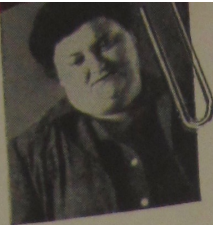


## True Confessions

STORY FILE: Rita G.



...My mother and I quarreled about me hanging around the house, not having any boy friends. Finally I couldn't stand it any more. I told her, "Why should a fellow want to take me out? Just look at me! I'm so fat I even hate myself...."

(From Rita's letter to the editor.)

# I Love made a fool of me

WHEN MOM CALLED ME for breakfast the morning of my twenty-fifth birthday, I came into the kitchen all ready to ask if she remembered what day it was. Then I noticed the deep circles under her eyes and the way she dragged herself from the stove to the table, and I changed my mind.

"You didn't sleep again last night?" I said instead. "It's your legs again, isn't it? You ought to stay off your feet with those varicose veins." I sighed. "If only I could get a better job—then you could stay home. Anyway, it's about time I got a promotion, after almost nine years. Should I ask the supervisor? According to the grapevine, I'm due for one."

"All the more reason not to ask," Mom said. "Meanwhile, we're not starving. Between us we can manage. Of course I'd be happier if you got married. Then I wouldn't need hardly anything. I could live in one room."

"You would not!" I burst out. "You'd live with us!" And then I laughed. "You'd think I had some prospects, the way I'm talking. Don't count on me getting married, Mom. Men don't like fat girls."

She shook her head. "I don't know what's the matter with the boys today. Someone like Mrs. Deenan's Margy, a tramp, she gets a nice fellow, and a girl like you, good as gold, a good housekeeper, a good cook—you sit home every night."

"Okay, Mom," I said. "I know I'm a prize, but every year I get less and less valuable."

Mom stopped, the coffee- [Continued on page 82]



Mom knew right away what I had done. It was just like she could see the shame that was crawling through me

