

# Top Model



**Gladys Fernandez**

A "New Woman" Novel

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

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# TOP MODEL

**By Gladys Fernandez**

## **Chapter I: FIRED**

I was depressed when I left my little office in Modern Building, Inc., carrying a box with all my properties.

I just had been fired and the sense of defeat was overwhelming. It was true, my job was not the best in the world of architecture, but I had been working there for the last three years and I did not have any other opening I could think of in the near future.

My wife Hedy had our car as usual during my working hours so I walked slowly to the nearest bus stop to go home.

During the trip I wondered how I was going to break the news to Hedy; not that she will regret my being unemployed since she always thought it was silly to reduce our income to my limited earnings as a draftsman when she could make much more money as a fashion designer. I was trying to find the right way to tell her the news because I knew she would

demand again that I should fulfill the agreement we made when we got married two years ago.

I believe it was a foolish thing to accept that agreement, but we were newlywed, I was in love and I thought I would always work in the Company and soon I would get a promotion to an executive position.

Nothing of this proved true and now I was jobless and on the verge of being forced to accept Hedy's terms.

I guess by now you must be curious to know what this agreement is I object to so much.

It goes like this:

Once we were married and back from our honeymoon, we discussed the financial aspects of our marriage. Hedy had a good income and a considerable bank account, but I refused to use any of her money to support our home expenses. I was old fashion about it and believed the man should provide for the household expenses completely. She wanted to keep on working as a designer for Karla Klein Fashions, a new and successful enterprise she had organized in partnership with Jean Paul Monet, a young and handsome French businessman.

I was jealous of him and I didn't want Hedy to be around him all day long, so I opposed blindly to her keeping the job.

We argued about it for a long time and sometimes the discussion got bitter. Finally, we came to an agreement: she would quit working but keep the partnership. The money she earned this way would go to her bank account and I would assume full responsibility to support the house expenses. She would take a role as a full-time housewife. However, if any time in the future I was unable to support our home for more than a month we would exchange places; she would go back to work and be the provider and I would become the "housewife".

You see now why I am worried about being fired just in the middle of a recession; it's going to be hard to get another job in a month and after thirty days I'll have to put on an apron and go into the kitchen. A hell of a future, isn't it?

The bus was coming to my house stop when I decided what to do; I am not going to say anything to Hedy and I am going to look fast for new employment. Anyhow I have the money of my termination to carry on for a while. Hedy was surprised to see me at home so early, but I had imagined an explanation, and I gave it very convincingly; I had finished all my project drawings early and I had taken the afternoon off to go to the racetrack with Tom, my best friend in the office.

She did not pay much attention to it and seemed satisfied with my excuse.

I noticed she was working on designing an evening gown; I suspected she kept on designing clothes but I did not know what she was doing with the designs and I didn't want to ask.

She asked if I wanted something to eat and I said no, I'll be leaving immediately. She looked at the box I was carrying but said nothing. I went to the bedroom, left the box in one of the closets, came back to kiss her and left.

I didn't know what to do with my afternoon, so I took a bus and went to the racetrack.

I just watched the first two races without betting. But it was kind of boring so I bet two dollars in the third race. I won and my two bucks became ten; I bet the \$10.00 to the favorite in the fourth race and won again. I had now \$20.00 and the inner feeling that this was, after all, one of my lucky days. The money of my termination payment was in my pocket and I was touching it with my fingers calculating how much would I make if I bet all to that horse "Lucky Break" which was 15 to 1. It would be enough to pay for everything we needed at least for three months and that would be long enough to get a new job.

The temptation was strong and I approached the window and placed the bet to win.

I was shuffling the tickets nervously when the horses entered the gate and after a few seconds they were off.

“Lucky Break” took the lead and kept it easily for two thirds of the race. I was feeling I had the money already in my pocket... but then “Last Warrior,” a 20 to 1 bet, started to gain ground by the outside until it was head to head with my horse.

They entered together the last stretch about three lengths ahead of the other horses.

The crowd was shouting crazily and I was shouting with them.

I wished I could be inside the track and push my horse with my own hands to the winner’s position... but it was impossible.

The two horses crossed the end line together in a photo finish.

I, and the other ten thousand spectators waited the result impatiently.

It came after almost five minutes of uneasy expectancy and it was like an iced water bucket on my dreams; I had lost all the money I had.

I stayed there, petrified, for a long time. I didn’t see the horses for the next race when they paraded in front of the stands; I couldn’t hear the noise made by the crowd. I only could think of my inability to cover the house expenses and of Hedy’s demand that I shall be, from now on, in charge of the domestic chores.

I didn’t wait for the end of the racing session; I left the track and took the bus to go back to my home and to my destiny.

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When I came back home that evening Hedy was waiting for me in the living room. She asked me to sit.

“OK, Joe. You’re going to tell me right now what’s happening since this morning.”

I thought for a long minute. I knew I couldn’t hide the truth anymore and I told her about my being fired and my losing the money.

“As you see,” I concluded, “I’m not able to cover our house expenses for the next month right now, but I shall look for a new job starting tomorrow and as soon as I find it I shall reimburse your bank account for whatever we have spent.”

“Yes,” she said with a little secretive smile. “That’s no trouble. I’ll put out whatever is necessary and you’ll pay me back when you get a job... if you get one. But you know what we agreed upon, so we will count the days starting today and if in thirty days you are not fully capable of supporting us, we trade our places and I go back to work.”

The next morning I started my desperate search for a new employment.

The evening of the thirtieth day ended the search and my desperation. I was now resigned to become Hedy’s little homemaker.

## **Chapter II: LEARNING.**

The first day of my new life did not start differently from the past ones. At 7 a.m. the alarm clock woke us up. As usual I stopped the ringing and tried to go back to sleep, but Hedy’s hand pulled the covers away and her voice reminded me of my new duties.

“Come on, Joe, get up. You have to go down and make breakfast.”

Reluctantly I got out of bed, put on a robe and went downstairs to the kitchen. I filled and started the coffee maker. I drank some orange juice and went about setting the table for Hedy. I cut a grapefruit and put half on a plate and served a glass of orange juice.



The coffee was ready. I served myself a cup and put two slices of bread in the toaster. Then I decided to make fried eggs. I never thought it could be such a difficult task. The first egg slipped from my hand and splashed on the floor. The second one reached the skillet but the egg yolk tore and dispersed when I tried to fry it. Finally, at my third effort, I made a nearly acceptable sunny-side-up which I again tore when I took it off the skillet and passed it to the plate.

I gave up. I set the plate in Hedy's place and nearby it I put the slices of toast which were too dark, a bar of butter and a jar of jelly.

Then I called, "Breakfast is ready, dear."

"Be down in a minute," she answered, but she came down all fresh and perfumed, elegantly dressed in a tailored suit, after a long ten minutes.

The egg, of course, was now cold and uneatable. She looked at it and the other things I had put on the table with an incredulous glance and then looked at me as if she was ready to reprimand me; but she changed her mind, drank the orange juice and while sipping the coffee, she explained to me, "Today is Thursday and you have only the regular cleaning to do but I want you to iron my dark blue blouse and sew a button missing in the coat of my light gray suit.

"Tomorrow comes the dry-cleaning man; check which of my clothes need cleaning and pressing. It's also laundry day so get ready all the clothes to be washed. See if they need any mending, or spot cleaning, which you should do prior to washing them.

You change sheets on Saturday. That's also shopping day but this first time I'll go with you to the market. I'll be back for lunch to see how are you getting along. Have it ready at 12,30 'cause I'll be short of time." She kissed me on the cheek and said, "Bye, baby. Have a nice, amusing day."

And she left.

I worked all morning and discovered I was not prepared to run a house. I got awfully tired trying to vac-

uum the floors and furniture and when I finished I had the suspicion they were just about the same. I went upstairs to fix the bed and not knowing how to do it I just pulled the covers and put the pillows on top.

I saw my watch and was amazed how fast the morning was running away. I hurried downstairs to fix lunch. My knowledge of cooking was nil so I opened a can of chicken soup and put it to heat while I made two ham and cheese sandwiches. I took a lemon and meringue pie from the refrigerator and set it on the table with the sandwiches. That moment I heard a hissing sound and ran to the stove to find out the soup had boiled out of the pot; I tried to take the pot out of the fire and I burned my hand.

Hastily I left the pot on the counter and opened the faucet to put my hand in the cold water. I kept it there until the pain disappeared. I sat down on a chair feeling deeply defeated and disgraceful and did something I had not done since my childhood: I cried!

I was sobbing and my tears were flowing down my cheeks when the door opened and Hedy came in with a joyful: “Hi, honey! I’m home!”

I felt so miserable when I heard her cheerful voice I started to loudly cry again.

She came to me and raising my face she said in a soothing tone, “Come, come, dear, it’s OK now. Calm down and tell me what happened.”

With a burst of sobbing I answered, “What happened is that I can’t do it. I am a stupid failure. I know nothing about the house and I cannot do any of the things you want me to do. I can’t cook, I can’t clean... I don’t know what am I going to do and you are going to be mad at me...”

She pulled me close and embraced saying, “Come on, baby, calm down and stop crying. I’m not going to be mad at you. I know you’re not prepared to take care of the house. I know it’s not easy and you don’t know how; but I wanted you to realize you have to

learn... and you will, believe me... and you'll be the best homemaker in this world and we both shall be very happy."

"You think so?" I asked rubbing my nose with the back of my hand.

"I know so. Come on, let's eat something and we'll talk about it."

After we ate the sandwiches I put the coffee maker to work and we sat down in the living room with a cup of the aromatic liquid that made me feel a little better.

Hedy looked at me with a sympathetic smile.

"Now you know running a house is not an easy task. You have proved it by your own experience. To be a good homemaker you have to learn and I am willing to help you. I'm going to ask my mother to teach you everything you need to know to be the perfect housewife. She's the best teacher I can think of and I'm certain that she will be willing to do it. However, you have to promise you will do everything she tells you to do just the way she tells you."

I thought it for a few minutes: I didn't dislike my mother in law and I knew she would be an excellent teacher; but accepting the deal meant to put farther away the possibility of bringing our roles to what they used to be. Nonetheless, I couldn't see how I could get a job if I didn't look for it and I needed free time to do it; if I learned how to run the house I would have some free time to look for an employment... Besides I didn't want to fail on the first day of this new occupation; in fact I wanted to show Hedy I could be as good as she or even better in the task the new circumstances had imposed on me.

"OK," I agreed, "I promise I'll obey all her instructions."

"Fine," Hedy concurred, "I'll call her this afternoon."

And I saw a mischievous shine in her eyes.

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Next morning making breakfast was not as tragic as the first day but that was because I relied only on a good assortment of fruit, toast and coffee. Anyway I was able to send Hedy off to work with a full stomach.

As soon as she left I started to collect all the dirty clothes and put them into the washing machine. I was going to get the clean sheets for the bed when the bell rang.

It was Agatha, Hedy's mother; she is an elegant, slender woman of 56 who looks 45 at the most. She's not the motherly type but she sure knows how to run a house and she's an excellent cook.

I guess she was the best teacher I could ask for.

I greeted her warmly, not only because she was there to help me, but because I really like her. I guess she also likes me.

She gave me a little kiss on the cheek in greeting.

"How's my little homemaker apprentice? Doing better than yesterday?"

"So you already know about yesterday's disaster?"

"Yes, Hedy told me all about it; but don't worry, we're going to fix all that. We'll start from the beginning and soon you'll be an excellent home administrator. Incidentally, how is your hand?"

"It's fine now; it doesn't hurt anymore."

"Good. Now let's see what you're doing."

I told her and there started my training.

She was very experienced and very patient. She explained to me how to do each little task and made me repeat it until it was correctly done.

At first it took a long time but I was a fast learner and soon I started to do things better and faster.

Once I fixed the bedroom and the bathrooms and collected the clothes to be sent for dry-cleaning we came downstairs to fix lunch. Hedy was not coming home until the evening so we had more time to cook.

She made me fix just a salad and coffee for me saying I was overweight and that was bad for my health and figure. I had never worried about my weight and I told her so. But, she replied if I wanted to please Hedy I should keep slim and good looking. So, that same day I also started my reducing diet.

We sat to eat and rest for some time and we talked about the new arrangement between Hedy and me.

“I haven’t seen Hedy so happy in a long time,” Agatha explained, “she is a woman made to work outside the house. She is aggressive and creative and strong. I think she can be a great success in the fashion business. And I also believe you can be very happy in your new role.”

“I don’t know,” I argued, “I miss my work and want to back to it. Of course, I promised Hedy to take care of the house for a while and I’ll do it.”

“Well, maybe so...” Agatha was looking at me as if measuring me. “Anyhow, I think you are not very much the active and forceful type. I believe you soon will discover you like more the tranquillity of your house than the pushing and biting of the outside world.”

The conversation was interrupted by the man from the laundry. I gave him the clothes I had prepared and came back to Agatha who was waiting with the things ready to iron the clothes that needed it.

That afternoon I started to learn to darn and iron clothes and to sew on missing buttons.

When Hedy came back home I was cooking dinner under Agatha’s supervision. The table was already set and she told her daughter, “Dinner will be ready soon. Why don’t you fix us all a drink, Hedy? We need one and I’m sure you can also have yours with no complaint.”

Hedy kissed me and asked, “How was your day, honey?”

“Long and busy, but I guess quite productive.”

“Good,” she said, and went to fix the drinks.

I served the stew I had cooked together with a bowl of salad. We sat down to eat and Hedy asked a lot of questions about what I had done during the day. I told her with all the details and Agatha made some occasional comments and a few compliments on my readiness to learn. Hedy was very pleased to hear it and encouraged me to keep on practicing all the things her mother will teach me.

Time flew away fast and just after dinner Agatha said good-bye to Hedy and “till tomorrow” to me. Once she left I put the dishes in the dishwasher and turn it on.

Hedy put her arm around my waist and we went upstairs to sleep.

### **Chapter III: LITTLE CHANGES**

The following weeks Agatha came every day to coach me in my domestic duties. Progressively I was becoming more and more efficient and was spending less time to have the house clean, the clothes in good shape and the meals ready.

Having some free time, Agatha decided to teach me to knit and I became very adept to it because it made me feel calm and content.

I also started to read the newspaper classified ads to look for a possible job. There were few and all the ones I called to were not good or already taken. After a week I was discouraged and started to think I wouldn't be able to go back to work. Strangely enough, it didn't worry me as much as I had thought it would; in fact, I realized I was not much interested anymore in getting regular work since the present arrangement seemed to be working fine for Hedy and me.

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One evening Hedy came home in a bad humor.

I mixed a martini for her and brought her the newspaper while I got dinner ready. While we ate she was in a better disposition.

I asked her what happened and she told me.

They were preparing a fashion show for some big customers and she had been working on a new collection. That morning she was advised one of her designs had been presented in a competitor's collection; it had been, undoubtedly, copied by someone in Karla Klein and sold to the competitor.

Hedy and Jean Claude were awfully mad and wanted to find out who had stolen the design; however, the main thing right now was to protect the other designs from being stolen. They were now kept in the safe-box but they had to make the sample dresses for the show and she was afraid they could steal the samples before they had them ready to be presented to the customers.

"Can't you have someone you trust make the dresses somewhere else?"

"That's not the problem," she answered, "the point is once we have a dress ready we have to try it on a living model and make the changes or adjustments I think necessary once I see how it looks and falls on a human body. I can't do that in our workshop where everybody can see them. But don't worry, honey, I'll find a solution."

The next two days I noticed she was worried by the problem, but on the third day she came home early and told me she had a solution I could help her with.

"Me?" I asked doubtfully.

"Yes, you," she countered. "What I need is to try each dress on a living model to see how it looks, how it falls, how it flows when the person moves and so on. The model has to be tall and slender to make the dress look better. And I have to be sure the model is not going to steal my design. I can't trust any model in the company and I can't get any other model now, when everybody is preparing their collections. I need

someone else, someone who's not in the business... and I thought of you."

"Me?" I asked again, incredulous.

"Yes, you. You have a nicely proportioned body; with your diet you have slimmed more or less to a size 10 and with some little changes you can be an excellent model for what I need."

I couldn't believe it, but deep inside I was intrigued by the idea.

She continued.

"You'll see. Tomorrow I'll bring all the things we need and we will give it a try. OK?"

I knew she had decided it and I would not be able to object; so, submissively, I said, "OK, but I don't think it will work."

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The next day Hedy came early carrying a couple of big paper carton boxes. She seemed to be very excited about the test we were about to make.

I was a little afraid of what she was going to ask me to do.

She took the boxes to the bedroom and told me, "I want you to shave your face as close as you can. When you finish, cover all your body except your face and privates with this lotion, wait ten minutes and take a shower rubbing all over with a washcloth. Then dry thoroughly and come back in your bathrobe."

I did as I was told and was highly surprised when I was in the shower and saw all my body hair detach from my skin and go away through the drain.

The depilatory effect of the lotion and the rubbing with the washcloth left my skin hairless and pink as a baby's.

I came into the bedroom complaining to Hedy, "What have you done to me, Hedy? What's this all for?"



She smiled knowingly.

“Well, you cannot expect me to work on a hairy model. It will cut down my inspiration. Besides, the loss of your body hair is not permanent. It will grow back in five or six weeks. I told you we have to make some little changes in your appearance. Come over here and sit so I can see your face.”

I sat in the stool in front of the mirror.

She took a jar of cream and rubbed my face with it to work it into my skin. Then she took it away with cleansing tissues. Once my skin was clean she refreshed it with an astringent lotion and started to pull out hairs from my eyebrows with a pair of tweezers.

“Hey!” I was alarmed. “What are you doing?”

“Hush, hush,” she soothed, “I’m just making your eyebrows look neat... And you better stop objecting everything I do. You agreed to help me. If you keep on arguing I’ll get mad and, believe me, you’re not going to like what I can do when I get mad.”

Her voice was strange, threatening and I was a little frightened, so I shut my mouth and submitted to her ministrations.

From a little box she took a pair of false eyelashes. She curled my own with a curler and put some glue in the fake lashes with a toothpick and applied them to the edge of my lids ordering me to keep from blinking until they dried.

She then proceeded to apply a heavy beige cream over my cheeks, chin and throat explaining to me it was a beard cover. She put powder on top and waited for it to set.

“You better watch closely what I’m doing and how I do it because I want you to repeat it by yourself every morning until you are able to make up alone.”

“But why do you want me to paint my face? I’m not a sissy.”

“No, dear, you are not a sissy, but I’m going to bring the seamstress to make the alterations in the dresses and I want you to pass well as a girl. I also might need to show the clothes to other people before we get them into the show and I need you to be fully credible as a woman.”

“What do you mean, other people? You cannot intend to go around showing me all dressed up in skirts, do you?”

“Don’t worry about it now. Maybe it won’t be necessary. And now, shut up; end of argument.”

For no clear reason I was afraid of what could happen if I kept opposing her and I stop my objections.

She took away the excess of powder and, using a small sponge, she covered all my face with a beige liquid make-up base and when it dried she went on to make up my eyes.

Dark brown pencil to define and shape my eyebrows, three different shades of blue eye shadow dexterously applied to my lids, dark eye liner to accentuate the edge of my lids and several coats of blue mascara over my long false lashes made my eyes look different, bigger and kind of mysteriously inviting.

Funny thing; I didn’t dislike the effect of the cosmetics on my face. In fact, I was feeling curious about how would I look when she’d finish.

She turned my face to see it from different angles and announced, “You know, Joe, you’re very fortunate; you have a wonderful bone structure; high cheekbones, small nose and a delicate chin. We can make a beautiful girl out of you.”

“Dammit,” I protested angrily, “I don’t want to be a girl. I’m very well as I am.”

“We’ll see, we’ll see. You don’t know yet how good it feels to be the center of attention of a group of nice handsome guys.”

“To hell with that!” I swore.

She laughed. "Now, be quiet, we have to go on with your face."

She took a little jar with dark brown contouring cream and extended some at the edge of my jaw and under the cheekbones to make them seem more prominent. She then selected a dark red blush and applied it to my cheeks up to my temples. She covered my face again with translucent powder and once she took it away she outlined my lips with a red lip liner making them look slightly wider than they were. She filled the lips with two applications of a dark ruby lipstick, sealed it pressing with a tissue and covered them with a syrupy liquid to make them glossy.

I saw my image in the mirror and told to myself: *"My God! What a change! I'm real pretty and I didn't know. Maybe she's right and I'm going to like all this charade."*

Hedy had gone to the boxes and took out some clothes. When she approached me I saw they were a white satin lace bras and a light lycra panty-girdle.

Under her direction I put on the brassiere.

She had me stoop forward and pulled into the cups all the flesh of my breast she could but seeing it was not enough to fill the cups she went back to the box and brought a pair of falsies, the kind they use for women who had mastectomy. She made me arrange them into the bras cups.

I put on the panty girdle and she showed me how to pull my genitals backwards between my legs so my crotch would look flat and smooth.

Immediately afterwards I learned to roll on a pair of sheer pearl gray stockings which I attached to the girdle garters.

She handed me a nice white satin slip with a wide hem of lace.

When I put it on the feeling of the cool soft material made me shiver with excitement which increased when I saw how feminine my figure was.

She opened the closet and looked through her dresses choosing a light blue two piece with a very short skirt and a blouse with a round collar, short sleeves and a double line of small dark blue buttons at the front.

It was nice and youthful and I was thrilled when I tried it on. It was a little tight at the waist and loose at the hips.

Hedy's comment disturbed me.

"To make it fit now we can move the button out a little but in the future you have to loose more weight and we'll put you in a corset to slim your waist. We should do something also with your hips, but that can wait."

A corset? My God, how could I tolerate all these abuses from her? and how could I consider interesting all these bizarre things she's imposing on me?... But, was I really being abused when some part of my inner self was enjoying deeply what was happening? I didn't know what to think anymore... I decided to wait and see how things developed.

Hedy made me sit again and brought a long wig. Its reddish brilliant hair was already set in a fluffy style with bangs on the front. When she set it on my head and fixed it with a comb and brush the change was dramatic; I was not anymore a man in disguise; I was now a quite attractive redhead, still young and pretty.

I was amazed and so was Hedy.

"I never thought you would be so good, Joe. You're really scrumptious and you can still be better with some professional help. My! you're going to be such a dish I'll have to watch carefully who you meet or they can take you away from me."

“No, honey, no chance. I’ll be like this just for you and maybe the dressmaker, but nobody else.”

“We’ll try to keep it that way, my dear. But Agatha has to see you. She will be delighted to see how wonderful a girl you are.”

“No, please, don’t do that to me, Hedy. I’ll die of shame if she sees me like this!”

“Nonsense. Being a woman is no shame and starting today you have to think of yourself as a girl so you can be seen as one by everybody. Besides, I need Agatha to teach you the movements and graces of a real female. I’m going to call her right now.”

Agatha arrived about thirty minutes after Hedy’s call and she was also amazed at my surprising change. She looked at me from every angle, made me walk back and forth and turn as if modeling and finally she exclaimed:

“God! you’re really gorgeous, Joe, and fully credible as long as you don’t move or talk. Standing still you look very feminine and pretty; but when you speak with that hoarse voice or when you take those big and abrupt steps all the illusion crumbles. If you want to pass as a girl you have to learn to control your voice and your movements and adapt them to be feminine and delicate.”

Immediately Hedy took advantage of this comment and explained, “That’s the main reason I called you, mother. You already know I count on Joe to prepare my collection for the show; but, as you said, he has to develop feminine ways of acting and speaking in order to fool the people we will work with. Otherwise they are going to laugh at us and the whole thing would be a failure and hurt my status in the company and in the fashion world. I thought you might take charge of Joe’s charm course as well as you have taught him his domestic skills.”

“Yes,” Agatha said, “I think I can do it. How long would it be before you present him to someone else?”

“About three weeks. It’s the time we’ll need to have the dresses ready for the first trial. Then you probably would dispose of another five or six weeks until the costumers come for the fashion show.”

They were discussing my immediate future as if I had nothing to say about... better yet, as if I was not there. But Hedy’s mention of the fashion show was too much.

“Just a minute,” I interrupted, “what do you mean ‘until the fashion show?’ You don’t intend to put me in that show to model women’s clothes in front of a bunch of people because I’ll never do it. Not for you, not for anyone else.”

She saw I was really angry. She gave me a conciliatory smile and said, “No, honey, don’t misunderstand me. We’re going to do adjustments to improve the dresses until the day of the show and mother can work with you until then, if necessary.”

“Then it’s OK by me as long as this masquerade stays just between us.”

“Don’t worry, honey. I guess we won’t need to let anybody else see you.”

I noticed they exchanged a conspiratorial look, but I did not give it much importance and my attention was diverted by what Agatha was saying, “There’s one detail we have to solve right now. It might seem a small matter but it has the utmost importance. You have, from now on, to think of yourself as a woman and you need a female name. We cannot go on calling you Joe and expect you to identify yourself with the female gender.”

Hedy agreed and suggested, “I think Josephine is a nice name, don’t you?”

“Yes.” Agatha agreed, “it’s nice, but it is the same as his male name; someone might notice the resemblance in physique and name and make undesirable deductions.”