Shotgun Motherhood

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

Make no mistake about it – Emma Louise Tankersley was as pretty as a picture. It was just that she had nothing going on in that head. She had those blond curls by nature, and the big blue eyes too, but by that same nature she just had no sense at all. The mind of a 6-year-old they say. When we made love she was puzzled at first, and there was pain I guess, but I gave her something for that - a lollipop. Then after that she liked it plenty, although she had no idea what was going on. I guess even without brains that G spot (whatever that is) still works well enough.

Sexual relations with a mental defective is called statutory rape in our state. I thought all rape was statutory – meaning there is a law against it. Anyways, it don’t matter if she says yes or not; it don’t matter if she is really 18 years old – it is prison time because in her head she is 6. 7 years minimum so I was told.

Matt Tankersley said it was a betrayal of trust too. I was working on the farm but with duties around the house including attending to Emma-Lou when she was flighty. Her mother was long gone. I heard said that she was dim too, but Matt sure wasn’t. His son Keller was gone too – too smart to stay some said.

He had money and he had hired a few women to mind the girl, but they never worked out. He hired me to clean the roof and then I met Emma-Lou and she liked me. I guess Iiked her and she returned it. Matt kept me on. The way he put it he had trust me with the care of his daughter, and I had done them both wrong.

Maybe he never would have known about the sex if it hadn’t been for the baby. It was just that when Emma-Lou fell pregnant it was not like there was anybody else likely to be the father. Then she fessed up despite all I told her.

“Jimmy done it,” she said. “He done put his dicky inside my twicky and filled it right up.” Dim as a dark night, that girl.

“I know you’re the father, but who is gonna be the mother of this child,” says Matt. “Sure as a saint’s promise it ain’t gonna be Emma-Lou, not unless you want to go to jail. The truth is she just ain’t up to mothering. I will raise this child as if it be my own, but not with my poor childish daughter as her momma. We need a girl to stand in for her. This is your problem. You need to find this girl. You need to …”.

Then he done stopped talking and he looks at me all strange-like. He says something about - “the miracle of modern science” or some such. From that moment my fate is sealed, as they say.

The next thing I know is that I am wearing some of Emma-Lou’s clothes and Matt is calling me Jenny, or Jennifer. He has me injected with some stuff and wearing plasters under my nipples, and being told that I am going to be the mother of my own child.

Matt said that I just needed to learn two things – the first was how much time I would be spending in jail for statutory rape; and the second was how to be a mother. Once you know the answer to the first, you just gotta learn what you can about the second.

The hormones were just the start. It turned out that the mix Matt got me started on were not quite right. I needed to make some adjustment. I needed the blockers too. And did you know that men can produce breast milk? It seems crazy but it is true. You just need the right hormones and your breasts grow big and you can lactate, as they call it.

And the hormones do other things besides. They make your hair and skin soft. Matt paid for me to get all my hair pulled off of my body like plucking a turkey, but underneath my body was starting to look like a woman’s body. I had the best part of 6 months to get things right. Matt and me would keep Emma-Lou locked away so as nobody would know, and then I would be the mother of this new member of the Tankersley family.

“So who is the father then?” I asked.

“That would have to be me,” he says. I figured that if I was the mother then there would nothing weird about that.

I sort put my hand on my hip and flicked my thick soft hair that was growing like a weed, and I says - “So you and me, we have fucked, and this is our baby?”

“Now don’t you be getting smart with me, Son … I mean, Jenny,” he said. “We have to have some kind of explanation. And this child is my blood and will carry my name. So yes, that would mean that we have had sexual relations, with you being a real woman.”

It turned out to be a stupid thing for me to say, that I had been fucked by the old man, because Matt started to realize that if folks were to think that he and me were in some kind of relationship, I would have to be a more convincing woman than I was. He would have to do something about that.

He said that I should go on the internet and learn what I could, but to help me along he sent me out of state to spend a week with an instructor of sorts – she called herself a “mentor”. She said that she was a transwoman helping other transwoman. I wasn’t that, but I needed to know how to pass, as the say. She was a good advertisement for her services. When I first met her I thought that she was a real woman, and she said that if I followed her advice I could be like that too.

Like I said, I was with her for the week, so I learnt a lot. I also learnt about surgery for transwomen, and I tried to sound interested, but I had no intention of having my junk cut away. The thought of it turned my stomach, back then. I just wanted to serve my time and get this kid off my hands, when it finally arrived. I knew that I would have to stick around as “the mother” for a while, but it would be a short stretch compared to prison, and living at Matt’s place was easy.

In the last few weeks of the pregnancy Emma-Lou was getting upset. She was big and the baby was growing inside her and she was scared shitless. I guess if you are as dumb as her you can understand. Matt tried to explain it to her.

As for me, I told her that I was there to help her by being like a sister to her. She knew fuck all but I did stuff like braid her hair and play with makeup, and some of that took her mind off what was happening.

It was around then that Matt said that I had to wear a fake bump and go to town with him. I was a bit jumpy about this. It was OK to pretend around the house, with just him and me and Emma-Lou, but Matt said that he needed to explain the baby, and I was the explanation.

He took me shopping for baby clothes.

“This my friend, Jennifer,” he told folks. It was nothing more than that, but I am guessing he got tongues a-wagging.

But as Matt put it – “It doesn’t matter what they think of me just so long as they can’t say that I can’t look after my own daughter.” He was still mad with me about what I had done, but we were working together on this, and I was doing all I could, and more. He appreciated that.

Matt had arranged for the birth to take place out of state too. There was a midwife who would attend without asking questions. As far as she was concerned here was a father (Matt that is) who was looking after his idiot daughter by having the child born in secret to be adopted out. She just did her job and presented the child to Matt, and saw Emma-Lou cleaned up and healthy. But the fact is that she did not know what the child was, even though we had played games with a baby doll so she could learn.

I don’t know exactly what happened but the midwife told Matt that Emma-Lou could not be trusted with the child. When she brought her home Matt said that I would be doing the mothering and she just sat me down and placed the child in my arms.

To this day I don’t know how this all happened. But it did, like completely out of the blue. Milk started coming out of my titties. The midwife just latched the child onto one nipple and later onto the other. She just nodded and said that the child was in good hands and she was done and gone.

But that is only half the story, or maybe less than a quarter. What really happened is that I bonded with my child. This was my son. He was mine, because half of his blood was my blood. Matt could only claim a quarter, despite the fact that everybody said that he looked exactly like Matt Tankersley, and I guess he does carry some features.

I am not good with words so I cannot describe the feelings that came over me. I can just call it love, not that I had any idea what that was neither. As I sat there with my baby sucking nourishment from me, it did not matter that I had not given birth to him – he was still a part of me. I cried tears of joy just to hear those little grunts as he took my milk. I knew then that I would do anything for my baby. I then knew what motherhood was.

Any thought of abandoning my baby after Matt had decided that my job was done, went right out the window. He had no right to my child, but I could not shout that out. I had to remain quiet.

The fact was that Matt was busy and he was not interested in attending to a crying baby in the middle of the night. I needed to have the bassinet near my bed and all the equipment too, so I moved up to the master bedroom and Matt moved down to my small room to get the sleep he needed.

He loved the child, I don’t doubt but little Jacob loved his mother more, and that was me. He would look at Matt and burst into tears and Matt would pass him back to me. I would say that they would become close in time, and I would make sure of it, but I wanted the opposite. This was my baby and Matt was not going to take him away from me.

I suppose that the other thing that motherhood did for me is that I abandoned being a guy, like totally. I am not sure why, because in private I could be Jimmy, but it was like that phase was over now. I was Jenny, a mother, and also pretty close to a wife.

I took charge of the house because everything needed to revolve around little Jacob. I liked to say to Matt that I treated Emma-Lou as an older sister, but I was always worried about what the midwife had said. The fact is that Emma-Lou was now a step-daughter. No more games – I had responsibilities, and I guess she was one of those.

Matt had been alone long enough to prepare his own meals, and when I moved into his place I helped cook a shared meal every now and again, but as a mother, making sure that you family are well fed is important, and I was keen to get Jacob onto solid food as he was sucking me dry. I knew then that he would be a big boy – bigger than his grandfather.

I loved to take Jacob into town in the baby-buggy. I was so proud of him and how strong and healthy he looked due to my care. I made lots of friends among other mothers in town.

As I got to know people in town I understood that there were questions about the relationship between Matt and me. Everybody knew that we were not married and the word was that Matt was not divorced from the wife who had left him years ago. I nodded to that, although Matt had told me that he had received a copy of her death certificate from Brazil years before. It seemed like a story we had no hand in making up, might work for us.

I suppose that Matt came to accept this view of our life too. He took to hugging me in the kitchen. He said that Jacob should see our home as being a loving one. I had no problem with a hug and a kiss on the cheek, but when we moved Jacob into the nursery Matt came into the master bedroom I still occupied and talked about snuggling up in bed.

As I told him, the nursery was next door so I could jump up as needed. Still, as winter drew near I let him into bed and let him do the spooning thing, as they call it. The truth is that there was not much going on below his belt, but he was still strong and manly and I have to say that lying with him made me feel more like a woman and a real mother.

When Jacob started to play with other kids, I got closer to other ladies and we talked about hairstyles and fashions because women do. Matt opened his wallet because everybody thought of me as his wife and he wanted me to look good for him. I wanted to look good too, but not for him.

The other thing I talked about with the mothers was a second child. I remember somebody said – “It is selfish to have only one child. That child needs a brother or a sister.” It was just that it was something I could not do, even though after I told Matt what had been said, he liked the idea too.

As I said to Matt – “It don’t matter how many times you fuck me, there ain’t gonna be another child in this family”.

“The only way that could happen was if I could get Emma-Lou pregnant again”, he said.

I have to say that I was shocked to hear that. But in a way, it worked for me. I wanted another baby. I felt ready. I would have loved to have carried that child in my own womb and given birth to him or her, but starting from the beginning as the mother I was, I could share the journey. And it would put an end to any of the shit from Matt about me causing the whole thing in the first place.

The question was whether I could do the deed. My cock was now nothing more than a pissing stick tucked away in my panties and deliberately ignored.

I contacted my transwoman mentor about it. She told me that I would need to go off the female hormones for a bit to be able to perform, and just work o getting a proper emission, as she called it. Then I could lie with Emma-Lou, and as soon as she was pregnant, I could go back on the girl juice and go back to being me.

I have to say that it was hard for me, and it made it all the more clear to me that my future was female. But I got Emma-Lou pregnant and (at home anyway) we went through the pregnancy together. This time we had the midwife come and attend to both of us. Well, not really, but pretending, sort of.

I was there when Emma-Lou gave birth to my daughter Margot. Matt want to call her Mathilda, or Mattie for short, after him. But I said – “Mathilda is an awful name. It sounds ugly. Look at her. She is a Margot. She is so beautiful.

“She looks like you,” Matt said. He was right. She looked exactly like me. Even now people say it - “Mother and daughter, as pretty as beauty queens.”

It could not go on forever like this. How could it. I was not sure how long it would last, but I was as happy as I thought I could be. I was a mother of two wonderful children, a boy and a girl, and I was being provided for by a man who increasingly devoted to me. It could not get any better.

And then Matt had a stroke.

He didn’t die but he was put into hospital and he was almost unconscious. I was not sure what to do, but it seemed like a good idea to call his next of kin, and that would be his son, Keller. It seemed to me that if Matt died nobody could question that I was the mother of his younger children and the established caregiver for Emma-Lou. If it was to end then my family would be intact and we would need to be provided for by the … whatever you call it – dead people’s money.

Still, I was a bit worried about what this guy would make of the whole thing.

Then Keller Tankersley walked into my life. He just turned up at the door. I opened it and there he was. He was like an older version of my son Jacob. It was his father’s feature I guess, but better looking, and maybe just a few years older than me. But it was a face I loved already.

“You must be Jennifer,” he said. He had a look of concern on his face, as you would expect for somebody who got the news about their father.

“Yes, I’m Jenny,” I said. “Have you seen your father yet. Let me get my bag. We should go to the hospital right away. The kids are at kindergarten, but let me get Emma-Lou. You must be worried sick?”

“Slow down, Jenny,” he said. He reached out and touched my arm. I swear that it was electric, but in a nice way. “The old man can wait.”

We sat and talked. It took a while before Emma-Lou remembered who he was, having not seen him in years, but when she did she opened up. It was like all memories of her bearing children had just gone out of her head completely leaving it just as empty as it was to start with. As far as she was concerned I was Jenny who came to look after her and I had a brother called Jimmy who had never come back, and now she had a little brother and a little sister.

“And you cared for my father too?” Keller said. “I have to say that I had little time for him.”

“He was a lonely man,” I said. “I was never here to care for him. It was just that he was needy and I am a giving person I suppose. The first pregnancy was not intended. But I could not be more happy with the children he has given me, and Emma-Lou as well.”

He told me that he thought at that moment I was a saint – like a really good person. Maybe it sounded like I was, or maybe I had become that. Anyway, we went to the hospital and we visited old Matt, but it would be weeks before we turned off life support. I remember that right there in front of Keller we cried, me and Emma-Lou. It was just seeing him there, and she started it, and it’s the hormones too.

Keller put his arm around me and I sobbed into his should some.

Then we went home and he met his Jacob and Margot. It was like something clicked in his brain. He saw himself in the boy, and me in the girl, and then he saw the girl in me. Maybe she has always been there, but she was there then, and she is there now.

I told him some story about having problems with my womb and other bits that would needed to be fixed with surgery. I covered up tightly down there, but it allowed us to sleep together and make love in other ways. He said there would be plenty of money to pay for the surgery even if his father did not die, and there was.

But somehow when Matt Tankersley did die, it was meant to be that I would carry his name somehow, and now I do.

I came clean with Keller before the wedding but after the surgery. I had to. We believe in honesty. Well, maybe not total honesty, because I did not mention that his father had no part in the first pregnancy. After all, sexual relations with a mental defective is called statutory rape in our state.

The End

© Maryanne Peters 2023

3620