

DNA Lady

By Sheila Columbia

## Chapter 2: Transitions

It was a bit more than four years before the café meeting when both Greta Garbo and Brad Yayger were making fateful transitions in their lives. Brad had moved to California a number of weeks prior to meeting Canis Personality. Greta was working as a software engineer for Musk-Koggi, but was not happy with her work. She was always a people person, so she longed for a career that spent more time with human stuff and less time with machines.

It was a Saturday morning in her Santa Monica digs where she kicked back with a copy of the L.A. Times and a cup of unadulterated Algerian roast coffee. (Boneheads think of it as “French” roast thanks to centuries of colonial oppression.) Greta grew up in France drinking café au lait as a wee lass, and attending the finest private schools available. It was not until after puberty that she kicked the milk and sugar habit altogether. That was when she shifted over to the divine, unadulterated brew.

She loved to keep tabs on current events with a morning paper. This one included an article on her own firm, and how it won a contract with Warmer Brothers. She thought about the sales win, and how it had a place in the public spotlight. She knew about it a week ago from an internal announcement. Back then, it was strictly tentative. The official announcement came the day before in the company’s internal email. The Times article was pretty much the same as the email, but with some preface boilerplate material on Musk-Koggi and its close ties to Gray Research and its Fun Macrosystems supercomputer product line. (Gray had yet to go belly-up.)

Greta got to thinking about dropping out of the engineering side of the business, and seeking a sales support role. She had a close college buddy who did just that the year before. She regaled Greta with sales stories that charmed her pants off. There is a place for technical expertise on the sales side of the business. This prompted Greta to peruse the internal job opportunities Web site for a sales position. There were two available. It would be the beginning of a new life for Greta, and an exquisite day.

In the mean time, Brad was getting ready for a blind date with Canis Personality. His friend Marfa in Hoboken, New Jersey, had asked him for permission to give his phone number to Canis. They lived in the same building on Hudson Street near the Snevets Tech campus. Canis mentioned her move to California to Marfa, and worried that there would be no straight guys to date in the area. Marfa mentioned Brad and his current availability. After getting the nod from the Dude, Canis got the digits and dropped a dime to introduce herself. Brad was happy to receive the call, and invited Canis out for a wine shopping spree the following Saturday. It would turn out to be the same day as Greta’s fateful decision to switch to sales support.

Canis moved to Oakland, California in order to accept a position as an art school administrator. She was hired to start up a new program that would hold classes during Summer Break. This gave her a few months to prepare starting in late Autumn of ‘94. She got an apartment in an affluent lady’s place. It was an in-law type of space in the Oakland Hills. She had purchased a Jupiter sedan in Serramonte, and showed up for her date in those wheels.

Unbeknownst to Brad, Canis had relations with a victim of the Naval Misfits. He was a Naval officer who bore a striking resemblance to Brad. He had broken up his relationship with Canis a while back when she started doing hinky stuff with a Navy Intel officer. The guy turned out to be one of the Misfits. Neither Canis nor Brad were aware of Misfit plans to get Canis knocked up using stolen semen from her former Navy beau. It was a scene out of a Stephen King Sci-Fi story.

Canis drove to Brad's small Palo Alto digs from her apartment in the Oakland Hills. It was on the other side of the Bay and quite far to the south. She wondered why Brad did not drive down north to her place. After all, she was closer to both Napa and Sonoma Counties where wine shopping was quite popular. She did not realize that Brad intended to drive further south to wineries closer to Sillville rather than down north.

Back in Santa Monica, Greta sent an email to her human resources (H.R.) connection requesting the opportunity in sales that fit her best. Of the two support roles, the one with the greater technical background was most appropriate, and it paid much better. It would be a step down from her current salary, but the reduction in stress was worth the pay cut. It would also pave the way for a more financially rewarding sales career.

After closing her laptop, Greta contemplated her next move. Perhaps a trip to Beverley Hills for a bit of shopping was in order. As she thought about what she might add to her wardrobe, the phone rang. It was her manager calling to ask why she was jumping ship. "I don't like working for an asshole." He hung up immediately.