

ALL OF ME - EXCERPT



Who remembers high school? Or maybe the better question is, 'Who *wants* to remember high school?' Ladies, do you remember the popular clique? Maybe you were even part of it, huh? The girls who had the perky personalities, gorgeous hair, petite figures, designer clothes, and once a month wore their cheerleading uniforms to school for the big pep rally?

"Even back in grade school, these girls outshone the rest. They were *never* the last ones picked for Red Rover at recess; always the *first* ones picked to show the new students around school because they were teacher's pet. Even when puberty started, nary a pimple nor blemish would make an appearance on their flawless skin - do you remember?

"Yeah, well that was *never* me. But I did experience it up close and personal because my fraternal twin sister was *all* of those things. And beyond that, she was the sweetest and most loving sister a girl could ever have. To this day, she's always there for me,

supportive, caring, and totally clueless as to how it feels to live in my world which was and is quite different than hers.

"Many of you may have already seen my promotional ads and billboards around town. Yep, that's me. I'm a full-figured gal who tried like hell to be all the things I was never meant to be. And that's okay, because along the way I learned to appreciate the woman that I am. To not dwell on the negatives, but to focus on the positives. And the most positive quality I felt I possessed was my voice, and my ability to train and hone it to transition myself into characters who were not me by design. I actually earned a living doing such things, and I never had to leave the confines of my apartment; never had to put Autumn Dey out there competing with skinny girls for jobs where one's physical appearance should never even matter. Yeah, I knew from the start I'd never qualify as a Victoria's Secret model, but that was okay as long as I was given a fair shot at anything else.

"But that's not quite the way things work in our 'must look perfect' society. Cosmo tells us through their ad copy for everything from age defying make-up to hemorrhoid cream that skinny is beautiful yet dare to post a column now and then about '*making your curves work for you.*' Note to Cosmo: Put a fat girl in your ad copy sometime - and not to pitch some diet milkshakes, 'kay?

"You're probably thinking 'Autumn get to the damn point here,' by now. So, I will. As much as I preached to myself that I was happy in my own skin, my inner *skinny girl* was telling me different based on past experience. And she had a name, *Ramona*. Some might say Ramona was my alter-ego, and maybe in some sense she was. But she was also that skinny girl inside of me who would never be judged by anything other than her voice, and the sexy, skinny blonde picture which represented me on the website. I admit it, I worked at a 900 call-in service, but I was there, with my seductive twang, when horny, and sometimes just lonely men called in. But I wanted more. I wanted to venture out and do something that I could be proud of. And then I came here. To Quirk-99 and I sat in

a waiting room full of beautiful, willowy talent and almost ran out the door because I didn't feel that I could compete with them, even on radio where you're only judged by your voice . . . and your personality. I have to admit, my initial impression when meeting the owner left my *inner Ramona* face-palming when a button on my skirt popped at the start of my interview for this job. I was certain I'd blown my chance.

"Imagine my surprise when my future boss didn't bat an eye and subsequently gave me the opportunity to do an impromptu, mostly unscripted, audio test for his new baby, Midnight Caller. The rest is history. I've been here for several months, and I love what I do. I absolutely love being the 'Night Hawk,' a name my callers tagged me, and listening to those callers, sometimes giving pithy responses, other times identifying with their challenges, doubts and idiosyncrasies, and hopefully conveying sound advice.

"Tonight, I've failed all of you with the inappropriate and unprofessional spat which occurred during my segment. I take ownership for the impetus behind it. I was deceptive in reference to my former position as the call-in fake persona, Ramona. I apologize to whomever I hurt with this. Sometimes we simply cannot exorcise the demons of doubt and mistrust based on what we know and what experience tells us. Guilty as charged. So I'd like to extend my sincere apologies to those who were listening, and for those whose calls weren't taken. I've got a couple of hours left on the air. Feel free to call in and tell me whatever you're feeling--good or bad. Chew my ass if it's what you think I need. Don't hold back."