

Butterfly & Wolf



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by TG Cooper

Parker unzipped his fly, pulled out his Johnson and let a stream of yellow piss splash against the red rock wall in front of him. A hundred feet above him, a stout little twig of a woman peered over the canyon wall and clenched her fists. "That's sacred ground!"

"Everywhere I piss is sacred ground," Parker shouted back.

"Someone should teach you some respect."

"My mother used to say the same thing," Parker said, making figure eights with his urine. Finishing, he shook his dick and shoved it back in his pants, jumping back on his Harley. "Keep on rocking in the free world, old lady!"

A rooster tail of red earth shot out from behind Parker's Harley as he gunned the engine and popped his front wheel into the air, riding a wheelie along the narrow desert canyon, calling out "yeeee haaaaaaa.!!!!!!!" The sound of his guns thundered through the narrow canyon walls, and he grinned as the wind blew through his hair, the sun shining down on his stubbled face.

The woman watched the motorcycle tearing its way through the canyon, saw the man howling at the sky, and then, as the sun hit his face, she saw a raven swoop overhead, and then like a shadow, a pretty little black-haired native girl appeared behind the man, her arms tight around his waist, and she laughed, too, as she merged with his body and prepared to be born.

The woman stood and fished through her pockets, grabbing a piece of sage, she brought it out and waved it around herself, spinning... spinning... driving away the spirits lest they play some mischief on her as well. The Raven landed on a cactus near her and stood on one foot, its head cocked to the side.

"You just go on and leave me be," the woman said, holding the sage sprig out in front of her.

The Raven croaked, flapped its wings and took flight.

* * * *

Deeper in the valley in a ramshackle cottage at the end of a cul de sac, Meaghan leaned on her mop and wiped the sweat from her brow with a slender, freckled arm. The floor's warped, green and orange linoleum still looked dirty even through she'd scrubbed and mopped until her arms ached. The whole cabin seemed impervious to cleaning. Everything. The windows were a permanent dirty grey, the curtains a kind of diarrhea brown, the toilet seat covered in cigarette burns and orange rust stains. And everything smelled like stale cigarettes and mothballs.

She shivered and felt her skin crawl just thinking about all the stinky germs in the place, and she felt certain if she stayed here long she would be forever tainted with that same gross smell. She brought the mop out onto the little, sagging wooden porch and, shielding her eyes against the high, desert sun, she saw nothing, squinted, and still saw nothing. Where was Parker? And why the hell had she ever ridden off with him? The asshole. He'd told her he was rich, was going to take her on his yacht, and she'd believed him.

Well, not really, but that night at the diner it seemed better to run off with a lying phony millionaire than stay in her stupid little town with a bunch of real, fine, upstanding losers. It had seemed like a good idea, but now? Standing here in the desert in a tattered house dress, sweating in the shade, her previous life serving up coffee and apple pie to dull farmers didn't seem so bad.

Meaghan turned on the radio and sank into one of the plastic porch chairs. Once they got to the next town, she decided. Once they got there, she would call her parents and beg them to come and get her. Hot... so hot... she let her eyes drift shut...

A raven landed on the porch and stood on one leg, then the other. A tall, broad shouldered man appeared next to Meaghan. He looked down at his hands, his arms, and then he pounded his rock-hard chest and, looking at the Raven, he smiled. Then, with a sigh, he sat down on Meaghan's lap, and then slowly melted into her.

The noise of the motorcycle engine woke Meaghan. She snapped to, her mouth cottony and dry, and she looked up to see Parker standing up on his bike as he came to a sliding stop in a cloud of red dust. He propped his bike up on the kick stand and then stood there grinning, posturing in the sun. "Hey, babe," he said.

"Where have you been?" Meaghan snapped, her head pounding with heat exhaustion and resentment, seeing him there grinning and preening after she'd spent the whole day working and cleaning the filthy pit he stuck her in.

"Good to see you, too," Parker said, sounding hurt.

"I've been waiting all day!"

"Well, maybe this will make the wait worthwhile." He unslung one of the saddlebags from his bike and brought it over to her, grinning like a little boy who'd found a salamander. Meaghan crossed her arms over her chest and frowned, steeling herself against whatever stupid thing he would show her.

Parker unzipped the bag and she saw... "money?"

"Yeah, money," he said grabbing a handful and tossing it in the air. "Money.... Money... money!!!!"

"But... how?"

"I told you I just needed to have it wired to us from one of my Swedish accounts," he said taking a wad of hundreds and pushing it into her bra. "Don't I get a kiss?"

Meaghan kissed him, then pulled away, looking at him sideways. "Where did you really get it?"

"Babe! Still? I got a whole 'nother bag of it, so we can get us a hotel room with a hot tub and champagne. How about that? Real champagne!"

"That sounds... great," she said, laughing. "Let's go."

"Nah.. nah... better stay here tonight... there's talk of some sort of mean ass storm, and you know the snakes come out of the ground when it storms in the desert."

Meaghan looked at the clear blue sky. "It doesn't look like a storm to me."

Parker put his hands on her waist and kissed her. "Let's go make love, baby."

"That bed is gross...."

"Well then let's do it right here, baby."

"No... I... ummmnnn..."

Meaghan felt herself slipping under his spell, the heat from his body, the bristle of his stubbled face, his hands on her soft hips... then something from the radio caught her attention.

"A daring early morning robbery resulting in the lone thief getting away with over 100,000 dollars in cash...."

Meaghan's head swung around to the radio, and she pulled away from Parker.

"Boring..." Parker said moving to turn the radio off, but Meaghan slapped his hand away. "It wasn't me!"

"Witnesses reported a single man who rode away on a black Harley Davison motorcycle while screaming 'yee ha'..."

"Not you?"

"Coincidence, babe."

"Law enforcement have identified the bike as belonging to Parker Jefferson...."

Meaghan didn't bother to listen to the rest instead turning and slapping Parker hard across the face. "You asshole!"

"Ow!"

Meaghan slapped him again, then started to slap at him with both hands as he bent over and begged her to stop. "Babe... It's not...ow! Please! Ouch! Stop!"

Meaghan shoved him in his crouching position, and he crashed through the rickety porch railing and fell onto his back holding his hands out in supplication. "I'm a troubled man, babe! Help me, don't hate me!"

"Just go to hell," Meaghan said, going back inside the cabin and slamming the door.

Parker sighed and closed his eyes. Good, he thought. Good. Cause all I need is time, and I'll have her right back in the palm of my hand. In the meantime... "I guess I'll sleep out here tonight," he called. Meaghan didn't answer. "If a scorpion should come along and sting me... or maybe a rattler bites me and kill me... I guess that's just what I deserve for what I done."

"Shut up," Meaghan hissed. "Just shut up."

Parker grinned. She's talking to me, he thought. Hahahaha. She's talking to me. And that's really good because lord knows I am going to need her.

Meaghan sat down on the edge of the narrow, rickety cot that sat wedged into the corner of the tiny little bedroom. She covered her face with her hands and cried. How could things have gone so wrong? Now, not only was she trapped out here in the middle of the desert, but she was suspected of bank robbery and who knew what else.

Just go. Get out. Tell them you had nothing to do with the whole thing. They'll believe you, she thought. Or tell them you were kidnapped. But no. No. She had no idea how to even get out of the little valley, to find her way back to the city... there were snakes and scorpions... Indians... It was like she'd been trapped in a stupid movie with a very stupid man. No cell service. No way to communicate. She couldn't drive a motorcycle, and it would take hours to walk out... HOURS.

How much food do we even have? Not much. Just some cans of Dainty Moore stew... some Hormel Chili... Only two rolls of toilet paper.

I'll have to wait until tomorrow. Find someone to help me get out of here. She lay down on her side, curled up into a ball and cried herself to sleep. The sound of Parker yelling woke her.

"It's so cold," he shouted. "So very cold."

Meaghan sat up. It was dark now. And the cold had rushed down upon them with the setting of the sun.

"Shut up!" Meaghan said, pulling her curly red hair out of her face.

"Please," Parker said. "I'm sorry. Just let me sleep inside. I won't even look at you."

"Fuck off!"

It was quiet for a time. Just the hum of the desert insects. The occasional whisper of the wind whipping down the canyon. The air filled with a pungent, flowery smell, some sort of night blossom. It drove away the stench of the cabin, and Meaghan breathed in deeply of it, glad for the escape it gave her.

"So cold...." Parker moaned...."I can't feel my toes... "

Meaghan ignored him.

"I see... I see a warm light... a warm light in the sky... I feel drawn to it.... I need to go to the light on account of how cold I am and all....."

Meaghan found herself smiling and stifled a laugh.

"Is that, Jesus? You're taller than I expected.... Forgive her, please... I done her wrong, for sure, and she was right to make me sleep out on the cold desert floor. I swear... send me to hell instead of her, Lord.... It weren't her fault at all..... "

"Fine," Meaghan said. "But sleep in the living room. I don't want to see you."

"Never mind, Lord," Parker said. "Looks like I got saved by an angel."

Parker brought the bags of money into the house with him, plopped them down on the floor and, pulling the old Army issue wool blanket up to his chin, stretched out on the couch. Victory, he thought. Victory.

He shivered beneath the blanket, but he felt good. He was a damn outlaw, and he had him the prettiest outlaw girl in the world. It was just like Pretty Boy Floyd, and he was pretty sure he would get Meaghan to come with him when he made his break for Mexico. Then the two of them would live in high style until they ran out of money, and Handsome Man Parker would strike again!

He drifted off to sleep and immediately found himself in a bright, crisp dream. He was kneeling on the ground, playing with a doll made of corn silk. The doll was his baby, and he was pretending to change its diaper.

"What are you doing?" He heard a woman ask.

"Changing my baby!" Parker answered without looking up.

"Oh dear. That's not right for a boy," the woman said. She reached down and started to take Parker's dolly.

"No!" He shrieked, tears immediately springing to his eyes. "That's my baby!"

"Boys don't play with dolls," the woman said laughing.

"Well," Parker said with a grin. "I'm not a boy!"

"Why, yes you are!"

"No! I'm a girl," he said. "I'm a girl."

"Oh? Well, then, here's your little dolly, then."

Parker took the doll back and hugged it to his chest, relieved and pleased with himself. He'd always been such a good liar. He felt good about how easily he'd fooled the old women into giving him his doll back.

"Well, if you're a girl, then you want to grow up to be a good wife and mommy, right?"

"Of Course!"

"You're sure, now, that you're a girl?"

"Of course I am," Parker said.

"You know what else you are?" The woman said.

"What?"

"A silly goose."

Parker giggled and skipped away, hugging his dolly.

When he woke, the dream clung to Parker's conscious mind, but in scattered strands, like a cobweb. Still, the feeling of holding his doll, playing Mommy, disturbed him and made him feel uneasy. Where the fuck had that come from? When he sat up, he saw Meaghan looking at him, and he felt himself flush with a strange guilt, and feelings of insecurity, and he tried to fight the feelings off as he smiled and said, "You still mad at me?"

Meaghan scowled and turned away without answering, but he could see she was weakening.

Parker felt a sense of relief. He needed her.

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Parker scraped the last of the chili from the can and gulped it down, wiping his chin with the back of his forearm. "We're going to need food."

"What we?" Meaghan asked. "I'm going. I'll just walk out of here. Get away from you."

"Why walk when you can drive?"

"What drive?"

"I'll teach you how to ride my motorcycle. You can just ride right on out of here and be free of me."

"Why the hell would you do that?"

"To make it up to you for doing you wrong."

"Bullshit. God. You are so full of shit it makes me sick."

Meaghan grabbed his Skoal hat and pulled it down over her thick red hair. "I'm taking your hat asshole. Good luck."

Parker followed her out the door and stood on the porch as she walked away. "It's hot and dry out there, babe. There are scorpions and snakes and beavers!"

"Fuck you!"

"You'll die of thirst or get attacked by vultures!"

"FUCK YOU!"

"If a bear attacks, look him in the eye and make a quacking sound. It scares them off!"

Meaghan raised her arm high above her head, middle-finger extended. And then she rounded the corner in their box canyon and disappeared from sight.

I should probably follow her, Parker thought. But, nah. He was pretty sure she's turn around and come back after a little bit if he just gave her a little time. He went back into the cabin and sat down on the couch with a sigh. One thing about the desert, he decided. It's boring as hell. Boring as hell. And then he noticed something.

This cabin is filthy, he thought. Filthy. And so, he stood up and grabbed a sponge from the sink and found some Comet in the cabinet beneath. He stopped. I don't clean, he thought. That's Meaghan's thing.

But, gosh, the mess! He sat back down on the couch and tried to ignore his sudden compulsion to clean, but he found himself fidgeting and scratching himself as if the grossness of the cabin were crawling on him.

Darn, he thought, getting up and grabbing the sponge. Why not? Maybe this will get me back in on her good graces, show her I care.

He sprinkled some Comet onto the counter, then stopped. I don't want my hands to get rough and dry, he thought, pulling on a pair of yellow rubber gloves. Then, humming a song he remembered from an old commercial, he started cleaning. "I can bring home the bacon... fry it up in a pan... cause I'm a something.... Some-a-thing."

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Meaghan found herself standing beneath a sheer cliff face. She'd come to a fork in the path and gone right, and after walking for what seemed like an eternity, she found herself at a dead end. She was already tired. Hot. Thirsty. Her shirt was soaked with sweat and sticking to her. She felt defeated. Already. Kicking at the dirt to make sure no weird desert bugs were hiding down there and waiting to attack her, she sank down and sat cross legged looking up at the blue sky above the cliff face. What to do?

Turn around and go back. Obviously.

And yet, she found herself wanting to climb to the top of that cliff. She didn't know why, but she felt she needed to do it. And why not? She'd done some rock climbing before. Yeah, she thought, but with a harness and a helmet and ropes and hooks.

And then a wolf appeared. It was at the top of the cliff, and it was looking down at her, a dark silhouette against the sun, its eyes a luminous green. Meaghan shook her head, thinking she was imagining something, but the wolf stood there looking down at her with its glowing green eyes, and she didn't feel afraid of it. Instead, she felt... drawn to it.

She stood and found purchase with her hand, pulled herself up a little and, finding a place to brace her foot, began to edge her way carefully up the cliff face. The wolf stood and watched, and Meaghan glanced up occasionally to see it... her hands started to hurt, they were soft and tender, and her legs... she scraped her thigh against a sharp rock and it started to bleed slightly, the bloody wound caking with dirt, and soon her hands were bruised and cut and bleeding in places as well, but she ignored the pain, the aching fatigue in her forearms and shoulders, and she climbed and climbed and climbed.... Until finally, with a gasp, she pulled herself up and over the lip of cliff face, and she threw herself on her back and gasp, her breasts rising and falling. The wolf looked down at her and made a growling noise. She reached up and ran her fingers along the bristly fur along its muzzle, and the wolf licked her fingers and then her face, its rough sandpapery tongue wet and cool against her sweaty skin.

Meaghan felt... strange. She felt strong... powerful... decisive. And she knew things, things that couldn't be said in words, that didn't need to be said in words. It was like she'd developed some sort of sixth sense. Getting to her feet, she looked around and quickly located herself in relation to the cabin and then, spotting a distant cell tower, she could picture the whole area in her head as if she'd seen it on a map. "Hmnnnnnnnnnn." She knelt down and ran her hands through the wolf's fur. "Two days hike, I suppose, based on the terrain. Won't be easy. Won't be hard. But, I think there are some things I need to do first. What do you say?"

The wolf looked up at Meaghan, and she was sure it smiled.

"Lead the way," Meaghan said. "I'm ready."

* * * *

Parker had tried to stop cleaning three times, and each time he had found himself consumed with a need to clean... clean... clean... What the hell has gotten into me? He thought. He'd managed to scrub the rust stains off the toilet, and even gotten a lot of the glumpy stuff out from around the faucet handles on the bathroom sink before he'd thrown himself into scrubbing and scrubbing and scrubbing the tub. He wanted it good and clean in case he decided to take a bath.

Finally, he'd found a stiff old brush and gotten down on his hands and knees, relentlessly attacking the grime on the linoleum floor. Halfway through, he wiped the sweat from his face and sighed. He was tired, hungry and lonely. Where was Meaghan? What if she never came back? What would he do if he was stuck here? Alone? Then, he heard his name on the radio. "Parker Jefferson now stands accused of murder as well as ...

Murder? Parker thought. No. I didn't even shoot my gun.

"Security Guard Harvey Miller, who suffered a massive heart attack during the robbery, has died, and authorities say that..."

"Died? Heart? But that's not my fault!" Suddenly, he felt tears sting his eyes, and in shock he sat back on his haunches and sobbed, feeling lost and lonely and... he saw a butterfly fluttering around the room, then land on the counter right in a little ray of sunlight, and it carefully flapped its wings, just sitting there almost as if it were looking watching him. Parker felt himself smile, and then laugh. It made him feel... happy... to see the butterfly there, made him feel like everything was okay. "Hey, there, girl," he said.

"You are on the right path," he heard a woman's voice say.

Parker squinted. Looked around. Had the butterfly just spoken to him? "Excuse me?"

"Keep scrubbing," he heard the voice say.

Yes, Parker thought. Yes. When in doubt, keep scrubbing! It would keep him from worrying so much.

Meaghan quietly opened the door to the little cabin and stood in amazement. Parker, a kerchief tying his hair back, was on his hands and knees, and he was... cleaning? Parker? "Hey," Meaghan said.

Parker looked up and a huge smile spread across his face as he dropped his brush and leapt to his feet. "Meaghan!" He rushed over to her and wrapped her in a crushing love hug.

"Oh... wow," Meaghan said surprised both by the reaction and the seeming sincerity. "Okay... okay..."

Parker kept her in his arms and nuzzled in her hair. "Oh my God," he said. "I was so scared you weren't coming back, that you'd left me, that I would never see you again... oh, what the hell is wrong with me?"

Meaghan saw that Parker had started crying, and she patted him on the back and said, "You really missed me."

"Yes, and I am so sorry, for everything, I mean, it was wrong, and I was like... wronnk! And then, I have to say..."

"Shhhhh," Meaghan said, putting a finger to Parker's lips. She'd never seen him so emotional, so open, so vulnerable, and she felt her heart go out to him, and a strong need within her demanded she comfort him and make him feel safe. She took his hand and led him to the table. "Sit down," she said. "Take a breath. Everything will be fine."

Parker let her lead him to the table and sat down, peeling off his gloves, feeling confused and embarrassed by also... okay.

"I brought food," Meaghan said, holding up a burlap sack.

"How?"

"I went hunting."

"What did you find?"

"Rattlesnake."

Meaghan insisted on cooking, and Parker sat and listened in surprise and awe as she described how she had managed to capture and kill not one but two rattlesnakes. She'd also gathered some cactus and various greens she knew to be edible.

"You're amazing," Parker said.

"Me? I can't believe how clean you got this place!"

Parker felt himself flush shyly. "Oh, well, I didn't have the proper supplies..."

"You did great, honey," Meaghan said. "You really are a good cleaner."

"Thanks."

This is all wrong, Parker thought. All wrong. Meaghan hunting? Me cleaning? He thought about the strange dream, about the talking butterfly. Hadn't the woman said something about him becoming a wife? "Does something seem... strange?" He asked Meaghan as they ate.

"Yes," she said.

"Right? I mean, everything is.... Is... so... like..."

"Better."

"Better?"

"Yes," Meaghan said. "Don't things seem like they are getting better?"

"In a way..."

"They are getting better. Trust me. Everything is going to be fine."

Parker smiled. If she believed it, he believed it.

That night, Meaghan let Parker sleep in the little bed while she took the couch. He wanted to sleep with her because he felt lonely even just a room away from her, but Meaghan insisted the bed was too small for two people. So, with a hug and a kiss goodnight, she left Parker to pull the blanket up to his chin and stare at the ceiling, feeling scared and lonely. He was tired. His whole body ached from his all day cleaning binge, but he felt so uncomfortable without Meaghan there to hold him. "I'll never get to sleep," he thought, and then he fell asleep.

He was lost and scared. Wandering in the desert, some kind of maze of canyons and crevices, and he could feel his heart beat as he hurried along, turning this way and that, always hoping Meaghan would appear and save him. There were lizards and crows and snakes, gross things that made him shriek and run in a panic. And then he heard them. The soft, pretty voices of girls laughing and giggling... and the sound of water splashing. He followed the sound, calming himself, and he turned this way and that, getting closer until he walked into a grotto with a big, blue natural spring, and there were six pretty Indian girls playing in the water. They stopped as he walked into the grotto and looked up at him expectantly.

"Can I play, too?" He asked.

"Only girls can swim here," the tallest, prettiest of the girls said.

"I am a girl," Parker said holding out his doll as proof.

"Okay, then," the girl said.

Parker set his doll down and pulled his dress up over his head. He was so happy to have some friends! He waded into the water and the girls all laughed and giggled, so he laughed, too.

"I'm Namea. What's your name?"

"Parker," he said.

"No," the girl said. "Your name is Fawn."

"Okay," Parker said, and then the girl splashed him, and he shrieked and dove under the water. They splashed and played for a while, and then Namea said, "Let's go in the secret cave!"

All the girls began to chatter excitedly, and then hurried out the water and began to slip into a narrow crack in the wall, one by one. Parker was last, but when he tried to slip into the cave, he realized he was too big.

"Come on!" Namea said.

"I can't fit!"

"Then you can't be our friend," Namea said with a wicked little laugh.

"No! No!" Parker felt panic rush over him as the girls started to walk away and leave him behind. He couldn't stand it if the prettiest girls weren't his friends! "Don't leave me."

"Okay, then," Namea said. "Then you have to wish to be girl-sized."

"Just... wish?"

"Yes. Just wish that you were small and slender like a real girl."

Parker bit his lip, unsure if he really wanted to be small and slender. He was really a boy, after all, and he liked being big and muscly. "I'm not sure..."

"Do it," Namea said.

"I don't... I can't..."

"Then you can't be our friend!" The girls turned and walked away, deeper into the mysterious crevice.

Parker felt himself starting to cry as his new friends walked away. He felt so lonely, so unwanted and unloved. He turned back and started toward the grotto, and the entrance to the canyon maze, thinking he would either find his way home or die, probably, of thirst or starvation.

Then he saw his butterfly fluttering in the sunlight. It flew to him and fluttered around his head, and when he held out his little finger the butterfly landed. "Make the wish," the butterfly said.

"Who are you?"

"Your spirit guide." And with that the butterfly took wing.

Of course. Of course. His spirit guide! He knew what to do. Rushing to the crevice, he closed his eyes and said, "I wish I was small and slender like a real girl!"

He heard a bell ring, and he felt himself shrinking. It rang again, and his arms shrunk and became the lithe, rounded arms of a girl, and the bell rang a final time and his whole frame seemed to draw in on itself. Parker easily slipped through the crack and rushed after the girls shouting, "I made the wish! I made the wish!"

Namea and the girls turned and seeing the now tiny Parker running toward them they cheered and laughed, burying him in hugs and kisses. "You're so cute!" Namea said. "I'm so glad you are my friend!"

And Parker found himself crying, again, and this time they were tears of joy. He looked up at Namea, and he smiled. I'm the shortest girl here, he thought, and it made him feel special.

Parker woke feeling the same sense of shame and humiliation as after the previous dream. He was curled up, and Meaghan was spooning him from behind, one arm draped over his shoulder.... But that wasn't Meaghan's hand...

With a shriek he jerked free and tumbled to the floor, looking up to see Meaghan on the bed, sitting up in shock and surprise. "What the hell?" Only it wasn't Meaghan. It was a giant that looked like Meaghan, and looking down at his own small hands and slender wrists, Parker felt a sickness in his stomach and a shock of terror.

Meaghan shook her head, shocked as she recognized and didn't recognize Parker. It was his face, but he was tiny. He'd grown shorter, and his arms and legs were all skinny like those of a little boy.

"Parker?"

"Yes," he said, drawing his knees to his chest. His voice had changed, too. It was his voice still, but his voice before puberty, his voice when he'd been a little boy.

Even as she was processing the transformation of Parker, Meaghan was starting to realize her own transformation. She stood and stretched, marveling at how small the room seemed. She reached up and touched the ceiling. "Holy crap!"

"You're a giant!" Parker said.

"Yeah," Meaghan said. "And you're...." she started to say a pixie, but she stopped herself, knowing it would embarrass him. "You're... you're...."

"A twerp!" Parker said getting up and, grabbing his sweat pants to keep them from falling down, he rushed to the bathroom and slammed the door. He looked in the mirror, appalled at how much lower he now stood in relation to the sink... the mirror... He looked like a child, and looking at his skinny little arms he raised one and tried to make a muscle. Nothing! I look like a little boy! And yet, was there the slightest hint of roundness in his hips? Something of the arched, swaybacked look of...

The dream came back to him, seemingly in vivid detail, brighter and more perfect than a dream, brighter and more perfect than reality. Oh God. He remembered himself making the wish, asking that he be made as small and slender as a girl.

He looked at his long, graceful swan's neck, at his smooth round shoulders, and he felt sick. My God. Oh My God! He closed his eyes. "Make me as big and strong as I was... Make me as big and strong as I was..."

He opened his eyes. Nothing. No change.

Meaghan called through the door. "You okay in there?"

"No!"

Meaghan rubbed her chin and smiled ruefully. She figured she would have to get used to dealing with Parker's new, more emotional nature. It was going to be her job, she figured, as the changes continued. "Come out, and let's talk about it."

"I don't want you to see me like this!"

"I feel just as embarrassed as you do," Meaghan lied. In fact, she loved being so big and strong.

"Really?"

"Really."

The knob turned, the door opened. Just a crack. Parker peered bashfully out, looking at her sideways. "Promise not to laugh?"

"Never."

Parker came out and stood looking up at his giant girlfriend. The top of his head was now just below her chest, and he felt even tinier, looking up at her, holding up his sweat pants with one hand. Meaghan gathered her little boyfriend in her arms and hugged him to her, bending down to kiss him on top of his head. Parker felt so small and powerless in her arms. He hadn't felt like this since he'd been eight years old. But standing there in Meaghan's strong arms, he also felt something else. He felt safe.

"We have to get out of here," Parker said. "Before this goes any further."

"It may not be safe just yet. The police are looking for us."

"They aren't looking for a little boy with a giant girlfriend! We can ride right out of here now, and even if they stop us, they'll never be able to convict me now."

"They're looking for your Harley, and what if your fingerprints are the same? Your DNA? What if you went to prison--like that?"

"They couldn't... would? Maybe what?" Parker imagined himself in prison in this tiny little body and felt a wave of terror. "Then what can we do?"

"I'll go scouting. I can ride your bike out to the edge of reservation and ditch it. Head into town. I'll see how things look, and get you some clothes while I am at it, so that if we do make a run for it, you'll have something to wear."

"That's a good idea."

"Let's see if we can figure out some sizes for you."

There was no tape measure, but using her hands, Meaghan guess him at about 5' 1", and super skinny. She noticed that his shape seemed a little more like a girl than a boy, and she smiled to herself but said nothing even as some ideas began to cycle through her subconscious.

"I guess I better teach you how to ride the Harley," Parker finally said.

"Oh," Meaghan answered, an almost embarrassed look in her eyes. "That's okay. I'll figure it out. You're probably too... um..."

"Small?"

"Yes."

Parker didn't bother to argue.

"Keys?"

Parker went and got the keys. He held them out, flashing in the morning sunlight, and his girlfriend took them. "Drive safe," he said.

"Of course. NOT!" Meaghan said with a laugh.

Parker followed her out the door and stood on the porch while she swung one leg over the Harley. "Don't be long," he called out.

"I'll get back as soon as I can, honey."

And with that, Meaghan fired up the Harley, gunned the engine, and took off into the desert while Parker stood on one foot, a slender hand waving her goodbye. When the noise from the Harley died out, Parker found himself retreating into the cottage. It did not surprise him at all that he now felt very vulnerable and a little afraid of the possibility that someone or something might come along and threaten him while Meaghan was gone. He could barely defend himself from a kitten now, and he began to think of all the places he might hide if anyone came along.

We've got to get out of here, he thought, run before ... whatever happens next, happens next. Fidgeting, worrying, he had to do something to keep himself busy. So, Parker decided to clean some more. Tidy up. It was one thing he could still do, even tiny. That would make Megs happy, he decided. Make her proud of him. He longed to be held in her arms.

* * * *

Meaghan found herself downtown. She would get food to last a few days, get Parker some clothes, and then she wanted to go out and spend some more time exploring the desert. She walked into the local department store, running Parker's sizes through her mind, and as soon as she walked in a cute young woman walked up smiling and said, "Can I help you?"

"No..." Meaghan said reflexively, but then suddenly said, "Or... yes, actually. I feel kind of helpless here."

"Well, I don't know if we have anything in your size!" The girl said.

"Oh, it's not for me. It's for my... niece."

"How old is she?"

"She's 12...", Meaghan said. "About this tall. Very slender."

"Okay. And what kind of clothes are you looking to get her?"

"I'd like to get her some... dresses."

"Okay. We should have some things. Let me help you."

"Thanks."

A little over a half hour later, Meaghan left the store with a couple bags with pretty clothes for a girl to wear. She couldn't wait to see Parker's face when he saw them, and was even more excited to see him put on his first dress. She knew he would probably throw a hissy fit, pout and cry, but she was also very confident she would get him dressed all pretty and sweet.

Should I feel guilty? She wondered. No. It's for his own good. He needs to accept his new life, and the sooner the better. She could tell her was in denial over what was happening to him, to them, and she felt certain that she needed to be cruel to be kind.

At the grocery store she loaded up on food for a few days. She thought about grabbing a bouquet of roses, but the dresses would be more than enough for him to process without rubbing salt in the wound.

When Meaghan got back, she found Parker standing tiptoe on a chair, stretching to scrub the doors on the kitchen cabinets. He was so cute! Looking to her, he smiled and said, "Did you buy the whole store?"

Maggie set the bags down. Parker finished wiping and started to look around as he prepared to get off the chair, but Meaghan came, put her hands on his waist and lifted him effortlessly into the air, spinning him around like a doll. Parker shrieked, his eyes wide with surprise at how easily she lifted him, and said, "Put me down!"

Instead, Meaghan hugged him to her chest. He instinctively wrapped his legs around her waist and grabbed his shoulders, and clinging to his big, strong, girlfriend he looked her in the eyes, and instinct took over and his lips parted and he tilted his head to the side and Meaghan accepted his invitation and gave him long, sweet, loving kiss.

Meaghan felt powerful with her little man in her arms, and she carried him over to the couch and set him down. Parker tucked his legs under himself Indian-style and ran a hand through his hair and looked up at her with wet eyes. "That was... quite a hello!"

"I missed you," Meaghan said.

"I've been thinking about you all morning."

"I got lots of food," Meaghan said.

"Did you get me some clothes?"

"I got canned goods, but also some fresh veggies and some apples, cause I know you like apples."

"I can't wait to have some clothes that actually fit. Did you get me some jeans?" He started to get up, but Meaghan rushed over to him and sat down beside him on the couch.

"I want you to trust me," she said.

"Trust? What?"

"I got you clothes, and when you see them you might be a little... upset, but if you trust me..."

"What are they? What? Did you get me Geranimals or something?"

"Not exactly..."

"I mean, I know you had to get boy's sizes, so don't worry..."

"Tell me you'll trust me."

"Meaghan, what is this all about?"

"Just tell me."

"Of course I trust you."

"Okay."

Meaghan got up and picked up one of the bags from the department store, handing it to Parker. She stood back and watched his little face. He looked at her strangely, opened the bag, looked down, glanced up with a confused look on his face, and reaching into the bag with one small hand, he pulled out a thin cotton dress, purple with a flowery pattern on the straps and hem. He held it out, shaking his head. "What the fuck is this?"

"Trust..."

Parker threw the dress aside, reached in and pulled out another dress, then panties and a patent leather Mary Jane. He felt angry and afraid, an overwhelming feeling of guilt as he remembered his dreams, his dolls, his wish. "No way. No god damned way."

"Trust me..."

"No! What the hell are you thinking?"

"It's for the best."

"How? Meg, I'm a dude. A guy. I am not going to wear a dress."

"It's for the best."

"No. No, it isn't. Is this how you see me now?" Parker felt smaller and weaker than ever.

"No, I don't mean it in a bad way..."

"Fuck you!" Parker felt the tears coming, his vision blurring. "You want to treat me like a girl? A fucking woman? I'm a man. I'm still a man!"

He got up from the couch and started to run to the bathroom, but Meaghan wrapped an arm around his waist and lifted him into the air. He kicked helplessly as she swung him around and plopped him onto the couch, reaching down and grabbing the waist of his sweat pants. "What are you...?" Parker hit her with his little fists, but she didn't even seem to feel it, and she quickly yanked his pants and underpants down and tossed them aside.

Parker curled up into a little ball in the corner of the couch, ashamed of his weak, tiny body. Meaghan had a hard, angry look in her eyes like he'd never seen, and he felt scared of her. "Meaghan, please," he said, "whatever you're thinking..."

Meaghan grabbed his little wrist and yanked him to his feet. "Come on," she said, dragging him helplessly behind her.

"You're hurting me!"

Meaghan shoved him into the bathroom and tossed some clothes in his face. "Get dressed!"

"Fuck you!"

And then she pulled the door closed with a thud that shook the whole cabin.

Parker wiped his tears and, closing the toilet lid, sat down on the cold seat, squirming uncomfortably. "I'm not wearing a dress," he said.

"You won't get to eat until you put it on."

"Then I'll starve!"

Meaghan said nothing. Parker sat on the toilet, looking at the insult in purple she thought she was going to get him to wear. Never, he thought. Never. "I'm going to leave you here," Parker said. "I'll go to the city and get out of here."

Meaghan didn't answer.

The silent treatment? Really? I'll show her. I'll show her. I can out silent anyone!

He fidgeted. He fiddled. He didn't like being naked, trapped. He felt sleepy, but he'd already decided he would have to stop sleeping for fear of the next change, the next dream. Whatever it was, he knew it would be one step further away from manhood, and one step closer to being a real girl.

He heard the floor outside the bathroom creak, and he could see Meaghan's shadow from beneath the door. "The town is swarming with police... local, state... federal... they are looking for you, Parker. All of them. It's the perfect disguise." She paused, waiting to see if he would respond, and when he didn't she walked away to let him stew.

Disguise? He looked at the hideous dress, at the insult to manhood. How about a fake mustache? A hat and some sunglasses?

He felt himself drifting off, could see the grotto and hear the voices of the girls laughing. He shook his head and almost fell off the toilet. He listened. Nothing. No creaking or radio. Had Meaghan left? He sighed, and stealthily turned the handle to the bathroom door, pulling it open and cringing as the hinges squeaked. Nothing. No sound at all. With one arm across his chest and another over his groin, he crept into the cabin and saw ... no one. He crept out further. The Harley was still in the yard. Where had Meaghan gone?

He sensed motion out of the corner of his eyes, and turning he saw his butterfly flittering about, dancing in and out of light rays and swirling dust motes. He felt the usual happiness to see his friend, the usual calm, but also a little anger. "Look at me," he said, slitting his eyes and stomping a foot. "Look what you've done to me!"

The butterfly fluttered into the bathroom, perched on the edge of the sink and seemed to be looking down at the dress pooled on the floor, then back to Parker, and back to the dress. "Trust her," the butterfly said.

"You're taking her side?"

"We're both on your side."

"Hmmpf."

"No will recognize you in a dress, Parker. You could walk right up to the cops and ask for directions."

Parker walked into the bathroom and picked up the dress using just his fingertips, like he was afraid it might sting him. He held it out and looked at, and he cringed. He walked to the mirror and held it in front of his him, and there could be no doubt that in the dress he would look like a young woman--boyish, perhaps, but a woman. And no one was looking for a woman.

Maybe?

No.

He carried the dress into the bedroom and lay it on the bed, went back into the living room and gathered up the other things Meaghan had bought, laying them out on the bed. Another dress, a skirt and a blouse. Girl's underwear... socks... the only shoes were the shiny patent leather girl's shoes.

No one is around, the butterfly said. "Try one on. No one will ever know." Parker stood looking down at the clothes, and it seemed to him to pull one of those dresses over his head was to surrender, to give away his power, his masculinity... but did he even have it to give away? He thought about Meaghan picking him up and twirling him around, dragging him by his wrist...

"No," he thought as he picked up the purple dress. "Never," he thought as he raised it over his head and then let it fall down over his body, the straps settling over his shoulders, the hem fluttering down to just above his knees. He plucked at the fabric at his chest, feeling strange with the straps over his shoulders, dressed but not dressed... wearing a dresses... and he felt a feminine thrill, an almost palpable sense of relief as the girl in him flushed prettily. He hurried into the bathroom and looked in the mirror, and a young, boyish woman looked back at him. He looked cute. There was no doubt. Even with his long black hair all tangled and natty, he looked cute.

Fuck, he thought. Fuck.

Trying not to think about it, he stepped into a pair of the white cotton panties and pulled them up, letting his dress fall back down, and then, base foot, he went into the kitchen and, finding one of the green apples Meaghan had promised him, he took a bite savoring the sweet and sour pulp, the juice seeping out the edges of his mouth, and he wiped it away with one slender arm. The butterfly was there, looking at hm. "Happy?" He said.

"Yes," the butterfly answered. "You look cute."

"Shut up," Parker said, taking another bite of his apple, turning away to hide the little smile that was creeping across his little face. He ate the apple and then sat down on the couch. What does a guy do when he's in a dress? He wondered. Am I supposed to want to play with dolls now in real life as well? But he felt mostly like himself, still. Mostly. Only, he could feel the worry, the constant worry he associated with women. Wear was Meaghan? What if she never came back? Should he change before she got back? Run away? To where?

One thing he was sure of is that he would not sleep. No. Who knew what would happen next, and he saw himself, briefly, with a soft, round body, full breasts, a round butt... no. His mind rebelled. It was one thing to be a small man in a dress.... What the fuck? Was it?

Yes. Yes, it was, but to be all bouncy and jiggy and to have that soft woman's body he'd been obsessed with fucking since puberty? No. No.

I have to convince Meaghan to take me away from here before I... before I blossom.... Fill out this dress with curves.

The cabin smelled. Gross. He decided he would brave the outdoors, look for some flowers or other plants that might overcome the smell of pig breath that seemed to cling the place. Yes. He seemed to know of some things he could likely find in the desert nearby--he'd smelled a blossom each night. It was late afternoon now, still hot but about to break. But he knew his small soft feet would not be able to get him around the desert, and so with a sigh he pulled on a pair of the frilly socks and the shiny shoes that looked to him like something Alice in Wonderland would wear.

"Follow the rabbit!" His butterfly chirped.

Parker stood and looked down at his little feet in the shoes. He did look.... What was the word?

"Cute," the butterfly said.

"Yeah," Parker said. "And also stupid."

And saw, tentatively, Parker stepped out into the sunlight dressed as a girl for the first time, and with the shy, bashful air of a young girl he slipped out into the world, nervous and excited and scared, but determined to find something pretty.

* * * *

He was gathering some wild flowers not far from the cabin when he heard someone say, "what's your name?"

Parker leapt and turned, dropping the flowers he'd gathered and blushing as he stood there in his dress facing a girl, who was looking at him curiously. "I didn't mean to scare you," the girl said.

"You didn't mean... I was so busy..."

"Let me help you," the girl said, leaning down and starting to gather the flowers. "I'm Tia."

Parker knelt down and started picking up the flowers, too. "I'm... Fawn," he said, using the name he'd been given in his dream. "Thanks."

The girl handed the flowers to Parker, who clutched them to his chest, looking up Tia, who looked to be about 13 years old. It was one thing to look up to Meaghan, who now stood over six feet tall, but now he processed the fact that he was shorter than an average girl child. And, in this case, not just shorter but smaller. It made him feel even more vulnerable and uncomfortable. Tia wore a pair of ripped jeans and a black t-shirt with Black Sabbath across the chest. Nikes. And he stood there in a dress and Alice in Wonderland shoes.

"I like your dress," the girl said.

Parker felt a shock of shame and pleasure at the comment as he realized that Tia took him for another girl. And then he said, "thanks... um, your hair is really... pretty."

Tia smiled and followed along as Parker started back toward the cabin. "I should probably get home," Parker said. "It's getting dark."

"Where do you live?"

"In a cabin."

"Is it near here?"

"Yes."

"I snuck out here," Tia said. "My parents don't know where I am."

"Oh," Parker answered, not sure how to respond.

"Anyway, my dad is like, always drunk, so whatever."

"Oh."

"You're quiet."

"I guess."

"My dad says I talk too much, and my mom does, too."

"Hmmmnnn."

"Have you ever kissed a boy?"

"No!"

"I have."

Parker felt he should say something, so he said, "did you like it?"

"More than anything!"

They got back to the cabin and when Tia followed him onto the porch Parker stopped and turned. "Well, thanks for helping me. I guess I better go."

Tia opened the door for Parker and held it. "Are your parents home?"

"No, they don't, I live with my... sister."

"Is she home?" Tia asked looking into the cabin.

"I don't know."

"Is anyone home?" Tia yelled.

"Don't!"

"No answer. No one's home. Go in!"

Parker frowned and carried his flowers into the cabin, Tia following close behind. "I don't know if you should come in!"

"This place smells kind of gross."

"I know. That's why I got these flowers."

"Oh."

Parker set the flowers on the kitchen counter and wiped his hands on a hand towel. Tia sat down on the couch, her legs stretched out in front of her. "So," Tia said. "What should we do?"

"I don't know," Parker said, standing there awkwardly, annoyed that he was letting this little girl bully him. Just as he was trying to work up the courage to put his foot down and order the annoying little wench to get out, Tia jumped to her feet and said, "I know! I know!"

"What?"

She was walking toward Parker, smiling, eying him with a wicked little gleam in her eyes.

"Hair!"

Meaghan felt exhausted as she walked back to the cabin in the cooling night desert air. She run through the desert for an hour, chasing Wolf, run into a group of guys and spent another hour or so drinking beer and playing poker, then gotten into a first fight when she thought Mel was cheating, and she'd laid him out. Laid him out. Her knuckles were cut and bruised, but she felt amazing, a grin plastered across her face, and she kept reaching up to feel her now rock hard pecs, her breasts having disappeared during the run.

She wondered if that meant Parker would now have boobies, and as she approached the cabin, she was surprised to hear Parker talking to someone--so she snuck up and looked in the window. There was Parker in the purple dress, sitting primly with his knees together and his little hands in his lap while some girl stood behind him braiding his hair. He was smiling and chattering with the girl. Meaghan pulled out her phone and snapped a picture.

Meaghan covered her mouth, stifling a laugh. It was too perfect. He didn't have boobs--yet, but seeing him there just like a little girl getting his hair braided was so perfect. She watched until the girl finished Parker's braid and tied it off with a strip of white cloth she fixed into a bow. Snapping one last picture as Parker turned and thanked the girl with a sisterly hug, Meaghan then knocked on the window.

The two "girls" leapt in surprise, and then when Parker saw Meaghan standing at the window smiling, his hands went to his cheeks and he blushed furiously. Meaghan came around and entered the house.

"Hey, Meaghan," Tia said as if they were old friends.

Parker stood shyly, his feet together, hands behind his back, eyes downcast.

"Hey," Meaghan said. "Parker! You look great."

"Isn't she cute?" Tia said. "I told her she needs to take better care of her hair!"

"I couldn't agree more," Meaghan said, pleased and a little surprised to hear the girl refer to Parker as a she. Walking over and putting an arm around Parker's shoulder, Meaghan kissed him on the head.

"What's for dinner?" Tia asked.

"Fajitas."

"Hot damn. I'm starving."

"I'm so glad Parker met another girl to be friends with," Meaghan said with a smirk. "What's your name?"

"Tia. Only, she said her name was Fawn."

"Of course it is," Meaghan said smoothly.

"Parker is our last name," Parker blurted out, "Right, sis?"

"You guys look nothing alike," Tia said. "You're like a giant or something."

"I got all the tall genes," Meaghan said.

"And Fawn got all the cute."

"Yes," Meaghan said. "FAWN got the cute. My little sister sure is a cutie."

Parker shot her an angry glance, going and sitting down the couch, he turned his back to them and stared angrily out the front screen door.

"What?" Tia said.

"Nothing," Parker said, seething. He was so self-conscious and focused on his own shame he hadn't even noticed the change in Meaghan's chest. But he would.

"She's a little shy," Meaghan said, amused at the story that seemed to be unfolding before her. What a change. Parker had not only put on the dress, but pretending to be a girl? It was more than she could have hoped for, and what a name! Fawn? Could he have come up with anything more girly? She glanced over at her slender little boyfriend in his purple dress, his long, glossy braid trailing down his back, and she liked the way he was changing, what he was becoming. She was looking forward to watching him blossom into a pretty little fawn, even while she grew into her new life as a wolf.

* * * *

"Well, should I call you Fawn from now on?"

"Don't start," Parker said, sitting on the couch in his dress, his legs tucked under him. Tia had finally gone home.

"Okay. Okay."

"I'm going to bed."

Meaghan desperately wanted to talk to Parker about her day, to tell him all about her fight, but she knew, as embarrassed as he felt already, it would make things worse. So, she just waited until she heard Parker leave the bathroom, and then slipping off her pants, she made her way into the dark bedroom, climbed under the covers and draped an arm across Parker's slender waist.

"Good night," she said.

But Parker rolled over and put one soft hand against her rock hard chest and whispered, "Your chest."

"It changed today," she answered.

Parker's fingers tingled as he ran his fingers over the muscle, like a piece of stone, harder than his own chest, and he felt himself getting a little stiff. Meaghan put a finger under her chin and ran it along his jaw line, and when he tilted his head to the side she kissed him, wrapping her powerful arms around him, making him feel vulnerable and safe at the same time. It was odd to feel their flat chests pressed against one another, and he let himself fall into the warmth of the kiss.

Meaghan turned him onto his back and climbed on top, pinning his arms above his head. He could barely see her face, it was so dark, but he could see her eyes, hard and glassy, filled with need, and he nodded and softly said, "yes."

Meaghan kissed him and ran her hands over his arms and chest, his abdomen. He spread his legs as he got stiff, pressing his little hands against her rock hard chest, and she slipped his underwear down and left it riding at his ankles. He kicked it off and settled onto his back, and Meaghan reached down and put him inside her and started to rock. Parker bit his lip and closed his eyes, gently rocking his own hips to match her rhythm, but mostly just laying back and letting it happen.

After, he got up, found his underwear and pulled it back up. Groping in the dark, he found his dress and pulled it over his head. "What are you doing?" Meaghan said in the dark.

"I'm not sleepy," he answered.

"Okay."

Parker went out into the living room rubbing his hands over his face. He couldn't allow himself to sleep. Not now. The feel of Meaghan's chest had scared him, not only because he had found it such a turn on, but because he knew now with absolute certainty that if he did sleep again, he would have more changes, that eventually, he would have boobs.

He pictured himself with breasts. Saw himself looking into the mirror and seeing them soft and round, swaying on his chest, full, plump dark brown nipples. He imagined Meaghan coming up from behind him and cupping his breasts, the feel of her big, calloused hands against his soft flesh.

No. He didn't want that. He didn't want to have boobs. He didn't want to be small and weak, and to be a woman. He didn't want to spend the rest of his life on his back with his legs spread. He felt himself nodding off and got to his feet, walking out onto the porch and into the night desert chill. It was cold and dark, and a little bit of a breeze wafted down along the canyon, full of the thick smell of the night flowers. Looking up at the sky, he saw stars and stars and more stars, more stars than he'd ever thought he'd see before, and his heart leapt at the sight.

He spotted Orion's belt, one of the only formations he could ever recognize, and then letting his eyes drift among the heavens, he saw a bigger, brighter star close to the horizon, and he wondered if it was a plane, but then something told him he was looking at Venus, the planet named for the goddess of love.

Meaghan was becoming a man. He didn't want to face it, to admit it, but she was, and not just in body but in mind. She was changing faster than he was, and he knew, somehow he knew, that the only way for him to stay with her was for him to become a woman. The thought sent a shiver through him, and he hugged himself, glancing down at his slender forearms. He was halfway there already. Was it such a sacrifice to make? For love?

He imagined himself a woman. A real woman. What would it be like? Would it be so terrible? How much different would it be? He'd been a screw up anyway. He was wanted by the police. He was going to jail. But if he became a woman, he would be free, and he could start over, and things would be different.

Yes, a voice in his head said, a deeper, masculine voice, his old voice. Things will be different. Meaghan will be fucking you. He thought about it, about having a slit, about spreading his legs and having a man stick it to him, about being Meaghan's bitch.

No. No. No. Never. I am a man, he thought. I was born a man, and I will die a man. I have to get back in control. Get out of this dress and out of this desert. It will mean losing Meaghan. Yes, and he felt a pang of regret at even the thought of losing her, but the price of keeping her was just too high. He would not, could not, accept a life in dresses.

He went in the house and filled the kettle with water, put it on the stove. He dumped coffee into the French Press, and he paced and thought. He couldn't stay awake forever, but he could stay awake tonight. Once Meaghan left in the morning, he would make a run for it. Get out of this haunted desert and get back to being a man. And he was sure he could get Tia to help him.

Meaghan got up just as the sky began to lighten. She didn't say much. Mumbled good morning. "Did you sleep at all?"

"Some," Parker lied.

Meaghan grunted. "I have some things I need to do," she said when she finished eating. "Got to head in to the reservation."

"Okay," Parker said.

Meaghan came over and leaned down. Parker tilted his head back and accepted a quick kiss. "Be good," Meaghan said, and left.

Parker watched her jump on the Harley and gun the engine, tear off into the desert, the wind in her hair. He missed it already--the freedom. The feeling of the bike vibrating beneath him, the explosion of the engines. But, as little as he was now, he doubted he could handle the old girl, and he certainly wouldn't be riding anywhere in this dress. He drank two full glasses of water, wanting to make sure he was hydrated, and then he pulled one of his old baseball caps over his head, feeding his pony tail out the back. Then, strapping his patent leather shoes onto his feet, he grabbed one of the plastic bags from the grocery and tossed in a couple apples, a package of cheese and crackers.

Oh yeah. He just remembered, and took a moment to find some Coppertone and run it on his bare shoulders and arms.

Then, with a deep breath, he stepped out the door, feeling a rush of excitement and fear as he walked away from the cabin and Meaghan for what he hoped was the final time, away from a life in dresses, a life as a woman.

He followed the directions Tia had given him to her house. Or he thought he did. He got lost. Then he realized he was lost. He found himself on the edge of a stand of cacti, looking out over the vast expanse of desert, high, red mesas dotting the horizon in the distance. The sun was high in the sky, a noon day sun, and he had no idea where he was or even how to get back to the cabin. He wandered back the way he'd come until he at least found an entrance to the canyon maze that led to the trailer, and then he sat down in a patch of shade and began to cry. He was hot and tired. His dress was sticking to him, and he was scared and alone.

"I never should have left Meaghan," he thought as the tears poured down his cheeks. "I never should have gone off on my own."

He lay down and hugged his knees to his chest, trying to remember how to get back home, to recall a landmark or a sign, but nothing occurred to him. Everything looked the same, and he was tired, so tired. I'll rest, he thought. Just for a minute. He closed his eyes and he thought about the apples in the bag, how good it would be to eat one. His apples, and then he saw himself with small round breasts, little apple breasts, and he was blushing, and Tia was clapping and saying, "You finally got your boobies!"

He sat up and immediately reached to his flat, boney chest. Thank god. He still didn't have boobs.

But he had to stay awake. To keep moving. To find his way home or somewhere, anyway. Somewhere away from this cursed desert.

And then he saw his butterfly. It was so pretty as it came wafting out of the canyon maze, pin wheeling through the sharp mid-day air. Parker felt himself smile, butterflies in his tummy, and he reached out with his pinkie finger, and his friend landed.

"Why are you crying?"

"I'm lost," Parker said.

"You want to see Tia?"

"Yes."

"I'll show you the way!"

The butterfly fluttered into the air and began to fly back into the canyon, and Parker followed. The butterfly flew quickly, and Parker rushed along, struggling to keep up as the pretty little creature rushed here and there. By the time he ran into the wooded clearing where Tia's house squatted, nestled among the desert pines, his cheeks were flush and his body slick with sweat. Tia was swinging in a tire swing, singing a song in a high, pure voice: The caterpillar liked to be a creepy crawly green thingy It thought nothing could be better than having a hundred feet together Do you could you want to change?

Oh no, it said. That would seem strange.

Do you could you want to change?

Oh no, it said. That would seem strange.

Then, she spotted Parker standing on the edge of the hollow, and she shouted, "Fawn!" Tia immediately did a little flying leap from the tire, and ran toward Parker with her arms outstretched. Parker threw his own arms wide and ran to meet her, the two colliding in a pile of hugs and giggles.

Tia grabbed Parker's hand and dragged him toward her house, and in a mock adult voice she said. "Come in! I'll give you the tour!"

Parker followed along helplessly as Tia showed him around the various small rooms of her house, each one crowded with exotic paintings and instruments from all over the world. Parker was fascinated, his eyes wide with wonder, and then finally Tia plopped him down on a little footstool and said, "You're wearing the same dress as yesterday."

"Yes," Parker said, seeing his chance. "I don't have any other clothes."

"That is just simply unacceptable. No. I will not hear of it! Let me find some things for you young lady."

"Oh no," Parker said.

"I insist," Tia responded, still playing mother, and without a word she stood and walked out of the room. Parker followed her as she grabbed a piece of rope that dangled from the hallway ceiling and pulled down a set of stairs. "I am sure I have something in the attic that will fit. My old clothes."

"Do you have any pants?" Parker said.

"Sure."

Parker smiled. Yes! Finally something was going his way.

They had roses embroidered on the back pockets, and they were a little tight, but they were pants, and Parker felt a familiar comfort as he wiggled into them and zipped up the fly. She found him a yellow t-shirt with a picture of Sponge Bob Square Pants on the front that was a little too small, fitting tightly over his torso and ending a little bit above his jeans, showing off a bit of his midriff. No old shoes, so he strapped his Mary Janes back on, still feeling at least a little more like a boy. It seemed a good a time as any to push forward with his plan, so he said, "thanks. My sister... doesn't care."

"She seemed nice."

"Because you were there! She's mean to me, and she hits me!"

"What?"

"I want to run away. Will you help me?"

"Where will you go?" Tia felt sad and scared for her new friend. She was so tiny and helpless.

"Somewhere. Anywhere."

"You can't," Tia said. "It's not safe."

"I'll be fine."

"No. Stay here. With me. I'll ask my parents."

"I want to get out of the desert, off the reservation. Free."

"Not yet. When you're older. You can go to college."

Parker wanted to tell her he was 20 years old, a man, that he'd robbed an armored car and could ride a motorcycle. But, standing there in her old jeans, looking up at her, he was too ashamed, and he was sure she would never believe him anyway.

"I was hoping you'd help me," he said, disappointed.

"Running away doesn't work, anyway. I tried it before." Tia threw her old clothes back in the box and said, "so what should we eat for lunch?"

"Food?"

They made grilled cheese sandwiches, and then Tia walked Parker home. She showed him some landmarks so he would remember how to get back to her house if he wanted to visit and made him promise not to run away. "If your sister is being mean, or you just want to talk, promise you'll come and see me!"

"Okay."

Then, Tia fished around in her pocket and pulled out a rubber bracelet in a bright, lime green. She looked down and held it toward Parker. "I want you to have this."

Parker took it from her and looked at it. It read: BFF. He felt confused, and stood there turning it over in his hands, strange feelings overcoming him.

"Do you like it?" Tia asked.

"Yes."

"Put it on!"

Parker slipped it over his hand and held it up for Tia to see. When she looked up, he saw that she was crying, and she gave him a quick hug and then hurried away, yelling, "You are my best friend, Fawn!"

And then Parker swallowed, and he started to cry as he waved goodbye, watching Tia rush off. Am I her only friend?" He wondered, twisting the bracelet on his wrist. The thought made him feel happy and sad at the same time.

And so he found himself back at the cabin, and it was hot, and he was tired, so he filled the kettle. Tonight, he decided. I'll make a run for it tonight. He was sure he could find his way now. Tia had shown him. It made him feel sad to leave her behind, but she was strong. She would find a new friend, and he wasn't even a girl anyway.

And as long as I don't sleep, he thought. As long as I don't sleep, I can stay a man.

* * * *

Deputy Sheriff Jonah Wabash did not care for Indians. Nor did he think too much of common criminals, in particular that variety of criminal which engaged in crime which placed the lives of innocent people at risk. And if one happened to be both a criminal and an Indian, and that person happened to make a choice which led to the premature passing of one of his friends and that friend happened to owe Jonah more than a small amount of money, well that person would rise to the very top of the list Jonah Wabash called Shit.

And so when he saw the incredibly tall, broad shouldered person with curly red hair duck into the barber shop, he sat up in his patrol car and thoughtfully shifted the green tea infused tooth pick he'd been chewing on from the right to left, and he pulled up the Wanted report on his computer confirming that good ole Parker did, in fact, have a suspected accomplice with red hair. It was reputed to be a much shorter woman, and an actual woman, whereas the person he'd see looked more like a man, but eye witness testimony had been known to lie. Still, it seemed unlikely the reports would be so completely wrong, and he leaned back in his patrol car and close his eyes.

But it bothered him.

Wabash had lived in Coyote County his whole life, and he knew just about everyone in the county on account of the fact that it wasn't such a big place, and he had never seen this particular giant man/woman before in his life. Maybe a reporter from out of town, but he'd talked to them all, he was pretty sure, trying to get his name on the news like any ambitious cop would do. It just seemed like too much of a coincidence. He got out of his car and casually walked past the barber shop. She/he was reading the paper, waiting for a chair, so he figured he had time and rushed into the department store nearby.

"Gonna need to borrow some clothes," he said, grabbing a pair of jeans and a shirt.

"Whatever," the girl said, keeping away from the creep so he couldn't pinch her butt as he liked to do.

Parker switched out of his uniform and soon sat on a sidewalk bench in jeans and a t-shirt, a baseball pulled down low over the cheap plastic sunglasses he'd grabbed at the department store. He had a duffle bag with his gun sitting next to him, and he watched and waited. He had a hunch this unknown individual would lead him right to his old buddy Parker--and a large pile of money that just might mysteriously disappear along with a certain no good Indian thief.

No point in calling this one in until he had the money, and then not only would have the money to buy the new jet skis he'd been wanting, but he'd make himself a hero on the evening news. Yes, indeed. He could see the reports now. Jonah Wabash, hero cop, survives shoot out with desperado and his crazy ass girlfriend. That would be mighty sweet, and maybe he would just run for sheriff and send his old geezer of a boss of to the retirement home for washed up donut jokeys.

* * * *

Meaghan got home just after dark. As she approached the cabin, she could smell food cooking, and her stomach rumbled. She swung open the door and walked in to find Parker standing on a chair, carefully stirring a pot of red sauce with diced up pieces of the sweet Italian sausage she's brought home the day before. The furniture in the little living room/dining room area had been rearranged, and it gave the room a more open, airy feel. There were also even more bunches of wild flowers arranged all around the room, and what was he wearing?

"Finally!" He said, turning up the heat and tossing a couple handfuls of pasta into a steaming pot of boiling water.

Meaghan gave Parker a hug and a kiss, though she noticed he turned his head so this kiss landed on his cheek. "What's all this?"

"I decided to cook dinner."

"Where'd you get these clothes?"

"Oh," Parker said with a smug little smile. "I got them from Tia. I don't want to wear dresses all the time."

"Good for you," Meaghan said, looking at her boyfriend's Sponge Bob shirt and wondering if he knew that he looked no less a girl now than in a dress.

"You got a haircut."

"Yeah," Meaghan said running a hand over his brush cut hair. "Need to change my appearance, too."

"You look... good."

"What?"

"Nothing."

"No. What were you going to say?"

Parker had been about to say, 'you look like a man,' but he thought it might annoy her, and it certainly creeped him out. It was more obvious to him now than ever that he and Meaghan would have to part ways. She was becoming a man, and he was not willing to accept the role of the female in their relationship.

"And you rearranged the furniture?"

"Oh yeah," Parker said. "I'm going crazy here. Crazy! I need something to keep me busy."

"I can't even believe it's the same room."

"Help me set the table?"

They ate and talked, traded stories about their days. Meaghan couldn't stop raving over how much she loved Parker's cooking, and Parker for his part felt flush with pride over how well the dinner had turned out. It all seemed nice, and for one last hour things were good, and it almost seemed like they could go on and be happy together.

But then Parker, sensing the time would slip away, said, "I think we should talk about the future."

"Yes," Meaghan said.

"You've changed."

"We've both changed."

"You're becoming, Meaghan, I think you're becoming a man. And I think you like it."

"I do. And you..."

"No."

"Parker, being a woman? It's not so bad."

"Not so bad? That's your sales pitch?"

"I mean, I know you think it's some kind of demotion or something, but it's not. It can be fun."

"I don't want to be a woman."

"Why not try it?"

"Because I don't think I can choose to go back. I think it I... go through with this, that it's a one way street."

"You don't know that."

"I can... feel it."

"I'll take care of you."

"I don't want that."

"Parker, don't you see? This is a miracle. Magic. Real life magic. This isn't something that just happens. It's a gift. Freedom. For both of us."

"I'd rather go to prison."

"Really? Your manhood means that much to you?"

"Yes."

"I want you to meet someone," Meaghan said.

"I don't think we're done talking."

"This is part of the conversation."

Parker followed Meaghan out onto the porch. "Wolf," Meaghan called, and Parker immediately saw the luminescent eyes flicker to life in the darkness, and then a huge wolf sauntered out of the darkness and up to the porch steps. Parker instinctively put an arm around Meaghan's waist, and she threw a protective arm around his shoulder. "It's okay. Wolf is my spirit animal."

"Your spirit animal is a wolf?"

"Yes."

Wolf stood there, looking up at the two of them expectantly, the hint of a little canine smile on his face.

On cue, Parker's butterfly flittered onto the scene, circling around his head. Parker reached out and offered a pinky finger, and the butterfly landed. "Meet my spirit animal."

"She's beautiful."

"Thanks," Parker and butterfly said in unison.

Meaghan kissed Parker on the head and said, "How can you deny this miracle?"

"I don't know," he answered. "But I have to. I have to. When I think of being a woman, I feel... so scared. Terrified."

"Change is scary," Butterfly said.

"We all face fear," Wolf said.

"Take the chance," Meaghan said. "Open the door."

Parker shook his head, crying again. "No." He said. "No."

"Okay," Meaghan said. "It's okay." She put her hands on Parker's cheeks and tilted his head back. "I'll love and support you no matter what you choose to do."

"Will you help me? Help me get away from here?"

"Yes, but, I want to stay. I never want to go back to my old life."

"I understand," Parker said, crying, feeling an emptiness open inside him, a longing and a loneliness. "I do. But for me..."

"It's okay. We each have our own destiny. We'll go. Tomorrow..."

"No! Tonight! Now. Before it's too late for me."

"Okay. Okay. Let's get ready, and we'll go."

"Thank you," Parker said putting his head against Meaghan's chest. "Thank you so, so much."

Wolf and Butterfly left, and Parker and Meaghan went inside to gather some things for the trip. Meanwhile, Sheriff Wabash crouched in the shadows, watching, puzzled and disturbed. He had seen two people talking, and one did look Indian, but he would swear it was a little Indian girl.

Yet, sure enough there was the motorcycle in the yard, and he was sure he'd heard the she male call the little one Parker. Could they be in disguise? Was Parker in disguise before? What the hell was the deal? The two went back in the house. The man lifted a bag, reached in and pulled out a bundle of money.

And Parker forgot all about who was a guy and a girl and who was tall or short as he reached into his duffle bag and pulled out his gun. Because all he really cared about was green, lots and lots of green, and whatever might come of these two being found dead out in the desert, Parker wasn't too worried. The reservation created all kinds of jurisdictional problems for the feds, and as for the local law, the county judge was his Uncle, and the prosecutor was his cousin.

Meaghan and Parker were in the kitchen when they heard the screen door creak open and, looking up, saw skinny man with a shaved head enter the trailer. Both of their eyes were drawn immediately to the flashing, chrome gun in his hand, which he waved casually in their direction. "How about if both of you just stop right where you are and stand real still."

They both froze, and Wabash smiled crookedly. "Good. Good. Now, we're going to be working together tonight, and as long as you cooperate, no one gets hurt. Got it?"

Parker found himself shifting to a position slightly behind Meaghan, knees bent, one hand resting on her arm. Meaghan gave his little hand a pat for assurance and said, "Whatever you want, just take it. We don't want any trouble."

"Good," Wabash said. "Good. On your knees. Both of you."

"Listen, we don't..."

"On your knees!"

Parker dropped to his knees. Meaghan slowly got down, keeping her eyes on the man with the gun, waiting for a chance.

"Hands on your head."

They both put their hands on their heads.

Wabash moved fast, circling behind Meaghan, sticking his gun in the waist of his pants and zip cording Meaghan's hands. He then pushed her onto her side and corded her ankles, leaving her hog tied. Meaghan silently cursed herself for not taking the moment to strike, but she'd been worried about protecting Parker. And now?

"You don't look like much of a bank robber," Wabash said, taking Parker's braid in his hands and tugging it.

"Ouch!"

"Don't hurt him," Meaghan said.

"So, you are a man?" Wabash said, coming around to stand in front of Parker. The sheriff's groin was only inches from Parker's face. Parker turned his head away, and Wabash laughed. "Look at me."

"Fuck you," Parker whispered.

Wabash kicked Meaghan viciously in the ribs, and she grunted. "Look at me," Wabash said.

"Okay! Okay!" Parker tilted his head back and knelt, looking up at Wabash, the man leering down at him, and Wabash leaned down and took Parker's chin in his hand and turned his face to one side, then the next. "My, you are pretty. Too pretty for a dude. You're prettier than most girls."

Parker's heart was racing, he could feel his body tremble. The look in the man's eyes, the dirty leer, it made Parker feel... dirty, and he wanted to look away, but... Meaghan.

"I just told you I think you're pretty," Wabash said, his tone stern and angry. "What do you say?"

"Thanks," Parker said, forcing himself to smile. "Thanks."

"I don't think you mean it."

"I do, I do..."

Wabash kicked Meaghan in the ribs again, and again. Parker screamed and threw himself over Meaghan, and Wabash laughed. "Thank you," Parker shrieked, tears now flowing down his face. "Thank you!" And now he threw his arms around Wabash's legs and looking up at him with wide, teary eyes, he smiled, and said, "I like it when you tell me I'm pretty."

"Show me."

"Show...?"

"Show me how much you like it. Show me your gratitude, pretty boy." Wabash unbutton his jeans, partially unzipped his fly. Parker looked at the man, hoping he was getting the signals wrong, misunderstanding, but Wabash grinned and nodded. "You know what to do, honey."

"Please," Parker whispered. "No. Please."

Wabash kicked Meaghan, who grunted. "Don't," Meaghan said.

"I have to," Parker whispered.

"That's the spirit little one. You just do what you have to do, and your she male mangirlfined or whatever she is does not get hurt."

"Okay. Okay."

Parker sat back on his haunches and smiled as prettily as he could. He raised his index finger and wagged it, gesturing for Wabash to come forward. A strange sense of calm came over him, and he saw his butterfly fluttering behind Wabash, and now a genuine smile spread across his features, and he whispered, "Let me show you a good time."

Wabash sauntered forward, and looked down at Parker, his eyes hard and empty. Parker reached up and slowly finished unzipping Wabash's zipper, pulled down the other man's tattered tidy whites, but then Wabash slapped him across the face and sent him tumbling backwards. "Haha. Like I'd ever let a dirty little Indian boy touch me! I was just playing. I like girls, and girls only."

"I'm going to kill you," Meaghan said.

"Yeah? Well, that's going to be a pretty good trick given that in about a minute I am going to put a bullet in your head. This ain't fun anymore, kids. I think I may just go ahead and kill you both now. Take the money and buy me a lap dance."

"Sleep," Parker whispered, looking up at the butterfly. "Let me sleep." The butterfly landed on Parker's nose. Flapped its wings.

And Parker found himself back at the grotto. He was sitting with his feet in the water, naked, and he could hear the girls singing in the distance. He hurried to them, and when they saw him the girls all laughed and cheered, and they exchanged hugs and kisses. "We've been missing you!"

"I'm sorry," Parker said. "I got scared. I was going to run away."

"Without even saying goodbye?"

"I know. I shouldn't have tried."

"It's okay. You'll always be our friend now."

"I always want to be your friend, and I always want to... be a real girl."

"You do?"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. I'm sure."

"So, ask for it."

Parker closed his eyes. "I wish I had a body like a real girl, that I had curves, and breasts, that I had wide, round hips and a... and... and a slit between my legs. Just like a girl."

He felt his body shifting and changing, felt his breasts blossom, full and round and heavy, felt his hips swell, and felt like someone had suddenly pushed an icicle in between his legs, a cold, wet feeling, and when he reached down he felt his vulva, and then the lips of his vagina. The girls all laughed and cheered, and there were more hugs and kisses, and then Parker said, "I have to go."

"Go. Go. We'll see you soon!"

Parker woke. He rolled onto his back. His t-shirt was impossibly tight against his breasts, and he felt like he was about to strangle. Reaching down he grabbed the hem of the shirt and yanked it up over his head, let his full breasts sway free. The button on his jeans had popped off and they now rode halfway down his womanly hips. Wabash was kneeling next to Meaghan, his gun next to Meaghan's head.

"Oh, mister...?" Parker called out in a high, soft and seductive voice, pushing himself up on his elbows.

Wabash turned and saw... breasts. Big, brown, naked breasts. His brain froze. "What the...?"

"I'm not...a boy at all," Parker said with a giggle.

"No..." Wabash said. "No, you are not."

Parker shifted slightly, letting his breasts sway, and he smiled and put a finger in his mouth. "You wanna lap dance?"

"That would be a good start."

Parker held out one slender hand, and Wabash reached out and took it, helping Parker to his feet. He stared at Parker's amazing breasts, watching every little bounce and sway, and reached down and let his fingers just barely float across the smooth, soft flesh. "Oh my god," Wabash said. Parker raised his arms over his head and did a little twirl, putting some distance between himself and the creep, and then he slipped out of his jeans and turned to show the other man his ass, which he shook and playfully, looking back over his shoulder with a smile.

"Oh my god," Wabash repeated, his mouth dropping open at the sight of this incredible little female. He felt the blood draining from his head, surging downward. "Oh my god."

Parker danced, himself mesmerized by the sensation of movement, the way his whole body seemed to jiggle, and especially his new breasts, and danced his way slowly and seductively into the bedroom, and Wabash followed like a love sick puppy, just mumbling oh my god... oh my god over and over again as the little brown goddess spun and swayed before him. Just before disappearing, Parker caught Meaghan's eyes. Parker's eyes were wide and full of fear. He was buying time, but he had no idea how he would get them out of this. Meaghan nodded. Keep dancing, baby, she thought. Just keep him distracted for a little while longer.

* * * *

Wabash put a hand on Parker's ass, and Parker playfully slapped it away. "Not yet," he cooed. "Wait for it. It will be better. I promise!" Putting a hand on Wabash's chest, Parker pushed the man back onto the bed, and Wabash lay back watching the gorgeous woman before him as she turned away pushed her panties down, wiggling that sweet ass of hers, and then she flipped the panties into Wabash's face.

As Wabash clutched the panties to his chin, Parker cupped his own breasts and began to squeeze them, leaning forward and teasingly presenting them to the stupefied man before him before dancing away in a cloud of giggles just as the other man reached out for him. "Stop teasing me," Wabash said. "Oh my God, I need you."

Parker smiled and showed the other man his profile, sticking his breasts out and ass back and then slowly undulating, thrusting his hips in and out, his breasts bouncing in counter point to his firm round ass.

Parker glanced at the doorway that led out of the bedroom to the rest of the house. He knew--knew--Meaghan would find a way to free herself, would come in and rescue him, all he had to do was buy some time. He searched through his mind desperately trying to remember the things he'd seen a stripper do, and then raising and lowering his butt, he backed toward the other man, glancing over his shoulder and smiling as the other man's head bob in time to his rising and falling buttocks.

And Wabash, as the little female moved closer and closer, felt himself grow flush with desire, and reaching out, he grabbed Parker's hips and pulled Parker back and onto his lap. Parker squealed and tried to wiggle free, but Wabash had lost control, and grabbing the little woman's wrists he rolled her onto her back and pinned her to the bed.

Parker strained against the man but couldn't move at all. He saw his face, felt his hot breath, his hard, firm rod shoving into his own soft thigh, and Parker screamed as a new, feminine terror filled his body. "No... please..." he said.

"Oh my God," Wabash said in a dead voice, running his hands over Parker's big, soft breasts. "Oh my God..."

Parker slapped at the man with his soft little hands, but Wabash just laughed and grabbed the little woman's wrists again, pinning her once more. "I don't want to hurt you," he said. "Don't make me hurt you."

"Okay," Parker said, terrified at what was about to happen.

"Just relax and take it," Wabash said.

He reached down and started to adjust himself, getting ready to push himself into the slit between Parker's legs, and Parker whispered "no... please... no..." He closed his eyes and thought, what did I do to deserve this?

"Get ready," Wabash whispered.

"I'm a virgin," Parker said in a small voice.

Wabash just grunted, and then Parker felt the weight of the other man lifted off of him. Opening his eyes, he saw Meaghan standing tall above him with Wabash in a choke hold, and Meaghan swung the scrawny little man around and slammed him into the wall. "Just relax," Meaghan said, holding him as he gasped and kicked helplessly at the air. "It'll be over soon."

Finally, Wabash stopped moving. Hung limp in Meaghan's arms. She stopped him to the ground and gave him a kick in the ribs, then immediately rushed to Parker and gathered him into her arms. Parker threw his soft, round arms around her, and Meaghan and hugged her to him, tears flowing freely, again, and he held tight as she lifted him in the air and carried him out into the living room, setting him down on the couch. Parker curled up, hugging his knees to his breasts, and looked up through his bangs at his girlfriend.

Meaghan looked down at Parker, now fully transformed into a woman. He was stunning. A perfect, gorgeous little female, with full, soft lips and big brown eyes. Tone, rounded legs. She stared into his eyes and said, "You're gorgeous."

"Thank you," Parker answered, glancing away. When he looked back, he smiled shyly and said, "I guess I'm a woman now, too."

"I want to see you," Meaghan said in a husky voice. "I want to see all of you."

Parker stood, letting his slender arms drop to his sides, letting his big, round womanly breasts sway free. He stood with his hip out to one side, one of his small feet lifted just a touch off the ground, and Meaghan let her eyes ease down his body, the flat tummy, full, round hips, the V-shaped patch of hair between his legs, the long, strong legs--legs like a gymnast or a dancer. Parker stood, small and soft and round, eyes cast downward in maidenly modesty, and he felt her eyes caress his soft brown skin, glide down and then back up again, and then Meaghan once again gathered her pretty little boyfriend into her arms and held him close and kissed him until he saw stars.

"What now?" Parker said, watching as Meaghan tied Wabash's wrists together with the last of the zip ties from the man's duffle bag.

"Let's get out of here," Meaghan said.

"You... but you aren't ... done changing."

"I know a place we can go, where you'll be safe while I finish my spirit quest." Meaghan took Parker's small hand and said, "You ready?"

"Yes," Parker said, because he felt safe with her, and complete, and he loved her and had given up everything for her, and now the only path was forward. "I need to get dressed!" Meaghan went and got him some clothes--a dress, his Mary Jane's. He slipped into the dress, and it was too tight in the chest and the hips, and Parker felt proud of his new curves.

"You're about to bust right out of that little thing," Meaghan said. Parker giggled.

Meaghan was loading the bags onto the Harley, Parker at her side, when they heard the metallic click of a pistol's safety being switched off. They turned to see Wabash on the porch, gun in hand, but the man now had his own pair of full, firm breasts straining against his too tight t-shirt. "What the hell have you done to me?" He croaked. The zip tie dangled from one of his now dainty little wrists.

"Calm down," Meaghan said.

"Calm do--- like hell! You've turned me into a freak! I'm going to kill you, both of you."

Meaghan braced. Parker braced. Wabash raised the gun with one slender arm, his other held awkwardly out to the side, wrist bent. And then with a shout, Tia threw herself into the backs of Wabash's knees from behind, sending him tumbling down the stairs, the gun flying from his hand. Meaghan was on him in a second, twisting his arm behind his back and then tying him to a fence post on the porch. Wabash just cried helplessly, emasculated and afraid at what had happened to his body, and at the dream he had where he had begged to have breasts of his own.

Tia and Parker hugged. Meaghan and Tie hugged. They all hugged. "Where are you going?" Tia asked.

"We're getting out of here."

"You got your boobs."

"Yeah, and then some," Parker said. "It's hard to explain, but..."

"No. I understand," Tia said. "I knew the whole time."

"How?"

"They told me."

The group turned and saw the four of them gathered, watching. Raven. Wolf. Butterfly. And Doe. "They asked me to help," Tia said. "So, I said yes. I help the spirit animals a lot out here."

"What? Who are you?"

"I'm Tia," she said. "Didn't I ever tell you my name before?"

"Well, yes, but not every girl goes around helping spirit animals."

"They're my friends," Tia said. "So, that's that."

"Omigod, what the hell is going on here?" Wabash said.

"Oh, well, it seems your spirit animals I a doe, sweetie," Parker said. "And you are turning into a woman."

"Omigod," Wabash said, and hearing the fear in his voice Parker remembered how terrified he'd been when his own changes had started, so he walked over and gave Wabash a little hug, and then a pat on the cheek.

"It'll be okay," He said softly. "Just trust that it will be okay."

"I don't want to be a woman."

"Well, it's happening whether you want it to or not, girly."

Meaghan, bored by the little feminine scene of hugs and tears, fired up the Harley and said, "Climb on. Let's get out of here."

"Tia," Parker said. "Are you going to be okay? Do you want to come with us?"

"I can't," Tia said.

"You sure? I mean, we'd love to have you."

"I have to stay around here," Tia said. "It's where I'm buried."

"Where you're....oh. No. You mean?"

"Yeah. But it's okay. Cause now I don't have to go to school."

And so they hugged and cried, one last time, and then Parker climbed onto the Harley behind Meaghan, and he wrapped his little arms around her belly, and he put his soft cheek against her back and closed his eyes as Meaghan gunned the engines, and the Harley spat forward like an angry snake, a rooster tail of red earth trailing behind.

Things grew quiet. Tia sat down in the shade and seemed to be drawing pictures in the sand. Wabash whistled. "You gonna untie me?"

"Not yet."

"What the hell?"

"Not yet."

"Get over here and untie me you dumb little brat!"

"Not until they get their pictures."

"Pictures? Who?"

But just then the News 12 Van pulled into the little clearing. "Omigod. Oh no," Wabash said, struggling to free himself. "No."

"It's what you wanted," Tia said, grinning. "To get on TV."

Maria Lopez, the local news reporter jumped out of the van with her microphone in hand, a cameraman following close behind. She slowed as she saw Wabash, tied to a post, his d-cup breasts straining valiantly against his little t-shirt, now wet with sweat, his full nipples showing clearly through the dark fabric. "Get this," Maria said, smiling crookedly at Wabash, taking in his amazing rack.

"Deputy Wabash?"

"No," he said, looking away. "I never heard of him."

"Oh, I'd recognize you anywhere after all the times you hit on me, but I never realized you were so well endowed."

"Don't do this to me."

"You ready?' She asked her camera man, Walter First Moon.

"Oh yeah," he said, matching her smile.

"This is Maria Lopez reporting live from the Red Rocks Reservation, where we have found Deputy Sheriff Wabash." The camera showed a full body shot of Wabash tied to the post, then focused in on his heaving breasts and blushing face. "Deputy," Maria said, "can you explain what happened here?"

Wabash shook his head and looked away from the camera. "Leave me alone," he said. "No comment."

"You don't need to talk with a rack like that," Maria said in a flat, masculine impression. "Am I right, or am I right?"

Meaghan turned the key and swung open the door to the little furnished room she'd found deep in the reservation. It was a converted space above the garage in an old woman's house, and Meaghan had arranged to paint and do repairs in the place in return for the use of the space. She didn't feel it was wise to pay the woman with money the feds were likely looking to find.

"What do you think?" Meaghan said.

Parker put his hands on his soft, round hips and blew his bangs from his eyes. "I think I have a lot of cleaning to do!"

That night, Parker curled up in his girlfriend's arms and lay his head against her chest. She hugged him tight, and he sighed. Meaghan, after a while, tilted his head back, and he opened his soft mouth and accepted her kiss, tentatively at first, and then eagerly, and they kissed and held each other, but when Meaghan let her hand fall to Parker's full, soft breast, he felt a shock of desire and pushed her hand away.

"I'm... I'm not ready yet," he said in his soft little voice. "Okay," Meaghan said, hugging her little man tight, brushing his hair back from his forehead, letting him know with her eyes and her gestures that she loved him, and that she understood his feelings. "It's... It's just... confusing... and I'm scared."

Meaghan nodded and smiled. "I love you," she said, finally saying the words, and she watched as Parker's pretty face brightened at that magic, four-letter word.

"And I love that you feel you can share with me how you feel, how scared you are, and I'm scared, too."

"You?"

"Of course. This is all so different, so strange, and I have no idea how to be a man, but now I'm going to learn, and I am going to do it for you, and for us." Parker closed his eyes and gave Meaghan's hand a squeeze. He loved her, more than ever he loved her, and he, too, would learn, and he would be the best little woman he could be for her, and for them.

It took Meaghan another three days for her spirit journey to be complete. She spent three days in the desert, living off the land, just she and Wolf, and she had visions and met ancestors she never knew she had. During the day, the sun beat down brutally, and sweat poured off her aching muscles as she climbed to the top of the tallest mesa, her fingers bleeding as she raised them to the sky. And at night she shivered in the frigid cold of the desert, her sun burnt skin dimpled and tight from the icy winds.

When she opened the door to the little apartment, she strode in a man, a tall, broad shouldered man roped with lean muscle, a square, powerful jaw and hands gnarled with callouses. Parker looked up and gasped, his soft little body immediately hot with need at the sight of his swaggering girlfriend. He stood and slipped out of his dress without a word, standing before Meaghan in his bra and panties, one leg raised slightly, his arms behind his back.

Meaghan let her eyes drift over her boyfriend's soft, curvy body. She wanted to charge forward, throw him down and have her way with him right then and there, but she waited, knowing full well what it took to please a woman. So he lingered, letting her little boyfriend bask in the glory of his beauty, and when she did walk forward, she gently caressed his shoulder, and then his arm, she let her fingers trail lightly against his belly, and then down along his spine and to the small of his back before she cupped his soft, round behind, while also softly squeezing his breast. Parker made a small noise, like a kitten, and he arched his back, and she wrapped one arm around his waist while squeezing his breast harder, and tucking his nose under Parker's long, black hair, she blew softly in his ear, and then nibbled on his earlobe.

"Oh..." Parker said... "oh..."

He turned and kissed her, hungrily, his small, soft hands tingling as he touched and squeezed her powerful, muscled arms, her stone slab chest, and he wrapped his legs around her mid-section, and she carried him into the bedroom and tossed him on his back. Parker lay there, his smooth, round legs spread, his arms over his head, and he smiled up at her, his eyes wide and wet. "I want you... inside me..." Parker whispered, almost surprised at how badly he wanted her, how much he needed her, how little he cared anymore about having been a man, or feeling shy, or feeling anything but his girlfriend, hard and stiff inside him.

"Oh, you do, do you?" Meaghan said, climbing onto the bed and taking a position between Parker's legs.

"Yes," Parker whispered. "Please. Now."

Meaghan playfully tapped Parker on the nose and said, "You just be patient little girl, because I am going to make you see stars."

She pulled Parker's panties down and tossed them aside, and then she put her head between his legs and began to work her boyfriend's vagina with her tongue. Parker gasped and squealed, stunned with the surge of feminine pleasure that warmed his body, and he started to make a high-pitched little noise, "oh.. oh...oh... OH! Oh, my! Oh, my! Goodness! OHHHHHHHH!!!"

He arched his back and curled his toes as his whole body exploded with his first female orgasm, and he'd been to heaven, seen the stars and thought he could possibly ever feel more pleasure when Meaghan slipped into him, and he felt of beautiful, tearing pain as she took his maidenhead, and then he was lost in a fuzzy and glorious new world as multiple orgasms washed over him and left him panting, gasping and whispering as if in some kind of female prayer trance, "thankyouomigodthankyouomigodthankyouomigod."

Meaghan held her woman, proud of how well she had pleased the sweet little thing, and she closed her eyes as exhaustion overcame her, and she kissed her woman, and said, "you were amazing, babe."

Parker sighed and closed his eyes, and they fell asleep together.

* * * *

Meaghan could not believe that her little Parker could squeeze so hard, but she was sure he was going to break every bone in her hand. "Push! Push!" She heard herself saying. Parker was on his back, feet in stirrups, his hair and face drenched in sweat as he grimaced and screamed.

"I see the head!"

"You asshole," Parker screamed, squeezing Meaghan's hand. "YOU ASSHOLE!!!!" He felt like he had a bowling ball pushing its way out from between his legs, and not for the first time during his nine months of pregnancy he was thinking that Meaghan should have been the one to put up with this crap, and not him.

And then, sudden relief, and he heard a baby cry, and he looked around in a daze, and then they handed a little bundle of blue to him, and he held his baby in his arms, and looking down at the perfect, beautiful little baby boy, Parker felt a joy and a sense of perfect happiness like he'd never experienced before in his life, and he cried as he seemed to do so freely in his life as a woman, and his husband put his arm around him, and they snuggled together as Parker held his baby, a proud new mommy, and woman and a wife.

"You did good," Meaghan said.

Parker just cried and held his baby, kissing him on his cheeks.

"Can I hold him some?" Meaghan said.

"No," Parker said. "Not yet. I want to love him some more."

Meaghan smiled and gave her little wife a kiss on the head. Parker had made a good woman, a sweet wife. In fact, he was far better as a woman than he'd ever been as a man. And now, well, she was sure he was going to be just the best little mommy any husband could want.

And as for Meaghan? She missed being a woman sometimes, but she was more comfortable as a man. She liked being so tall, so strong, and she liked hanging out with the guys. Bullshitting. Shooting the shit. Truth to tell, she didn't really understand women, not anymore if she ever did, and after a day dealing with her little boyfriend's latest emotional crisis, it was a true relief to hang out with guys, bust balls and repress feelings. Beer and bullshit. That was the life for her all right.

Things had all worked out for the best, and it seemed that maybe they had each found their true shape and life and sex out there in the desert.

Yes, Meaghan thought. They had. Parker was always meant to be a butterfly. And she had always been meant to be a wolf.

The End