like I’m clearing out some cobwebs. And as I do it, the panicky feeling goes slipping away and this practical side of me snaps to action. Time to start planning ahead. Time to get realistic. Time to start thinking about getting myself naked.

Oka-a-y, right. Thinking ahead. Being practical. So what do I take off first?

My shirt? Yeah definitely, the shirt comes off first. I mean that’s just common sense, right? But what after that? My bra, and then the jeans? Or first my jeans and then the bra? Hmm. That one’s a little tougher. But one thing’s for sure. The thong comes off last. I mean, this much is totally obvious. Save the best for the end. But ooh-ah! Just the thought *that.* Already I can feel the little tug behind as the tail string of the thong slides out of my wedgiezone. And then the swoosh of air as the thick part of the crotch panel peels itself away, all damp and sticky, from my newly-shaved vagina. Sssssssss! And all the while Pete’ll be sitting right here in front me, watching me, and trying his best to keep from going totally nuts. Or at least trying not to show it—and oh, man, just the thought of all that, it’s already making me tingle.

Ah *yeah!*  The more I’m thinking about this whole thing the better I’m feeling. *Definitely* better. But even so, I guess I’m maybe still not feeling, like, totally *totally* ready, because, well.. I *am* still just standing here. Silent. Gazing at Pete’s calendar. Like I still can’t figure out what day it is.

*Your move, Michelle.* Definitely, my move. And all at once I hear myself blurt out, in a wimpy little kittenish tone:

“No, Pete. What day is it?” And then I pause, like I’m thinking about it some more, and add: “You mean it’s, um, Friday?”

“That’s right,” Pete replies, surprisingly matter-of-fact. “And remember what that means?” he halfway sings. “The accountants come in on Monday. So today’s the day we’ve got to sort through the purchase orders. There’s still that big batch from last week, and I need you to check and arrange them, so the bookkeepers can do all the numbers.”

“Oh, yeah.” It all comes back. Pete’s already mentioned this project a couple of times before. He said he was going to show me how to do it. He still hasn’t.

“Weren’t you going to show me how to do it?” I’m really trying hard to sound enthusiastic but I gotta tell you, I think even Pete could hear the disappointment in my voice. So he thinks today’s the “big day” because we’ve got to sort through purchase orders. Sheess!

I lean across Pete’s desk to hand him back the calendar. As I do, I feel my t-shirt pulling tight across my front. I have to lean a little farther, and the shirt gets even tighter, the powder-blue material ve-e-ry stretched against my bra. And Pete’s eyes? Well, what d’you think? They’re planted right smack on my chest. When it’s obvious that I’ve caught him, he quickly looks away. But then, like it was nothing, he’s like:

“Hey, Michelle, what’s the star?”

“Star?” I look down, where he’s pointing with his fingers.

“Yeah, that,” he says, twiddling his fingertips directly toward my breasts. I see the fading five-point logo printed on my shirt.

.

It never stops amazing me the things that guys can say. I mean, he’s like so-o-o obvious, not to mention clueless. ‘What’s the star?’ He’s such an actor! What’s the ‘star’, my ass! But I really gotta wonder how dumb he thinks I am. Fine, I guess this t-shirt is a little snug in front. But geez, is that my fault? It *shrank*. And besides, tight-across-the-front these days is pretty much the style. Right? I honestly think so. But that’s clearly not a topic that I want to raise with Pete. So I shrug instead:

“It’s just a star. Doesn’t mean anything at all. Least not that I know of.”

“Oh.”

Meanwhile, this little thought pops into my head, and know what it’s suggesting? Why don’t I just show my boss what’s underneath the star. You know, just a flash of yellow bra to sort of get things rolling? I mean this could go on all day long if I don’t take some action.. It’s high time I get naked if I’m going to at all. But then I get this saner thought, like, maybe that I shouldn’t? Uff! Story of my life, I guess. Nothing’s ever simple. Besides, it’s getting pretty clear that Pete’s all into work. Looking at my breasts like that was just a small diversion. Just a little something nice to help him through his day.

Purchase orders! My mouth goes dry. When’s it going to *happen*!

I pull a chair beside Pete’s desk, and he starts off on the orders. I try to listen closely, but it’s really hard to do. I face him and we sit so close I smell his Drakkar Noir.

As Pete drones on I’m all at once like, wait a friggin second! Is it my imagination or do his eyes keep bobbing down, like for no apparent reason? I watch some more, and sure enough. It’s notimagination. And just when I’m about to think the poor guy’s had a seizure, I’m like: Look at that! I think my boss is spying on my tits! I watch some more and pretty soon it’s obvious what he’s doing. He sneaks a glance down toward my front every chance he gets. He’s shoving papers in my face and thinks that I’m not looking. But does he think I’m so spaced out I wouldn’t even notice? Sheess! This is just another thing that guys don’t seem to get. Girls *always* notice.

But even though I’m on to him, I decide that I won’t show it. After all, he *is* my boss. I’d hate to get him pissed. So I just pretend to look around, and try some more to catch him. And I do. More than once, but I must admit he’s good. With all of his gazillion years, I guess he’s had some practice. But all at once it hits me, I’m sup*posed* to see him do it. Maybe he’s not sneaking looks but something else completely.. It’s like, duh Michelle. Maybe it’s your signal.

Now *that* makes sense, I’m thinking, so I really get attentive. A few more minutes—same routine—and Pete is almost finished. As he reaches me a batch of stuff, his eyes sweep past my breasts. And back again. And stop. This time he doesn’t glance away. Instead he just peers down at my front and couldn’t be more blatant. I’m not completely positive how I should react. So I just get quiet, bow my head and lightly bite my lip. Like a good little female employee, I simply let him stare.

Finally he seems to get his fill and looks back toward my face. It’s clear that I’ve been watching him, but he doesn’t seem to care. Instead, he gets that weird half-smile and tilts his gaze back downward. Like checking out a woman’s breasts is the normalest thing there is. And here again, just like before it’s not a passing glance. He gets his eyes *locked on.* Then, after what seems forever, he comes back up for air. Now he looks me in the eye and firmly nods his head. He doesn’t make the slightest sound, but his expression says it all:

“Aw*-ri-i-ght*, Michelle!”

And me, I’m thinking. This is it! That’s gotta be my signal! A stare that blatant, then that nod; what else can it be? No one does a thing like that totally by chance. That definitely was way too brazen, even for a guy.

So, okay now, here I am, just about convinced. Maybe I’m not *totally*, but what else could he do? No way he could just blurt out: “It’s time for you to strip”? I’ve got to be realistic. It’s like Jeff explained last night when he met me at my class. Pete’s in business, and business guys worry about ‘harassment’. If there’s even just a tiny risk, he couldn’t be direct. The chance would be too great. But even so, I gotta say he’s being pretty direct. Gazing straight down at my breasts like ‘why in the world are we waiting?’ And then that nod and a look that shouts: “Aw-*ri-i-ght,* Michelle!”

Pete’s phone rings and breaks my spell. He picks it up and listens. He mumbles something back again and then hangs up with a groan. “I’ve got to run downstairs,” he says. “A problem in the shop. We can finish when I come back up.” And adds, “This is lucky timing. Now you’ve got some time alone, to do what you need to do.” He gets up from his desk and winks, then heads on out the door. I hear his footsteps fading as he hurries down the stairs.

*‘Do what I need to do’*?Oh yeah! Only one thing that can mean. ‘Cause I can’t work on the purchase forms till Pete gets back upstairs And that wink! I guess that clinches it. He’s never done *that* before. I think it’s totally clear at last: *It’s time for me to get naked!*

I smile to think of Pete’s good manners leaving me some space, so I won’t feel lots of pressure when I take off all my clothes. It shouldn’t be a striptease act or anything like that. Just a young professional office woman doing her job in the nude.

As I stand and start off toward the door, there’s a light bounce in my step. Pete will be back before very long. I’ve got just enough time to go “change.”

**6. First Friday**

*a. On the way to the office (and remembering yesterday)*

[See Part 6a in separate file]

*b. Getting the signal from Pete*

[See Part 6b in separate file]

*c. Taking it all off at last*

*[Introduction from Gal Friday 6b]*

*Pete’s phone rings and breaks my spell. He picks it up and listens. He mumbles something back again and then hangs up with a groan. “I’ve got to run downstairs,” he says. “A problem in the shop. We can finish when I come back up.” And adds, “This is lucky timing. Now you’ve got some time alone, to do what you need to do.” He gets up from his desk and winks, then heads on out the door. I hear his footsteps fading as he hurries down the stairs.*

*‘Do what I need to do’? Oh yeah! Only one thing that can mean. ‘Cause I can’t work on the purchase forms till Pete gets back upstairs And that wink! I guess that clinches it. He’s never done that before. I think it’s totally clear at last: It’s time for me to get naked!*

*I smile to think of Pete’s good manners leaving me some space, so I won’t feel lots of pressure when I take off all my clothes. It shouldn’t be a striptease act or anything like that. Just a young professional office woman who happens to do her job totally nude.*

*As I stand and start off toward the door, there’s a light bounce in my step. Pete will be back before very long. I’ve got just enough time to go “change.”*

\* \* \*

Basically, I already decided days ago that I’d go to the second-floor restroom and “change” in there. To me, anyway, that’s just logical. For one thing, it’s private, one of those unisex affairs—you know, a lock on the outside door? That means I don’t have to worry about getting unexpected company right in the middle of, like, pulling down my thong or something. *Pfft!* That’s just what I’d need, for Kira or somebody to come barging in on me and getting all, “Gee whiz, Michelle. What’cha *do*ing?” I’m nervous enough the way it is. A little bit, anyway.

And another thing, the room’s got a nice full-length mirror. All week, I’ve had this nightmare of me walking out in front of the whole friggin office and there I am, in full view of everybody, with a couple of those weird stuck-together gummy curls sticking out of my muff. Yech! I guess my little buzz cut last night pretty much took care of that, so I won’t have to worry about fluffing myself to be presentable in public. But even so, it never hurts to take one last look. I mean, geez, you just *know* I’ll probably end up being the center of attention for the rest of the morning. Maybe even all day.

And then there’s another reason for getting ready in there. The second-floor restroom’s right down the hall from Pete’s, at the top of the stairs. That means I won’t have to go running around all over the place with an armload of clothes, like I’m headed out to the launderette or something. Just a few quick steps and I’m back in my conference room where I can stash everything away for the rest of the day. Clip-clopp! Very efficient! Yeah, I’ve thought this thing through a thousand times, and that’s just what’s logical. Getting myself naked in there. So that is where I go.

I step out of Pete’s office and turn toward the landing. But just as I do, who shows up out of totally nowhere and heads straight for the friggin john? Aw sheess, this can’t be real! Good ol’ grinning Walt, one of the guys down in the shop. Unbe*liev*able! The sight of him makes me stop mid-step. And now here I am, standing here all stupefied in the middle of the hall, mouth agape and staring, like I’m totally fascinated to see a guy go in a bathroom. He flips on the light, steps inside and slams the door. The inner lock goes click. Well, isn’t that just precious! *Shit!* And I know the whole routine from here ‘cause I’ve seen it all before. Every day a little before 11, here comes Walt, bent over grinning up the stairs, newspaper in hand, and plops himself down in ‘our’ bathroom. Why he doesn’t use the one down in the shop is a mystery to us all. But he doesn’t. And once he gets in ours he’s, like, there for 20 minutes. Sometimes even more. And from past experience I can tell you. You don’t want to go in there right after Walt comes out. If you know what I mean.

Well, crap! Now what? I can’t just stand here waiting. I mean, geez, the last thing I need is for Pete to get back upstairs and find me still in my clothes. Honestly, I don’t know *what* he’d think. Maybe that I chickened out, or maybe even worse. Like maybe that I lied to get the job? Sheess! I sure don’t want him to think *that.* He might even fire me. Okay, I’m pretty sure he won’t fire me. But that’s not the point. The point is, Pete gave me the signal and I’m ready to get naked. I want to do it *now*. But where?

I need a ‘Plan B.’ Except I didn’t make a ‘Plan B.’ Geez-louise, why’s everything I do always gotta turn into such a big complicated mess?

But then all at once I’m like, Hey, wait a minute. Why do I need a Plan B? Why not right here, right in my boss’s office? And the more that I think about it, the more I see it’s perfect. Pete gets back upstairs. I’m ready and waiting. Maybe even sitting in his chair! Ho, yes! Sitting right there, feet up on the desk, naked as you please. Wouldn’t *that* be a surprise? Yeah. I’m thinking. Definitely. A surprise…

I twist myself around, so quick I nearly come out of my flip-flop, and step back in Pete’s office, ready to take off my clothes. I finally feel like I’m starting to make some progress here—and about time, too. Until, all at once, boom! It hits me, right inside the door. Oops, just one last itty-bitty problem, and it’s staring me in the face: The wall is not a wall.

Gods! I’m wondering. What on earth were they *thinking*? Right there between Pete’s office and the one next door they’ve got this humongous glass window. I don’t know why I never noticed it before, but I sure do notice it now. Big time. And right through the glass, just as clear as can be, there’s Ken, the office manager, plodding away at his desk. He’s got his back to me now but I’m looking straight at him, all hunched over a pile of papers, thick hairy arms sticking out of his cheap, mustard short-sleeved shirt. *Ukh!* Okay, I guess he’s a pretty nice guy even if he does dress like a dork. But the important thing is, at this particular time, that he’s there, right *there!* And even if for the moment he looks like he’s all engrossed in his work, all he’d have to do is glance over his shoulder, and…

*Okay, Michelle.* This voice inside me’s screaming. *When’re you going to stop this endless stream of crap?* Pete’s going to be back up here any minute and you’re just totally wasting time. The chances are zilch that Ken’s going to look through that window, and you know it. And besides, what’s the big deal if he does? Hey, it’s casual Friday! Well, isn’t it? He must already know the deal. He’s gotta. Time to quit futzing around.

I know that’s right, at least the part about futzing. Time to get a move. So I take a deep breath, let it out slowly, then with one more I’m like: “Okay. Here goes.”

And before I can start myself thinking again, I reach to the hem of my shirt. As the pale blue material comes up over my head I can feel that it’s mussing my hair. But then as the t-shirt slips past my eyes, I’m like.. *wow*! It’s me! Right there! Pete has this mirror propped in his bookshelf, and my yellow bra really looks bright. The thin lacey ‘D’ cups are filled out all firmly and this swath of bare skin glows below. “Now that’s a midriff!” I think to myself, admiring the round of my tummy. I can’t help but smile and strike a small pose, the back of my hand by my ear. *Nice.*

So where do I put down the shirt? Hmm. I look all around, and notice Pete’s coat rack, but all of the hooks have been taken. So I drape the blue t-shirt on top of a raincoat and reach down to undo my pants. I fumble a little with my white leather belt. Nervous I guess, but I manage. And next thing I know (I’m really not thinking), my blue jeans are down at the floor. I step out of the pant legs, one then the other, slipping my flip-flops away. The soles of my feet must be damp ‘cause they’re sticky, pressed on the smooth hardwood floor, “No flip-flops on Friday!” sings through my mind. Yeah, Pete was sure right about that!

I hang up my blue jeans on top of the t-shirt, while poking the flip-flops aside. Glancing at Ken, who still hasn’t moved yet, I unhook the clasps of my bra. The cups pull away and my breasts fall out freely. I let the bra slide down my arms.

No stopping now. My thumbs pushing outwards, the thong crotch peels coolly away. I sense that it’s moist when it touches my skin as it slips down my legs to the floor. I flick up the thong with the point of my toe. And o-o-oh! As my thigh pulls away, my pussy folds swell from their warm little hideout as air hits my groin with a ping.

I hang up the thong with the crotch panel out so the wet part’s away from my clothes. Finally nude from my top to my toes, Gal Friday is ready for work.

So-o-o. What next? I look up toward Ken, still hunched at his desk, and seeing him gives me a giggle. Here I am naked, a few steps away, and the poor guy is totally clueless. I maybe should knock and wave through the window? I can picture the look on his face. But then I decide that it might not be smart to. Better just wait here for Pete.

I start looking around, hands at my shoulders, partially covering my front. But that doesn’t seem right, so I move my arms downwards, holding them loose at my sides. Spotting Pete’s desk chair, empty and waiting, it hits me like, yeah, why not sit! Right in the same chair where Pete sat last Friday when I came to apply for the job. I circle the desk, sauntering slowly. The wood floor feels smooth on bare feet. I settle my weight and the chair makes a squeak. Oops! I glance through the window at Ken. But he hasn’t moved so I settle back down; the cool leather back makes me shiver. “Neat and businesslike,” I hear myself say in the deepest low voice I can manage. “Here at the office, we must dress neat and businesslike.” Oh Pete, you are such an old prude. Hah!

But sitting here now, where Pete sat last Friday, all that I’m feeling is hot. I lean the chair way back, then forward again. Then rock back as far as I can. My feet leave the floor and I stretch my legs outward, my toes on the edge of Pete’s desk. With the ends of my tiptoes I straighten his blotter, so it’s all “neat and businesslike” there. I pull up my knees and watch my nails glisten as I point with my toes in the air. I’m feeling so sexy. I’m feeling so sassy. And down there I’m feeling so wet.

*Wet!* Fear rivets my body, both feet smack the floor, and I’m out of the chair in a bolt. Pete’s fine leather chair, I check it for drippage, and thanking my stars I see none. But I decide that it’s better to stand.

I walk back around to the front of the desk. It’s covered with papers and junk. There is the calendar Pete showed me earlier. It’s lying there right on the top. It’s still opened up and it’s showing November. I check out the box for today. And what do you know, for November’s first Friday a smiley-face grins from the page. *Ve-e-ry interesting*. So okay, I’m thinking, now it’s for certain. I’m clearly supposed to be naked. If ever there was any doubt in my mind, that smiley-face clinched it for sure. I let a slight sigh as I put back the calendar, and then: “I still had some doubts?” *Geez, Michelle! You’re standing here naked but still weren’t entirely sure?*

Looking around I notice Pete’s coat rack. My stuff is of course still on top. The bright lacey bra cups kind of stand out against the light blue of my jeans. My personal view is it looks pretty rockin’, but I’m guessing Pete might disagree. Intimate underthings aren’t really “businesslike,” at least not the business done here. So I go to the coat rack to switch stuff around so my underwear won’t be on top. As I drape Pete’s new raincoat over my thong crotch, I’m thinking he’ll like this much better.

Before I can finish admiring my work, I hear Pete’s voice out on the stairs. Quickly I move so I’m more toward the middle and turn so I’m facing the door. I stand on my left foot, hands on my hips with my right foot a little bit forward. I lift up my heel to make a nice arch, and swivel my knee slightly out. A wisp of cool air sends up a shiver when my sticky moist thighs pop apart. I brace myself smiling for what I expect to be at least a minor surprise.

Out through the door I can already see Pete when he gets to the second-floor landing. He’s looking at papers he’s got on a clipboard. “Say. Michelle,” he says as he walks. “Sorry ‘bout that, but something came up and the boys in the shop couldn’t wait. A couple of deliveries were promised from yesterday and the papers got misplaced in the …”

Pete glances up and suddenly sees me. He breaks off his words at mid-phrase. And I’m telling you honestly, the guy looks exactly like he’s just gotten whacked with a pan.

“Holy shi-moly!” he finally blurts out. “What do you think that you’re doing?”

*Doing?* I wonder. The word comes as a jolt. “I mean, what in the hell does it look like?”

“It looks…” he begins, then he stops for a sec. “It looks like you took off your clothes.”

“Aw, man! Great catch!” I know he’s just kidding. I decide I should play right along. I force out a chuckle, but Pete isn’t smiling. Instead, he just stares straight ahead. It’s the most put-on display of fakey male “eye-contact” I ever have seen in my life. Like he’s freaked out completely that someone might catch him peeking at something he shouldn’t.

And then for a while there’s this big stretch of time when neither of us says or does anything. Me standing naked and him playing boss man, both of us silently glaring. Finally, I think, this is going too far. It’s time for the guy to get real.

“But, Pete,” I begin. “Hey, I know you remember. Don’t try to pretend you ‘forgot’. We said it last week. When I came for my interview. You told me that this was our *deal*.”

“Deal?”

Pete acts all baffled. His eyes become squinty. “What kind of ‘deal’ do you mean?”

Then all of a sudden, way deep inside, I’m getting this queasy sensation. Like maybe this whole thing is starting to look like a seriously major ‘oh-shit.’

I feel myself break out over my body with beadlets of icy cold sweat. This shiver inside me runs up and down. I’m starting to feel kind of sick. Without really thinking I raise up my arms and cup my hands over my breasts. My skin must be glistening. I’m getting these chills, and it sure doesn’t help to be naked.

“Oh come on. Pete. What are you doing? Trying to mess with my mind? You know very well what the deal is I mean. Our deal about casual *Fridays!*”

I open my arms out and try to sound strong, but my voice is now seriously cracking. And these frickin’ tears: *Oh* puh-*leaze! Not tears now!* They push at the sides of my eyes. I try to hold back, but Pete sees them already. And now he looks really confused. Then, all at once this huge sob slips out. Then another, and I’m all “huh-huh-huh.” *Oh why did I have to go shave my vagina!* I’ve never before felt so nude.

“No, really, Michelle.” His voice seems to soften. “What do you think that I said?”

I try hard to smile, but my chin starts to quiver. More sobs are building inside. To hold back the heaving, I’m keeping my breath in, but teardrops now pour down my face. “Oh come on, Pete.” my voice shaking wildly. “You’ve *got* to remember our deal. You said it’s ‘intriguing.’ The reason you hired me. Because of our deal for today?” I stop for a moment. He looks truly puzzled. Maybe he’s really forgot?

“You said that our deal… that on casual Fridays… I shouldn’t wear clothing at all?”

“Oh?” His brows jump. Again he looks doubtful. “You’re sure that I really said that?”

Then he’s just silent, like he’s thinking real hard. I feel myself shiver inside. I curl my toes under; my knees want to crumble. I just don’t know what more to do.

Pete glances down, starts shaking his head and gets his peculiar half-smile. I’m biting my lip as his eyes turn real sad, “Okay, I guess I remember.” He then softly adds, his voice very small: “Oh sweetie, but that was a joke.”