**The Secretary**

by Arthur Saxon
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The telephone rang. Muttering curses, I continued typing feverishly with my left hand while my right fumbled for the phone. I pulled it to my ear and said "Hello?"

*"Hello Mr Smallwood, it's Janet from reception. I have a young lady here for an interview...?"*

"Ah yes," I said. "Thanks - send her down."

I put the phone down and sighed. My workload had increased dramatically over the last few months, and I desperately needed somebody to do some of my typing and filing for me. My superior, Henry, had finally managed to get my request for a secretary approved, and so far I had conducted two interviews. The employment agency had not exactly bowled me over with their selection, but I rather liked the second candidate - a well-spoken middle-aged woman named Marie with a typing speed of more than sixty words per minute. Not that I needed a particularly fast typist, but it was impressive nonetheless. I had almost made up my mind that she would be my choice, but there was still one candidate to see.

A few minutes later there was a knock on my door. "Come in," I said.

The woman who entered was young, blonde, quite attractive, and rather nervous-looking. She was obviously a novice when it came to job interviews - her skirt was too short to appear professional, and she was wearing a t-shirt of all things! I arched an eyebrow slightly, but invited her to sit down. When she did so, on a chair two feet beyond the front of my desk, I caught a glimpse of her white panties before she crossed her left leg over her right and thus revealed most of the outside of her left thigh. It was very nice to see, but hardly appropriate for an office setting.

"Right ... Jessica," I said, consulting my notes. "What can you tell me about yourself?"

"Um," said Jessica, "well..."

(Great start, I thought to myself wryly. Welcome to the firm, Marie.)

"...I'm twenty years old," continued Jessica, staring somewhere over my left shoulder. I resisted the temptation to glance behind me. "I'm married - two years last Tuesday..." She looked at me then, smiling and blushing. How sweet.

"Congratulations," I said. "I was thinking more of your work experience."

"Oh! Well, I worked as a waitress at an Italian restaurant for a couple of years after I left school..."

"Did you take any A-levels?" I asked.

"No, I left after my GCSEs," she said, then added, "I got six GCSEs."

I nodded. "How did you do in English?"

"English was my best subject," she said proudly. "I got an A in English language and a B in English literature."

"Not bad," I conceded. "How fast can you type?"

"I managed forty words per minute at the agency," she said. "I get a lot of practice with typing, because I like to chat with my friends on the Internet."

An astonishing admission, but at least she could type. I supposed this was why she felt she could be a secretary. "Any experience with office administration?" I asked. "Filing, organising, taking telephone calls, and so on?"

Jessica shook her head. "I think I could do all that though. I mean, filing can't be too hard, can it? And I use the telephone a lot. I think I have a decent telephone manner."

The phone rang. I smiled, somewhat grimly perhaps. "Well let's see you in action," I said. "Why don't you take this call for me?"

"Okay!" she said, uncrossing her legs quickly (giving me another flash of panties) and getting to her feet. She rushed forward to the phone and then stopped. "What's your name again?" she asked me.

"Ben Smallwood," I told her.

She picked up the phone. "Hello this is Mr Smallwood's secretary, can I help you?" she said. After a pause, she said, "and who should I say is calling, please?"

Whom, I mouthed, but she was not looking at me.

Jessica put her hand over the mouthpiece. "It's a Mr Newman, of Clough Designs," she reported in a whisper.

"Tell him I'm in a meeting and will call him back in half an hour," I said.

Jessica removed her hand and said, "I'm sorry, Mr Smallwood's in a meeting at the moment. He'll call you back in half an hour, is that okay?" Another pause, then "Okay, bye then." She put the phone down.

"Thank you Jessica, that was fine," I said. And I meant it - I was grudgingly impressed. Her tone had been almost professional.

Jessica smiled happily and sat down again. Once more the panties made an appearance. This time she may have caught me glancing at them, because she pulled the hem of her skirt down a bit as she crossed her legs.

"Okay," I said. "Well I think that's it. Thank you for your time - the agency will let you know in due course."

Her face grew troubled. "Aren't you going to ask me when I can start?" she asked.

I smiled. "Well, I haven't yet decided which applicant I'd like for the job," I said. "But it's a fair point. When would you be able to start?"

"As soon as you like," she said. "Tomorrow, if you want."

Poor thing, she seemed really desperate for the job. But Marie really was a far better candidate. I sensed this one would be gossiping on the phone half the day, or chatting with her friends on the Internet. "Thank you," I said. "I'll bear that in mind."

She left, and I pondered the three candidates. The first, Helen, had been rather surly and unkempt - a fast typist to be sure, but I knew that I would not get along with her. The second, Marie, was now my favourite choice - pleasant, calm and level-headed. Jessica was simply too young and inexperienced - she would require more coaching than I had time for. Moreover, she did not exactly look the part - I needed a secretary, not a waitress.

That afternoon I called the agency and told them I wanted Marie. They must have passed on the bad news to the unsuccessful applicants quickly, because less than an hour later there was another knock at the door, and I was most surprised to see Jessica enter. She looked upset.

"Please," she said. "Tell me what I did wrong. I was really hoping to get this job - I don't want to be a waitress any more."

"Jessica!" I said with a frown. "You really shouldn't have come back here. I'm sorry, but you can't expect to get every job you apply for. You win some, you lose some. That's the way it goes."

She slumped down in the chair in front of my desk. Decorum forgotten for the moment, she sat with her knees apart and gave me an uninterrupted view of her panties. "I know," she said mournfully, "and I'm sorry for coming back. But there must have been something..."

I shook my head. "You were fine," I assured her. "There was just another candidate that I preferred."

She persisted. "What was better about the other candidate?" she asked. Then she suddenly became aware of her posture and crossed her legs.

I paused, then cleared my throat. "Tell me," I said, "who picked your outfit for the interview?"

Her brow furrowed, then the light dawned. At least I assumed so from her expression, but apparently it was the wrong kind of light. "The other woman had a shorter skirt?" she asked. Then, before I could respond, she added, "I can wear a shorter skirt!"

My jaw dropped. First and foremost, I was astonished that in this day and age anybody could really think that job applicants could be selected on a 'shortest skirt wins' basis. Secondly, I was amazed that Jessica was actually prepared to wear a shorter skirt than this one in order to get the job. Did skirts shorter than this exist?

"Jessica," I said, deciding to avoid the skirt issue. "I really liked your telephone manner and I'm sure you would do a very good job. But the other applicant was a little more experienced with office duties, and I really don't have time to teach you things that a secretary would need to know."

"But that's unfair!" Jessica blurted out. "I can't get secretarial experience unless I get a job as a secretary, but I can't get a job as a secretary unless I have experience?"

"It's an old problem," I said. "You'll find it's the case with most jobs. But I'm sure you'll find something - perhaps a temporary position to begin with, where you can get some experience. Now if you'll excuse me..."

Crestfallen, Jessica got up (more panties) and left the room. I sighed and shook my head, then got back to work and forgot all about it. I wrote a few emails, went to a meeting, ended up working until seven o'clock, and then went home tired and grumpy. My mood worsened considerably when I discovered amongst my mail a letter addressed to my ex-wife. I was tempted to toss it in the bin, but I thought better of it, re-addressed the envelope, and put it beside the front door.

The following morning, after an early meeting at work, I returned to my office to find I had a voicemail message from the employment agency:

*"Hello, this is Sue at Office Bods. I've just had a call from Marie Tanner - she's unfortunately found another position. Could you please give me a call and let me know whether you would like to go with one of the other applicants? Speak to you soon. Bye."*

I cursed and picked up the phone to call Sue. "Hello Sue," I said when she answered. "I just got your message."

*"Yes, I'm sorry Mr Smallwood. I called her yesterday to let her know she'd got the job, but she wasn't there so I left a message. Then I got a call from her this morning to say she'd found something else. What would you like to do?"*

I sighed. I really did not want Helen, but... "Could you call Jessica ... what was her last name?"

*"Sheldon."*

"Right - Jessica Sheldon. Could you call her and ask her back for a second interview?"

*"Certainly. Oh good, she will be pleased."*

"I'm sure she will," I muttered. "See if she can make it here this afternoon at two o'clock. Thanks. Goodbye."

That afternoon, Jessica once again reported to my office. This time she wore a happy smile. "Hello Mr Smallwood," she said.

I had forgotten to ask Sue to advise Jessica to dress more appropriately. However, the girl did in fact look a little smarter. The t-shirt was replaced by a purple blouse that I deemed quite acceptable for an office environment. The skirt, however, was as short as the last one, though a different colour. Overall, the effect was quite striking, and reasonably smart in an Ally McBeal-ish kind of way. Perhaps it would not hurt to have a bit of eye candy in the office. First, though, I had questions.

"Hello Jessica," I said. "Please sit down." Again the panties - pale blue this time, I fancied. "I've asked you back because, to be frank, the other applicant decided she didn't want the job after all." Jessica beamed, and I added hastily, "Now this doesn't mean you've automatically got the job - I'm still considering other applicants. I've asked you back so that I can get to know you better and thus make my decision more informed. Are you familiar with Microsoft Office and Windows 2000?"

"I can use Microsoft Word," said Jessica. "I don't know about Windows 2000 - I've got Windows 98 at home..."

I waved a hand. "Very similar," I said. "Now, a word about your attire..."

She looked down at herself. "Is this better?" she asked. "My husband said a blouse would be better than a t-shirt."

"He was right," I said. "You look much smarter and I approve. The skirt, however..."

"Oh - I still haven't had time to get a shorter skirt, Mr Smallwood," she began in a rush. "I would have got one yesterday only I thought I hadn't got the job."

I found myself feeling a certain sense of curious fascination at this concept. "Is it your impression that secretaries wear very short skirts?" I inquired.

"Well it was my husband's idea, actually," Jessica confessed. "He said I'd be sure to get the job if I wore a short enough skirt."

"I see." I cleared my throat. "Well, perhaps you could type a letter for me and I'll see how good you are with Microsoft Word." I gestured across the room to a desk on which sat a computer that I had booted up before Jessica's arrival. "Take a seat there and we'll begin."

Jessica sat down at the desk and I began to dictate, trying not to be distracted by the girl's crossed thighs. Ten minutes later, I examined her work, and found just two grammatical errors and one typo. "That's pretty good," I said. "Okay Jessica, congratulations - you've got the job."

She jumped up, eyes shining and, to my astonishment, gave me a hug. "Thank you thank you!" she exclaimed. "You won't regret it - I'll be a great secretary!"

I chuckled and eased her away. "I'm sure of it," I said. "Can you start tomorrow?"

She could, and did. The following morning, when I arrived at the office, I found her already sitting at her desk, ready to start. Her PC was on, she had loaded up Microsoft Word, and a new blank document was ready on-screen. Bless her.

She was wearing another blouse - white this time, and a black microskirt that nearly made me choke on the tea I was bringing in with me. Almost all of her right thigh (which was crossed over her left) was revealed as the hem slanted downwards from the top of her thigh to halfway back along her buttock. As I entered she swung around to face me, and I was treated to a fairly large white triangle between her legs below the hem of her skirt.

As I coughed on Earl Grey, she jumped up and ran over to me, reaching up to thump my back (she was quite petite). I thanked her and went to sit down behind my desk. Jessica continued to hover in front of me.

"Okay Jessica," I said. "Perhaps you could start by familiarising yourself with the filing cabinets over there." I gestured. "Each cabinet is labelled to explain what it contains. You'll need to be able to dig out any documents I request, and put them back again in the right places. I think that's the most important thing to begin with. I'll be asking you to prepare reports based on those figures - unfortunately our mainframe only keeps a twelve-month history so for any older data we need to resort to hardcopies."

"Yes Mr Smallwood," she said.

I chuckled. "Call me Ben. Incidentally it was inconsiderate of me to only make tea for myself - would you like tea or coffee?"

"I'll have coffee," she said, "but don't worry - I'll make it. I'll make yours, too, in future - I'm happy for that to be part of my duties."

"This is the twenty-first century, Jessica," I said. "Secretaries these days do not wait on their bosses. We'll share the tea-making."

"Oh but I really don't mind - I'd like to," she said. With that she darted from the room, and I sighed.

Half an hour later, as Jessica was still going through the filing cabinets, my boss walked in. "Hi Ben," he said, looking at Jessica's bottom (I winced - she was going through one of the lowest drawers, and her buttocks and white panties were just peeping beneath the hem of her skirt). Upon hearing the new voice, Jessica quickly straightened up and turned around.

"Henry, this is my new secretary Jessica. Jessica, this is my boss, Henry Benton."

"Pleased to meet you," said Henry, extending his hand.

Jessica smiled at him and shook the proffered hand. "Hi," she said. "Would you like a cup of tea or coffee?"

"Um, sure," said Henry. "Tea, no sugar please."

She smiled and nodded and left the room.

"Wow Ben!" exclaimed Henry. "I can see why you picked her!"

I grimaced. "She wasn't my first choice," I said. "I'm really sorry about the skirt, Henry. It was her idea - she just turned up like that. I'll make sure she doesn't wear it again."

"Are you mad?" said Henry. "Let her wear it if she wants to! What's the matter, you finding it hard to concentrate on your work?"

"I can concentrate perfectly well," I retorted. "I just figured it wasn't appropriate - giving the company a bad image, you know."

Henry laughed. "Ben, who are you trying to impress? The only visits you get are from Peter Pomfrey of Clough Designs, and I'll bet you anything he'd be pleased as punch to meet Jessica."

"Stan Newman sometimes comes too," I said, before meeting Henry's eye. "All right I take your point. But Henry, people will talk - you know what they're like. It'll only take a couple of the girls from Finance to see Jessica dressed like this, and the gossip will be the death of me."

"Nonsense," replied Henry firmly. "You've hardly got a marriage to ruin, now have you?"

"Hey!" I protested sharply. "Uncalled-for!"

"I'm sorry." Henry was instantly contrite. "But seriously, unless you give them something more substantial to gossip about, tales of miniskirts are only going to last so long."

"I suppose you're right," I said. "But still..."

"Besides," said Henry, "you've hired her now. Is it really your place to dictate your secretary's manner of dress?"

I opened my mouth, and then shut it again. Henry had a point. The company had no official dress code - it was understood rather than explicit. Did I really have a right to tell Jessica what she could and could not wear?

Jessica returned, then, with Henry's tea, and then she resumed her inspection of the filing cabinets while Henry and I went over the Wechter report. The sight of Jessica bending over low drawers was, indeed, rather distracting, and I was quite relieved when she finally went to sit down at her desk. Even then, it was hard not to notice that the back of her microskirt was barely tucked beneath her buttocks. Why did she not pull it down a little?!

Once Henry had gone, I asked Jessica if she felt comfortable with the filing system. She swung around to face me, and I blinked at the sight of her panties, just visible as a tiny white triangle even though her legs were crossed. That skirt had really climbed!

"It seems pretty straightforward," said Jessica. "What would you like me to do now?"

"I'd like you to update a spreadsheet for me," I said. Then I paused. "Have you used Microsoft Excel before?"

Jessica shook her head.

"Hmm," I said. "I'll have to show you. It's really not that hard." I got up and went over to her desk. She was wearing perfume and it smelled very pleasant. I glanced down and started as I realised I could see down the inside of her blouse, the top three buttons of which were undone. I wrested my eyes back to her screen and began instructing her how to use Excel. Ten minutes later, I had her inputting figures by herself, and I left her to it.

By the end of the day she had done some good work, and I was pleased with her progress. She was obviously very keen to learn, and was making a real effort. I found myself actually glad that Marie had turned the job down.

The following day, Jessica turned up in another microskirt, just as short as the previous one. I resolved not to comment, but as it happened, in the middle of the morning she herself decided to elicit my opinion.

"How's my skirt?" she asked, almost anxiously, while standing in front of my desk. "Is it okay? After what you said the other day, I was keen to get it right. Will this do?"

I chuckled and smiled at her. "Yes, it will do," I said. "But don't feel you always have to come to work in a skirt of that length - I'm really not as fussy about the issue as you seem to think."

"Oh ... okay," she said. Then, "Would you like a cup of tea?"

"Mm, yes please," I replied. "But I'm making the next one, okay?"

For the rest of the day Jessica worked industriously, and I actually managed to clear some of my backlog. As she was packing up to go home at five o'clock, I decided I ought to express my appreciation.

"I'm very glad I gave you this job, Jessica - you've greatly exceeded my expectations. Thank you for all of your hard work."

Jessica glowed. "Thank you, Ben," she said. "I've enjoyed it."

I wished her a good weekend, and then she left. I finished off some emails, and then left myself - at twenty past five! I could not remember the last time I had left that early.

The weekend passed quickly, and soon enough it was Monday morning. When I arrived at work Jessica met me with a cup of tea. I took it and smiled at her. "Good morning," I said.

"Morning!" she said brightly, before turning and taking her place at her desk. I was glad to see that she was wearing a longer skirt today - it was the one she had worn to her first interview.

As the day wore on, however, I realised to my surprise that I was missing the sight of Jessica's half-revealed bottom as she sat at her desk with her legs crossed. I put the thought from my mind and attacked my workload with vigour. By four o'clock, I had accomplished pretty much all that needed to be done for the time being, so I put my hands behind my head and had a stretch.

"How are you getting on?" I asked Jessica.

"I've almost finished this spreadsheet," she replied. "I think it could do with another column showing the difference between the original cost estimate and the final cost - what do you think?"

I was taken aback. "Well, it's easy enough to see, but ... sure! That's a good idea. In order to add a column, you just..."

"I know how to do it," she said with a quick grin. "I've been exploring menu options."

I chuckled and shook my head. "You're full of surprises, Jessica," I said. "But don't work too hard or there will be nothing left to do!" She looked a little dismayed, so I added, "Don't worry - there's always more to do. But it wouldn't hurt to take a break."

"Okay. Shall I make us another brew?"

I shook my head. "Not for me, thanks. I thought we might just chat for a bit. Tell me, how are you liking the job?"

"It's great!" she replied, with real enthusiasm. "I'm learning so much, and it's not as hard as I would have thought."

"Well you're certainly coming along in leaps and bounds," I said. "Listen - tomorrow I thought we might try you on PowerPoint. I've got a meeting in London next week and I need to put together a presentation for the bigwigs. It would be nice if you could have a go at that. I'll give you all the text to put in it - all you'll need to do is arrange it in the form of a slide show."

"Okay," said Jessica. "Sounds fun!"

For the next twenty minutes we did nothing constructive, and simply chatted about nothing in particular. She was delightful company, with a pretty laugh that I loved to hear. Eventually I reluctantly got back to my work - I had a few new emails that needed my attention - and at five o'clock we went our separate ways.

The next day, Jessica was wearing another microskirt, and I could not help feeling secretly pleased. The frequent flashes of panties, along with her engaging personality, made Jessica an entertaining person to be around.

I showed her how to use PowerPoint, and by the end of the day she had produced a couple of slides of her own which employed several of the techniques I had taught her, as well as one or two that she had discovered for herself.

On Wednesday Jessica was wearing a longer skirt - the one from her second interview, in fact - and as I idly watched her sitting at her desk, it occurred to me that I no longer considered it too short, as I had done the first time I had seen it. On Jessica it just looked, well, normal.

A few minutes after midday, as Jessica sat munching her sandwiches, she said to me suddenly, "Ben?"

"Yes?" I responded, looking up from my computer.

"Do you prefer this length of skirt, or the length of the one I was wearing yesterday?"

I shrugged. "It doesn't matter what I prefer," I said. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh, no reason," she said, then added impishly, "I like to keep the boss happy though."

I smiled at this. "Have no fear on that score," I said. "You've been keeping me more than happy - you've done stellar work."

"Thank you," she said, "but I meant with my appearance."

"You look," I replied, "fabulous. But I'm sure you don't need me to tell you that."

Jessica smiled happily. "Thank you!" she said. "But which length of skirt do you prefer?"

"Variety," I said, "is the spice of life. I think you look wonderful in miniskirts, but I'm quite happy for you to mix it up a little."

She seemed satisfied with that response, and dropped the subject, much to my relief. If I had to be honest with myself, I actually preferred the microskirts, but I would never admit that to Jessica. I was her boss, and it would be entirely inappropriate to let her know I was attracted to her. Besides, she was married - it simply would not do at all.

Later that day, we had another little chat, during which Jessica rather distractingly sat facing me with her knees slightly apart. It was very hard to keep my eyes away from her panties, but she did not seem to notice my occasional downward glances. I would have asked her to close her legs, but I did not want to draw attention to the fact that I could see up her skirt.

How many times, I wondered, had I seen Jessica's panties? Thirty? Forty? It certainly seemed like it. The girl never wore tights and she always wore pale-coloured panties, so it was hard to miss that pale triangle whenever she turned to face me.

On Thursday she was wearing a new skirt - new to me at any rate. This one was the shortest yet, and barely covered her buttocks at the back when she was standing straight. I refrained from comment, but the sight of Jessica sitting at her desk with her thigh revealed all the way up to the hip was quite breathtaking.

Then came the turning point in our relationship. Jessica looked up at me suddenly as I was gazing at her legs, and said, "Ben, do you need me to get any files?"

"Hmm?" I asked.

"Something from a bottom drawer?" she asked. "An invoice from Whitefield Consultants, perhaps? Or a purchase order requisition form?"

I realised at once what she was doing, and my mouth went dry. Eventually I managed, "Actually I could do with a requisition form."

She smiled and nodded, and got to her feet, pulling her skirt down as far as it would go (which was not far). Then she walked over to the first filing cabinet and deliberately bent down without bending her legs in order to open the bottom drawer. First the lower curves of her buttocks peeped into view below the steadily rising hemline, then, as more and more of her bottom came into view and her white gusset winked at me from the gap between her buttocks and her thighs, it became apparent that she was wearing a thong.

It seemed to take Jessica ages to find a requisition form. While she was searching for it, she shifted her weight back and forth from one foot to the other, causing her buttocks to wiggle deliciously and her gusset to shift and contort. With each movement, her skirt also shifted, riding higher and higher to reveal more of her bottom. By the time she straightened up and turned around, with an air of apparent unconcern, I was as hard as a rock and beginning to perspire. Her skirt had by now climbed so high that an inch of her thong was visible from the front.

Casually she approached my desk and handed me the form. I took it and thanked her with a slight tremor in my voice. Then, looking down at herself, Jessica gasped. "Oh dear!" she exclaimed. "My skirt seems to have ridden up. Shall I pull it back down?"

My voice came perilously close to squeaking as I said, "No, that's all right."

Jessica smiled. "Okay then," she said. "Is there anything else you would like me to do?"

Two minutes later she was naked and I was fucking her on my desk. I was so intoxicated with lust that I did not even care if somebody walked in. Fortunately nobody did, and Jessica stayed pretty quiet, except that she made these little high moaning sounds that always drove me nuts. Afterwards, as we cleaned up with the help of a couple of tissues, I said, "That was … brilliant."

Jessica grinned. "Best role-play yet?"

I nodded fervently. "Almost makes me want to marry you again," I said.

THE END