

Miss Annabel and Julia

Chapter 10

“Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My!”

Fiction by Angela Bauer

On Wednesday, 21 June 1933, the morning was as beautiful as possible, especially for a visit to The Philadelphia Zoo, which was the first zoo in the USA and is still world famous. Annabel had invited Susan Manchester and her mother Leticia. From the moment Susan and Annabel met by chance the previous Monday, they were best friends.

Just before Annabel, her step-mother Julia and Nanny Randall had picked-up the Manchesters, they had stopped at their favorite photo shop to retrieve re-prints of the pictures Annabel had taken of Susan in the park that Monday.

Annabel actually owned two identical cameras, Kodak Brownies. Her father Richard bought her the first one the previous Saturday. The second one was a gift from Rogers of Philadelphia Department Store the previous Monday afternoon.

Julia felt Annabel deserved a stylish leather photographer’s ‘gadget’ bag. It was large enough to hold both of the Brownies as well as several rolls of film. Their favorite clerk remarked, “Next time I’ll sell you a more sophisticated camera! The Leica II is very popular.”

“Funny you should mention that, because my Daddy told me he was seriously thinking about buying a Leica. Funny name I guess. Daddy also said he was thinking about a Rolleiflex.”

Julia smiled, introduced herself only as ‘Annabel’s mother’ and asked if some of the pictures just re-printed in normal snap-shot size could be

enlarged by Friday morning. The clerk assured Julia doing so would be his pleasure.

Annabel showed him the particular photos of Susan alone and with her mother, of Hannah and of Mr. Merriman posed with the Rolls Royce. The clerk compared those to the negatives and made note of the negatives' numbers.

After Susan and Leticia were safely seated in the back of the Rolls, Annabel gave them the pictures of themselves. They were delighted.

"Susan, after we played in the park on Monday, a friend of our family gave me a second Brownie. I can't use two at once. Would you like to borrow it while we are at the zoo? We will have both of our pictures developed and printed. The next time I see you I'll give you the pictures you took, and their negatives. I have scads of film."

Leticia turned toward Julia, with a bewildered expression, "I'm not sure Susan is mature enough for the responsibility of even holding a camera."

"I'm Julia, and I love my name. Do you mind if I call you 'Leticia' instead of Mrs. Manchester? I have not actually known anyone else with your name, but when I have read it I always smile."

"Please do call me Leticia. When I teach I am always called 'Professor Manchester' so I love being less stuffy while on Summer Vacation.

"I'm still not so sure Susan is ready to borrow a camera."

"Leticia, since Susan is Annabel's friend, your daughter must have vast talents, some not yet known. I had a far less sturdy and robust Kodak camera when I was not much older than Susan. That still worked when I started at Barnard. I only replaced it because the film it used was getting hard to find.

"Cameras can be replaced, but you will be doing us the huge favor of letting Susan discover if she enjoys taking pictures. Maybe she is the next Margaret Bourke-White?" Julia asked.

"Oh, Julia, I love her magazine photos. You are right; maybe Susan has such a talent. Of course if she breaks Annabel's camera, my husband and I will replace it."

"Leticia, that is fair, but should that Brownie be damaged, it will be Annabel's gift to your daughter. The cameras look alike. Annabel does not know which one was bought by her father and which one was the gift. While it would be rude of her to give away a gift from a family friend, I dare say even Emily Post would agree Annabel has the social right to give away something given to her by her father."

“Julia, I see the logic. I also see where Annabel got her vocabulary and mature way of expressing herself. Susan, please be very careful with the camera.”

Julia nearly giggled. Fortunately Mr. Merriman had just turned into the zoo’s front parking area and stopped the Rolls in front of the grand entrance structure. Only he remained with the Rolls. Everyone else moved briskly to join the line waiting to pay for their tickets.

Susan was beaming as she proudly and carefully held her borrowed Brownie. Inside the zoo, it was Hannah who stuck to the girls like glue. She had youthful energy to keep up with them. Sensibly Julia and Leticia each moved at her own pace.

“Leticia, I am sure I can trust you. You are so polite you never mentioned that upon orders from Annabel’s father, my husband, none of us have told you our family name. I want to confide in you.”

“Julia, or should I say Mrs. Julia Scott Barclay, when your marriage last month was announced, your picture was in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Then last week they ran a story, with your picture, about how you were staying here while heading the transition of Rogers’ Department Store to your husband’s ownership. I grew up shopping there with my late mother. It distressed me how their standards have slipped. Friends of mine blame the young squire who inherited a business many say he is not qualified to run.”

“Leticia, since Felix the Cat is out of the bag, I am sure I can rely on your discretion. You must know I was assistant secretary to Richard’s late father William R. Barclay, who was a mentor to me and a good friend of my own late father. As soon as Richard joined the family store after the Harvard Graduate School of Business and several years as a junior executive with the Barclay Banking Group, WR Barclay asked me to become Richard’s executive secretary and serve as his mentor.

“Honestly, Leticia, I never had a crush on Richard. He treated me as a sister and even after his divorce from Annabel’s mother he never hinted of romantic interest in me. My career used to occupy most of my thoughts. Certainly Richard was the last man of Earth I dreamed of loving me.

“Want to hear a funny story?”

“Of course, Julia, I can see a lion, bear or elephant anytime. What about this story?”

“In May I had been doing the research into taking over Rogers of Philadelphia because Leonard Rogers, who has known Richard most of his life, approached him begging to be bought-out. Lenny just does not want to be in the retail business. He was staying in Manhattan as we concluded the negotiations.

“For the first time since I started working for WR Barclay in 1920, I was asked to have dinner at that mansion so Richard and I could quietly write our mutual position papers to seal the deal with the banks.

“I confess that as an only child, I preferred the company of adults. I never did any babysitting. But Richard trusts me. During that dinner there was a family squabble between Gertrude, his slightly younger sister, and Richard. She has been serving as ‘Mistress of the Manor’ letting servants take advantage and frustrating the efforts of respected Nanny Clara Parsons to inculcate Annabel with structure and discipline.

“Richard asked if I was upset by the squabble, while all of us were trying to eat a really tough piece of beef. He was concerned I would have a low opinion of his sister and daughter.

“My reply was that I found his family charming, adding that they just needed a system of operations. He has an MBA, so he knew I meant as we operate all his businesses. His sister, who never attended college, was outraged.

“Richard said something about putting me in charge, but he could not spare me from the store. I bragged I could straighten out his family in a couple of hours.

“Richard then put me in charge with complete authority. Except for Annabel’s nanny, all of his other servants were robbing him blind, possibly with the active collusion of Gertrude. So I discharged without references: the butler who is married to the cook; and the chauffeur who was stealing gasoline.

“I regret I did not have authority to discharge that sister Gertrude.

“Annabel started off throwing a tantrum before she knew I was there. She continued being a brat the rest of the evening. Once I was in charge I ordered her to prepare for bed. She did not get up from the dining table until I walked up to her.

“While I was discussing a need for ‘iron hand discipline’, including spanking, with the nanny, Annabel walked into the room. I chased her back to her room, picked up her hairbrush and spanked the daylights out of her. Almost certainly that was Annabel’s very first spanking, at the ripe old age of nine!

“Apparently that impressed Richard. I did hire him an all-new staff, including John Merriman who is driving us. The older nanny Clara is resting up in Manhattan and letting the assistant nanny Hannah Randall keep up with Annabel on this trip.

“The morning after the wedding, I stayed home from the office to be sure the new staff was improving the system of operation. Annabel was especially rude to the staff and to me, egged on by my sister-in-law Gertrude.

“So I spanked Annabel harder and much longer that second time and confined her to her room. Every half hour I would go to her room and try to talk. She said she did not understand why I married her father, claiming he is much older and does not love me.

“Leticia, Richard is just under four years older than me, but I graduated from Barnard the year before he graduated from Harvard. I promised Annabel that I married Richard because I love him and that I also love her.

“A half hour later, when I checked in with her, she was smiling, hugged me and said she actually loved me, but her Aunt Gertrude hates me.

“So, I made a decision to bring Annabel and Nanny Randall here for the three weeks I am using to instill changes at Rogers’ store.

“My guess is that Annabel is very smart, but lacks self-discipline and is socially awkward. She has never been to school! Anyway, pending an interview, she is enrolled at an exclusive girls’ school a few blocks from our home. They are strict but supportive.

“I accept any blame for Annabel, but do not claim any credit.”

“Wow, Julia, I never would have guessed why Annabel is who she is. I tried not to think why she is still wearing diapers during the day, but obviously she does not mind. Your Nanny Hannah is a jewel!

“Susan told Annabel she still sometimes wets her bed at age six. As soon as we were driven home Monday after a nice lunch, Susan started begging me to diaper her for the zoo.”

That was the cue for Susan, closely followed by Annabel and Hannah, to back-track until they found Leticia and Julia.

“Mommy, Mommy! I need a dry diaper!” Susan announced loudly enough she probably could be heard in Harrisburg.

“Mrs. Manchester, I offered to change Susan. I brought plenty of clean diapers, but I told her I felt the need for your permission. Annabel covers her diapers with rubber panties, but they probably will be too large for Susan” Hannah breathlessly explained.

“Miss Randall, of course you may change Susan. I don’t want to impose.

“Before Susan was potty trained I knew nothing about any rubber pants. At home in her bed, I diaper her thickly and let the rubber sheet on her crib deal with the leaking. But, why should you have to wash Susan’s wet diapers. I brought enough for a couple of changes.

“Honestly I did not expect her to wet all that much.”

Hannah took Susan by her hand. Annabel followed carrying both of the Brownies in her gadget bag, as well as Susan's diaper bag over her shoulder. Because she is short for her age, the diaper bag shoulder straps which work for Leticia caused the bag to drag when Annabel tried to carry it as intended.

In a fastidiously clean ladies' room, Hannah was delighted to find a permanent changing table larger than would be needed for even older toddlers. Clearly Susan and Annabel were not the first girls of their size needing diaper changes at The Philadelphia Zoo.

Susan was changed first, because her diaper was the more saturated and she was not wearing rubber pants. Sure enough, Annabel's size PlayTex stretchy baby pants did not cinch snug enough to be effective on Susan.

Annabel was changed second, without any muss or fuss from her. Her diaper was more than damp, but had capacity remaining. A woman who could have been a grandmother came in with a girl who easily could have been twelve. She was bigger than Annabel.

That girl started giggling and pointing at Annabel. The older woman never said a thing. She first smacked the girl in her face and then administered two very hard smacks to each of the lower thighs, reachable with only a slight lifting of the skirt.

The rude girl burst into tears, with a red mark on her face.

"Save your tears for later at home. You will cut some switches and I will set you afire with them.

"If I ever again see or hear of you making fun of someone, you will be wearing just a diaper and babyish shirt around our neighborhood. As soon as you finish tinkling into the toilet, we are leaving the zoo and going home so you can get on with cutting the switches!" announced the mature woman. On a second look, she could have been the girl's mother.

Julia had a plan to turn her morning at the zoo with Annabel into an advantage for the stores: "Leticia, our great good luck was that Richard and I agreed when we first had the chance to make an exclusive deal with the International Latex Corporation to sell those PlayTex baby pants in our New York area.

"We were selling them faster than PlayTex could make them the first few months. Now production has caught up to demand. Leonard Rogers did not even attend that sales meeting. According to our rep from PlayTex, Wannamaker did not ask for a distributorship.

"This means that we are allowed to sell them exclusively here in Philadelphia as well as Southeastern New York State. The day escrow closed on the Rogers' store, before I traveled here, we shipped a starter

inventory from our warehouse in New York. PlayTex has since shipped directly to Rogers’.

“I really want you and Susan to try those. And, I also need a huge favor. Leticia, you told me you used to shop at Rogers’ but stopped. Would you mind just walking around the store before anyone realizes we have met? You don’t need to buy anything, although if you do find some things you want, feel free to buy them.

“In a suite next to mine at the Bellevue-Stratford I have set up a secret office with my most trusted Manhattan secretary, Trudy Josse. She takes all messages to that phone, my hotel suite phone and also Annabel’s suite phone. I will phone my Philadelphia assistant Helen Wood at the store and have her send a dozen each of Toddler and Toddler Small to Annabel’s suite. One of those will certainly fit Susan. Annabel wears Toddler Large. We will find a way to get those to you.

“If it is not too much trouble, after you walk through Rogers’ store, could you dictate your impressions as a former customer to Trudy? Rogers’ is still a work-in-progress for everyone. I hope it is an improvement, but I am not a Philadelphia native.”

Leticia agreed that such a covert shopping mission would be harmless fun.

For the rest of the morning the three women and the two girls had a lot of fun at the zoo. When either girl needed a change, Hannah took care of that.

As they all walked to the zoo’s main parking lot, Susan and Annabel made another play date for Friday morning. Susan would select the adventure. Annabel promised that all the Wednesday zoo photographs would be developed and printed so she would pick up those on her way to meet Susan and her mother.

“Oh, Mrs. Manchester,” Hannah spoke up. “I’ll be thrilled to be nanny to both girls Friday and today while you are shopping.”

At the zoo, all had seen the usual range of exotic animals. They even rode on an elephant that did not seem to mind. Annabel had a lot of time to bond with Julia, who in turn knew Leticia Manchester would remain her good friend for decades.

Lunch was eaten in the Zoo’s delicious restaurant, for which Leticia paid. John Merriman sat with his back to a wall, ever vigilant, and paid for his own meal on his expense account.

They decided to drop off Leticia two blocks from the Roger’s store, to preclude a connection between her and Julia’s Rolls Royce. Julia needed to change clothing at the hotel. Hannah felt it best to remain inside the hotel. That way the girls could be changed and take naps as needed. All

the exposed film was left in a Bellevue-Stratford Hotel paper bag with the hotel's concierge, for pick-up by the photo shop on Wednesday afternoon.

Hannah could tell that Annabel was drooping after the zoo. She agreed to be put into bed for a nap. Since Annabel's room only had one double-size bed, Susan would share it because that bed already had a rubber sheet protecting the mattress.

After only a few minutes of trying to fall asleep, Annabel got up to speak to Hannah: "Nanny Randall, we both know I am not used to taking naps. I admit I need the rest, but although tired, I am not sleepy. We also both know what I need to fall asleep. Pretty please, spank me, now!" There was no whining in Annabel's voice.

"Lambie Pie, we both will need to be super quiet. Susan is sleeping, but neither of us knows how well she stays asleep. Since you need the spanking, bring me either your 'Girls' Spanker' or your hairbrush. It makes absolutely no difference to me.

"I think the only way to do this without disturbing Susan is here in the living room. I don't think it safe to use my room because I need to not be far from Susan. Do you agree?"

"Yes, please, Nanny. I will bring you my hairbrush because I miss its own form of sting."

The first couple of spanks did wake up Susan, who wanted to watch. Temporarily Annabel was left in the living room without a diaper bare bottomed. After Hannah settled Susan and tucked her in, she closed the bedroom door.

Annabel returned to her position across Hannah's lap and the spanking re-commenced. As Annabel began to sob very quietly, the hall door opened.

Edna Lyall wanted to show something in the bedroom she shared with Hannah to Trudy Josse. Both knew vaguely that Annabel was still spanked, but neither had a clue how frequently; and especially that it was Annabel who wanted to be spanked.

To put it mildly, they were horrified, but Trudy had the presence of mind to close and dead-bolt the hall door.

Before Trudy or Edna could voice an objection, Annabel suspended her sobs, turned toward them and spoke in her most adult voice: "Please give us some privacy. Can't a gal get a simple spanking without intrusion?"

Hannah resumed spanking and Annabel let her sobs flow, despite Edna and Trudy lingering in the room. They had awakened Susan, who was skulking behind Hannah.

She was only caught because she did not retreat before the spanking ended and Annabel meandered to her room to be diapered.

Susan was fascinated as usual seeing Annabel diapered while on the bed: “You know, Annabel, I have a real changing table in my room at home. Mommy says it reminds me to try to control my wetting. I love it because it is my connection to when I was a real baby.”

Hannah wanted both girls to stay in bed and get some rest. Since Susan did not have a nightie in her diaper bag, she was wearing one of Annabel’s shorter night shirts.

“Susan, I am sorry I did not discuss spanking you with your mother. I expect you to confess to her. Then your mother will decide how best to punish you.”

Eventually both Susan and Annabel seemed asleep for over an hour, giving Hannah a chance to get a short nap for herself.

A bellman brought up the package of PlayTex panties from the store. First he tried to deliver it to Trudy. She told him she could not leave the office phone, so as she tipped him well, she asked him to take it down the hall to Annabel’s suite.

There Hannah tipped the bellman again. Seeing the package was rubber panties, she put the whole package in Susan’s diaper bag, leaving one tube of each size out for immediate use.

Susan woke from her nap first and needed a diaper change. That gave Hannah the chance to see which size PlayTex would fit best. It turned out the Toddler was a very good fit. The Toddler Small was needlessly snug, so would be uncomfortable, especially in bed.

Susan was overjoyed with her rubber panties. When Susan and Leticia spread the word about PlayTex to their friends, Hannah knew that Julia would be thrilled with a sales increase.

To maintain separation from Julia as far as the Rogers’ employees knew, Leticia Manchester took a cab from the store to two other shops before reaching the hotel.

Susan did confess to spying on Annabel being spanked. Leticia commented, “Miss Randall, when will Annabel be up from her nap?”

Looking at the living room clock, Hannah answered, “Any minute, Mrs. Manchester. I told Susan if I had authority to do so, I would have spanked her for spying. Under the circumstances I felt it prudent to wait until I could talk directly to you.”

“Miss Randall, I just assumed your authority to punish Susan while she is in your care was a given. That happens all the time here. I spank her pals and their mothers or nannies spank Susan,” Leticia explained. “It must be more formal in Manhattan.

“It seems to me only fair that you do spank Susan seriously for spying and that Annabel watch. We will wait until she wakes up.

“As for you, Young Lady, go stand in the corner away from Annabel’s room. Nanny Randall, I often only spank her bare bottom with my hand because I reserve the hairbrush for such safety misbehavior as running into the street.” From the corner Susan quivered with fret.

“This is an exception, calling for severe punishment. Could I see both the hairbrush and that new leather paddle you mentioned? Nanny Randall, which were you using on Annabel this afternoon?”

Hannah was listening as she quietly entered Annabel’s room. She returned with both the hairbrush and ‘Girls’ Spanker’. “Normally Mrs. Manchester, Mrs. Barclay and I use the leather paddle because between us we spank Annabel two or three times a day to maintain her best behavior. The paddle does not cause marks and bruises.

“Today I let Annabel choose, because she was not being punished. Getting a spanking helps her fall to sleep. She selected the hairbrush.”

“Well, Nanny, that settles the question! When Annabel is awake, Susan will be spanked by you on her bare bottom with the hairbrush just as firmly as you spanked Annabel,” Leticia decreed.

Annabel woke up groggy. Nevertheless, Susan’s diaper and PlayTex panties were removed. She was placed over Hannah’s capable lap and soundly spanked with the hairbrush until she was bawling her eyes out. Then Leticia re-diapered her and appreciated the Toddler size rubber pants.

“Now, Nanny Randall, while you supervise my naughty daughter as she sits in the corner in *Disgrace*, I will dictate my report to Miss Josse as requested.”

“Speaking on behalf of Mrs. Barclay, I am sure she will appreciate that report. Miss Josse usually has hot coffee and water to make tea in her office about this time. Enjoy yourself. I will keep a stern eye on little Susan!”

The second Leticia was out of the room Hannah hugged Susan and assured her she was forgiven by Annabel and her.