

# Miss Annabel and Julia

## Chapter 01

### “Household Shake-up”

Fiction by Angela Bauer

*This story of Annabel and Julia starts in 1933 and will continue until for decades, in many chapters. Occasionally the story will flash back as far as 1924 or earlier. The setting is Manhattan’s Department Store District on Fifth Avenue south of Central Park and the Mansion District on Park Avenue north of East Sixty-Sixth Street.*

It was a time and place where the fortunate retained family fortunes, and private mansions had not been torn down to be replaced by residential skyscrapers. These elite paid lip-service to hard times, which to them meant reducing their fleets of Rolls Royces, and only having two chauffeurs.

Their butlers might only be assisted by one footman, the chef by a couple of cooks and the housekeeper by less than four parlor maids. Some gentlemen no longer had valets, yet their wives all had a lady’s maid. Horror of horrors, the nanny had no nursery maid.

Without such quaint eccentric families, there would have been no screwball comedies and drawing room dramas.

We return you Gentle Readers, to those long-ago times.

Of course in 1933 most people were living in The Great Depression. Those who had jobs took great pride in their talents and work.

Now, let this story of two remarkable women, and the men in their lives, begin...

Miss Julia Scott was born into a happy successful family at the start of the Twentieth Century on lovely Barrow Street in the western part of Greenwich Village. She never had a nanny, but her loving parents could afford a decent private school, Grace Cathedral, in their neighborhood.

That school was progressive enough it included classes in typing and shorthand while preparing young ladies to attend university. Julia found that being able to take class notes in shorthand was most useful, as was typing her homework. She was only twenty when she graduated from Barnard College in May of 1920, just a few months after Prohibition started.

Julia's father Lowell Scott, an influential attorney and lobbyist, was a trusted advisor and friend of William Randolph Barclay. Through that connection, Julia was hired as a secretary at the most elite of Manhattan's department stores, Barclay's of Fifth Avenue. That was just across East Fifty-First Street from St. Patrick's Cathedral.

She did not have a university degree in accounting or business administration, but Julia Scott did have the advantage of growing up in a home where she was allowed to listen while her father and his equally successful friends discussed business strategy.

Month after month Julia was given increasing responsibility at Barclay's. William R. Barclay, the elderly grandson of the store's founder, took a special interest in Julia's career. He arranged for her to be the assistant to his long-time male executive secretary.

William's only son, Richard Barclay, had been educated at Groton Preparatory School, Harvard and the Harvard Graduate School of Business. By the time Richard joined his father as a junior executive in 1926, William felt it was in the best interest of the store to assign the experienced and discreet Julia Scott as Richard's private secretary. She was the first woman to hold such an important job at the store. Even in

the 1920s there was prejudice against women working in business offices.

And, many women shared that prejudice, especially wives of business executives. In 1923, Richard had married Jessica Davis during his final year at Harvard Graduate School of Business. She was the daughter of a minor Boston executive with a very minor bank.

Jessica Davis barely graduated from a public high school and fell into a gin-soaked life sleeping most of the day and partying all night, drinking bootleg alcohol.

The mystery to the Barclay family was how a tea-totaller, such as Richard, managed to meet a flapper like Jessica. Meet they did. Six months after Jessica married Richard over the strenuous objections of his slightly younger sister Gertrude, Jessica gave birth to an adorable girl they named Annabel. This was in honor of William's late wife who died giving birth to Gertrude.

Within the Barclay family, Annabel was considered to have been born three months premature. They were in denial that the Richard/Jessica wedding might have been a few months late.

Long story short, when fifteen-year-old Jessica started as a party girl and flapper in 1920, she was treated as a major beauty. She was harder but still attractive when she first met Richard. But bootleg hooch adds years to appearance while dulling the mind.

By the time Richard Barclay took his first position in the family's Barclay Banking business, Jessica was feeling especially hag-like. Eventually she also resented being the mother of the adorable baby Annabel.

Of course since Richard and Jessica lived with Annabel in a third floor apartment within the Barclay's mansion on Park Avenue at East Seventy-Third Street, it was actually Nanny Parson and two nursery maids who took care of Annabel.

Richard threw all his energy and affection into The Barclay Bank and later Barclay's Department Store. He was as indifferent to the many beautiful models and saleswomen he met as he was to his alcoholic wife.

His two-year younger sister Gertrude Barclay (born in 1898) seemed to hate everyone, especially her better-looking sister-in-law Jessica. Gertrude made it her mission in life to run Jessica out of the mansion and out of the family.

Surprisingly enough, neither Gertrude nor Jessica visited the store routinely. Julia Scott had been Richard's private, and then executive secretary for almost four years before Jessica first saw her. Instantly she became jealous of Julia.

Julia dressed as well as possible on her salary, making appropriate use of her employee's discount. She inherited her apartment upon the sudden death of her parents, so she lived in far more space, without roommates, than other young women her age.

At the store and office, Julia's beauty was carefully subdued so she was taken seriously in the office. She did her best to appear older and more mature than her actual age.

Julia shared facial and body features of a cross between Kay Francis and Norma Shearer, if they had been medium strawberry blondes. Julia's voice often sounded like Claudette Colbert, with hints of Myrna Loy and Jean Arthur tossed in. To be blunt, Julia's telephone voice was outstanding.

Thus it was not entirely illogical that Jessica was jealous.

The business team of Julia Scott and Richard Barclay was quite the talk of the Manhattan upper scale retail community.

With the hatred and scheming of Gertrude, resentment of Annabel, Richard's indifference and the fact of Julia, in 1927, just before her

daughter turned three, Jessica moved out of Barclay Mansion.

Only because William R. Barclay was willing to pay whatever it cost, a divorce was negotiated without publicity. Jessica moved far away and lived well on exorbitant alimony. That expense churned the stomach of Miss Gertrude Barclay.

The whole 'Jessica Situation' probably led to the premature and unexpected death of William R. Barclay as the divorce became final. Under the terms of William's will, the store, mansion and most of the cash was left to Richard, with generous trust funds for Gertrude and Annabel.

Gertrude did inherit the use of her own apartment on the fourth floor in the Park Avenue mansion, where she remained as the 'Grande Dame of the Manor'. Despite her snobbish airs, the fact is Gertrude was not well informed and shockingly socially awkward only slightly educated by ill-qualified *laissez-faire* governesses.

Nobody understood why a woman as vain and selfish as Gertrude wanted to micro-manage the raising of her niece Annabel. Miss Clara Parson had been hired as the Nanny because she was experienced and very talented.

During the six years between Jessica departing and Annabel turning nine, Gertrude had systematically frustrated all attempts to provide Annabel with structure and self-discipline. She ordered Nanny Parsons to ignore Annabel's rudeness and indulge her whims.

Nanny Parsons was old enough she did not want to look for a new job, so she went along with Gertrude's *laissez-faire* approach to parenting and discipline. For example, when Jessica was still living with Richard, Nanny Parsons was expected to smack the naughty hands of Annabel. Under the regime of Gertrude any thought of corporal punishment of Annabel was absolutely *verboten*.

To be blunt, at nine years of age, Annabel Barclay was spoiled rotten and a pathological

liar. Actually, she was a younger version of Gertrude.

In her private thoughts, Nanny Parsons felt sure many sound spankings were in order. If the world were more perfect, she would start spanking the bare bottom of Gertrude with a hairbrush, and might eventually get around to spanking Annabel!

Meanwhile, many exciting business ventures were taking shape at Barclay's Department Store. Although Julia Scott still only held the title of 'Executive Secretary' to Richard Barclay, she was the *de facto* 'General Manager' of the business.

A playboy named Leonard "Lenny" Rogers had inherited an impressive Philadelphia department store, Rogers' of Philadelphia in 1931. Even Lenny realized he was incompetent to manage his business and he had no more interest in doing so than he did living on Philadelphia's Main Line.

So he approached a long-time pal, Richard Barclay, in hope of a merger or take-over by Barclay's of Fifth Avenue. It was Julia who did all the vital research and planning of this venture. Richard realized her importance to his success.

Barclay's had a minor cash-flow problem, largely because wealthy customers expected to buy on interest-free credit. They were slow to pay their bills. Thus it was necessary for Barclay's to obtain funding from their bankers to close the deal for Rogers' of Philadelphia.

Julia had crafted all of the presentations Richard used during negotiations with his bankers, and even coached him in the delivery of those talks. After the Crash of 1929, US Federal regulations required a 'hands-off' separation of authority when a business and a major bank shared co-ownership.

Just as the take-over of Rogers of Philadelphia was about to become final, a slightly older friend of Julia, Martha Pryor, encourage a rebellion.

Martha's plan was for Julia either to: take a similar job as the Executive Director of a Paris

business at double her Barclay's salary; or to force Richard to meet the same terms.

It is entirely possible that Richard's only romantic thoughts ever had been back in the days when he was first fascinated by Jessica Davis. Apparently he did not think in romantic terms about any other woman, including Julia. Yet when Martha convinced him that without a very good counter-offer Julia would sail to Paris, Richard became desperate.

Julia Scott was shocked by Martha's scheming, but realized Martha was correct – this was the time to be bold. If she did not make a move on Richard she might well die of spinsterhood!

So on Monday, 22 May 1933, the afternoon before the last important meeting of the bank's Board of Directors, Julia announced to Richard that they needed to work late at the Barclay mansion. Julia's excuse was the air cooling system at the store needed to be repaired. Richard well-knew Annabel and Gertrude were dysfunctional and annoying. Still he invited Julia to the mansion for dinner.

Over the years Julia knew, first-hand, that Gertrude was very needy of Richard's attention. Julia also suspected that Annabel was a spoiled brat, without ever having met the child.

Within the first few minutes of Richard arriving home with Julia, Gertrude outdid her usual rudeness. Annabel chased her small dog around the entry and living room, despite Nanny Parsons trailing, pleading for the child to calm down.

Oh, yes, during the day Gertrude had phoned Richard to say that Annabel needed an instant replacement of her toy piano. Julia had brought that replacement piano with her. Annabel had kicked the piano, claiming she did not want it.

Dinner was served and proved to be inedible. Richard had his best epiphany in a long time. Over the noise of Gertrude and Annabel in full fury, he apologized for the family row.

"Oh, I think you have a marvelous, expressive family. All it needs is a system of operations, like we use at the store," Julia casually answered.

Richard told her he wished he could spare her at the store for a few weeks to get his personal household under control by implementing such a system of operations.

"Mr. Barclay," Julia responded with a twinkle in her eyes, "All I need will be a couple of hours and absolute authority!"

Gertrude protested that their home could not be run like a business. She stood up and took a few steps toward the door.

"What nonsense, Gertrude!" Richard snapped at her. "Your totally absurd non-business-like approach to household management operations has clearly not worked.

"Miss Scott has my full confidence. She manages over ten thousand store employees. If she says she can straighten out this mess in two hours, I believe she can do it.

"She as the full authority she needs.

"Julia, when you have taken control, I will be in my study."

Arnold Russell, the butler, was hovering between Annabel and Gertrude's empty chair across the table from Julia. She focused an intense glare at Russell, "When you and the cook, whom I am told is your wife, Jane, have finished clearing the table, met me here in the dining room. Please ask the chauffeur Williams to join us.

"I also want to see Nanny Parsons when she has put Annabel to bed.

"And, I want to see all the expense records for the past year when I am talking to all of you!"

The butler replied, "Very good, Miss."

"That is 'Miss Scott' if you please!"

Annabel smirked at Julia and said, "Pay no attention to her, Russell!"

"As for you, Young Lady," Julia said with a determined expression focused on Annabel, "Prepare yourself for bed!"

"Now that you have finished your dinner, you are to be given a bath and put to bed by your Nanny as quickly as possible."

As predicted, the brat protested, which did not convince Miss Scott. Annabel gave a haughty smirk to Julia, who began slowly walking around the dining table, past Richard's empty chair. Annabel hesitated once Julia was so close she could have seized her. Then Annabel jumped up and scampered, backward, toward the door. She even bumped into her father's vacant chair in her haste to elude Julia.

Running up the stairs to her room, Annabel called out to Nanny Parsons. "Julia thinks she has been put in charge, instead of Aunt Gertrude. I was ordered to prepare for bed, whatever that means. Julia said you should bathe me as if I were an infant and dress me for bed."

"My nicest short summer nightie will suit me. Julia did not say I must be tucked into bed, thank Heavens."

"But, Julia did instruct Russell to have you join him in the dining room after you have prepared me for bed."

While Annabel took off the housedress she had worn to dinner, along with her panties, socks, shoes and hair ribbons, and threw them in a mess on her floor, down the hallway Miss Parsons drew the bath. She returned to Annabel's room and held open her bathrobe.

Downstairs, the second Annabel left the dining room, Julia stepped into Richard's office. She used his private desk phone to reach Ronald Butterfield. He was head of the store's Security Department.

"Special Agent Butterfield, this is Miss Scott. I am at the mansion of Richard Barclay. All my instincts tell me that his butler, cook

and chauffeur are robbing him blind. I want you to send two or three very large armed plain-clothes officers. They could be from your staff since none of those servants would know them, or they could be Pinkerton operatives.

"I want them here as soon as possible to deal with the outcome of the firings. They are to make sure no Barclay property leaves with the former servants, that they retain no keys and that they are forcefully escorted off the property. I especially want to be sure the Barclay Rolls Royce is parked and locked in the mansion's underground garage. Please have as many agents remain at the mansion to secure it as long as we decide is necessary.

"Of course Agent Butterfield, use your own excellent professional judgment. My suspicion is the extent of the embezzlement constitutes felony crimes. But I do not want such publicity. After I have seen the records of expenses, the two of us should confer about additional investigation."

"Miss Scott, at the moment only uniformed guards are in the store. It will be faster to use Pinkertons. Since they do not know you by sight, I urge you to delay any confrontation with the employees until I can arrive, in about ten minutes. None of the servants have met me, so I will simply introduce myself as a Barclay business associate. Yes, my duty weapon is fully loaded!"

Once Agent Butterfield joined Richard and Julia in the study, he made sure the Pinkerton operatives had been dispatched on the double. As soon as he saw their cars park on the front driveway behind his, he signaled Julia everything was ready.

The result of the meeting and view of the receipts was that Williams was embezzling gasoline and taking kick-backs on the auto repairs.

Less than half of the other household expense paperwork could be produced. What was available convinced Julia of additional embezzlement. She fired all three of those crooks on the spot.

"You are to pack and get out immediately. Williams park the Rolls in the garage and bring me the keys to both of them.

"In the reception room several Pinkerton detectives are waiting to supervise your packing. Then you all will be escorted off the premises. None of you are to ever return here without special permission. Once I am satisfied, you will receive checks for wages due you.

"I am sure this easily could be a matter for the police, but to spare embarrassment I will accept your resignations. Needless to say, you may not list the Barclay family as reference!"

Periodically during the tense confrontation with the Russells and Williams, Richard peeked into the dining room from its ajar door.

"Miss Scott" Nanny Parsons started in a tentative, shy voice, "Am I to go, too?"

"Nanny Parsons, I am convinced you have been honest and are very welcome to stay," Julia said calmly, smiling at Miss Parsons.

At this point Richard returned to his study, leaving the dining room door fully open.

Julia continued in a soft voice, "Your only drawback is that you have been far too soft on Annabel for far too long!"

"I was only following the orders of Miss Gertrude Barclay, Miss Scott" the nanny stammered to explain, still appearing to be ready to cry.

"Try an iron hand for a change. That girl is a bully. She needs discipline badly!" Julia told Nanny Parsons solemnly, looking her straight in the eyes. The elderly woman seemed to be on the verge of tears.

"Nanny Parsons, you are not to blame. If Miss Gertrude Barclay had ever been a parent, she would see that Annabel has absolutely no self-discipline!

"What that naughty child needs is consistent, strong discipline! I will introduce an entirely different approach to her education and discipline, which I will term my 'New Deal'. I am

counting upon you, Nanny Parsons, to inculcate in Annabel self-discipline. Will you help me help Annabel?"

At that moment Annabel, wearing a summer nightie with a bathrobe and carrying a doll, burst into the dining room. "I am not a bully. I will not go to bed this early. I am not sleepy."

"Annabel, I am in charge. You heard your father," Julia made clear without raising her voice.

Using a very soft voice, as if a 'throw-away' line, Julia said, "Nanny Parsons, please put Annabel to bed again."

When Nanny Parsons reached for Annabel's hand, the brat kicked her and ran to the entry room. There was a brief chase, with the nanny two steps behind. Under the grand piano, Julia caught and held onto Annabel.

"We are going to your room this minute!" Julia ordered. "The easy way is for you to walk on your own showing me the way. The alternative will be a lot less fun for you, and you already are in significant trouble!"

"Please follow Miss Scott's instructions, Lambie Pie," Nanny Parsons pleaded.

With Julia looking stern and forceful, Annabel scampered ahead of her up the stairs, sometimes on all fours, and to her room, yelling such things as, "Aunt Gertrude! Save Me!"

Inside Annabel's bedroom, Julia locked the door. Her order for the brat to get into bed was ignored.

"Even if you force me into bed, I will not sleep" Annabel whined. "What are you going to do, give me a pill? I refuse to take any pills!"

"Never mind, Annabel" Julia cooed, "My method will put you to sleep without the need for any pills."

Calmly Julia walked over to Annabel's vanity and picked up the child's adult-sized oval hairbrush. Julia patted the back of it on her own left hand.

As Annabel cowered against the far wall, Julia started slowly and deliberately toward her, warning: "Believe me, Lambie Pie: This will hurt you very much more than it will hurt me!"

Never having been punished and without contact with children her own age, Annabel did not understand the significance of an adult in authority patting a hairbrush against a free left hand and saying, 'This will hurt you more than me'.

Wide-eyed with concern, Annabel naïvely asked, "What are you going to do?"

"What do you think I am going to do?" Julia asked. "You have to be the most annoying and densest child on Park Avenue.

"I am going to give you the spanking of your life, which you have needed for a very long time.

"This hairbrush will be the star of your traditional paddy-whacking spanking. Your panties and nightie will not be in the way!"

Annabel could not tell that this was the very first time Julia had been responsible for a child's punishment. All Julia knew about spanking was from the position over the lap of her loving mother. A few times her father had punished Julia with a belt.

Less than an hour before when she had the epiphany that Annabel needed spanking, Julia had forgotten how she herself would struggle, twist, squirm and wriggle as a hairbrush or belt punished her. She worried if she would be able to physically control Annabel while only hurting her with the hairbrush.

Yet, as if with practiced ease, Julia sat on the bed, pulled Annabel's garments out of the way, positioned her bare delicate derrière over her lap and reached for the hairbrush.

Over Annabel's loud protests, Julia applied the hairbrush alternatively to both of the girl's small lower buttocks and upper thighs. Julia was pleasantly surprised that Annabel, not only never struggled, she did not squirm or wriggle.

While Julia continued to vigorously apply spanks with the hairbrush, she recalled a few minutes before, as she told the girl she would be spanked, Annabel flashed the hint of a contented smile.

Julia had another epiphany: Was it possible that Annabel did not struggle because she knew what she needed was effective discipline, even being spanked? Annabel's protests soon turned to sobs, with copious tears.

Originally Gertrude had joined Clara Parsons outside the locked door. While Clara put her ear to the door, Gertrude ran down the stairs to find Richard.

He was at the base of the stairs, a look of beatific rapture on his face: "That's the finest music in this house in years," Richard remarked to Gertrude.

"But, Julia is killing little Annabel," Gertrude stated, forgetting that when Richard and Julia had arrived for dinner, it was Gertrude who complained about Annabel's deportment.

"No, Sister, Miss Scott is not killing Annabel," Richard answered. "My daughter is getting a simple spanking, and she is not exactly taking her spanking like a lady.

"Her yelling reminds me of the way you carried on, Gertrude, when your governesses frequently spanked you. I remember a few times when I was attending Groton and once when I was first at Harvard, getting letters from you protesting being spanked. You would have been older than sixteen when you wrote to me at Harvard!

"I am sure Annabel is being taught a valuable lesson."

Gertrude leaned back against a column for support. Her hands fluttered about in a bad imitation of 'Billie Burke-style movie female dithering'.

"Oh, Richard, I think I am going to faint!"

"Go ahead, Gertrude, maybe the fall will do you some good, too," Richard remarked, without a glance at her performance.

Gertrude gave up the dithering and just stood there also listening to the sounds of a thorough spanking. Her eyes were closed, as if remembering the distant past when she was over the lap of a governess receiving a similar hairbrush spanking.

Upstairs Clara Parson was enjoying herself. Silently she was urging Julia to spank the brat longer and harder.

Eventually the shrieks and sobs from Annabel stopped. So did the loud sound of hairbrush meeting tender flesh.

After a few minutes of quiet from the locked room, Julia Scott emerged. Her business dress was neat, not a hair was out of place and Julia had re-applied her lipstick.

"Nanny Parsons, Annabel is in bed, on her tummy, with her bedding down at her feet" Julia stated the obvious. "In an hour will you please check on her? But please do not be affectionate with her. Annabel needs to feel that she has been punished and will be in disgrace until morning."

"Very good, Miss Scott! May I say I have wanted to give her a sound spanking hundreds of times?" Nanny Parsons said with a broad smile.

"Nanny Parsons, from now on you will have that chance. I cannot be here every minute. You know where Annabel's hairbrush is kept. You do not need permission from me, Mr. Barclay or especially Miss Gertrude Barclay. When you consider that Annabel needs punishment, be sure to spank her soundly," were the instructions from Julia.

Downstairs, Julia was brooking no nonsense from Gertrude. "I am sure you know I just spanked Annabel with her hairbrush on her bare derrière. I am confident she is upset and confused.

"My instructions to Nanny Parsons are very clear. She has orders from me to spank Annabel for any misbehavior, using her experience to decide how long and hard.

"Miss Barclay, I am familiar with the provisions of your father's will. I typed all of that paperwork. It is true that you will always have an apartment, somewhere.

"Your apartment needs to be in this mansion only as long as providing that is practical and possible. Nothing in your late father's will mentions that you can live in this mansion for as long as you want to do so.

"In fact, to satisfy the will, all the estate needs to do is offer to pay for another housing arrangement. Unfortunately for you, that same provision does not give you veto power over such arrangements. Your father left you a substantial trust fund, so you are free to buy or rent your own dwelling!

"From now on it will be Mr. Barclay making all decisions related to raising Annabel. Should you be willing to agree with this stricter discipline and corporal punishment, I will recommend that you remain in Annabel's life. If you do not agree with these methods, then you will no longer be part of the child's life.

"I am sure down inside Annabel is a bright decent kid. All of us who love her must guide her in the same direction!"

Leaving Gertrude sputtering in rage, frothing at her mouth, Julia calmly walked into Richard's study. "Well, I took the authority you granted me, Mr. Barclay. I am sure all your servants, except Nanny Parson, were embezzling you blind, so I fired all of them. Before I fired them I spoke to Ronald Butterfield. Three of Pinkerton's most imposing agents were waiting to ensure those three crooks did not steal anything else.

"My best friend Martha Pryor's own chauffeur will drive you to the store this morning.

"I will leave for my apartment now. Agent Butterfield will drive me in his car. He has left two Pinkerton operatives to prevent any of the fired servants attempting to return.

"I will get some rest, and return here in time to be sure Annabel gets her breakfast. Gertrude

can fend for herself as far as I care. If necessary you can eat at the store. Once I am sure the new servants are reliable, I will have your new chauffeur drive me to the office.

"Oh, yes, not only did I spank the daylights out of your daughter on her bare derrière with her own hairbrush, I have instructed Nanny Parsons to do likewise whenever Annabel misbehaves.

"It is still less than two hours since you gave me authority. I regret to say that while progress has been made, it could take longer than a month to resolve all the problems within your family.

"For example, you did not grant me authority to spank your sister. Spanking Gertrude would so speed up the resolution of your family problems."

The doorbell rang. It was Ron Butterfield with his car. Julia gathered her hat, coat and purse. Leaving Richard Barclay speechless, Miss Julia Scott nonchalantly shook his hand and walked out the large front door.