Signover

The Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

Jerry and I had known one another since childhood. We went through high school together and worked together after I finished college. I went into finance, but Jerry felt that he was ready to set up his own business. You have to admire him for that.

He had driven vans and trucks for a part-time job for years even while we were at school. He started doing local deliveries and short haulage on shift, but by the time we were graduating high school he was graduating to long haul. That is where the money is.

Jerry was smart and could see the problems with the companies he was working for. He said it was all about back-loading. Coming back empty is not just missing an opportunity for profit, it is a cost. If you have business in at least two places you can double your return. If you are getting business in 6 or 7 cities you never have to do business without getting a return load. It just needs organization.

I helped Jerry with funding he needed to set up online bookings and to get casual space for depots in several major cities. He never looked back. He was never shy of hard work. The business took off.

I was doing well, but I was in the city centre and he was on the outskirts, so we did not catch up as often as we should. But old friends are best friends, and we stayed in touch.

He got married and I was best man at his wedding, even though I barely knew his bride Sabrina. To me she was wrong. She was bigger than him, but that does not mean she was a very large woman. She was all tits and butt and long blonde hair – almost a caricature of a woman, like a widened Barbie doll. Jerry was small and quiet, and a gentle person. I half-imagined that she had wrestled him to the ground and forced a marriage proposal out of him. I said something close to that in my wedding speech. She was not happy.

She never liked us getting together, but we did.

I suppose friends are supposed to notice changes, but I never really took much notice. Lots of guys grow their hair long, if they can get away with it. I cannot in my job, but he worked for himself so he could look how he liked. There were other things too. When we caught up, I always said that we should go to an all-you-can-eat place to some more meat on him.

“Sabrina’s food must be shit,” I teased him, but it was clear less than a year after the marriage that things were not happy at home. It sounded like he was doing all the cooking as well and bringing in all the income.

Then out of the blue I got an email, sent to all of Jerry’s friends and it looked like a whole bunch of his business contacts, with a video attached. It was from Sabrina and it carried the message: “This is the real Jerry, a fag and a pervert”.

I thought about not even opening the file – just sending it back and saying something like “Jerry is my friend so I have deleted the file you attached without opening it”. But I thought: ‘My friend is in trouble, so I had better find out how much’.

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| When I opened the video I could see a very attractive woman in a little black dress applying her lipstick at the bathroom mirror, and puckering her lips. Then she turned and looked at the camera in shock. A voice came from her lips: “No Sabrina, please!” It was Jerry’s voice.  I almost fell off my chair. Strangely I was not shocked to see my friend in drag. What really shook me was that he was gorgeous. |  |

This was somebody I had known most of my life and I had no idea he was a cross-dresser. I had no real idea what that was, but Jerry was married and when we were at school, he had dated girls. I knew enough that transvestites are not necessarily gay, and it just a kinky thing. But as I say, he was gorgeous. That was the unsettling thing.

Then I thought: ‘Shit. That bitch has sent this out to ruin him. This is bad’. So, I called Jerry straight away.

“What am I going to do,” he said. He sounded so distraught I found myself imagining that I was talking to the pretty girl in the black dress on the other end of the phone, like a damsel in distress. “I have been too embarrassed even to call you.”

“Is it really that important?” I asked. “By the way, you look good in drag”.

“I’m in trucking.” That was all he said, as if it was the complete answer. Okay, the trucking business can be tough. Jerry was not big and did not have a dep booming voice, but he came across as somebody who could not be easily rolled. How did it look now that his customers knew that he was a closet sissy?

“What does she want?” I asked him, keeping my response equally to the point.

“She wants money,” he said. “To get it, she wants me to let her father and brother into the business. It was blackmail, but now she has fired her shot. Her father has said that he can rescue things if he fronts the business and I just do the admin side.”

“The prick,” I said. “The bitch.”

“I kept it secret from her,” he said. I knew what he was talking about. “She didn’t have to know. You never knew. She saw some stuff on my PC and then she searched for an found my clothing stash. And now … well, I’m fucked.”

Suddenly I was wondering what he had on his PC. And what was in his “clothing stash”. What I should have been doing was thinking how to help.

“If she wants money then after only a year of marriage she won’t get much if you sell the business,” I suggested.

“This business is my life,” he said. I knew it was.

“I am not suggesting you really sell out. I will come up with a shell to buy it.” A plan was forming as I spoke. “One of the funds I control already holds some debt on the business, so we can use this turmoil she has created as an excuse to call up the loan and force a sale. That will crystallize a price for the business, and you can pay her a cash settlement. You don’t have to do wat she wants. As you said, she has shot her bolt.”

“Are you saying that I should sign my business over to you?” Had I gone too far? “Because I happily would in order to keep her and her family out of it.”

“It would just be temporary, but we would back it with cash. We will have a trust document drawn up to protect you and you alone. There would be a call option for you to buy the business back. It is just a common financial device.” Not so common, but something that I could arrange.

“And you would front the company?” he asked.

“If I need to, sure. But maybe you can put this girl thing behind you and step up. It’s a modern world, Bud. People understand that trans stuff now – right?”

“Not my customers,” he said with a look of resignation on his face. “Besides, now it is out there maybe now is the time to leave the man behind.”

“What man?” I was confused. Was there somebody else involved in this shit-show?

“Me,” he said. “Sabrina was right: This is not the real me. The real me is on that video. You have seen her. Everybody has. It is not the way I would have done it, but it is done now. All my excuses for hiding are now gone, so why hide?”

I said: “I don’t understand”. But I did. It seemed incredible that I had no idea in all the time that we had known one another. I thought I knew him, but clearly, I did not.

I found out later that Jerry had only married Sabrina for the fact that she was as I had always thought, just a fantasy of womanhood, and in Jerry’s case, that is what he wanted to be. He didn’t want a wife, he wanted to be one. If that was impossible then her could watch her putting on her bra to cup those breasts, or pulling up her tights over that huge butt, and imagine it was his body. He liked to brush her hair and help her to arrange it, and watch her put on her makeup.

It was only a matter of time before she understood what was going on. To be fair to her, it must have been a shock. But it was clear from the video that her husband had moved from watching to emulating her. He presence only helped to feed his need to become a woman.

In less that a year in had become obvious to both of them that this was not a normal relationship. But Jerry said that he could have let it continue, but surely it was something other that money that forced her to post that video.

But now it was done, and it would not win her any support should the property split come before the Court. For that reason, our attorney was able to secure a relatively cheap buy out of Sabrina’s interest in his property, and a quickie divorce.

But Jerry was right, my help was needed to deal with some of his less liberal-minded customers and many of his drivers. To them I was “the guy who bought out the pervert”, but to others I could call myself “Jemima’s (Jem’s) partner”.

Yes, Jem was now free to live as a woman, and to run all of the logistics of the business just as well as she always had.

What Sabrina had doe was horrific and spiteful, but in reality it was like a dream come true for Jemima, and as it happens, for me.

I found that the work was far more interesting than the dry world of finance. I was dealing with real people and we were shifting real goods, rather that working to convince people that there was value in pieces of paper or lines of code. I could still do some market trading in the downtime, so why work fulltime in the rat-race?

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| And the truth is, that the working environment in finance is dog-eat-dog. Trucking is a service business where you are all working together to achieve a good business – keeping inventories, tracing movements, meeting committed delivery times, keeping trucks on the road. And the key members of the team were me and Jem. We were always together. Even when I was tearing a strip off some driver, she was always there to support me, now preferring to watch me do those kinds of jobs.  People who saw us together and heard us described as “partners” were bound to make assumptions.  “No, we’re business partners,” I would say.  Some might reply with a wink to me: “Business is looking good.” | http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-4ikp5fO9bXg/Ua1bY-nb7MI/AAAAAAAAAJQ/Y2Qnz5Udvc8/s640/regata+de+strass.jpg |

I mean, they were right. I had said that Jerri “looked good in drag” but Jemima was never in drag – she just looked good. There is a woman who takes pride in her appearance, and who became happier each day as the effects of the hormones became more obvious.

Jerry had ceased to be, and the words: “This is my partner Jemima” became easier to say and to extend beyond mere business. Looking at her should make this much easier to understand.

It was just supposed to be temporary. But we enjoyed working together so much that it just seemed to coast along.

And just I case you think that I have taken advantage of a friend’s misfortune to have the business signed over to me, let me tell you that she will be getting her share back the day after tomorrow. That is the day that Jemima and I are getting married.

The End

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Author’s Note

Images are of Daisy Calixto and transwoman from Brazil. This story was originally a short tale “The Signover” inspired by a captioned image.