

Patti-girl

Mali Farnell

5 seconds, 4 secs, 3 secs, 2 secs, 1 sec. Congratulations. You are the highest bidder.

Bargain, she thought.

Clicking on the Pay Now icon, she confirmed payment on her well worn Credit Card, checked delivery details and noted the Powerseller status of 'Patti-girl', the seller of her newly purchased Sass & Bide top.

Flicking her painted toenails back and forth across the plush pile carpet that carried the glass dining table, she headed for the virtual check-out. Snapping shut the slimline silver lap-top, she returned it to the neat book-lined study down the hall. A victory drink was in order. No matter that it was only 3.21pm in the afternoon, after all, she deserved it. She had worked hard trawling the net all day in search of something to wear to the cocktail party Saturday week.

As she headed into the cool, clean glare of the white kitchen, her eyes smarted a little as they adjusted to the light. She clinked a crystal cut tumbler under the icemaker of the stainless steel Maytag, and wondered about Patti-girl, the Powerseller.

Could it be someone she inadvertently knows? Perhaps they had rubbed shoulders at a party before? Maybe she's been seated next to her at the local Barista on a busy Saturday morning? She's probably a Fashion Buyer selling off her European samples. Even at \$162.50 (inc.postage) the Sass & Bide top was a steal, and it would go a treat with that little black skirt with the sequin finish she purchased last week. Come to think of it, was that from 'Patti-girl' too? Yes, she must definitely work in the fashion industry, she thought to herself.

"Good morning Pat", Marjorie said to her friend and work colleague.

"Morning Marj. Anything good in today?"

"Ah, I put a couple of things aside for you in the back room".

The room held a muted, musty smell.

"Good on ya, luv. I'll have a look at them after my morning cuppa".

She shuffled into the dark kitchen, filled the ceramic electric jug with water and booted up the old computer seated on the laminate kitchen table. Plastic bags spilled out of the back room onto the wooden verandah of the weatherboard cottage.

The community charity shop was owned by the local Uniting Church and turned a small but tidy profit for the Church's Missionary work overseas.

"I'll bring this lot in, in a minute Marj", offered Pat.

"But, I've just got to get this parcel off to the Post Office first".
