A Wife Found

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

It had been a wonderful and exhausting day. They had explored a small beach on that sun-drenched Greek island, walking down a tight trail where they had swum naked and sunbathed, before climbing back up to the rental car and taking the tortuous roads back to the village. There they had enjoyed a meal and some good wine from Cyprus and had danced with the locals. When they got back they still found the energy for sex, but it was slow and sweaty in the hot evening air – it was even more perfect than the day had been. Now she lay close to him, playing with his greying hair as the night insects chirped outside the open window, just a hint of breeze off the blue sea below.

“I love you,” he said. Her hand stroked his chin by way of a reply. “But I know that you are not the woman I married.” The hand froze. “I just want to tell you that I don’t care.”

She propped herself up to look into his eyes. The light was dim, but they could see one another clearly.

“I love you too,” she said. “Do you believe it? I love you with all my heart. No matter how I came to be here, you need to know that I love you now and I always will.”

“I can guess why you did what you did, and in many ways, I don’t want to know more, but I feel that I need to know what happened to her. I owe her that much.”

“I owe you the truth,” she said. “But you will get it all, I tell you now. Just hold me. That is all I ask. This will be as hard for me to say as it will be for you to hear.”

“I will forgive you anything,” he said. “I tell you that right now.”

She took a deep breath before starting to explain - “Her death was accidental, just in case you think you might have to forgive me for that. We were close, she and I. We were together when she died. She knew the risks, but in the end, it was dysentery. Simple dysentery.”

“She always had a thirst for adventure,” he said. Then he felt the need to correct himself. “You had that. The woman I married was that woman. And that is you. I knew what I was getting in for when I spoke my vows.”

“The bride’s vows are my vows,” she said leaning over again to accept his gaze. “Please accept that.”

“As if spoken by you, because as far as I am concerned, you are the woman I married.”

She lay back again and spoke on. “We were adventurous souls stuck in a crisis. We had only one another. I spoke of my life, and she spoke of hers. It seems now that I had nothing to say. My life before her was empty and worthless. I was an international wanderer, living off my flute.”

“You play the flute? I never knew.”

“He played the flute. She told me she was tone deaf, but that is not entirely true. Anyway, she cannot play and I am her, so I cannot play.”

“One day maybe?”

“Please let me continue. You wanted the story, and I am telling it to you now.”

“I am sorry,” he said. He squeezed her, holding her as she asked despite the heat of the Aegean night.

“She spoke of you. She loved you, but can I suggest not as much as I do? I could not leave you the way she did. She loved the life that you could give her, but most of all she loved that you were there, and that she could always go home to you. She was that kind of adventurer. I never had that luxury. I was without ties but not by choice. I envied her this life.”

She paused, as if her guilty secret was out. Envy. But he was there, and she was loved.

“But most of all I envied that she was what I could never be – she was a woman. I was running away from who I was. I was roaming the globe as a man because a man can walk alone more easily, but really because I was wrestling with those inner feelings. I pushed them deep down inside me. But for me she seemed to be everything I wanted – she was beautiful, and she was loved, and she was rich too.”

“I am rich,” he said. “So, my wife is rich. You are rich.”

“We are talking about the person I saw,” she said, and little angry at the interruption. “And the crazy thing was that we looked like brother and sister. Everybody we met assumed that we were. Normally when you meet a couple travelling you assume that they are a couple, but never us. Some said that we must be fraternal twins. We were even the same size, our eyes exactly the same color. It was just that my face was that of a man and my body too. A face and a body that I hated.”

A breeze entered the room, making it just slightly cooler. He squeezed her again.

“When she died, I decided that I should try to be her,” she said. “It was not entirely selfish, but perhaps mainly that. But I also thought of you. You did not deserve to be alone. Nobody would miss the man, but the death of the woman would tear a hole in you. I knew that. I just thought that she deserved to live more than … more than him.”

“She does live, and for that I owe you the world,” he said.

“It seemed like an outrageous story, that somebody would be kidnapped and have their sex changed forcibly, but it seemed that it was a story that I could at least try. All I needed to do was to have her DNA in a blood sample to prove that I was her – to prove that I was your wife.”

“I can understand how you might have been able to draw blood from her body, but how did you keep the sample for long enough to get it to the embassy?” he asked. It was something that he had not considered before.

“It was a humanitarian program. Medicine containers for live vaccines were available. I just had to switch vials when they asked for proof of my story. You can imagine their shock. A man walks in and claims to be a woman who has been forcibly turned into a man. But when the results of the sample came back you could see there amazement. They treated me like a crazy person, and then suddenly every woman at the embassy was filled with horror and genuine sympathy for my predicament. A woman forced into the body of a man – how horrible! But that had always been my predicament. I got no sympathy then. Transwomen don’t, especially secret transwomen.”

“I remember when they called me,” he said. “They could still not quite believe it. They said that if it was female to male surgery, which was being done locally over there, it was the most comprehensive ever seen.”

“I had a self-mutilation scar from years before that helped, but I wriggled throughout the physical and made it hard,” she said. “But what did they say when they called you? I never asked you.”

“They asked me to get your DNA analyzed. Some hair from your hairbrush at home. That would be the definitive proof, but in the meantime they said that I should talk with you to confirm whether it might be you. And then I got you one the phone and I heard your deeper voice and I immediately thought that there was no way. But then you started to cry and they were your words that came out – it was just the voice that was wrong.”

“The emotion was real. You were my husband, and we had been apart for so long. You are my husband and I never want to be apart from you again not ever. But yes, the words I had heard spoken by her so many times. When two people are alone in a hostile environment, you learn everything that there is to know about one another. Everything.”

“They sent me some photographs of you, Did I tell you that?” he said. “They made me sick. It seemed true to me then. I could see you, but they had taken my beautiful wife and done this to her. They had changed her face. They spared me the views of your body. The suggestion was that they were rogue surgeons experimenting on some Westerner they had bought in a slave market. It was so disgusting that I had real trouble. I just wanted to get the corrective surgery done, as soon as possible, even before you got home.”

“Yes,” she said. “That was all that I had hoped for. If after that had been done I had simply said to you that you had been tricked into paying for a sex change, I might have been able to walk away with a brief apology, but then you arrived and … and I fell in love with you.”

“At first sight?” this time he rolled over to look in her eyes.

She smiled. “The truth is that I was in love with you even before I met your. She made me love you. Just as she made it so easy for me to become her, it seemed natural that I would fall for you. So the first sight I had of you, while I was still in bandages and in pain, it was love.”

“Do you have any idea when I might have first doubted that you … were you?”

“Was it before I left the hospital?”

“God no. Not for weeks after that. Which I suppose goes to show you just how well I knew my wife. You knew her better than I did. I know that now.”

“You doubted me? But then what?”

“By then you were healed, and well … there is nobody quite like you.”

“So doubt disappeared for a while?”

“No. I suppose I knew then, but I did not care.” He leaned over and kissed her, gently on the lips. They lingered for a moment, sharing one another’s breath. She ached to have him inside her again, but then she always did.

“Forgive me for deceiving you,” she said.

“I am so easily deceived it does not seem to matter,” he said. “It seems to me now that she was like a captive bird, the first version of you. What man does not want a beautiful bird of paradise in a cage to adore and to show to others. But such a bird can never live in a cage. She must be free. And with time I have learned that birds are for the sky, and beds are for people like you and me.”

“I say a big yes to that,” she said.

She reached down and could feel his cock stiffening. He gasped and she could feel the blood flowing to her welcoming fingers.

“I only wander with you, I swear it,” she said. “I have been found and I will never be lost again.”

They devoured one another like wild animals, in the manner of people that much in love.

The End

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Now and Always

a woman disappeared some years ago but now has reappeared she looks pretty much the same but is now male she claims to have been transformed by some unknown process she can answer any questions about her old life and there are no old fingerprints or such records to trip her up she wants to claim her old assets, which might be a lot she had a husband and he resists the new her, but they agree to live together for a time as a trial. Slowly she convinces him that she is really his wife he testifies in her behalf and the court cases are settled in her favor once she has been confirmed in her identity she gets an operation to become female again she and her husband go on a 2nd honeymoon and she asks him how he would feel if it all was just a scam that she had learned all about the original woman thru living beside all those years while she died slowly of some injury or disease he says "it wouldn't make any difference. you're here and now and you're mine, it's all I want. Besides, it isnt true is it, you are my wife

“Yes I am,” she says "Now and Always"