

Part II



Once we were in my cabin, I poured myself a good three fingers of whisky and did the same for Rogers. I took a good, stiff drink and reached the wooden cup toward Rogers. Seeing him dressed in his officer's uniform but now with his slender, boyish frame, a thought floated into my mind which struck me as odd even as I thought it: "He looks quite darling in those clothes." I shook my head, scolding myself for having such a foolish thought. Men do not look darling. Ever.

I did not have time to further ponder where this odd thought may have come from. As I held the drink toward Rogers, he looked at me like I was some sort of raving lunatic. “I don’t drink,” he said as if shocked I would even make such an offer. Then, as if sensing his response had put me off, he added, “It’s bad for my skin.”

His skin? Looking at him now, his skin was much changed from its former ruddy, sea battered mien. Like the rest of my crew, he had pale, milky skin. It was quite dewy and silky, I did have to admit, and not the skin of a man who’d spent so much as a day at sea.

Rogers? Not drink? Rogers, worried about his skin like a woman? I had to let these concerns pass. They weren’t important, or at least not as important as the root cause: “Witchcraft,” I said. “You and the rest of the crew are under Daciana’s spell.”

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“The red hair. The whole crew with red hair. Their--” I started to say something about their bodies, how they all now had the slender bodies of young boys, but looking at Roger’s lanky, youthful frame, I thought better of it. I suspected he would be offended. “Their, red hair,” I repeated.

Rogers looked quite concerned at that point. “Captain,” he said, further softening his already soft voice. “We’ve always had red hair.”

Always? I looked into Roger’s eyes, searching for some tell, some cue that would let me know he knew what he said was not true, but I saw nothing but a kind of wide-eyed innocence and even some concern for me, a concern that resonated deep inside me. My eyes scanned his new face now, and I had to admit he was now quite pretty, with a feminine aspect I couldn’t deny. I doubt I had ever seen such full, soft lips, such fine features from his long lashes to his fussy little nose. I felt strange stirrings within me, and when I once more allowed my eyes to rise from those pillowy to meet Rogers, I felt a sudden surge of confusing feelings.

Rogers’ pupils had grown fat and dark, and there was a sparkle in those big, innocent eyes as he regarded me. He smiled and his pink tongue slipped between his lips, licking them, making them wet and shiny and inviting while he dug his hands into the wild crimson curls that framed his sweet face and made tiny, barely audible sound, like the cooing of a baby seagull.

I felt drawn to him, to what I now felt was an intense desire on his part to be kissed, and I longed to kiss those full lips, to caress that smooth cheek—

“Go!” I shouted, throwing an arm across my eyes and turning my back, scandalized by the wicked though I’d just had. This was my first officer and a man, such feelings were sin.



“But, Captain...”

“Dismissed!” I shouted once more.

I did not dare look again until I heard the footsteps cross my room, the door open and slam shut. Sighing with relief, I struggled to regain my composure. The air in my cabin still smelled of his perfume, and I could not get the sight of those wet lips from my mind.

I paced, plotting my course of action, finally resolving to find Daciana and confront her at once. Clearly, my crew had been right about her. This was some sort of devilry, and she

was clearly to blame. I found my own Saint Alban's medal and slipped it around my neck. My scorn as to the crew's superstitions had been quite driven out of me by the sight of them all transformed into ginger boys.

Drinking down the rest of my whiskey— and it was good whiskey— I charged out the door from my quarters and stormed across the deck. Daciana no longer held her perch on the aft deck, so I was sure I would find her in her quarters. As I charged across the deck, I saw the men glancing at me with dire worry in their eyes, mumbling and whispering about me, and that filled me with such dread as I had not felt since my days as a junior officer.

I was losing my crew. And that, for any captain, was a fear greater than death. Still, I was sure I could handle Daciana and make her relent. When I got to her cabin door, it had been propped open and Gershig was not on watch. I stormed into the cabin only to find Gershig sitting in a chair as Daciana combed out his now long, red hair.

“Gershig. Out.” I said.

Gershig glanced at Daciana, clearly waiting for her permission. His deference to this woman instead of his captain drove me mad with rage. “I said out,” I shouted, raising a fist. “Defy me again and you will receive 20 lashes.”

Gershig smirked and once more glanced at the witch.

“You may go,” Daciana said with a smile.

“Thank you m'am,” Gershig answered, but before he rose Daciana carefully removed what I now realized was a long, red wig from his head and placed it on a block head. Gershig stood, turned and curtsied to Daciana. Curtsied. Then, he lifted his nose in the air as he left the room.

“I was just getting your wig ready for you,” Daciana said, the same arrogant smirk as always playing upon her lips. She held up the red wig. “You'll look lovely, Captainessee.”

“Harlot,” I said, shocked a mere woman would have the audacity to speak to me so. “You will undo your foul curse upon my men now, or I will have you in the brig and deliver you unto the cardinal in Marseille to be tried for witchcraft.”

Daciana laughed, though still she did not smile. “You’re just feeling emotional because you’re having your menses.”



Menses? Eve's Curse? How dare she insult me in such a manner. I have never struck a woman, but her insulting manner and comments drove me into such a fury I charged toward her, my fist raised meaning to do just that. Before I could, however, I felt the most terrible pain in my abdomen. I stopped, my knees going weak, and then another pain struck me, even worse than the first, and I felt something hot, wet and sticky leaking from my crotch even as the smell of copper filled the room. Pulling open my pants, I saw blood. Overwhelmed with the pain that assaulted me, shocked and horrified, I could no longer even think of striking her. "What's happening?"

I remembered what Daciana had just said. "You're having your menses."

Daciana had said it, and now I was bleeding just like a woman. Could I be--? But, no. It was too terrible. Yet, the truth that I was, indeed, suffering a woman's menses consumed me with such shame I could only think to turn and run back to my cabin. Keeping my hands over the wet spot on my pants— one in front and one behind— I ran across the deck, desperate that none of the men should know my shame, but they seemed all aware, looking, pointing, laughing. "The captain is bleeding like a woman!" I thought I heard someone shout, though with the wind I couldn't be sure. "He's a woman," another jeered.

As soon as I reached my cabin, I rushed inside and slammed the door shut behind me. I dashed across the room and threw myself onto my bed in a storm of tears, curling into a ball, hugging my pillow against my aching stomach. I cared not that I was acting the girl. I could only think of one horrible thought— my whole crew knew I suffered maiden pains.

June 23

I cried myself to sleep. In my dreams I found myself a woman wearing a long, diaphanous gown, lost in a fog drenched hedge maze. A full moon rose above me, casting my world in silvery light, and I ran, my heart pounding, as I knew a man pursued me, a man with the sort of dark intentions only a girl must fear. I ran and ran, terrified of what this man meant to do to me, and yet—at the same time—longing to be caught, to be ravished, to have him grab me by the hair and yank my head back as he tore my dress from my body...

When I woke, the ship heaved and wallowed. Thunder crashed. Lightning flashed. I could hear soft voices shouting over the winds as the men sought to keep the ship afloat. As Captain, I needed to be on deck. I had stout sea legs and had been in many a storm. A sailor learns to move even on a storm tossed ship, and I made my way to my wardrobe. My

pants were yet sticky and reeked of a woman's curse. I cleaned myself up as best I could and wadded up a ball of cotton to put into my undergarments, lodged firmly between my legs.

I had no time to feel ashamed. I had a duty to my crew and couldn't allow anything to get in the way. Confident I would not experience any humiliating leaks, I could yet smell the shame of my woman's time. That is when I saw it secured in my wardrobe. A ball of spices and flowers such as women use to hide their unpleasant odor during that time. I pushed it into my pants and pulled them up, then made my way out onto the deck.

Rogers was at the helm, his thick, red curls whipping in the wind. Daciana stood next to him, and when she saw me she looked right down at my crotch and got that infernal smirk of hers on her face. I reeled with shame as I knew she knew.

There was nothing for it. Ignoring her glee, I was just about to ask Rogers for a report when yet another and the worst pain of them all struck. It felt like there were beasts inside me clawing at my insides, trying to tear itself out. With a small shout of pain, I once more fell to my knees, clutching my belly.

Weak, confused, blinded by pain, I found myself being helped back to my cabin where I must have passed out as the next memory I had was waking to golden sunlight streaming through my windows and a ship that I could feel now rode on smooth waters.

June 25

Rising, I saw my Cabin Boy waiting for me. To my surprise he wore a corset though otherwise seemed garbed much as formerly, despite his slender frame and youthful face. My eyes dropped from that youthful face to his chest, which was as soft and round as any maidens, his breasts rising together in soft crescents as shadowy and inviting as any woman's.

I had told myself that my crew looked like boys, but in truth from the first change they looked the very aspect of girls, with their faces, the modest serve of hip, long, stork-like

legs. Looking upon Rupert now and no longer able to deny his new sex, I could not help but reflect upon the fact that Rupert made quite a fetching lass.

That thought I regretted instantly as I thought once more of Clancy and that shameful slit between his legs, which my addled mind now seethed with confusion as I found myself wanting to take Clancy as a woman, and, too, I longed to kiss Rupert now, to sneak one naughty hand down his trousers and find out if he, too, now held Eve's shame between his legs.

Pushing these impure thoughts from my mind, I instead rebuked Rupert. "Why are you wearing a corset?" I demanded, though well I knew it was likely the work of my infernal passenger. "Take it off at once. I will not have my crew dressing as women."



Rupert stared at me as if I'd gone mad. As frequent as it was becoming, I had not nor would I ever grow used to it. Before I could speak further, Rupert spoke. "Begging your pardon, Captainesse, but we all wear corsets. We always have." I noticed then that he held a corset in his hands. "I have yours right here." He felt the corset towards me. It was made of a rich, deep brown leather with bright,

copper buckles. It looked to me like a very instrument of torture, or manacles meant to bind me to a woman's life.

Me? Degrade myself by wearing this woman's binding? "Never," I whispered. "Never."

I stepped back, almost as if the feminine garment might carry some sort of contagion. Knowing that he could do little other than perform the mad puppet show Daciana had staged, I merely said, "You are dismissed."

"But, captain--"

"Dismissed," I screamed, blood rushing to my cheeks. As Rupert left, I reflected that I would need to work harder to control my emotions. Indeed, until my menses had run their course, it appeared I would be as emotional as any girl. Once more I thrust a wad of cotton between my legs. Once more, my packet of pretty fragrances to hide the smell of my flow. I paused as I realized I was now acting as if suffering a woman's pangs was the most normal of things. Truly, this curse needed to-- ouch!-- a small pain stabbed in my tummy. I was grateful it was only a small pain. I now knew it could be so much worse.

Having been bested in my last attempt to stop the witch from bespelling my crew, I resolved that I would assemble allies, and we would have to sneak into her room at night and subdue her by stealth. I dressed. I opened the door to my cabin.

My crew stood waiting, Rogers at the lead. I say my crew, but little did they resemble my crew. All now had the shapely figures of women, enhanced by their corsets. Their faces were blank, while Rogers wore an executioner's scowl. Seeing all these pretty faces looking at me with blank eyes, somehow shook me. Never had I seen such coldness on the faces of my crew, even when they were men. To see them now as girls and with such harsh emptiness unnerved me. To see my crew made women enraged me. I cared about my men, and to see them all castrated and reduced to mere females was a cruel and evil act worse than death.

"Captain," Rogers announced. "We have voted to hold a vote to determine whether the crew considers you fit to command given your delicate condition."

My delicate condition? My fury knew no precedent. I could not control myself. These fools had no idea what a girl went through, and like typical men they assumed a woman incapable of leading due to her suffering the monthly curse. I was no woman, but I now found myself forced to take upon myself the cause of woman's suffrage. "You think me unfit to lead because I suffer a woman's monthly pangs? How dare you--"

The crew began to giggle. My crew! Giggle? At me. It would get worse as their giggles became laughs, the harsh piping laughs of cruel girls. Rogers shook his head. "You're having your menses?" He said. "I had no idea. The crew had no idea. Really, Captainessee, it is most impolite for you to mention such a delicate subject before the whole crew."

“You didn’t know?” My rage turned to shame in an instant as I realized what I’d said, what I’d done. Rogers was right. Even for a woman born it was most impolite to even mention her special times. I had just shouted mine to the heavens. “Then, why?”

“Traipsing about without a corset,” Rogers said. “It’s quite unheard of. Your hair is not the right color, and you seem to believe we are acting strange when you would appear to be the one going mad.”

I couldn’t help myself as a strangled laugh escaped my lips. “You think me mad? Do you not notice you have all been turned into women?” I raised a trembling hand and pointed at Daciana. “Her. She’s done this to you. She’s given you those shameful bodies, placed a goat’s beard between your legs, she...”

Once more giggling and laughter greeted my words. Rogers shook his head. “I can’t understand you.”

The others nodded. Shook their heads. Shrugged. “What do you mean you can’t understand me?”

I could see in Roger’s bewildered face that he spoke the truth. What was happening? What was going on? The sails snapped in the wind. The decks creaked. Otherwise, all was silent.

Then, Daciana spoke. “If you want to be heard, you must speak in the voice of a woman.”

I glared at her. I would have charged her once more or gotten a pistol and made to shoot her dead, but just the thought and I felt another sharp pain in my gut, felt hot, sticky blood began to flow. “Speak in the voice of a woman?” I spat. “Never.”

“Then none will hear you.”

The crew were talking, laughing. “His chest is as flat as a johnny cake...” one whispered. “is that skin or doth he wear a mask of leather?”

Deeply ashamed, I ran back to my quarters and slammed the door. Struggling to fight back another fit of crying. I took deep breaths, had a drink, and thankfully managed to keep my weeping at bay. I am a man, I reminded myself. A man.

I would needs stay in my quarters until the trial, which I learned was scheduled for the next day, so I sat down to write in my journal. Forgetting to record the events of the day, I wrote a poem and doodled a few flowers and a butterfly.

A knock on the door. “Yes?”

Another knock. “I can’t understand you,” Rogers called.

Remembering Daciana's words, much to my disgust, I lifted my voice into a higher register and took it from my chest, now placing more in my nose. "Yes?" I called, surprised and appalled at just how successful I'd been. I sounded like a girl. "Come in." I had little desire to talk to anyone in the voice of a girl, yet I had little choice.

The witch had me at a disadvantage. I had to play her little game. Rogers walked in, his walk and manner that of a young lady. He no longer wore his officer's uniform, but a corset and a silk top with frilly lace, yet still he wore breeches and stockings like a man, the clothes clinging to his shapely legs in a scandalous manner that would end with him in jail and on trial for indecency should he dress like that in London.

I would have sent him back to change clothes, but I felt time was of the essence. I would seek his help against the witch.

That is, if I could keep myself from kissing him. Rogers had blossomed into quite the fetching young woman, and to my shame and discredit, I had impure thoughts of what I might do to his new body.

To be continued...

