Pupil

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

If I thought that it was a nightmare when my mother married St. John Leger, I had no idea that there was so much more to come. She said that he was everything that my father was not – strong, decisive, rich, manly. For somebody who was always said to be the image of my father in every way, what did that say about me.

With the benefit of hindsight, and with the time to contemplate it, I can see that I treated my mother just as badly as my father had. We both needed attention, he and I. We needed praise, even though we had done little to deserve it.

The story goes that he was killed in Russia trying to buy the freedom of the woman he fell in love with. The truth is open to interpretation. What kind of woman can be bought and sold? What kind of people could her owners be? I spent a lot of time believing that she was just an unfortunate, and that she had died alongside my father as victims of love.

But maybe she is alive somewhere? Maybe she never cared for him at all?

Sinjin (that is what St. John calls himself) knew my father, and for the sake of my mother he did his best to find the truth. Back when we were talking, he told me that there was a world out there that it was better I did not know about. I thought at the time – ‘you patronizing prick’, but I said nothing. I would later, but not then.

Then he and my mother started in a relationship. It seemed too soon for me, even though my father had left years before he was killed. I will be honest, I wanted my mother to myself. I did not want this man in my life, or her life either. I tried all manner of devious plans to break them up, but they saw through them all.

The problem is that real hatred is visible. It cannot be concealed. I hated him, and by then he was my stepfather.

I got into trouble at school and I was expelled. I blamed Sinjin. I told the principal that I was being abused by my stepfather. It was a lie, and they knew it. My hatred was so obvious. Besides, what I had done was hardly a call for help. I won’t go into the details. They are irrelevant to this story.

Sinjin said that he had a new school for me. I was going to be sent to Europe. I would be flying into Vienna. To me, getting away from him seemed like a good idea, and I was coming to think of my mother as not much better. She was always taking his side. Europe had to be better.

When you have been raised as I was, you learn to take every expensive trip as an adventure until you bore of it, and then make a scene and you will be sent home. That is how it works, or always had done.

I was never told where this school was. In fact, after all this time I am still uncertain. Somewhere east of Vienna but not as far as Russia. The language was one I had never heard before, but even over there I only heard it spoken by the gardeners. Everybody else spoke English. The climate was nice enough, so maybe Hungary, Romania or Bulgaria? I honestly don’t know.

It was a school, but like something out of a fairytale book, or more accurately a theme park. It was in miniature because there were less than 50 pupils. The buildings looked old, but they may not have been. There was a hall and a chapel, and maybe six classrooms none the same shape, in the old building at the center of the school, with spires and balconies old fashioned windows.

But the strangest this about it was that it was a girl’s school.

Of course, my first words were – “They must have been some kind of mistake. This is a girl’s school, and in case you are too stupid to have noticed, I am not a girl.”

It was like Sinjin’s idea of a joke. I hated that man.

I was called before the principal, an Englishman who said that he was Doctor Burr.

“This is a girl’s school,” he said. “And this is no joke. So, I guess that makes you a girl. So, you had better get used to it.”

Maybe the buildings were an old convent or monastery? There were rooms upstairs which served as bedrooms – some for one, some with two beds and a large one with 8 beds for “ingrates”. Because I was a paid for student I was given a bedroom with another pupil. I thought she was a girl at first, but it turned out that she was just like me – a boy being schooled as a girl.

Her name was Catherine, and she was already well down the track. It was terrifying to see just how feminine she had become. She said that she was just pretending and that - “it is just to go along with it – you can change when you get out”. I am not sure that I believed that, even then. But it became something we would say to one another.

But at the beginning I was not ready to accept this without a fight, so on my second day I asked to go back and visit the principal again. Imagine my surprise when I met “Mrs. Burr”. It turned out that Dr Burr was the principal only on alternate days. On the other days, he became “Mrs. Burr” complete with a wig and fake breasts and butt, straining under a blouse and pencil skirt. I guess I knew then that this was serious, because “she” definitely was.

“Your name is now Abigail, and you will be schooled in everything a young lady should know. We don’t mind a little independence of spirit, but we have one simple rule – any behavior that is in the slightest bit masculine will be punished, and punished severely. And we will be the judge of what is masculine, so you had better take care.”

Punishment was not physical, but it was even worse than that. It was called “Isolation and Deprivation” which means being locked up in a cell in the cellar and being deprived of warmth, food and sleep. It only took a single experience of that to teach me that Catherine was probably right – “just to go along with it”. None of the changes threatened to be permanent.

But there were drugs. We were all on a compulsory dose of male hormone blockers to “neutralize any male tendencies and put a stop to nocturnal emissions”. Female hormones were said to be “entirely optional but encouraged” with the favorite method of dispensing them being as anal suppositories inserted with a dildo. Some of the girls assisted one another in this. They seemed keen to leave the world of pretending to be schoolgirls and really shift across to females. I said that it was not for me, but it seemed to me that Catherine might be wavering.

“Our training bras are empty,” she said. “It would be nice to have something in them.”

I now understand that there were female hormones in our food. When some breast tissue did appear Dr. Burr said that it was “a very modest case of gynecomastia – your own body producing female hormones with no male hormones to fight them back.” That was bullshit and he/she knew it. I could see it in his/her face. I was being deliberately and systematically feminized.

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| The thing was that I was getting it worse than Catherine. I started to grow real breasts really quickly. She seemed to be struggling.  It also seemed that my hair was growing faster and thicker than Catherine’s. She had a head start, as it were, but my hair was so much better than hers. Hers was dark and mine was naturally light brown, even verging on blonde.  And then there was the fact that I was prettier. I mean, Catherine made a vert attractive girl, don’t get me wrong, but she had a solid brow and a prominent nose and chin. She also had a visible Adam’s apple where I did not. She wore a choker to hide, and I sometimes wore one in solidarity, as it were.  We both worked on our figures, and I guess that we even got a little competitive. I mean, we knew what the ideal female figure is, and we were taking on curves so you just have to decide if you want to be a gazelle or a hippo – right?  Her thighs were not as slim as mine either. She needed heels to make her legs look good.  Maybe the only thing wrong with our shape was that our panties bulged in a very unnatural way. Dr. Burr said that could be addressed in time - “entirely optional but encouraged”. It was not for either of us. | A picture containing floor, indoor, clothing, person  Description automatically generated |

But I have to admit, I loved being pretty. There were beauty classes as well as classes in dressmaking, cookery and home economics. Beauty was my thing, and I was always picking up A passes. I guess some of it about have good material to work with, but the rest is about knowing the products, solid practice and a little artistry.

I thought that I was probably the prettiest girl in school. That kind of thinking drives you on, and gives you other ideas. What does somebody as pretty as I am do with her life? What can she do with her life? Now matter how much you tell yourself that you will never say it, it seemed that I had more chance of success as a female than as a male.

Dr. Burr said the same thing – something like – “Look at yourself, Abigail. You have beauty and style and that imperious air that comes from being spoilt as a youngster. These are traits that men find attractive, even to the point of madness. And you would throw all this away and take your chances in a dog-eat-dog man’s world where you are just one cog in a mindless machine?”

He/she offered to introduce me to the right kind of man – one who would give me anything I wanted, and expect me to remain dissatisfied.

“People who have been deprived in their lives can put on airs and graces,” he/she would say. “But only those brought up in privilege have the imperiousness that marks the upper classes. You have all the ingredients – lack of respect, arrogance, laziness and narcissism. I have no idea why that would want to, but we have people who are looking for somebody just like you. Some may even put up with that little anomaly in your panties, but in my opinion, anything long term requires that is be replaced with something less protrusive.”

Somehow the thought horrified me less. It was no use anyway, and it did make it difficult for me to wear a bikini, and I so wanted to flaunt my body on the beaches of the Riviera. We all know that is the place where beauty is best monetized.

Graduation time had come and I found myself sad to leave in a way. I learned that in Sinjin’s travels in search of my father he had found this place. It was a place that groomed young women – and a few young men who would become young women – for a specific role in the sex trade. They were looking for higher class sluts, because they demand the best prices.

But private students like me were not for sale, or at least not for sale by anybody except me, and for this body and these looks, I command a high price.

The End

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