Straight

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

The first thing that I did was come straight out and tell my family that I was gay. I guess a lot of guys have real difficulty with this, but at the end of the day you just have to get it over with. You have to be straight. As it turned out, it went well. My Dad was not surprised – in fact, he was almost relieved. It seemed to explain everything about me.

I guess that I was always effeminate. I don’t really know why. It was not something I put on. That was just the way I was. I was scared of little things and a bit silly, I guess. I was the youngest of the family so when I was small they all just laughed at me, but they loved me anyway. I never doubted that. When I got older and I never changed my older brothers and my sister just assumed I was gay.

I had girlfriends, so I suppose my father lived in hope. But they were just friends. In some ways I was just one of the girls. Actually, in many ways I was.

It may be a little unfair to my father too say that because I had two older brothers his line was safe, but I certainly felt that there was less pressure on me to be somebody other than myself. My father said that his only concern was for my safety.

“There are people out there who attack gay people,” he said. I never really worried me until it did happen. I was badly hurt, but I could not change who I was. I just needed to be more careful and it also helped to find a partner who could protect me – a more masculine queer.

Tyler was just the guy I needed. I was fresh out of high school when I met him. He was big and strong, and clearly cared about me. He wanted the active role in sex, and I was Okay with that. The truth is that it suited me.

Tyler was not out at home or at work, but we had a great social life with other gay friends. We were partners and everybody knew it. But felt that I wanted to be a part of his whole life. I did not pressure him to come out – all gay men understand that this a personal choice – but I told him that it could be easy.

To show him I took him to meet my family. They were great. My father liked him. He said that it could do worse than find “a real man like Tyler”.

The problem Tyler had was that I was so effeminate that if he was standing beside me, he was marked as gay, no matter how he behaved. No straight guy would have any association with somebody like me. He said even among strangers at the ball game he could not take me. It was his idea that I dress as a girl.

I am not saying that I had never but on a dress or makeup before. When I was at school I had spent time with my girlfriends dressing up and playing around – even more than one girls sleepover where I had been a special guest because I was “not really a boy”. I knew that I could pass, but I was aware that I needed to tone down my behavior a notch or two.

We went to the ball game, and then we went out to restaurants and regular bars with me as his girlfriend. The culmination was when I went with Tyler to a work function as his girlfriend Jennifer.

I then had to come out to my family again as a crossdresser. They were fine with that too.

So I am a gay crossdresser in a relationship with a gay guy. That was who I was. Or that is what I thought. Then I met Jordan.

The crazy thing was that when I met him I was dressed as a guy, or rather I was not dressed like a woman. But he asked me: “Why are you dressed in men’s clothes”? He assumed that I was female even though I was not putting it on.

Maybe it was just coming naturally to me, doing it as I did at least one evening each week. Or maybe it was something else that Jordan saw in me that nobody else had.

Anyway, in my best girl voice I launched into some spiel about “a woman can dress as she likes and not be confined to some gender role imposed by men”. He just smiled and gave me a look that sort of made my rant trail off.

He asked my name, and I said that I was Jennifer.

I mean, he was obviously straight, and if I had said that my name was Josh he would have walked away, but I did not want that to happen.

“Are you available for dinner tonight”? I remember those words exactly as he said them.

I am sexually attracted to men, but as a gay man I am attracted to gay men. I mean I had crushes like gay guys do. I would happily be fucked by Brad Pitt and a few others, but that is fantasy. Gay men recognize other gay men and there is attraction. Straight men are off limits.

Strangely perhaps, in all that was going through my head I never gave Tyler a single thought. Is that awful? I was to conclude that I was never really in love with Tyler. He was my man, and we had great sex, but it was not love. I am not sure whether I knew that my feelings for Jordan were love at that first meeting, but since then I have never doubted that they were.

I had to say yes. It was really out of my hands, or even my head. The answer came for the heart.

Tyler had nothing planned that night, so I told him that I was catching up with some girls from school. He would never check, because basically Tyler does not talk with girls. I got dressed up as Jennifer and I went out to meet Jordan.

As I have explained, I had been out before many times as a crossdressing gay man, but that night that was not what I was. I cannot begin to say how different I felt. It was as if I had pretended to be something only to discover that I was that thing all along. I just became me. It seemed like my whole life before that night was about pretending. I did not have to do it anymore. I was Jennifer.

I am still not sure whether it was that realization of it was Jordan that made that evening so special. All I know is that it was the best night of my life. It was like a Disney movie – I just danced through the whole thing. I did not want it to end, but mainly because I knew how it had to end.

I had no idea how to tell him, but I knew that I had to. This situation must have presented the same problem many times to many people. I told him that it was getting late. He suggested that we share a cab but I said that I would take my own. We stood there on the sidewalk while the cabs waited. We kissed. It was perfect – the perfect end to a perfect night.”

“I would suggest next week, but I don’t think that I could bear the wait”, he said as I got into my cab.

I dropped the window a little. I felt safe there. I expected rage. It would crush him, I thought. How do you say this?

“You need to know that I am in a relationship with another guy”, I said.

“I figured”, he said. “You have a choice to make. I hope it will be me. You have my number”.

“You have mine, but you won’t call”, I said. He looked at me in confusion. “I am trans”.

I just raised the window and the cab drove off. Is that cruel? I could not even look back. Even if I had my eyes would have been so full of tears that I could never have seen his reaction. To this day I still have no idea.

When I did look up, I could see the cab driver looking at me in the rear-view mirror.

“Please don’t judge me”, I said to him.

“That was heavy”, he said. “But it must be difficult for you transgendered folk”.

Is that what I meant? I said that I was trans – but trans what? A transvestite dresses in women’s clothing. A transsexual has surgery to function as another sex. Transgendered people are born believing that they are in the wrong body. Was that me?

What had happened that night is that I had fallen in love with Jordan, and it seemed as if he had fallen in love with me. I was a new category – a trans-fool – a victim of fortune.

Tyler was up when I got home. He was watching a rerun of some violent movie. It occurred to me then that he did not have sentimental bone in his body. He did not ask me about my girl’s night out. He just suggested sex. He did it right there in the living room. He draped me across the table and entered me from behind and thrust into me with all of the violence of the trash he had been watching.

I occurred to me how wrong this was. My ass was a channel for shit. Shit comes out of it, and sometimes a shit comes in it. But how can that be an organ of love. A vagina is that. If I had one of those it would be right.

I crawled into bed beside him, but I did not touch him. I did not sob, but there were tears to wet my pillow. For the first time I found myself wishing that I was female, and that I was lying in bed with the dashing and romantic Jordan, and not this brute.

But that was a dream. I was Cinderella for one night, but in reality I was filthy and low, and I always would be. Jordan would never call, and this would be nothing but a fairytale memory, that might bring an occasional smile to an otherwise depressing life.

We use the word “gay” to tell everybody that we are happy and carefree, and we rally do not care what anybody thinks. It seems like the perfect word when you are surrounded by friends and having way too much sex. In times like that, gay men say – “thank God I am not straight”! But I wanted to be straight, and to be female.

But Jordan would never call. As that cab drove away with me in it, did he throw up, or did he rage, or shed a tear. I will never know, because he as refused to tell me.

All that needs to be explained is that he did call.

“I have read all about it”, he said. “How far into transition are you? Have you planned surgery? This must have been so hard for you. I saw your tears as you drove off. I have had time to think … and to understand. I do want to go out with you again. I want more … much, much more”.

I had to come out to my family a third time. I had to explain that I was transgender. I had to explain that I was finished with being gay. Tyler was out of my life and they needed to meet Jordan, and Jordan was not gay.

My father liked Jordan from the moment he met him. He told me that he was “the kind of guy that a man could wish for as a soon in law”. He said it again at our wedding reception two years after Jordan and I first met. It took that long for me to complete my transition and to fully recover from the surgeries but now it is all good.

Now I am straight.

The End

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*Erin’s seed: Guy who thinks he is a gay crossdresser because he has a gay lover but he goes on vacation en femme and falls in love with a straight guy. It tears the gay couple apart and the straight lover is freaked out and dumps her but she bounces back, transitions and finds love in the end*