A New Dawn

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

I worked for Central Steel, and like most people who worked at the mill, I lived in Westtown, just a few minutes down the road.

Westtown was tough, as you would expect a steel town to be. Most of the guys who worked at the mill were big and strong. Me? Not so much. I worked in Metallurgy. In fact Metallurgy at central Steel was me, except for all the samples I collected and had taken away. I knew what I was doing and knowing the quality of the steel is an important part of the business. It was because of that I received a little respect.

I spent time around the furnaces, taking samples and checking the processes, so I knew the guys and I was happy to be around them after work, but I was never really the same as them. I also had other responsibilities. I was a solo father.

My wife Meghan left with a travelling salesman.

I am too young at heart, Don,” she said to me over the phone. “I married too early. I had children too early. It is no reflection on you or the boys. I am hungry for excitement. Please tell them that I am sorry.”

And that was that. We never saw her again. We never even received birthday or Christmas cards or even a postcard from a far away place, let alone a call or an email or a text message. She might be dead for all we know. I remember hoping that she was, because at least that might explain how she could simply forget about her family so coldly and completely.

Our two boys, Randall and Jackson, were more confused than upset. I learned later just how distant she had been from them. Meghan was a dreamer, and for her that travelling salesman must have been a dream come true. He must have sold her on a life with him, and I suppose any life outside Westtown might seem better. It sure is clear that living in a steel town with a husband and two kids was not her dream. I can understand that in a way.

I had to make some changes in our living arrangements to cope. The good news for me was that the management at Central Steel could not easily replace me, or rather any replacement would cost them twice what they paid me. I was allowed to start at the mill after I had got the boys away to school, and after school they had activities until I got home from work. During the school breaks I juggled things but when Randal turned 15 and Jackson 14, they could be at home alone.

They each had a laptop PC. It seemed like a good investment in their education. When I was home, I limited time and monitored what they were doing, but that was harder to do when I was at work all day and they were at home. I am not saying that it was exposure to inappropriate websites that changed my boys. It is now clear to me that what happened was a part of them way before they were old enough to find out more about it on the internet.

I was aware that both of my boys were being bullied at school. They were both being called “sissies” but I thought that was just Westtown. It seemed like anybody who was a bit smaller than the guys at the plant, and I suppose their kids too, might be considered a sissy.

I never even knew that sissies were real. It seemed to me that it was just a word people might use to say that a guy was less of man than most. But it turns out that sissies are real and there is a whole world of stuff out there about them.

I found out by accident. I didn’t have a PC at home but I needed to check something and Randall’s device was sitting on the kitchen table. I opened it and I knew the password would be his mother’s name – he had told me once that it was her daily nod to her. I did not even deliberately look at his browser history. I was looking for the site I needed by subject and the browser just kept making suggestions based on most visited sites. That was how I found out what he was looking at.

I was very troubled. It was not that I was horrified that my son might be gay, it was that he might be gay in Westtown. That would be a problem for him, and for me, and for his younger brother too. I hoped that it would not be so, but it was pretty clear from what I now understood that he viewed daily – he wanted to be fucked by men.

He was asleep. They both were. I had to leave it until the following day, and even then, our morning routine did not allow for a private talk. I thought about the problem all day at work, adding to the stress of a sleepless night following my discovery. I finally got the chance to ask him when I got home, when Jackson was outside. It was a hard thing to do.

“They call me a sissy Dad, and I am one. I know what a sissy is, Dad. Yes, I want to have sex with men, but real men who see me as a girl. I was to be passive and treated like a weak, silly but pretty little girl. I am a sissy, and I think that Jackson is too.”

Of course I tried to talk him through it, but he was adamant. But as for including Jackson in his fantasy, that annoyed me. Because he insisted it was true, that Jackson was like him. So, I called Jackson inside – it would be a family conference.

“I may not be like Randall, Dad,” said Jackson. “He may want to be like a girl, but I want to be a girl – it’s a simple as that. I don’t have to be pretty or soft, so long as I can be a girl. I have always felt this way, but now I see all the boys changing, I could not bear to be like them, Dad. If I grew whiskers, it would be so awful that I would not want to live.”

This is the kind of talk that must chill every parent to hear. The thought of a child taking their own life is terrifying thing. I had to think about what I could do to support them both – Randall from others and Jackson from himself.

Of course the first thought is to blame the internet. It seemed that the web was full of crazy ideas and seemed to have a hypnotic hold over young people. Were these ideas really theirs? I insisted that they show me what they had been looking at. What amazed me was that there was so much of this stuff out there.

There was expert opinion too. Is like my job – you always defer to the scientists. Transgenderism, gender dysphoria, autogynephilia – it was all new to me. But it was not madness. It just happens.

For some of it the treatment was well established – gender reassignment. It does not have to be surgical, or even pharmacological. In some cases it is just living as a member of the opposite sex. There is only one problem with that – we live in Westtown.

This was not just a problem for one of my boys, it was both of them. So a family problem needs a family solution.

“We’ll move,” I said. “We’ll move to Eastville.”

“It’ll be just as bad there,” said Jackson.

“No, I mean we’ll move and you can both be girls. You can live as girls, at least outside of home. If you are more comfortable as girls then you can live somewhere where nobody knows that you are not girls. Nobody need know. A new school and new friends.”

“New friends?” said Randall. “But I have a boyfriend.”

“A boyfriend? What do you mean a boyfriend?” As if I had not had my share of shocks on the nightmare of a day, now this.

“Nobody is supposed to know, but yeah. One of the guys at school likes me as a sissy. His name is Carlos. We have some fun together. I’m sorry Dad, but sissies have urges, and they are strong.”

“Well, if he likes you so much, then he can visit you in Eastville. If nobody is supposed to know then it may be better if he does, don’t you think?”

“I guess so,” said Randall. “So a girl, huh? All the time? Part of me likes the idea.”

Then Jackson piped up. He said something that threw the whole thing wide open. He said – “Why don’t you become a girl too, Dad? All three of us. It would be easier for everybody. We could be a family of women. A mother and her lovely daughters.”

“You could be a MILF, Dad,” said Randall. “I could do it if you could do it. I am sure I could.”

“Slow down, Boys. There is just one problem with that, and it’s a big one. I work at Central Mill. It is a good job, and I am not giving that up.”

“Everybody knows that you will be the last person fired at Central Mill,” said Randall. “If you turned up with the devil’s horns growing out of your head, you would not lose your job.”

That might be true, but it would be a challenge. I just had my two children, the two people that I care about most in the world looking at me with pleading eyes. The only fact that mattered was that I would do anything for my kids – anything. And it seemed to me that a family problem should include me. If they were going to suffer the hardships of a new gender, then maybe I should share some of that?

“Let’s look at how easy it might be to do this, or how hard,” I said. So we sat down at Randall’s computer and started to look into it.

I found a place in Eastville that was perfect. It was not to my taste, but Jackson just loved it, and he seemed to know what would suit our changed family. We could rent it with an option to buy, and I could let our house in Westtown until we knew how things would turn out.

We looked into changing gender and how to do it. We looked at online tutorials in looking like a woman, acting like a woman and speaking like a woman. We looked into how to change you identity.

It seemed that Jackson was right – if we all did this together, we could make it work. We would help one another. Jackson was convinced; Randall maybe not, but he was excited; I was just concerned, but I have to say – increasingly interested in this new world of variable gender.

I started to think about my wife Meghan. She had said that she had not lived because she had not lived another life. She felt strangled as a wife and mother. There was an energy in her that I remembered and probably loved, even though I hated her for abandoning us so completely. I think that she had a big role to play in the person I became, so I decided to take on some of her personality in becoming a new person - Dawn.

Jackson became Jacqueline or just Jacqui, and Randal became Roselynn. And they both became “she”. We all became that, except that we needed to keep everything under wraps until we were ready to move. It was simple really, one day three males would leave Westtown, and three women would arrive, later in the day, and via a small salon in a town to the North, in Eastville.

The following day I went into work and told my boss that I needed a change.

“You are not leaving, are you, Don?” his face had gone white, quite literally. “We can offer you a bigger wage if that is the problem.”

“I am not thinking about that kind of change,” I said. “But I will need more money. No, I am happy to stay but I will be moving to Eastville, and I will be living as a woman from the moment I do.”

It was hard to read the look on his face. Relief was there, and disbelief too, but maybe also curiosity.

“So you want to wear a dress to work?”

“Well, maybe some days, but it may not be too practical when I am down on the foundry floor. But I would expect to be treated like one of the female staff, and have access to the women’s restrooms.”

“So, for that you need some … modification downstairs – right?”

“Wrong,” I said. “That may come later. You will need to trust that I am serious. If I were to use the men’s room I would not trust a single man in this place.” I was thinking that he was included.

I told the school that I was pulling my sons out of school. We were moving, so it was a solid goodbye.

I had booked our time at the salon so they were not totally unprepared, but you can imagine this – three men turn up to a small salon in an old shop front on the edge of town, and expect to walk out looking like women. It was a challenge, but Carmen and her assistant were up for the task.

There was no doubt that I was the biggest challenge, as I had forty years of accumulated manhood, but I had plenty of hair on my scalp and not so much on my body to make having it all ripped off too painfully. Roselynn already had quite long hair, and Jacqui’s was long enough for a short layered bob, but I needed extensions. But that was just as well – it was a Friday and I would be turning up for work on Monday after getting the girls settled at school. I needed to look right.

We had been practising our feminine ways since we resolved this, and walking and talking at home like womenfolk, but while we had ourselves as rigorous judges, we had yet to test ourselves in public. For what it was worth Carmen was impressed.

After the hair and makeup was done, we had only a moment to be very happy before we needed to get dressed and back on the road to Eastville. Roselynn and Jacqui wanted to wear dresses, and while I could easily have worn pants and a floral top over the feminizing formwear underneath, I relented and wore a dress too.

We drove to Eastville and picked up the key to our house. The movers were waiting because we were late. We watched them shift our stuff in without any of us lifting a manicured finger. I had been roped in to helping as we loaded up.

“What happened to the guy, maybe your husband?” the moving guy said. “And I thought there were two boys in the household there?”

“They’re not moving,” I said. “They belong in Westtown. They’re staying there.” I looked around and saw my daughters smiling at me.

The house was a mess of boxes, and as I pointed out, we were not appropriately dressed to unpack.

“Just remember that being female is not all able pastel shades and lace,” I warned them both. “But dressed as we are, we need to go out for dinner and show off our girly chops.”

There was actually an Italian restaurant in walking distance on the main road heading west out of town. We went there, and introduced ourselves. The owner asked if Roselynn was old enough to wait tables part time. She liked the uniform – white blouse, green skirt and red bandana at the neck, but she said that she preferred pink.

“You can wear pink for Carlos, but the rest of the time you are a girl, not a sissy,” I whispered. “This is to make it easy for you. This is hardest for me, and here I am, smiling at the guy over there who looks like he is undressing me with his eyes.”

It was true. Maybe it was the hair and makeup. Maybe the figure that had been created for me, and the dress that showed it off. Or maybe I really was the MILF? I was big for a woman, but not overly so. I did not have heavy features, and Carmen had called my appearance “striking rather than pretty like your daughters” but it was clearly a look that had its fans.

It turned out that the guy staring was a regular. A divorced man who loved good food but couldn’t cook, so he ate at the local restaurant quite often. He could afford it, as it happened, as I was to discover. But it had been an exhausting day, and a busy weekend was to follow. We had to unpack and put anything masculine in storage, and make a list of what we needed to make a true feminine household.

We had plenty of opportunity to get out and about in Eastville and to introduce ourselves to neighbors. I was expecting that some might find us not what we held ourselves out to be, but if anybody did, they never let on. As far as everyone was concerned, I was Dawn, separated, with two daughters Roselynn and Jacqueline.

On Sunday afternoon Carlos came to call. He was a very large young man, dark and powerful, and clearly crazy about Roselynn. She insisted on wearing something pink, which she said Carlos had bought for her, and she pranced around him like a tease. I could swear that Carlos had an erection when he struggled to stand up and follow Roselynn upstairs.

Roselynn was 16 by this stage and I know that seems young, but it is the age of consent in our state, and while I could have said “not in this house” I resolved that I would not be that kind of mother. At least pregnancy was not a risk, but I did talk to Carlos about sexual hygiene. By that point he was too far gone, I think. Jacqui and I had to sit in the living room and listen to the pounding upstairs.

We actually looked at one another and started giggling. It is not the kind of thing Don would have done. But as I said, I was Dawn with a trace of Meghan – maybe with a moral attitude closer to her than to her than the staid and boring Don.

In the morning I gave Roselynn a lecture about restraint and about avoiding being branded as a slut. She needed to watch what she wore, and how suggestively she behaved, and not stare at the crotches of every boy who walked by.

“Carlos is my guy,” she said. “I am off limits to other guys.” But I always felt that others might not be off limits to her.

Jacqui was the opposite. When I got them both to school she just wanted to find some girls to hang around with. She wanted to be pretty, and she was, but she did not necessarily want to stand out. She wanted to be one of the girls, and within a very short period of time, she was.

Once I was happy with that, I set off on the long drive to Central Mill. That would be a grind every morning, so I would have to leave early and get another car for Roselynn to drive to school, although I would have preferred to wait for Jacqui to get her learners’ permit.

I arrived after lunch. I was wearing my shaped underwear with tight jeans showed what looked like a smooth front, and a loose colorful blouse that showed what looked like a large bosom. My hair was tied back so that everybody could see that it was my hair – or most of it was. I had spent time on my makeup, because I wanted that first impression to be right. This was not a joke and I was not in drag. My name is Dawn now and I am a woman – a female metallurgist.

Everybody gaped a little, but I learned later that everybody had been prepared and told that I was not to be picked out for comment, adverse or otherwise. In that vein I went about my business as I usually would, but with some differences that I had rehearsed. I wore gloves to protect my hands as a part of my skin care regime, and I adopted movements and flourishes that I considered feminine. I wanted everybody to understand that I was a woman now.

I think that when I started all of this I thought that a time would come when it would all end. I suppose I thought that Jacqui would have a successful transition and then have surgery and find a man who loved her no matter who or what she used to be – and that is what happened. I suppose that I thought that Roselynn would find a life as some kind of effeminate homosexual and get all the sex that she wanted with whoever she wanted – and that is more or less the way things went until Carlos left the scene and she found another guy who wanted her to follow her sister into womanhood.

But once they were looked after, I guess I thought that I would leave it all behind and go back to being Don. If I thought that then I would have believed that the old Meghan would reappear – her adventures over, her thirst for difference quenched – but that was never going to happen. She was not coming back, and neither was Don.

The truth is that I learned to love life as a woman. In fact, maybe I loved it from that very first day. That was the day that I caught the eye of the man in the restaurant who was to become my husband, and that meant that I had to follow Jacqui and Roselynn and give away my manhood completely, and happily.

The morning that I woke up both of my daughters were at my beside – both complete women. And I was too. It was like a new dawn. I was a new Dawn.

The End

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