Joe’s Woman

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

Joe surveyed his claim with some pride in the early evening light, the red earth of Western Australia made even more red by the final rays of the sun. The portable building they had lived in was still flattened on the slight rise facing Treasure Hill, but the screening plant and loader were now back to full operation after the dust storm of the previous month.

The storm had taken away their 4x4 as well – picked it up and smashed it beyond repair, taking down the radio mast with it. It had rendered them alone – on a desert island surrounded by a dry sea. Yes, Treasure Hill was an island, but an island of gold.

He had seen it when he flew over it years before. There was some weathered quartz visible through the red dust, and some darker stone hinting at ancient volcanic activity – a potential epithermal reef it a desert where other gold had been dispersed alluvial in some of the oldest geology on the planet.

Treasure Hill was so isolated that it was easy to lodge a claim and get the prospecting rights. It had no name then. He gave it that name after only three days working the surface and finding and tracing the line of reef. It had been an ancient fissure in the hard basalt, where gold had been pushed up in molten quartz, a crystal easily shattered to free the yellow metal from its grasp.

He had decided that he would work it himself, and stay under the radar. That meant starting on one side of the hill with an excavator, feeding a small crusher and a dry screen. And then as the wide reef continued on, to follow it. It seemed even more good fortune that as he went underground he did not need to drop, so that his mine shaft was an adit, with gravity taking the small gauge wagons out to the plant. It was simply blast in the evenings, dig in the mornings and work the plant in the afternoon. Every evening, every morning, every afternoon, for years.

He could sell to Perth mint, taking in at least one rough dore bar every month, and buying what he needed. The only suspicion that he was on to a bonanza was the constant badgering by Dan Seals, a machinery supplier. In return he had offered to pay Dan a premium on supplies to keep quiet, but the man had betrayed him.

It was of no great loss. Dan’s friend had followed Joe into the desert – it was easy to follow his dust cloud. He had checked the boundaries and looked to cash in on adjoining land, but the desert around Treasure Hill was featureless, and geologically barren.

Still, Dan owed him and owed him big. It was now clear that Dan’s business was dependant on Joe’s custom, so as pay off it seemed to Joe that he could ask for something of real value – something more than plant and equipment.

“This daughter of yours that you are always talking about,” said Joe. “Let me take her. I could do with some feminine company, and who knows, you may become my father in law with a very wealthy daughter.” It was half joking, but perhaps more than half serious, and Joe could see Dan thinking about it.

Joe left and headed back to his mine, but on the next trip Dan told him that he was ready to agree to the proposition he had made the month before.

“If its feminine company that you need, then here is Jamie, who is willing to go with you.”

He pushed forward what you might call “a mere slip of a girl”, whatever that might be. Flat chested, mousy hair, wearing a plain dress and tennis shoes, but pretty.

“Are you serious?” said Joe. And to the girl he said – “Are you ready to come into the desert with me?”

“Yes,” she said. “There is nothing for me here. Dad knows that I am looking for adventure. And it is not as if I will be leaving friends behind.”

There was a sad look to her that was revealed by her last comment.

“I had best get you some feminine supplies, then,” said Joe. “There is nothing like that where we are going.” He added – “I am thinking domestic duties only, but be prepared for hot weather and just the occasional cool night.”

He really had no idea what “feminine supplies” might entail, but one sensible move seemed for him to secure a bath, and birth control pills. He trusted Jamie to buy everything else that she might need and he would fit the bill.

He considered buying a new vehicle, but decided that would be too showy. The “ute” he had was reliable and had capacity for all that he needed, including the bath and the bags she turned up with. They we packed by the evening and he picked her up at dawn. If they made good time to Kalgoorlie they might just make it to the Warburton Road House before nightfall. It was a drive of almost 1,500 kilometers, or 930 miles – like driving from Los Angeles to Kansas City, half way across the United States, but with half of that on red dirt roads.

“I don’t talk much,” he said as she settled into the seat beside him, resplendent in a red patterned dress and desert boots.

“That’s OK because I do,” she said. “You just have to listen, and answer any questions.”

“Sure,” Joe said. “Just don’t ask too many.”

Joe drove and Jamie talked. To start with Joe thought that he would find her constant chatter annoying, but after a while he decided that the sound of somebody speaking only to him, even if he was barely listening, was a pleasure in itself. And sometimes she would say something silly, or naïve, and he would laugh and feel good because she would laugh too.

The did get to Kalgoorlie before noon, and could stop for a rest and a meal, in what Joe described as “the last sight of civilization” and not even a third of the way there.

Joe was accustomed to long hours, and taking his rest when he could. He napped there, while Jamie explored that strange town. It meant that she was to sleep in snatches between bumps in the road, all the way to the Warburton Road House.

“You can have your own room and bed tonight,” said Joe. “But I cannot promise that when we get to Treasure Hill.”

“You will not force yourself upon me, will you Joe?” she asked. Her eyes seemed like a frightened doe, and she seemed so young and pretty.

“I think that you can guess what I want from you,” said Joe. “But no, I will not force myself upon you – I promise.”

With that, she slept well.

They rose early and ate breakfast there. Then they drove off, backtracking a little before turning off onto a dirt track concealed by bushes at the road edge. There was still hours of driving before the hill that was to be her home came into view.

That was before the portable building arrived. He bought that for her. He wanted to give her comforts that a woman should have.

But as he surveyed the scene after the storm, that building was gone – picked up by the storm and now squashed flat. Some spindly trees had been uprooted and blown away, and other trees and brush had been deposited around the place (now scraped into bundles with the machinery) but otherwise the desert appeared unchanged, as it had been for millennia.

He smiled wryly at the thought of people against nature. They build things and the elements destroy them. They dig in the ground and the sand fills the holes. But for now the mine stood, and the machinery above ground was working – at least it had been moments ago before he shut it down.

And the mine was their home now, for the time being, until they could restore communications or until somebody came looking for them.

He had thought about driving the loader to the main road, but it was a thirsty vehicle, and the distance was major. He and Jamie had decided to wait it out.

He walked up the rail path to the mine entrance. There was laundry hanging on the line outside. The sight of her panties hanging there made him smile.

Just inside the entrance the reef had split into two forcing him to branch off and follow the quartz down to form a large chamber below the rail line which was where they now lived. It was cool even when the temperature rose well over blood heat. And there was water, some of it which he used to wash his hands.

There was the smell of cooking. Kangaroo tail stew flavoured with bush herbs and finger limes. She was a good cook – self taught but always looking to please him. Alone food was only fuel, but for her is was an offer of love. And there she was, offering him just that.

She threw her arms around his grimy neck and kissed his sun chapped lips.

“You are going to be very pleased with me,” she said.

“I can smell it,” he said. “It will be great, I know. And I can smell you.” He nuzzled her neck and her long hair. She always smelt that good. Even when he was worn out, she could make his cock stir. She gave him new energy … and she knew it.

“Eat first,” she said. “But that is not why you will be pleased. I fixed the HF radio. I used my boy skills, and the clothes line for an aerial. I contacted the Flying Doctor Service and had them call your friend Hec at Warburton.”

“Your boy skills, huh?” Joe reached down under her dress and into her panties and grabbed the little appendage that was nestled there. He used to hate it. When he first discovered it he was appalled and disgusted, but it gave her pleasure and so he had decided to let her keep it … at least for now.

“You can’t keep me prisoner any more.” Her words were said through puckered lips, inviting his kiss again, so he gave it.

“Is that what I am doing?” he said. His hand went up under her dress to her left breast, small but soft and with a nipple enlarged by the hormones in the birth control pills. It lifted her dress. She did the rest, letting it fall to the floor beside her, leaving her naked except for those tiny panties, with their tiny bulge. “I am your prisoner, I think,” he said, stroking her body gently with one rough hand, and making her gasp with a rising need for sex. “But I should have a shower first.”

“Fuck that,” she said. “Fuck me.”

He carried her to their bed. He did not pull back the cover to expose the clean sheets that she liked. That cover could get dusty and be shaken outside. He needed her, as she needed him. That they had both discovered the day after she arrived at Treasure Hill, in the same moment as he discovered her secret. If they have ever doubted it they learned that day that he was a man with a hunger, and she was not a man, but equally hungry.

That evening it was the same thing. They needed to be joined. She lifted her butt so that he could enter face to face, and he could look into her eyes as orgasm robbed them of reason.

He groaned and shuddered and she squealed with delight.

“Hec will come tomorrow and then we can go to the city,” she said. “You will need a new ute.”

“Being locked away as we have been I have a whole case of bars to cash up,” he said, although he rarely took money as his account at the mint quietly swelled. “We should stay somewhere nice. You should get you hair done and wear a new dress. Maybe we should call on your father? Maybe I should ask him why he sent you with me instead of the daughter he promised?”

“My sister was always his favorite,” said Jamie. “He would never have allowed you to take her. And my brother is indispensable as well. He will take over the business, you see. The one he could spare was the queer son.”

“I could have done anything to you when I found out,” he said.

“I agreed to it, Silly,” she said. “I took a risk. I had seen you before, and I decided to take a chance on you. I wanted to leave that place. I was sick of my father’s abuse. It was my idea. There was something about you which drew me to you.”

She reached down and grabbed his shrinking cock, wet from her lubricant and his emission. But the look in her eyes was more than sexual, and he felt it to.

“Let’s have that dinner then, Wifey,” he said. “And let’s decide that from tomorrow we will make all of your dreams come true, and all of mine too.”

The End

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