Suspicions

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

I am a possessive person. I admit it. I thought that Lauren loved me, and I thought that I loved her. I just felt that we were meant to be together. I thought that our arguments and lack of sex were issues that we could address, but that our relationship would be lasting.

I have to admit that sex was an issue for me, and I never really understood why at the time. Now I realize what the problem was. It seems so stupid that I did not recognize my own nature. I must be the biggest self-deceiver on the planet.

But it was just that she seemed like the perfect example of womanhood, and that is what I loved. She was a bit large, sure, but she was just so pretty and so feminine. She always dressed well, arranged her hair beautifully and never went out anywhere that mattered without perfect makeup. I used to love watching her getting ready, although she tried to shoo me away.

I like to think that she did love me, and that was why she couldn’t tell me. But it is more likely that she knew that I was besotted with her, and she was just too nice a person to devastate me with the truth. I never would have believed it had it not been for the small traces. I now wonder if the clues had not been left for me – Gretel laying out the breadcrumbs. And no, that is not her name – I am talking about the fairy tale.

There were traces of another man. I tried to ignore them for the sake of our relationship, but it just became too hard. Like the song says – suspicions take hold like a trap. You cannot escape them until you find the truth. But how could I do that?

The answer was to follow her, but how could I do that? One glance behind and she would see me. I needed to have a disguise and it could not be an overcoat and a big hat in our town in the summer. I was just rummaging around in our spare cupboard for something that might work. Some of her clothes that she wanted me to throw out were in there, and that was when I had a crazy idea.

Looking back, I wonder why I didn’t throw out those clothes when she asked me. Why would I but them in the cupboard along with some of her underwear? What was going on in my head? But the best disguise is to not look like somebody in disguise. When you think about it, dressing as a woman to cover your head and paint your face, and even change your shape. You just have to be able to pull it off.

She joked about us being the same size when she borrowed my sweaters, but it was true. Weirdly, we even shared a shoe size, because my hands and feet are quite small.

But she would recognize the clothes? I took one of the dresses and used a bucket of her garment dye to color it black and then hung it out to dry. She would never recognize that. I would mean that it would take at least a day before I could wear it, but then I would have time to plan and to prepare. She would tell me when she was going out and I would leave first, get into my disguise and follow her.

Then I went all out. Again, with hindsight I was driven by impulses that I did not understand. Why else would I shave all my legs and not just the portion below the hem? Why would I paint my nails while I sat hidden in the park waiting for her to appear?

It was as if had prepared for this role a hundred times. I had watched her to her hair and face so many times that I knew exactly what to do. I even decided that I could do without a wig provided that I had time to style my own longish hair and use the only thing that I did not borrow from her feminine supplies – a red scarf tied among my curls – plus a cheap but stylish shoulder bag to put things in.

I was able to an old pair of her high waist support panties to wear, and some of my own socks to stuff one of her discarded bras. The only shoes that she had discarded had a heel, so I had to work with what I had. There was time to get my walk right, and to work on feminine presentation, which was something that I learnt from her as I lovingly watched everything she did.

From my seat in the park she could not see me as she came out the front gate of our apartment complex and walked towards the village. I slipped in behind her and followed at a distance. The sun was shining a slight warm breeze was fluttering my skirt against my sensitive shaved legs. I just seemed so cool and comfortable which is why I recall it. I walked easily in the heels. I barely thought about my target – I was just enjoying walking.

As I came to the shops there were people looking at me – mainly men. My first thought was that I might have been discovered, but the admiring smiles told a different story. It was a new experience for me, and a pleasant one. Who looks at a man like that? Who ever admired me for anything?

Up ahead I saw Lauren turn into the small boutique hotel on Harris Street. I would have to follow and this would be a test. I saw her looking about as I entered, and she must have seen me but clearly nothing registered. She walked into the coffee lounge off the tiny lobby and took a seat at a table with a view of the entrance. I grabbed a magazine to help shield my face and took another table behind her and as far away as possible.

It was only a few minutes before my worst fears were realized. A man walked in and went over to her. She rose and she threw her arms around him and kissed him passionately. They walked out together. I could see them both get in the elevator. They were kissing again as the door closed. I almost fainted with grief.

“Are you alright, Honey?” The waitress was standing in front of me. I think that my eyes were welling with tears. “Can I get you something? What about an iced coffee with ice cream? There is nothing like ice cream to help take the tears away.”

“That would be nice,” I said.

“Bad throat, Honey?”

I realized that I must have sounded like a guy. I had no feminine voice, and I needed to find one, and fast. I coughed a little and then said – “Iced coffee with ice cream sounds great.” It did, and my voice sounded pretty good too.

I suppose that I sat there stunned for at least half an hour. It was like my whole world had collapsed. When I had decided to follow her, I found myself praying that there was another explanation and that she was not cheating on me, but as I was getting my disguise ready and walking in it, I never gave it any thought at all, being caught up in other things. But now it hit me, she was with another. I meant nothing to her.

But I still believed that she was everything to me. I felt that she belonged to me, but I felt incapable of doing anything.

I had a thought of somehow bursting into the room upstairs where they would be having afternoon sex, but what room? And how would I get in? And what would I say?

I might have said – “I have enough love for both of us. I forgive. Just leave here with me now.” What would she say? She would look at me, and … I would be standing there dressed as a woman. Everything was such a mess. What was I to do? I felt destroyed, although the iced coffee was good.

My bag was on the table. I found myself reaching in for the mirror to check my appearance. It was a typically female thing to do. I had watched her do it many times. Smooth the eyebrow – repair the tear streaks below the eyes and reapply mascara – freshen the lipstick. I just did it, as if I was her.

And then suddenly the lift opened, and they walked out, Lauren and he new man. They were both smiling. She had that unmistakable post-sex flushed face. She just gave him a peck on the check and then she went out the door onto the street.

He watched her go and then stepped into the coffee lounge and took a seat not far from me. He ordered a coffee.

I felt that I needed to do something. Even if I was dressed as a man would never be able to step up and slap him in the face. But maybe as a woman I could do something equivalent.

I stood up and walked over to his table. I said – “Excuse me, did I just see you come down with Lauren Brady? I know her, and I think I know what is going on. Are your aware that she is in a long-term relationship with her boyfriend and that they live together?”

To answer, he stood up. Infuriatingly, he looked slightly amused.

“I was aware that there was a roommate,” he said softly and with a voice that seemed to soothe me somehow. “If you tell me that he is something more than that, then I will not question ot – I really don’t know her that well. But it would seem that to her, this man means very little. If he meant more, why would she be with me?”

“Why would you be with her if you know there is another?” I snapped back. “Have you no respect for the feelings of the other man? Have you no sense of honor?”

“That is a curious word in this day and age,” he said with a smile. “Clearly you are a different kind of person? A little old-fashioned perhaps? Why don’t you have a seat – let me buy you a drink?”

Here was a man who had clearly just had sex with my girlfriend, but my anger seemed not to be directed at him in spite of that. It was not anger at all, really. It was sadness, and the sense that Lauren had betrayed me. What was it about this man that had lured her away? I think it was because I was interested that took his invitation and sat down.

“I believe in relationships. Most men don’t.” I had to stop myself. Albeit in my shrill feminine voice I was speaking as if I was a man. “So I doubt that you are any different.”

“I think you are wrong about me,” he said. The server came over and we ordered drinks. I ordered a cocktail - something long and cool. He ordered a beer.

“It is Lauren that is not looking for a relationship,” he continued. “Not with me, and not with this man of hers that you are talking about. She is restless, I think. She is not ready to settle yet, but she talks about children in her future so I have told her I am not the man for her beyond casual sex.”

“So why is that?” I wanted to know what drove this man to be nothing like me.

“I cannot be a father. I am infertile, or sterile if you like. I am not impotent. Quite the opposite. I would love a relationship, but I can’t offer a woman a family, and you all want a family, don’t you?”

“No,” I said. “I don’t think that I would want to share my partner with anybody. I am a person who seeks someone that I can commit to one hundred percent. Children would dilute my passion for … the right man.”

“You are indeed an interesting woman,” he said, as the drinks were placed in front of us. “And you are not attached to anybody at the moment? I wonder if after we have finished these drinks you might consider joining me for dinner? I know a little place nearby.”

The idea intrigued me. He intrigued me. Somehow, he had brought out these thoughts. I was not interested in a family. I wanted to give myself to somebody. It is not what a man does. It is more like what I imagine a woman should do. Commit herself utterly to a man – a man like this.

“That sounds like an fascinating evening ahead,” I said. “But I suppose that we should exchange names first.”

And that is how my life changed in a single afternoon. It was the day that I realized that I was never meant to be a man, trying to cling onto a woman. I was attracted to a man – seriously attracted – but only on the basis that he accepted me as a woman.

Of course, I was not a woman then, but I am now, or as close to it as modern surgery can achieve. But my internal imperfection means nothing to him, because he knows that I have but a single purpose in life – to make him happy by being his and his alone.

Will he always be mine? I have told him that if I ever have suspicions I will turn back into a man to find the other woman, and that thought horrifies him!

The End

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Erin’s Seed: “A suspicious boyfriend decides to spy on girlfriend because he thinks she is cheating on him so he disguises himself as a girl because people in area would recognize him. She IS cheating on him! but the guy she is cheating with spies the spy and pursues 'her'.”