Seasick

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

There were always the five of us. We were as close as a bunch of guys can get. We went everywhere together. They used to call me “Backseat Simon” sometimes, because as the smallest I usually sat in the middle of the back seat of Greg or Tom’s car, as we cruised the neighborhood. Jake and Hallett were the other two. The Felonious Five my mother would say.

We were always on the hunt for girls, but girls don’t come in fives. Somebody has to sit it out. It was often me, and another one or two, but not always. I got my share. The Five Fuckers. We did plenty.

But everything changed when we went down to Benneport for the long weekend - a weekend of booze and babes. We drove down in Tom’s Buick. He knew a guy who had a boathouse near the yacht harbor with an old cruise boat pulled inside for maintenance long ago - few mattresses and a box for our beer. He had some names too – some guys who could show us the town, and maybe some of the coves up the coast.

Salty Magee was on the list. He was like he sounds – an old sea dog up for taking some guys onto his boat, being that the one in the boathouse had not been in the water in years. He talked about places we could visit and bays where we could anchor up and fish. He could take all of us aboard for a day or three, if we paid for gas, provisions and beer.

He took us down to “The Rusty Anchor” to down a few and talk it over, with us buying the drinks. We were up for that.

That was where we met Lizzie, Lara and Megan. They were three girls who were not going to have their panties charmed off them easily, and they could take some shit as well. It was a good-natured exchange across the bar with them keeping their distance, and us taking it in turns to go over with some indecent suggestion.

We left them behind when went down to check Salty’s boat. The girls seemed happy to see the back of us, and that was fair enough.

You would think that backseat Simon would have been used to a little motion sickness. I never complained in the car even though a windy road made me queasy. But the moment that I stepped on that boat I felt that the world was spinning. Even tied up at the wharf I felt unsteady. Salty noticed it.

“If you are likely to get seasick then the trip will be no fun for you or any of us,” he said. “Let’s just go out to the lighthouse and see if you can find you sea legs”.

Unless you have been seasick you cannot understand. You might even laugh. The other guys did. Seasick Simon. I barfed up everything I had and then retched black bile from my stomach all the way back to the jetty. When I got back on solid the unmoving boards of the wharf I collapsed and hugged the solidity of it. Sea adventures were not for me.

We went back up to the bar. My stomach was still in knots. Lizzie, Lara and Megan were still there. They had seen the boat come back with me retching over the stern.

“If you boys want to go up the coast why don’t you leave the little guy with us,” said Lizzie. They were laughing. I was sick with shame by then, as well as still queasy while my balance adjusted.

“You could do worse,” said Jake. “Maybe we could leave you behind just for tomorrow, if these ladies are offering.”

“We are not looking for male company,” said Megan. “But if you want to be one of the girls with us for a day, or even two, you can hang with us so your buddies can go fishing.”

Greg whispered in my ear: “You could fuck all three, but I would not bet on your chance of getting one.”

It sounded like a challenge. I could try. I knew for sure that I was not going to try setting foot back on that boat. But no guy wants to prevent his pals from enjoying something they clearly wanted to do. Like I said, sometimes one or two of us had to sit one out. Now was one of those times.

“Like you guys said – I could do worse,” I said smiling at the girls. Let them go to sea. What could happen to me on dry land?

“Enjoy tonight, because we’re leaving now,” said Lara. “But when your friends have left in the morning call around to see us. We don’t normally work Saturdays but we will be there from 9:00.”

She gave me a business card. Renaissance Salon. Address right around the corner.

My stomach felt better. After the girls had gone, we drank and ate a steak dinner. They talked about a fish dinner for Sunday night when they got back. It was just going to be two days, and given I would be in the company of women they did not feel guilty about leaving me on the dock.

I talked about which of the three girls might be my first conquest. We all drank well but not too heavily. They had an early start.

They were casting off at 8:00 about an hour after they were supposed to. I just wandered around the moorings and the boat yard before heading for the salon. I was alone and that was not how I liked to be. I was looking forward just to having company. I resolved that I was not going to be an asshole with these girls. Even if I did not get any sex, that would be OK so long as I had company.

They were all there when I got to the Renaissance Salon. Megan had Lara in a chair and was doing her hair. Lizzie pulled me in a gave me a big kiss on each cheek. I felt better already.

“Thank God we are rid of friends for the day,” she said. “This is going to be a great day … a great weekend. A girl’s weekend. A first for you I am guessing, but an experience I know that you will love. And it will start with me doing your hair!”

I laughed, but then the smile must have dropped away as I saw that she was serious. And Megan and Lara were nodding. “Good times always start with a good hairdo. Bad hair is a bad day.” Where did that bad hair phrase start?

My hair was long. Not girly long, but long.

“We can fix that,” said Lizzie. “Extensions. Nothing permanent. Just a fun thing for a couple of days.”

I protested. Don’t think I didn’t. But it was three against one. My friends were long gone. I didn’t even have the keys to Tom’s car to drive away. What was I supposed to do? I was stuck in Benneport. I wasn’t with my friends but the people I was with were friendly. I could play the game. Maybe if I did, I might get a chance with one of them, or maybe more than one. I protested still, but with a laugh.

“You need a facial too,” suggested Megan, taking a break from Lara who was in curlers. When the stuff when on it was soothing and pleasant, but within a few minutes is seemed my face was starting to burn.

“Fuck! Get this thing off me,” I said. And when it came off my beard went with it, and the bottom half of my eyebrows with it. “What are you girls doing to me?”

“Moisturizing will take away the inflammation,” said Lizzie, completely ignoring my discomfort. But I needed that stuff.

“You’ll need a leg wax too,” said Lara.

“I am not doing that,” I said. “I will wear pants, or maybe even tights.” The mere suggestion indicated to them that I was ready to go further. I wished I had never said it.

“It’s summer, Sally,” said Lizzie, choosing a name for me that the others clearly approved of. “Bare legs are essential. Especially as we are going to a wedding tomorrow!”

The WTF moment to beat them all. A wedding?! Who? What?

“Our weekend is all arranged and now you are part of it,” said Megan. “We are the beauty team attending to the bridal party tomorrow. Tonight is the hen party, and you are coming. Then tomorrow we will be in early so you can help with the shampoo and trolleys, and then the whole salon is invited to the ceremony and maybe the reception if there is room.”

“This is going to be the perfect girly weekend!” It sounded like a chorus.

What do you do? Looking back I suppose there could have been any number of points when I could have said “enough”, but I didn’t. You can choose to think that I was just going along, and being passive, but as things developed I started to get more involved. They talked me through it, and it was fascinating. I suppose because I came from a family of boys and I hung with boys only, this was all such a new thing.

“We don’t want you acting like a boy,” said Lara. “That would be embarrassing for us, and twice as embarrassing for you. But at least at the hen night we can explain it away. The new assistant is a guy, but he had to be a girl to attend a girl’s only event.”

“That is if the bride and her friends pick you, but why should they?” said Lizzie. “Do exactly as I say, and they never will. This is going to be fun.”

So there we all were. By the time the sun was going down we were just four girls dressed to the nines and ready to hit the town, which was really only 3 bars not including “The Rusty Anchor”.

The bride was from out of town. It was just that the wedding venue was nearby and had a jetty at the bottom of the garden to whisk away the bridal couple at evening’s end. She had already had one hen’s night in the city – this was just for those who had not made it to that but were here for the wedding. Everybody seemed ready to down shots, except the bride and her immediate party. Still, they were happy to watch other girls get drunk and make fools of themselves.

I drank quite a bit, but I guess I could hold it a little better. I ended up with some girls leaning on me for support and telling me how pretty I was.

The strange thing was that being that close to pretty women should have been a turn on for me, but somehow it wasn’t. I really felt that I was one of them, and that anything sexual would be weird. Maybe I am the weird one, but I even joined in whistling at some good-looking guys. It was just girl fun, and it was fun.

Somehow having fun as a guy is different. It seems like we hit town focussed on something. Either we get shit-faced or we get laid, or maybe both. It usually ends badly and the day after we shake our heads and arrange to do it again. Girl fun is nothing like that. We only want to be happy.

Some guys hit on us more than once. I scored some free drinks more than once. It was just so easy. But if you are looking for a fuck, back off. That is a little harder.

The bride said to me: “I like your style Simone, you are a great girl to have in a pinch. I’ll make sure that there is room for you, in fact all of you, at the reception tomorrow.”

I spent the night at Megan’s place, sleeping on the living room floor with our hair in curlers and face masks painted on our faces. It was the traditional sleepover, with talk about strange things from our past and truth challenges. It was like they were getting into my head. If passing as a women undetected among women for the whole night did not change me, then maybe that sleepover did.

But come daybreak we needed to get our shit together. The bridal party was arriving, and we all had stations. I was doing nails, and had already done Lara’s to get it right, and I would do Megan and Lizzie after they had finished with everyone’s hair. But I had 7 sets of fingernails to do, some with extensions, and 5 sets of toenails. No wonder they needed me.

I suppose that I realized that Simon was like a spare tire with a hole in it – he gets carried around but he really is not much use, and he knows it. Nobody needs him. And yes, I started thinking about him – Backseat Simon - as somebody else – somebody pathetic and really not that nice.

Or maybe it was because being involved with people who were interested in your innermost thoughts like the night before, and who wanted to involve you, and who thought that you were interesting. I was interesting to them. Call me their pet project if you like – the boy they could turn into a girl for the weekend. But it made me more than just the object of their attention – they did it by involving me; making me one of them. And I liked it.

And there is also something about a wedding. I don’t think that men can truly understand it. It is a girl thing, and now I do. It is really about celebrating the woman – the bride mainly. The groom has a last minute walk on part, but it is really about her. And all women who attend a wedding or who have any role to play in it, bask in the bride’s reflected glory. How could we not be excited.

And busy too. There was running around to get everything together. Megan described all weddings where she did the hair as “an organized scramble in a state of joy”. I like that. They used humor to overcome any stress and put the bridal party at ease. They had done all of this before.

Then, when the brides hair was perfect, and all the makeup was done and everybody was marvelling at just how beautiful quite ordinary girls could be made to look, and they were out the door, it was time to prepare Lizzie first, as she had to run an errand, Lara and Megan to prepare each other, and then me.

We had been chatting about it all morning, and even at the sleepover the night before – beauty. What is it? How to make it out of rough cloth or bare clay? Which features need to be accentuated and which disguised? What do they want to see in a beautiful woman? They were talking about men, of course. We all were, because we were all women. Because of that it did not seem strange at all.

Nor did the fact that the talked to me with advice about make up – day looks and how to apply it myself. Why would I need to know that? Reapplying lipstick, sure. You cannot go through a whole afternoon and evening without freshening your lippy! Mascara too, perhaps? But I just absorbed it all, as if these were lessons which would carry me through life.

And then the reveal. I had seen what they were doing and because they explained it, I understood it all. There should be no shock, and I guess there was not. I just saw Simone in the mirror. Beautiful, exotic, interesting Simone, and behind her reflection, her friends – Lizzie (just returned) Lara and Megan. The best friends a girl can have. Four smiling faces. And we were headed off to a wedding – Yippee!

My dress was gorgeous. That is not a word a man uses easily, but it is the only word that is right. It was colorful, with an abstract design, short to show off my “great legs” and with lowish heeled sandals to help, waisted and with a plunging neckline concealed with black lace that carried across the shoulders. Gorgeous, but how could I wear it?

“I have been out to get you this,” said Lizzie. “It is the very latest in shapewear. It will give you a waist, and with gel inserts and tape we will make a cleavage. And we are going to need more tape to deal with that awful crotch.”

“You said last night that you liked penises,” I joked.

“Yes, but not on a girl,” she said. Two other heads nodded. And strangely, I was thrilled by that. I was a girl, and that thing could not change the fact.

When they went to work down there it was like they were handling some giant slug they had found in their salad. I have to say that they made it sound so ugly, I have never been able to look at it the same since. The tape seemed severe but they said that a specific arrangement was needed to conceal any bulge and allow me to pee downwards.

“Just don’t get an erection,” Megan warned. “If you need to get it on, go with a man. No girl has ever got an erection from a man!” They all laughed, but they were wrong.

Anyway, I was a knockout in the dress, and they looked great too.

“We’re not quite wedding crashers,” said Lara, “But we will be close to it. We are the locals who have been helping with not just the salon but co-ordinating with the venue and helping to dress the rooms and get the florists in. We deserve our invitations as extra guests, so let’s get some food and fizzy, and maybe the third F too!”

They all laughed, but it took me a while to realize what that might be. All I can say is that spirits were high and we needed to rush to get to the venue.

Like I said, a wedding is a celebration of womanhood as much as memorializing a contract. That means that it is emotional, and emotions can be contagious. Maybe that is why I cried a little. I never thought of myself as a crying person, but that was Simon. Simone was a girl – is a girl. She cries when she wants to, and sometimes when she just has to.

It was all just so beautiful. The decorations, the outfits and the love on display in front of us. Women cry when they are overcome by such things. And men look at us as if we are crazy.

One did. His name was Gus. He came up to me as I was dabbing my eyes and fumbling for a mirror to see if I needed to fresh my mascara.

“Are you with the bride’s family or the groom’s?” he asked.

“I could be with you.” That is what I said! What a dork! It was as if all the talk about finding a guy at the wedding had primed me to say something outrageously flirtatious and just plain silly. It is not the kind of thing any man could say, so how could I get away with? Easy. A smile. And a simple: “Sorry, the bride I guess, as I am on hair and makeup.”

“You have great hair,” he said. “And are you wearing makeup?”

It was on thick, so he was teasing me now. I liked it. I liked him.

“Can I walk you through to the reception,” he asked. I gave him my arm as if I had done it one hundred times. And as I we walked I found myself wondering where this was all coming from. It seemed as if somewhere deep inside me there was a female me that was just waiting to come out. And now here she was, surrounded by people who accepted her, and clinging to a man. A real man – not a man with a woman inside him.

Lara came over to drag me off to the Ladies Room – something that I discovered was the gossip chamber. Everybody was in there.

“I can’t believe that you are the first one to latch on to guy,” she smiled. “Where did you find him?”

“He found me,” I said, with some pride I have to admit.

“He’s hot,” said Lizzie. “But you’re hot, Simone. You just go for it, Girl. We are hear to have fun.”

“Remember we are in business, Ladies,” said Megan at the mirror, checking her mascara. “We are the hair and beauty team. Our wares are on display. We should be seen and remembered but only for doing good things.”

“Does your man have a brother?” said Lara. My man!

He was waiting for me. He wanted to dance. He was awful. I was quite good. The funny thing is that as a man you move around but you have to feel self-conscious. As a woman I was on display. The whole feeling of being on the dance floor was different. In fact, everything was different. It was like seeing the world through new eyes. And suddenly Gus looked very attractive.

Then the pain started. It seems so stupid to say it but I had completely forgotten that I even had a penis. And then it came to life. It was so tightly bound that just the early swelling really hurt.

But why was it even happening? The music had slowed down. I was in his arms. It was the way people dance to slow music. It was just that he looked so good and he smelled so good.

It was gay. What did that say about me? How do you fight it? If I pulled away, then what would happen? I thought that I needed to do something that would disgust me and wipe away whatever was going on. I knew that I was not gay, so I did the thing that should discuss me the most.

I kissed him. I closed my eyes and I put my tongue in his mouth and allowed his to enter mine.

I was initially relieved that it seemed to work. My strapped in junk relaxed. But then I realized that everything had gone limp. I had gone limp. I was like jelly in his arms, so that I stood only by his stature. I felt his hands caress me and I was excited, but it was not the same as the sexual urge that had brought me to attention moments before. This was something different.

“I have never done this before,” I said to him. I then realized that this must sound so stupid. “I don’t normally kiss strangers at weddings,” I added.

“Let’s not be strangers, then,” he said. By God, he was wonderful.

Was that the moment? What had happened to me? If I look at it is seemed as if the things that changed me were the hen party, the sleepover after that, the morning at the salon, the tears at the ceremony, and that kiss. Somehow, I knew that I could never go back, even then.

I have no idea what happened to time that night. It seemed like the longest night of my life and yet it passed in a flash. Before I knew it, that Cinderella moment was upon us. The girls were standing around me and it was time to go. The reception venue was almost empty – a drunken uncle holding court in the corner, and few others and waiting staff clearing empty glasses.

“Nicole, we have to go. We have transport.”

“Can I call you?” he said.

Yes, yes, oh yes! But a stupid thought. He did not have my cell number and how could I give it to him? Who would answer?

Megan must have seen the panic growing on my face. She pulled out a business card and pushed it into his hand, saying: “Nicole does male manicures too.”

“I live in the city,” he said, to both of us, I suppose. He would not be coming to Benneport for a hand job, if I was ready to give it. “Do you live down here?”

“Yes,” I said, with obvious sadness. It seemed the easy way to say: “We may never see one another again”. But the sadness was real. How many people can remember a night like that? A man and a woman meet at a function; they are drawn to one another; they dance; they kiss; they talk about things they cannot even remember; they enjoy the touch of one another; they kiss again; and again; and then they part with one last embrace. Will they ever be together again?

The fact that I had an ugly secret taped in my groin never came into it.

I have to say that when we got back to the girls’ place and it was free, I was both relieved and disgusted. It is not natural to be bound up like that, but suddenly the presence of that stuff on my body seemed just as unnatural.

“I had a good time,” volunteered Lizzie. “But Simone must have had a great time!”

“Everyone is sleeping here tonight,” said Megan. “We will go down to the waterfront for brunch tomorrow, and maybe enjoy some sun. We want to be down there when Salty when Salty gets back with Simone’s friends.”

My friends? She was talking about Jake, Greg, Tom and Hallett. Not Lizzie, Megan and Lara. But as I creamed my face and slipped on my nightie, I found myself considering what friendship really is.

I fell asleep and I dreamed of Gus. I dreamed that he and I were standing on the jetty. I was wearing a bikini. My perfectly round breasts filled the top, and the bottom section revealed the perfect pubic mound in front of my welcoming vaginal lips. My hair blew in the light breeze. He looked tanned and strong. Some onlookers saw the perfect couple walking hand in hand down the wharf.

“I can’t go out on a boat. I get seasick,” I said to my dream Gus.

“But I live on a boat, Darling one,” he said. “If you want to be mine you must overcome your seasickness.”

I stepped onto his boat. Almost immediately I started to feel nauseous.

I woke up with a start and rushed to the bathroom to retch. Was it imagined seasickness? Was it too much champagne? Was it the disgust in finding myself potentially in love with a man?

Somehow it rid me of something, and I sleep soundly. I was the last to wake, so my day had already been planned. I was to use the shapewear again, and the strapping and inserts, but a floral sundress and my hair up in a messy bun, sunglasses on my head.

It was not as if I had any choice. We were all dressed for a sunny Sunday. There would be coffee to drink, pancakes to eat and four sets of stories to tell of the previous night and the people we had met.

Just like the night before, the day seemed to fly by in a whirl of joy. Before I knew it the sun was low and we were sitting at “The Rusty Anchor” watching Salty navigate his boat around the lighthouse in the distance.

I suppose that I may have experienced maybe just 2 seconds of panic. It was like: “The guys will see me dressed like this as a girl! They will think I am a fag! I will never be able to hang with them again.” And then: “Fuck those guys. Men!”

We strolled down to the jetty looking super hot.

Salty’s boat came along side and Lara threw a mooring line.

“So Simon did not last?” shouted Tom. “The little prick found a way to head back to the city. Seasick Simon!” There was laughter aboard.

“Hey, four of you now,” called out Hallett. “Four of you and four of us. And we have caught so fish. So dinner is on us. Let’s make a night of it.”

I raised my sunglasses. My eyes might have been made up, but they were Simon’s eyes as much as mine. At least two of my so-called friends show signs of a confused recognition.

“What do you think Girls,” said Lara. “Shall we take these guys up on the offer?”

“Nah,” I said. “Let’s have another girls night out.”

The End

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Author’s Note:

SarahLon left a message on Fictionmania Message Board in November 2020:

**Subject:**Story request … It’s a story I could relate to and it's a fantasy of mine, probably there are similar ones but I've not been able to find one that fits what I have in mind, let me tell you the important things I’m looking for: Character is male but he's never cross-dressed … He's on vacation with some friends … and they meet some girls and the girls end up convincing him to dress and spend the week as one of the girls, in this case his friends would not know about this, they think he just left. What's important for me is that he should feel uncomfortable but also enjoying the experience … he tries something it should be awkward and he should be either ashamed or self conscious but eventually learning to blend in … ends up having a good time and doing all things girls would do - or that he has to attends a wedding as a girl or something like that. No magic, rape or bondage …, he should try sexy clothes, lingerie, miniskirts, maybe a bikini, a night dress.”