Mother May I

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

The word that could be used to describe my mother is that she was a “cougar”. According to the dictionary “a middle-aged woman seeking a romantic relationship with a younger man”. Although having said that, Jerome was older than the usual.

She had younger men before him, which is why she insisted on a “women only household when I have visitors”.

“No young man wants to make love to a woman with another young man in the house,” she said. “It is a man thing as you will find out soon enough - something about staking out territory. A potential rival puts them off, or something. Anyway, I am not taking any chances. You can stay but only if you pretend to be my younger sister Katie”.

Her sister? Did she really think that she could convince anybody that she was that young? Maybe they might think that as a girl, I looked older.

The first time she suggested it, I went through the roof, which saw me going to the roof. By that I mean that spent that evening locked on the roof in the little shack up that used to house pigeons. I was not going to do that again.

She would call me, sometimes in code for some bar, within ear shot of the guy she was seducing. She might say: “Katie, it’s May here. Just letting you know that I am bringing somebody home in an hour or so. There’s a Dear.”

What meant was “get the place tidy and put on a dress and a wig, and make yourself scarce when I nod in your direction”.

It was easier when I was younger, but as I got older I needed to wear long pants or shave my legs, and in summer long pants were not on, and not on me. I got annoyed with the wig too. After a while I had just enough hair to look like a guy until I wore a headband or a couple of barrettes and then I had girl’s hair.

It seemed no great burden and was sure better than a night on the roof. I even used to make a point of being up when they arrived. I was say - “Who’s you friend, May? Hello, I’m Katie, May’s younger sister. Would you like a drink? A nightcap perhaps? I was just about to pour myself one. Why not? What do you say? Just one and I will leave you two to enjoy a romantic evening together.”

It was just enough to poke finger into my mother’s back. I would have a drink even when I was underage, just to show her that lies made her powerless. I got really good at being Katie. I learned all the playful sexy moves from the best or the worst example – my own mother. I knew all about flirting and teasing.

When the man’s back was turned, she would look daggers at me. It was empowering.

Afterwards she would have a go at me, but I knew that it would happen all over again. If I was her sister that made her look young, and I was good enough around the house to get things ready for her arrival. As a system, it worked.

It allowed her to have a succession of young men, which is what she wanted. I always thought that it must be the worst kind of existence. I was not thinking that the best life was a couple in front of the TV, but at least some stability. If she went beyond a few dates and sleepovers with the same guy, it would soon end in tears. My mother had a temper, and a tendency towards violence.

But if instead of relationships you look for young strangers, they enjoy the night and they go and they are strangers again. That was the way that she liked it. I am not sure what that says about her.

Jerome was different because she worked for him. He was a big shot in public relations and she was his P.A. – personal assistant. He was married and so off limits - was what she told me - but she was interested in him, I know. She said that he preferred younger women. He knew how old she was really – he had personnel records.

And then she came home and told me that Jerome’s wife had left him. I think I said that he would need her support. She said: “Right. I need to get that man into my bed.”

I learned later how it went down. She suggested a drink with him after work “now that we are both single again” – whatever that means. She usually watches her drinking when she is picking up a guy, but she overdid it. She made the “It’s me, Katie, on my way home…” call but then basically lost it. Jerome had to bring her home in a cab and almost carry her into the apartment.

“Hello, I’m Katie, May’s younger sister.” It seemed that I would not be offering this guy a drink. So we took my mother into her room and he offered to wait while I put her to bed.

I suppose that I thought he would be out the door when I got back, but we ended up talking.

“I hope that she can forget about this before tomorrow,” he said. “Your sister has us married by the end of the year. She has been with me a long time, but the truth of it is that I am resigning from my present firm and moving to the opposition, and I will not be taking her with me. Please don’t tell her before I have the chance to.”

“She will be disappointed,” I said. “According to her she runs the office and you are just decoration.”

“She is competent but temperamental,” he said. “She has too much baggage. Younger women are simpler. Except I don’t want another family and younger women do … want a family, I mean.”

“I don’t,” I said. I am not sure why I did. I was wearing a shirtdress because it was warm, I had my hair sort of tied up off my neck with my natural curls on top. I felt playful, even though I was not performing to annoy my mother. I was flirting.

“I would have enjoyed making love to May tonight,” he said. “But I am not one to take advantage of somebody who has drunk too much. A woman needs to invite a man, and be in a state of sense to make an invitation.”

“Do you want an invitation?” I asked. It was like a game I had played before, but the referee was not on the court to call time.

He kissed me, as if I was a girl. I don’t know how it happened. Of course he could not know, but it was like I forgot that I was a guy, until it seemed that he wanted to head to my bedroom. Then I had to stop things.

I said: “Jerome, I would like to, but I just can’t. It is not possible.”

“We could find a way Katie,” he said. “We just keep quiet so your mother can’t her.”

“That’s not it,” I said. And then suddenly I realized what he had said. He said my mother.

“I know you were Mark,” he said. “I have personnel files. There is no sister living with her.”

So, there I was. Caught with my pants not yet down. Maybe it was lucky. But Jerome was still looking at me pleadingly. I said: “That is the problem. I still am Mark.” Although my girlish voice continued to speak the words.

“I don’t care,” he said.

It was like an engine had started. We were in a machine with throttle open and no steering, just pure power. I barely understand what happened next. We just tore at one another’s clothes like werewolves mating under a full moon.

Before neither of us knew it he was inside my butthole spewing hot seed and I was a woman.

I can honestly say that I never had a gay thought before that day, although I had no real relationships with girls either. But after that day, I just wanted him.

But things were about to go bad.

He got dressed but as he was leaving I just fell into his strong arms and he carried me into the living room our tongues locked together, laughing and kissing at the same time with spittle going everywhere. And there was my mother standing there.

We must have gone through this so many times, but it is still hard to understand what happened next. I said she had a temper. I said that she was prone to violence. And Jerome had said that she had been drunk and crazy all night.

Anyway, she flew at us and Jerome let me fall from his arms. Our only defense was that she did not know which of us to maim or kill first. We sort of retreated to the kitchen and something was knocked over making the tile floor slippery. The corner of the stainless-steel bench split her head open. This stuff does happen.

Jerome tried everything to stop the blood, but her eyes were open and she was growing cold. My guess is that she was dead from the shock of the blow.

I started to cry and he held me. I cried like a girl because that night I had become one. I am glad that I had. I am glad I cried. Her son Mark was unkind to her. He returned what he got. Her daughter would only ever love her, and she always will.

The cold light of day forced Jerome and I to make some decisions. You might criticize them, but this looked too hard to explain. A woman dead. Her boss in her home, having just sodomized the woman’s son who appears dressed as a woman. It could not be good for either of us.

And as Jerome said, her absence could be explained. She left the firm with him. We could arrange the email. Public relations is one of those businesses where if you o to the opposition you never darken the door of you old premises.

As for Mark, nobody would ask. He had no life anyway – not until Jerome turned hm into somebody else by the power of his sex.

As for my mother, she left the old firm without even making contact. She was not well-liked there. Everybody in her life except Jerome and me were strangers. So many strangers. We just needed to bury a body that would never be reported missing.

Jerome just needed to carry over his PA to the new firm. Her name is May. She might be reputed to be an experienced older woman, but in fact she is quite young. She was given the job because she came over with Jerome. In fact, outside work they are a couple - engaged to be married. It has been delayed so that May can have some minor surgical procedure they are told.

May lives on. I sort of butted in and took over. Is that so bad?

The End

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*Erin’s seed?: Mother's boyfriend rapes the son - says that he is a better lay than his mother. Kills the rapist and maybe instead of going to prison, he just goes on the run as a woman*