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| A New Way to TravelInspired by a Captioned Image by TiffanyBy Maryanne PetersI will not lie, I used to cross dress now and then, but just in the privacy of my own home. It never occurred to me that I could pass in public until I picked up that suitcase when I arrived in Paris.My hair was shorter then, but I always had a lot of it, and it the suitcase was some hair color and some volumizing spray, so I did not need a wig. The fact is that I could not wear what I travelled in which had got soaked in a downpour anyway. I had to chose something from inside the suitcase. And the owner of it had great taste in clothes. Just nothing that could ever be called gender neutral. But then, who would wear gender neutral in Paris.There is something about the City of Lights that demands you wear something stylish and feminine. So I shaved my legs and I put on something nice, setting it off with shoes that were the perfect size for me (what luck!) and a matching bag. |  |

Diane stepped out, walking with surprising ease in those heels, despite the sometimes-treacherous paving stones. Diane held her head high and walked on, and she never looked back. She still hasn’t.

A visit to the salon to knock off those rough edges, and then staring longingly in the windows of the boutiques along the Avenue Montaigne, while others stared even more longingly at me. Not that I had ever been interested in men - not the way that they were interested in me, anyway. But being admired and admiring myself is an intoxicating cocktail.

“I don’t understand. I am an American. I don’t speak French – sorry.” When there are only a few phrases, it is easy to deliver them is a feminine whisper through painted lips. Even those who spoke no English and could ask me for my phone number could give me theirs, perhaps in the hope that I might find somebody who could help them tell me how lovely I looked. That is what those with even a few words would tell me.

I learned that I only need open my bag to freshen my lipstick. An attractive woman in Paris who gets attention, gets everything else besides. She never needs to reach into her purse. It suddenly occurred to me that this was a new way to travel. Just never let them see your passport or the contents of your panties. It has worked for me so far.

The End

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| The Pick UpInspired by a Captioned Image by TiffanyBy Maryanne PetersIt was a late model Corvette – electric blue.“Are you Jake?” The question seemed wrong. “Yes, I am. Who are you?” She wore a black miniskirt and white heels, but her voice was incongruous.“My name is Omar. Mary couldn’t make it. She sent me around. Hop in.”Jake paused. This would not be easy. The car was low. The skirt was ridiculously short, and “the stylists” as the bitches called themselves had his package taped down tightly. Could it even be done?Butt in first and swing the legs around. That is what they said. Omar had pushed the door open a little. His butt dropped onto the seat. His shoes were bought around, his little clutch bag on his lap. Yet another task done. |  |

“You must have a story to tell,” said Omar. Thankfully he was not laughing.

“It was Mary’s idea. She said I always looked like a slob with my long oiled braid and wispy black beard. She said she would pay to have me look better presented to go out tonight. I just had to go around to this salon in the mall. And look what the did to me!”

“You look nice,” said Omar. “Real nice.”

“Those bitches took my clothes. Then they gave me a glass of wine with a roofie or something. They ripped every hair off my body. They straightened and dyed my hair!”

“That color suits you,” said Omar. “I looks good with your green eyes”.

“My eyes are green. Nobody notices but I guess the eyeliner makes it more obvious.” Jake pulled down the vanity mirror to check. His eyes did look good with a dark surround.

“You have great legs too,” said Omar.

Jake was suddenly conscious of how naked they felt without hair, and how pale they looked. But this guy was right. The did look good. He spotted through the open toe that his toenails hand been painted silver, the same color as his fingernails.

“Thanks for doing this Pal. You have a really nice car here. Are you driving me to Mary’s place, or my place?” Jake asked.

“We’re going straight to the party,” said Omar.

“Mary won’t want her date looking like this!”

“Mary is going with John,” said Omar. “You’re my date tonight. And you look absolutely perfect to me.”

“You’re kidding!” Jake was in shock. “Did Mary arrange this? That bitch.”

“She said that you were complaining about how easy it is for girls. You told her that girls just have to look good and give a few favors and they can live a life of luxury with any pressure.”

“I did say that,” admitted Jake. “It’s true don’t you think?”

“I think it’s the way it ought to be,” said Omar smiling at his passenger. “In your case I plan to make it so.”

“In return for favors?”

“Only if you think I am worth it,” he said, changing down a gear and accelerating along the straight road.

Jacinda felt suddenly very excited.

The End

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| DreamyInspired by a Captioned Image (Tiffany)By Maryanne PetersWe had been friends since elementary school. We tossed around a football even then, but we went to different high schools and we found ourselves on opposing teams.He said we needed a bet where the stakes were worth playing for. We both had long hair then and both of us accused the other of looking girly. He said the winner gets a buzz cut and the loser has to become a girl for a week and his date to the prom. | East |

He played a dream game. I mean that his game carried his team to victory. I said afterwards that it was because he wanted to win that bet so bad, and he agreed. What he really wanted, he said, was what he had always wanted – me.

So, what did I want. I could have treated it as a joke. I could have turned up in drag and played it for laughs. So why didn’t I do that. Why did I go to the salon to have my hair extended, dyed and curled? Why did I shave my body from head to toe, and paint my nails hands and feet? Why did I kiss him? Then why did I keep kissing him? And again? And again?

What about my girlfriend? She had to go to the prom with another guy from my team, and watch as her boyfriend fell in love with his oldest friend and sport rival.

I guess what we had was always love. He could see the woman in me even if I could not. He played his dream game, and my dream came true.

The End

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| Airhead BarbieInspired by a Captioned Image by TiffanyBy Maryanne PetersI now know that the drug that we used on him can have that effect sometimes. We read up about it when we saw what had happened. It is supposed to be a heavy sedative, but sometimes it can do some serious damage. Not injury, just some lasting effect on brain function. Memory and stuff generally stay intact, but maybe comprehension can be a little muddled. It shows as general confusion. Not necessarily permanent. Still, it is a bit distressing for me, but Derek says that it makes his Barbie even more perfect.It was just the way he talked to me. He did not seem to understand. I am an artist, not just a stylist. I am creating something every time I pick up a brush. I just wanted to show him how good I was at what I did, and who better to work on that the boy himself. |  |

But then when he came to, he looked in the mirror and actually said: “Hey there, who are you?”

He seemed confused that her lips were moving. He put his hand up and pushed the blond extensions away from his face, looking in the mirror like a cat seeing its reflection for the first time, not sure whether to jump forward or jump back.

“I’m a blonde now – did I ask for blonde? It does look good on me. And, like, what is going on with my chest? Is that me? No, what are these? They feel so bouncy.”

Instead of protesting, my boyfriend seemed only moderately surprised and not disturbed at all. He stood up on the heels, momentarily unsteady on the heels that I thought would hobble him completely. He was able to totter over to the full-length mirror.

“What great legs I have. They really should not be covered up … like ever – right? I don’t think this dress is too short – do you? I look like a Barbie doll. Don’t I? Just like, the perfect Barbie figure – right? Like a living, breathing Barbie doll.”

He struck a pose. What man would do that? Then another, with a leg slightly forward, then turn around to check the butt, and smooth the tight fabric over it.

Derek came over. He didn’t know that I had used the sedative, but he knew who this was, or rather who it had been.

“Barbie?” he said, picking up on what was being said.

Barbie giggled, and said: “Hi there. That’s me”.

“I’m Derek, the owner of this salon,” he said. “May I say that I think you look fabulous. Is this look for a special occasion?”

“What are you offering in the way of special?” Barbie asked, playfully.

It seemed to me that there was something very strange going on here, and it did not involve me. I have to say that I was annoyed. So I said: “This is my boyfriend, remember. I have dressed him up so that he can help me out as my shampoo girl.” It was all that I could come up with.

“You don’t want to be a shampoo girl do you Barbie?” Derek asked. “It will make your hands all wrinkly. Why don’t you come out with me instead? I promise to take you somewhere nice”.

Barbie looked at her manicured hands with dismay. “Oh dear, not wrinkles!” she said. And looking at me pleadingly she asked: “Do I have to put my hands in the sink, or can I go out with Derek?”

Derek gave me a look that did not need words added. He wanted to have some fun with this new curiosity. And although he is not my direct boss, at the end of the day I work for him.

“Just make sure you don’t embarrass the boss, Barbie,” I directed her. “Be sure to act like Barbie.”

She suddenly looked very puzzled. She said: “But … but, like, I am Barbie – right?”

The End

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| Apology Not AcceptedInspired by a Captioned Image by TiffanyBy Maryanne PetersIt seemed to me that the thought of losing her drove me crazy. Why else would I have agreed to her outrageous idea? Well, I did have a thing for women’s clothes, and she knew all about it. I had dressed with her for fun and I had even been out a few times, including her office fancy dress party.I think that when you dress you develop an eye for fashion. But I was wrong to say that the dress was ugly. It was just that it was ugly on her. On me it looked just great.Who know how a woman thinks? Why did she call Bob and make that a condition for her forgiving me?Bob the guy at her office party who could not take his eyes off me as Amanda. I thought he was a bit weird at the time, but he is a good-looking guy so maybe I was a little flattered by the attention. I looked pretty good then, but in this black and white dress, I was steaming. |  |

Bob picked me up and treated me like a woman that night. A girlfriend can never truly treat you as a woman as long as you are her guy. It is just pretending. I am one of those people who think that it takes a man to make you feel like a woman. In fact, more than just feel that way. I suppose that I became a woman that night. I knew it and he knew it too.

I did not come home that night. I slept over with Bob and moved in with him a month later.

She never did accept my apology, but it doesn’t matter to me anymore.

The End