

He's Her Girl

Part 2



Lady Claire Stafford

A "Spectrum" Novel

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He's Her Girl 2

By Lady Claire Stafford

"Rachael 'N' Roll"

We had been practicing for about two months, the five of us; Donna on rhythm guitar, me (Dianna) on bass, Christine on drums, Jenny on lead guitar and vocals, and Irene on vocals and percussion. We had developed a nice mixture of rock 'n roll, ballads, and the occasional heavy metal, but not too much!

Our trademark had become the harmonies, usually led by Donna. She had an amazing voice, sort of husky with a trace of Whitney Houston.

To be honest, we were getting a bit fed up with Donna. She was turning into a real pain. She kept missing rehearsals. As it turned out, there was a special man she didn't want us to meet. By the sound of things, he had a lot;

Money, a rich family overseas, but we didn't know where.

We practiced in Dave's cellar. Well, it wasn't really his, he just rented the place. He was keen on our music and enjoyed our company. While we played, he just sat in his corner, smoked his cigarettes and sipped his beer. Dave was a bit of a mascot for us. He helped with our music when we got stuck, couldn't find a chord that would fit, or whatever. He knew so much about music, especially guitar, and had played in various bands, that, for the usual reasons, didn't get anywhere.

Anyway, to be brief, what he didn't know about groups wasn't worth knowing. Often, he would sit in and jam with us. Funnily enough, when he joined in, we all tried harder. I think we did some of our best stuff in that basement.

And, on those occasions when Donna turned up and she took off with that voice of hers, we all felt so good and uplifted.

We were all excited when we got a gig at the club in the City Center, a place called "SWAG." One of the premiere clubs, they always got the best bands playing. I admit that we were only third string, but even The Beatles started somewhere. We practiced harder than ever and even Donna turned up more often. And when we finished our set, the crowd cheered and thumped the tables.

We were thrilled.

The manager came round and congratulated us. He asked us back the following week.

These occasional gigs went off well. After a month or two, we were invited to be the resident band, which meant that whenever there wasn't anybody else in town, we headlined Wednesdays and Thursdays. Friday and Saturday there was always some "name"

band playing, but we supported them and got some good exposure to a bigger audience.

One night, we were sitting around having a drink during a break and Donna was on the phone with her man. Chrissie was in a deep conversation with Irene, the way drummers and bass players gravitate together. I was having a smoke with Dave, who'd come along to see how we were doing. He helped us with our gear, in fact. I think we were going to ask him to be our "roadie." Donna came back from her phone call all quiet and pensive. She wouldn't tell us what was wrong. We finished the gig without any problems, but we didn't have the fire we'd had on other occasions.

As it turned out, this was a turning point in all our careers although we didn't realize it at the time.

The following afternoon, we were all sitting around Dave's table. He was strumming an acoustic guitar, showing me a chord progression that I could work a bass run in with.

Then something funny happened.

He was playing an old Beatles song that we did, a ballad called "Michelle." We sat and listened and Chrissie leaned over to me. "It's a pity that we're an all-girl band, you know."

I knew what she meant, Dave was so good.

Jenny started to sing the song, I joined in and we started to harmonize together. Then, all of a sudden, Donna's voice came in. She hadn't been there before and I thought she'd arrived and quietly joined in. I had been sitting with my back to everyone and looked around to see where she was.

I saw the rest of the girls watching Dave.

It took me a couple of seconds to realize that Donna wasn't even there. It was Dave! We all stared at him. His eyes were closed and he hadn't realized that we had stopped singing. When he opened his eyes, he saw us all staring at him and he stopped.

With a, "Sorry," he got up, placed the guitar on the floor, and headed into the kitchen to get a beer.

No one moved, then we all started to talk at once.

"Did you hear that voice?"

"I was here, wasn't I?"

It was fantastic how he had sounded like Donna. I followed him into the kitchen where he stood in the corner sipping at a beer. He looked sheepish and started to apologize.

"Sorry about that. I just got carried away."

"Hey," I said, "don't apologize! I didn't know you could sing like that!"

"It's nothing. I used to be in a choir and I found I could stretch or shrink my larynx and vocal chords to a broad range." He was a bit embarrassed at being the center of attention. He didn't understand that we were very impressed.

"When was this?" I asked, trying to put him at ease.

"In high school."

I went back to the rest of the girls and told them all about it. They were still impressed.

Chrissie had an idea. “Hey, don’t tell Donna!”

We all looked at her.

“Why not?” Irene asked.

“Simple,” she grinned, “when Donna doesn’t turn up at practices, we’ll use Dave instead. Admit it, she does think she’s indispensable sometimes.”

So, we did just that.

We went on for another month, playing at “SWAG,” practicing with Dave standing in for Donna when she didn’t turn up. We even stopped telling her off for missing practice which, I think, surprised her a bit, but she wouldn’t admit to it.

But, that idea backfired in a very strange way.

CHAPTER II

One night, a recording engineer turned up at “SWAG.” He was setting up for a live simulcast for the lead band and he’d arrived early to check out the acoustics. Anyway, we were running through our set when he came over and asked if we had ever cut a demo tape. Of course we hadn’t and we told him so. He gave us his card and advised us to come to the recording studio and make an appointment for the next week.

Well, talk about getting excited, we were all over the moon at the idea. This could be the big chance.

Dave was excited too. “Will you still speak to me when you’re famous?”

I thumped him.

“We’ll employ you as our roadie!” I screamed with glee.

We all laughed.

The demo was great. Donna really soared with her voice. Irene, Jenny and I warbled round her. We really enjoyed ourselves. It took about eighteen takes, I think, but Gloria, the producer, was satisfied.

She decided to take it to a major record producer and three weeks later, we were informed that we had a contract.

We partied.

Gloria was there too. We all sat around in the basement, playing, sipping a beer or three and generally enjoying ourselves. Dave joined in, but we told him not to sing while Donna was there.

But she left early anyway and soon Dave was warbling away with us. Gloria was impressed by his voice and suggested that if Donna ever got sick, Dave should stand in.

Dave blushed at this and we all laughed at him, giving him a cuddle so he’d know we were only joking.

CHAPTER III

Two days before we were to sign the contracts and do our first gig as the headline band on a weekend, Donna dropped her bombshell on us. She was leaving!

Those phone calls; that night when she wouldn’t talk to anyone, all added up. Her man was going back

to Europe and he'd asked her to go with him as his wife.

We just sat there, stunned.

Then, I realized that we were being rude. I went over to her and gave her a kiss.

We all did. We relaxed enough to wish her the best.

She said she thought it was for the best anyway. She reckoned that we'd noticed that we didn't seem to need her as much as before!

I realized this was in retaliation for our using her substitute. This had tipped the scales in her decision. If we had needed her a lot, she wouldn't have considered it, knowing how important the band was to us all.

Irene uttered the thought that had slipped to the backs of our minds, "The contract!"

We were an all-girl band and it was for five people. Now we were four. The recording people would have to reconsider.

Donna muttered her apologies, but we understood. We really did.

I mean, we had to, didn't we?

After she left (she said she had a lot of packing to do), we discussed our future. We'd been sitting around for an hour trying to decide what to do when Jenny suggested that we should call Gloria. She came round straight away.

She was less than impressed with Donna's decision.

“Look, girls; it’s like this, you’re a great band, but without Donna’s harmonies, you’re just another great among so many. All together, you were sensational, but without that extra voice...” she let the thought trail off. “Look, I’ve got some contacts, I’ll see what I can do, but it’s going to be difficult to keep the company interested.”

We heard Donna’s voice.

“I thought she’d gone?” Gloria asked.

Jenny came back into the kitchen. She’d gone into the other room to tell Dave what had happened. He’d been playing his guitar and had just started singing. She hadn’t the heart to stop him.

We all sat down again, except for Gloria. She went into the other room, and five minutes later, she was back with a gleam in her eye.

“Look, girls, I’ve got an idea!” She was really excited. “But, I’ll need your help. I’ve got another singer for you!”

We all stared blankly at her. Who? And this quickly?

I admit to being a little slow a lot of the time, but Irene picked up on the idea immediately.

“But the contract is for an all-girl band! How will they feel about a male?”

Gloria smirked. “We won’t tell them!”

Jenny asked the obvious question, obvious to everyone else that is. I was still lost!

“Won’t they notice when we sign the contracts?”

Gloria spun around.

“Not by the time we’ve finished with him!” she grabbed her bag. “I’ll ring them first thing in the morning and put them off until next week. I think I can hold them off till Monday. That’ll give you eight days to get him ready!”

It was no good.

“Eight days to do what?” I asked in exasperation.

Jenny and Irene turned in unison, “Turn Dave into the fifth girl!”

I sat down, stunned. Dave was still in the next room. I didn’t know what Gloria had said to him, but I was sure he wouldn’t do anything like this. Eventually, he walked in and grabbed a beer.

I looked at him.

With the beer in one hand and a cigarette in the other; three-day beard stubble; his hair a bit... well, tatty, his old jeans were threadbare and his T-shirt had definitely seen better days, and Gloria wanted us to turn that into...

Gloria must be crazy!

Now, don’t get me wrong. We were all fond of Dave, and under other circumstances, would have been pleased to work with him. But... Jenny and Irene drew him over to the couch and sat him down. Chris-sie sat behind him, ready to support him if he should decide to faint.

It took some talking... it took a *lot* of talking!

The sun eventually came up when we'd finished. I think that Dave eventually gave in out of sheer exhaustion.

Then, they started on me.

I was still unconvinced.

But we decided to try it.

CHAPTER IV

We actually divided the labor up among us.

Irene and I would attend to the outer image, clothing. The easy bit?

Chrissie and Jenny would look after the rest.

I figured that they would be better in that area, it being so personal and all. Actually, I was just glad of an excuse for someone else to handle that.

Irene and I went through our wardrobes getting out some suitable stuff. Luckily, Dave wasn't very tall, just five feet three inches, but I wondered about his waistline though. There were a lot of years of smoking and beer drinking under that belt!

We returned to Dave's place a couple of hours later. Chrissie and Jenny were expecting us. We sat at the coffee table and sipped some freshly brewed coffee.

"Where's Dave?" I asked, looking round.

"Don't tell me that he's chickened out?"

Jenny looked at Chrissie. “Go on, tell them.” She had a somber look on her face.

I was getting worked up.

“Will someone please tell me what’s going on, where’s Dave?” I heard the door open behind me, the bathroom door.

Chrissie smiled at me.

“Dave’s gone. Meet Rachael.” I saw Irene’s face, an expression of admiration on it. I turned around to see who was standing there. It took me a couple of seconds.

I have to repeat, I always was a bit slow.

His hair was washed and permed. The beard stubble was gone. In fact, all the hair was gone! His arms, his legs, under his arms, his chest... I looked at his chest, what I could see of it. There was a cleavage showing under the top of the camisole he was wearing. Apart from the camisole he had a wrap belonging to Chrissie.

She skipped over to him.

“Doesn’t he look gorgeous?”

Irene and I sat there, looking like a couple of stunned mullets.

“Well, come on! Say something!”

They gave us some dirty looks.

“Dave has gone to an awful lot of trouble, and the least you can do is say how nice he looks!”

I just babbled something to that effect and Irene smiled at me.

“It’s all right, Dave, Dianne always has trouble finding first gear when her brain’s in neutral! You look great!” She went over and gave him a cuddle.

“That’s not all though.” Chrissie nudged him. “Go on, Dave, say something.”

“Hi, Dianne, I hope your coffee’s all right?” I heard it, but I didn’t believe it! He had Donna’s speaking voice down pat! I had known he could sing in her voice, but to speak it as well?

“How... where... when?” I could hear my voice trail off and they all laughed at me, my mouth hanging open in the breeze.

“We suggested he try it while we waited for the nail polish to dry,” Chrissie gave him another affectionate hug. “Isn’t he great?”

Dave

When Gloria asked me about this, it was with a mixture of fear and relief. You see, ever since I was a kid, I’d been dressing in girls’ clothes. I don’t know the reasons behind my dressing. I never tried to figure it out too much, except that I just knew that I enjoyed dressing like a girl.

My earliest memories involved me wearing dresses, skirts and blouses; hand-me-downs from my older sister.

The really odd thing about this was that my sister seemed to start this desire in me, although I believe no one really knows how these things originate in anyone. She used to dress me up, I suppose, as a doll

at first, just a joke, something to do when there was nothing else. But later on, as we got older, we still kept it up. She realized that I relished every single occasion. The last time we did it together was at the high school “deb ball.”

She got me all rigged out in a long, white dress, did my hair and makeup, even got a corsage for me.

The dress was a very tight-fitting one as far as the bodice was concerned. I had to use an even tighter corset to ensure that my waist was slim enough! The skirts flared out from the waist to the ground and were held away from my nyloned legs by a couple of layers of satin and lace petticoats. My satin dancing slippers had three-inch heels and I felt wonderful!

At this same time, I was also getting deeper and deeper into my music. I had always had a good ear for music and taking up the guitar from an early age was considered a really cool thing at the time. But, although I had a yearning to play in a rock group, play the *stud*, as it were, with the guitar waving around and blasting off with some ear blasting riffs, I still felt a pressing need to seek out the softer side of my nature.

The strain was so much that eventually I turned to drugs and drink and whatever else was handy. I found this dulled the pain for awhile, but only just.

The need was still there. I just suppressed it some more.

Dianne

After I had settled down, we rang Gloria. By the time she got there, we had put Dave into a pair of baggy jeans and a lace top. Chrissie had done a brilliant job on his makeup, subtle but with enough

mascara, liner and shadow to make his eyes look vibrant.

Gloria bustled in. We didn't tell her what we'd done, just saying that we'd got a new girl and had Gloria found any luck with her contacts?

She just shook her head and said, "Hello," to Rachael, then slumped in a chair.

"Oh, well, she moaned, "I guess that's that. Pity, you had a good chance!"

"Wait a minute, Gloria," Jenny piped up, "wait until you hear us now."

Gloria raised an eyebrow. "Are you kidding?"

"Just listen," I pleaded.

So, Gloria kept quiet for the next fifteen minutes. Dave took my guitar and I took over rhythm using his old Gibson. We started with "Nowhere Man." Gloria's face was a picture. We kept it simple until about half-way through the song. Then Dave took on a blistering lead break, after which he started to sing over our harmonies. Gloria screamed and ran out to her car, returning with her portable phone. I thought she slept with the damned thing!

She rushed back in. "I've got you a gig for tomorrow night."

I turned to Dave and he looked frightened.

Gloria reassured him.

"Don't worry about a thing, my dear, you'll be sensational!" She looked around. "Where's Dave? You'll need someone to set up."



It was then that I realized that Gloria hadn't recognized Dave.

We all laughed out loud.

Gloria looked surprised. "All right, what's the big joke?"

We all stood around Dave. "Gloria, you're going to be our manager, aren't you?"

She nodded at me.

"Well, I guess you'd better know then, this is Dave."

Gloria must have looked, at that moment, how I'd looked when I saw Dave for the first time as Rachael. She sat down hard.

"I don't believe it! Say something!"

Of course, smart-ass Dave had to reply in his girl's voice, saying, "Something."

Which only confused her.

I nudged him in the ribs.

"Say something in your normal voice."

He obliged, saying, "something" in his Dave voice.

Gloria screamed again.

"This is sensational, wonderful, terrific, fantastic, abso-fucking-lutely the best ever! We're gonna kill them birds! Tomorrow's gonna be the start of a whole new era!"

Dave still looked a bit worried and we all reassured him.

“You’ll fool everyone!” we chorused.

Dave

The girls were concerned about my shyness at wearing the girls’ clothing. I was actually attending to a double bluff at the time. I had to pretend reluctance and contain my excitement at the same time.

I have to admit that I had encouraged the girls using my basement because I had wanted to be around girls, and I had figured this would be the “safest” method...

When the three of them eventually “persuaded” me to give it a try, I had almost cheered.

The details were pretty simple, although it had been a long time since I had last done this. I shaved every extra bit of hair off my body; extra, that is, for a girl. My hair was pretty long. It just hadn’t seen a hairdresser for ages. The girls attended to that. Jenny was a part-time when she wasn’t playing with the band. She trimmed it into an ultra long bob style and then permed it into a mass of curls. It looked incredible!

The makeup was a bit theatrical as well, heavy on the liner and mascara with an equally over-balanced amount of eye shadow. The girls were excited but not as much as I was! The lipstick complemented the nail polish, earth tones for the blusher and shading finished the lot off.

Then, the painful part. They had a camisole. The idea was to show a bit of cleavage, except I didn’t have any!

Then, as they were trying the bra on me, I “accidentally” pushed some flesh up and they immediately got the idea. The sticking plaster cost me a fair amount of flesh over the next few weeks. Eventually we got something that didn’t hurt as much, but that was later on.

In the meantime, I had to be presented to the rest of the band. All they had for me so far was the camisole, a bra and some panties. I went off to the bathroom and Chrissie gave me a wrap to wear. They all thought I was feeling shy, but to tell the truth, I wanted to see my reflection again.

Remember, I hadn’t seem this image for quite a few years!

Dianne and Irene brought some clothes for me to try on. To spare my “embarrassment,” they had kept to everyday things that most girls wear; jeans and shirts and loafers.

I was a bit disappointed. Well, I could have worn my own old clothes and looked the same!

But, I saw the logic in it. For me to “pass,” I had to wear what the rest of the girls were wearing. So, my first dressing in some years involved a pair of jeans and a feminine T-shirt over a camisole, panties and a bra.

Ugh!

Dianne

Dave fooled everybody that night, and for every other night we played together!

The gig was a sell-out.