Two Hundred Stories

An Essay

By Maryanne Peters

I think that you have to exclude last month’s thank you note, so it seems to me that yesterday’s “Marrying the Cop” was my two hundredth story. In my thank you note I told everybody how much I enjoy the release of writing TG fiction, and how much more joy there is in getting feedback and encouragement. I decided that I should write a short essay on my approach to TG fiction.

The last time I did this (at 100 stories) I was accused of “blowing my own trumpet” so I should say that I am not saying that my stories are special, I am just trying to explain why I am always searching for something new.

People who read my stories will note that the common thread is unintended change of sex. That is not always the case. Many of the changes are (to use the Fictionmania category) “Voluntary”, although some of those may show some resistance throughout the process, such as my story coming story “Butch” (only on my Patreon at this point) about a guy fighting his trans-thoughts. If we are going to get to the heart of it, I would have to say that all changes that are fully embraced by my characters, or at least accepted by them, indicates some innate transgender feelings. But for me it is the surprise recognition of that which is the fun of it.

I know why I write these stories. For me it is a key fantasy that some event might happen that will take away from me the decision that has been so hard for me to make. I know who I am and what I want, but just cannot do it. I am looking for a circumstance beyond my control that will make it happen, so it must at least be possible, however improbable.

So, my devices must be realistic situations where an apparently normal man is driven to change gender. Keeping it fresh means reaching way out there for novel reasons forcing drastic change. I find myself running up against the Fictionmania categories, which seem more slanted towards magic and science-fantasy. But in looking at some that I have employed I will use the Fictionmania category titles where I am able:

1. Accidental Change. By this I am assuming that this is accident with an injury, such as “Doing Without”, “Losses” or Lumberjackie”, but also a disease like “Androgen Insensitivity”. Taking the wrong drug in “With Darius” was an accident.
2. Crime Punishment. There are great stories about a penalty imposed by a justice system, but not by me – too far-fetched. Here I am talking about the vengeful wife as in “Mangina” or mother of the vengeful sister in “All Grown Out”.
3. Deals Bets or Dares. This is a big category for me. “The Follicle Challenge”, “Placekickers”, “Addiction”, “Wager”, “Gypsy Healing”, “The Statue” and “Rivals” are all examples. Maybe “Friendship” fits here? I see that more as an understanding between close friends rather than a deal. “Coaches” is another recent bet story.
4. In Hiding. Examples from my catalogue are: “Running”, “Sprung”, “Uncle”, “Italian Matchmaking”, “Anything to Avoid the Draft”, maybe “Sikh”, and more recently “The Sanctuary”, and “Transatlantic”. Hiding needs to be the reason for the change so in “Second Life” the change is voluntary.
5. Mind Altered, Hypnosis, Brainwashed. I have generally avoided this device as being unrealistic, although recently my scepticism has been questioned. However, I have written “The Gibbon Girls” (with some forced in there too), “Paralyzed”, “Pass Phrase”, “The Bedsit”, “Kinsey Scale”, “The Therapist’s Solution”, “Jerri-Aimee, “Domestic Duties” and perhaps the “Independence” stories. I have tended to approach hypnosis as I did in “Not Lonely and Single” – check that out.
6. Mind Transfer seems far too fantastical, but I did write to Novelettes using this in “Neuron Transfer” and “Reframed”.
7. Physically Forced or Blackmailed. This is fairly common, so when I use it, I am trying to bring a new angle and I prefer to avoid torture. Examples are “Gran’s Tale”, “Indian Red”, “Molly Grows Up”, “Cambiaro Island”, “From Russia”, “Decision Day”, “Mermaid”, “Farmers’ Wives”, “Conditioned”, “Cornstow Lodge”, “Traditions”, “Cabin Girl”, “Maid”, “Voila”, Revenge Served Cold”, “New Life”, “The Sign-over”, “Dom”, “A Taste of Girl” and a particularly nasty one in “The Surgeon”. But what about “Orphans”? Is this really forced?
8. Tricked or secretly forced. I used this to slot in my two “Weddings” stories and also “Stepbrother” and “It Worked”. But Fictionmania defines the category as being for stories: “Where the main character is tricked into the change, and unknowingly accepts an item, drink, or casting a spell that has been unknowingly tampered with”. Do they fit?
9. Undercover, Detective. My best examples are: “Bait”, “Squaddie”, “Infiltrator”, “Forensic Accountant” and more recently “Amazons”. But can you include “Pit Crew” or even “Diversity”? And what about the sociologist in “Immersion”?
10. Voluntary is a category that I have mentioned, and which is a big one. I have tried to give a twist to all overtly voluntary transitions as I did with “Always Fi”, “New Plumbing”, “Fishing Trip”, “For Daddy”, “Father of the Bride”, “Brothers”, “Pre-planned”, “Faith”, “His and Hers”, “Leaving the Nest”, “Rescuing Roberta”, “Pretty”, “The Quarterback” and more recently “Flicka”. As I said before, maybe for many of my other heroines, it was what they always wanted, but that does not make it voluntary

If something does not fit into these slots, I am generally inclined to post my stories under the category “Stuck” which includes: “Stories where the person ends up stuck as a female that is out of their control. More of a surprise then being forced”. That would be right, but reference to surprise sound like fast transformation, and as a category it does explain the reason for the change, just the result. The same for “Caught with consequences”.

So, the majority of my stories do not fit, and I am OK with that. I am always looking for some work of fiction that is beyond being classified.

Here are some additional categories that might help to organize my work:

1. Duty. I think that my first story “Zoran” fitted this, even with the blackmail component, and it certainly applies to a personal favorite “Guardian” and also to “Duty Demands”, “Witches” and family obligations with the stories “In Mother’s Place”, “For Her” and “Call for Help”.
2. Advancement. “Promotional Advantage” and “Diversity, “Adwomen”” are about the subject choosing a new gender to gain advantage in a workplace. Likewise, in the “Beautiline” stories (at least two of the five are on FM) are about doing the job more effectively as a woman. Could this category apply to performance such as “Tango”, “Voice”, or “Laurenina”? Or contests as in “Dad Wants to Party” or “Mother Daughter Pageant”.
3. Mistaken Identity. “Girls Love Paris Best” is one of these.
4. Strange Forces. “Bald” might be an example of this category, also “Devotee” and perhaps the “Triton” stories, a couple of which are on FM.
5. Survival. In “Cobras Moll” and also in “The Option” the subject faced a nasty fate in prison, met by becoming female but for very different reasons. “New Society” fits here too, and perhaps “Golden Days”?
6. Peer Pressure. For example: “Stepbrother” – not forced or tricked.
7. Opportunists. These are stories where dressing is just a means to get something, but grows into something else, starting with “Underage”, the “The Scholarship”, “Specialist Nanny”, “Partners”, “St Beatrice”, and perhaps “The Dealer”.
8. Stories Based on Fact. I have done a few: “Sporus”, “The Dark Lady”, “La Chevaliere”, “The Governess”
9. Rants. I would class “Gorilla Suit” and “Transwife” in this category.

I am not sure that it is a category, but there are a number of stories (not just by me) that could be described as “Cross Dresser crosses over”. Some of my stories are: “Too Convincing”, “My Future”, “Normal Life” and “Modelling Contract”.

Then there are a variety of motivations that can be identified: Guilt drives the change in “Goat”, insanity the change in “Schizophrenia” (renamed “Multiple Personality Disorder”), fraud drives “Births Deaths and Marriages”, a chance of sex in “What did the Twins Say?”, sporting ambition in “Penalties”, avoiding police charges in “Dating the Cop” a chance at comfort in “Prisoner 45816”, paying the rent in “Paying the Rent”, a gay man wanting to appear straight in “Now a Housewife”, and the actor taking on the role of transgender police officer in the “Talk Show” series.

Here are some which I might call uncategorizable: The alternative to suicide offered in “The Leap”, the slow bonding of “Golden Days, the empty killer adopting a life in “New Contract”, the growing fascination with clothes in “Consulting” or with hair in “Shampoo”, the mysterious androgyne in “Jonny”, the performance artists in “Life Imitates Art”, the impressionable geek in “Influenced”, trying a new relaxation technique in “Thai Plastic”, the misguided idealist in “Neuter”, the husband and wife business team in “The Joy of Serving”, the tourist in a lady-boy bar “Hungover”, the two lonely students in “My Son’s Girlfriend”, the brother roped into a video scam in “Vlogger”, the inventors in “Virtuality”.

I suppose that I am really inviting people to look again at what I have written, to give comments and ideas, and wait for what comes next.

Thank you all for your support.

Maryanne Peters