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foundation of vermont
is pleased to announce our Year 2005
Grants and Scholarships (centered)

Grants

- AIDS Project of Southern Vermont - \$1,500
- Mountain Pride Media - \$4,000
- Outright Vermont - \$5,000
- R.U.1.2? Community Center - \$3,500
- SafeSpace - \$1,000
- Transgender Day of Remembrance - \$1,000
- Vermont CARES - \$2,000
- Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force - \$1,750

Scholarships

- Larson Hogstrom - \$1,000
Killington
- Lauren Parker - \$1,000
Williston
- Gavin Rouille - \$1,000
South Burlington

Our Mission

The Samara Foundation of Vermont is a charitable foundation whose mission is to support and strengthen Vermont's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered communities today and build an endowment for tomorrow.

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fiction

Editor's Note: In honor of Pride and what it means to Vermonters who are just coming out to themselves and/or to their friends and family, we offer the following short story as a bit of summer reading.

The Bra Store

by Inga Singer

Ed is the one who told her I needed new bras. I thought I ought to - to go with *him*, my new husband. You couldn't get them in Vermont easily, except at the general stores, and I like to try mine on first. I must have mentioned this to Ed. So Ed told his mom, because we were visiting her in Brooklyn, and she likes to feel useful - that's what Ed said. She immediately thought of Miss Pauline's, but couldn't remember the name, so she looked in the phone book. Mom looked under lingerie first. She said lingerie so the i's sound like mystery. She's my mother-in-law, of course, but she is accustomed to being called mom, and I am trying to show deference. Why? It's so un-American. Wait, maybe not. Wait, maybe. Anyway, I don't mean to be political. You can think about it later. My father escaped the Nazi invasion of Hungary, and my mother was an addict. They shared and kept these secrets, and taught me how to pronounce lingerie instead. Sure, thanks. Back at the phone book, Ed and mom were gaining momentum, while I was rolling in memories and why does that sometimes feel as if one is losing ground? Now I know, and you do, too, that you will find Miss Pauline's in the yellow pages under corsets, not lingerie.

We took the car and mom dropped me off in front of Miss Pauline's while she looked for a parking space. When Ed was a little boy, he once told me, his mom would take him with her while she shopped for this thing, this *lingerie*. He would try desperately to seem preoccupied as long as they were in the store. Oh yeah, a

boy thing. Then what was making *me* feel funny? I was still trying to win his mother's approval, but did good Jewish girls *have* to go shopping for underwear with their mother-in-laws?

The place was tight and narrow - an unpolished hardwood floor trodden into pale paths, a glass-topped counter on each side, slightly dull, their contents obscured by bits of satin and lace. A tall display on top dangled a scanty red spandex bra and pants. Phew. Phew, repeated a tiny voice inside me. An equally tiny spark of panic shot through me, but I couldn't figure out why.

All the other goods, I assumed, were hidden in the hundreds of little boxes in the hundreds of little shelves covering three of the walls, floor to ceiling. Every box was either pink or white. Above the entrance door, on the fourth wall, were posters of lovely young women with lovely young figures wearing enticingly lovely lacey things, and satiny things, stretchy things, pushy things, revealing things. Blouses or soft robes thrown passionately back over their shoulders, love in their eyes. One is seated, long thighs parted just so. That one, I thought; I wonder how she is in bed, and went on as if no great insight had jumped up, waving its hand. *With me*, a little voice inside me was shouting, with me! I didn't recognize the voice, but the spark of panic was fanning hotter.

I had to wait for one of the sales ladies, since they were all occupied with clients. Miss Pauline -- it could only be her -- was fifty-ish with a red-glo coiffure, black rim glasses and a

heavy bust. She wore a brown dress and probably was unable to see her feet looking down, which could explain the shoes. Then again, all her clients had her racing around that tiny store, climbing ladders to reach those little white or pink boxes shelved up so high. There were two other sales ladies. One was younger and wore her hair down. She was in a sweatshirt and thin, tight bluejeans. I was assigned to her, but had to wait because at first they were all busy attending.

The youngest client had you're-so-blond bangs and a short blunt cut, long black nylon eyelashes, a fur coat, big diamond rings, grey sweat pants and sneakers. She fondled a beige satin bra, eyes half-closed, and waited for her bill. The cash register was antique. So was an old Pfaff sewing machine standing in the corner.

Miss Pauline asked me in passing, "Whaddaya looking for?"

I had no idea where to start. My chest was pounding now. My ears were ringing.

"Oh," flailing, flailing, "cotton, please, and uh, 34B." I whispered the size, overwhelmed by the feminine surrounding. Could I be a part of this? And tell me, is that a hope, a wish, a rhetorical question or did I need an answer? *Hello-o*, said the little voice inside me, waving its hand, *I know!* I didn't acknowledge it.

Mom came in and sat down in a very small chair next to the register and chatted with Miss Pauline. They seemed so cozy. I could barely look at them. I didn't know where to look. Born and raised in Manhattan and I didn't know where to look. When had my