First Three Men

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

I guess my father was old-fashioned. He brought me and my brothers up to understand the difference between men and women. Men were tough and didn’t cry. Women hurt easily. They feel and they suffer and weep. If men suffer then they do so in silence.

Learning that meant that I understood very early on that I was something less than a man. At first my father was angry, but I was his third son, so I suppose he accepted that I could be different, although he did worry about me. In time when I cried he took me into his arms and did not expect me to suffer in silence.

My mother also recognized that I was different. She said that I was “a rather girlish boy” and if I wanted, I could do stuff with her rather than with my father and my brothers. I tried to do all things. I didn’t want to make the choice to be less than a man – it was just the way I was.

Mom loved cooking and talking about food. I was closer to her, I guess, so I got interested in food too. I loved helping her. She would always say the essential ingredient in any great dish was love. I always remembered that.

At school I mixed with girls as well as boys. I was not a girl but they were happy to include me in stuff they did as if I was. My friends who were boys were quiet like me – not sporty.

Kids don’t really understand what crossdressing is, except that only girls wear dresses and skirts. When I helped my Mom I sometimes wore a pinny which sometimes seemed like a dress if I wore short pants underneath. The things I liked about girls clothes were the colors and the frills or other details that made the special. I had no sisters so I had no women’s clothes to wear when I was small, but when I got older I did like to put on some of the clothes Mom was throwing out, just for fun.

In high school puberty came along, but it had already started for most boys in middle school. I was not looking forward to all the spots and whiskers. I had really nice skin and it just seemed like puberty was out to ruin it.

Mom asked me whether I thought I was transgender – like did I want to be a girl instead of a boy. As I remember it, I said – “Sure. That would be OK.” Like not - “Oh yes, that is what I have always wanted” but not - “No way, I’m a boy” either. I suppose that I was not ready to commit, and even as puberty passed through me without destroying me, I felt I didn’t have to.

At that time I got closer to some of the girls in school. It was a little group called “the Acorns” because we used to get together under the old oak tree in the grounds for a chat. I was the only guy in the group and sometimes I was referred to as “an honorary girl”. I had no problem being that.

Then I found out that I was gay. I got a hopeless crush over an older guy at school. His name was Mason Newberry. He was my first love. The problem is that he was not gay. He also barely noticed me, and in the end, I figured that was a good thing. I was pretty sure that he would not recognize me when I was dressed as a girl – dressed as Rosa.

I knew that Mason liked to visit a record store down on Lincoln Street on Saturday mornings, so I decided that I would dress up as a girl preparing a little on Friday night, and then go there to browse and “accidentally” bump into him. My preparation included working on a female voice and gestures that I had learned about on the internet.

I told Mom that I was preparing to go down town dressed as a girl “just to see if I can do it”. She offered to go with me, but I said that I would do it alone. She was worried for me and asked me to be careful, but she was not surprised or disapproving. I did not want to tell her that my intentions were sexual, if that is what they were.

She helped e pick an outfit and to do my hair and makeup, and as I walked out the door I think she may have shed a tear, like sending her little girl off to her first day at high school. It felt nice and I wanted to hug her, but I was out the door and gone. I had things to do.

It all went perfectly, I backed into Mason and I had in my hand the same record he was looking at. He said – “Hey, you are interested in the same music” and “there’s nothing like vinyl, right?”. We talked, or rather I let him talk and he invited me to the place next door for “the best hot chocolate in town”. He never for a minute guessed that I was the boy from school that he pushed past in the hall. It seemed like a dream come true.

As I watched him talking I decided that he was the guy for me. There was just one problem – he thought I was a girl. In that moment I wanted to be one so badly that it hurt. I decided to bring the conversation around to things transgender, by mentioning that the girl playing the keyboards in a band I mentioned had actually been born a guy.

“A fucking tranny!” he said. “What is with those guys? Why would you want to cut your dick off? It is just plain weird. And then they go around trying to trick guys into getting into bed with them. Real sickos those trannies.”

I was destroyed. I mean I sat there as the whole building seemed to collapse around me. I looked at him and I realized that love was not real. This guy was the king of assholes and some feeling had drawn me to him, and that feeling had betrayed me.

I said something like – “my cousin is transgender and she is a wonderful person” and I just walked out. Outside I wished that I had spilt my hot chocolate all over him, but I was in tears, so I had to get as far away from there as possible.

When I got home Mom could see I had been crying and asked whether I had been discovered and abused.

“No Mom, I am just confused,” I blubbed. “I don’t know what I want.” But I did. I wanted love, and it was not there for me.

I got together with the Acorns and told them everything, except the name of the guy, of course, and the fact that I was dressed as a girl. They all said the same thing in one way or another – “All men are pricks and you just have to be choosy”.

I decided that I needed to choose a gay man who accepted that I was a crossdresser, and I suppose that I thought that there would be plenty of men like that. I used an app for young gay men. I got some hook ups, but I soon found out the sad truth that young gay men just want to fuck.

One guy actually said to me – “Hey, this isn’t mommies and daddies, and a house in the suburbs. This is the gay life – we fuck and we have fun”. Somehow it was just not me.

Then I met Julian Sanford. He was my second love. He was a closeted gay guy, and when I introduced him to Rosa he said that he wanted us to be together. He said that when we graduated high school, he would be going to college on a volleyball scholarship and I could be his girlfriend.

With the help of the Acorns and my mom, I came out as a transgirl at the prom. The idea was that Julian would be my partner, but he was not ready for that. The Acorns arranged a date for me, and Julian took a girl from the women’s volleyball team. But he stared at me all night in my beautiful ballgown with the hair I had been growing all year up in a fancy do. This seemed like real love.

My parents seemed to have accepted that I was transgender, but the truth is that is not what Julian wanted. He wanted me to be a woman at all times except in bed with him. He wanted me to be as womanly as possible and that meant hormones, but the effect of those is that at bedtime I was less of a man. I figured that we could work through it. We had a relationship that was outside “the gay life”. It was going to last. We could find a way to get married and commit to one another.

Yes, the M word. My friends in the Acorns told me that it was a hand grenade for most men, gay or not. They said – “You're really getting the female experience. They run from commitment as if it was burning plane”. Love had betrayed me again. I started to wonder if I was cut out for being a girl, but I had sampled life as a gay man and I was not keen on going back to that.

But you are what you are, as Julian Sanford would discover when the rumors about him started to bubble up shortly after we broke up. Volleyball careers end, and when Julian’s did, he came out as gay and somewhere he is out there living “the gay life”. But for me, our relationship left me alone but changed – I was now Rosa. While we were together I had enrolled in his college as Rosa and picked up a marketing degree. It seemed that it would be hard to go back to being a man, if I ever was one.

I just hated being alone. I was thinking that as I was browsing the meat section at the supermarket looking for a meal for one. That was when Aiden Rollins came into my life, backing into me just as I had done to Mason Newberry in high school. Only a few weeks later he admitted that it was deliberate, which made me love him even more.

He had said – “Looking for a good piece of meat?” and then he suddenly realized that he had said something hopelessly suggestive and stared at me in horror. I just burst out laughing. We shopped together and talked about food, and at the checkout he invited me to the place next door for “the best margarita in town”.

I said – ‘’I think I have more meat than I need, so why don’t I cook you dinner” or something like that. He was too polite to refuse.

It was just steak but I served it with ratatouille and gratinated potatoes plus a green peppercorn sauce. When he had eaten it all with such visible appreciation, he said – “You truly are the perfect woman”. I just burst into tears. If only I was. I was not perfect. I was not even a woman.

I just blurted it out and then I was ready to run past him to my bedroom, but I went first to the front door to provide him with the escape route. I tried to pull myself together and so I looked up at the sealing and waiting for him to pass me by. I had fallen in love for the third time and it was another disaster.

But he too the door from my hand and closed it, and embraced me. I just melted. It was wonderful.

“So when you said you had too much meat that was a warning?” he asked. He knew how to make me laugh. He still does. It seems I am always laughing. That is true love, don’t you think?

I have only ever loved three men in my life. I fell crazy in love with all of them. You have to know when enough is enough. I plan to make Aiden Rollins my last. He agrees.

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| The End© Maryanne Peters 20232280*Erin’s seed: A rather girlish boy grows up cross dressing when he can and enjoying it...and getting some support from friends and family saying maybe he really is a girl but he's afraid to commit to the whole thing ...until he meets a guy that he really feels needs to be introduced to his female self. But the guy turns out to be a prick, ragging on trans people and being an asshole so she's almost heartbroken! Her friends persuade her that y'know all men are pricks - you just have to be choosy. It takes a while but she gives it another try ...and falls in love immediately, but the guy runs from commitment like a burning plane. Ouch! her friends console her, "yup, they say, you're really getting the female experience" She says "i dont think I’m cut out to be a girl after all". But she can't resist going out dressed and know she really knows how to do it right … and romance waits in the produce aisle of the supermarket... but... dare she risk a broken heart again?* |  |