

Deception²



Deena Gomersall



A "New Woman" Novel



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Deception

part II

by Deena Gomersall

Chapter Twelve – Recognition

It was Alan's second day of waking as Marie. Isla had already been in and undrawn the curtains and had given him a tray of breakfast. After eating he had taken all of the pills that were on a small plate and downed them with a glass of fresh orange juice, if he was to get better then maybe he should be taking all of the medication prescribed for him.

Isla returned a little later to take away his plate. By this time Alan had once more pushed himself to having a shower and a hair wash.

Isla laughed. "Yer hair is aw damp Miss, ye should wrap yer hair turban style in a towel tae help it dry an' stop it tangling."

"Ah wouldn't know how to." Alan confessed.

Isla just looked at him and then went for a hand held hair dryer, returning with it and a hair brush. "If ah may be permitted Miss, as yer maid...?"

Alan knew what she wanted to do and nodded consent, getting his damp hair dried couldn't be a bad thing... and its unfamiliar length, had spikes of wet hair scratching at his neck and face.

Isla carefully brushed out segments of hair and blew the hot air from the drier onto the brush as she slowly drew it down to the ends. Before long Alan's hair was fully dried.

"Thank you Isla, that feels so much better."

Isla then lifted Alan's right hand and inspected. "Also Miss, yer nails cood dae with the edges filing a wee bit, ye always took such good care o' yer nails." She suggested.

To Alan, the long pointed nails were a constant irritation and he would be happier to have them cut right down to the ends of his finger tips. But Isla had told him that normally he (Marie) always took really good care of her nails.

"Ah suppose so... if you must." He mumbled, "To me they just get in the way of mah doing anything and feel weird."

Isla just laughed and lifted up the first hand. "Ah am sure ye will gie used tae them all over again."

When each nail was done, Isla looked at Alan, as if she wanted to say something else.

"Is that it Isla? They are done aren't they?"

"Well yes, Ma'am... apart from polish. Ah think ye would feel much better an' feel more like yeself if ye had yur nails painted." She then boldly suggested.

"Oh no, Isla. Ah am not ready for that."

"Nae ready? Ye always hud yer beautiful nails polished. Ye were sae proud of them."

“Isla nagged and nagged. Eventually Alan said she could put a clear or very light colour on them. He wanted nothing bright or obvious. Happily Isla got to work with the manicure box she had brought in; complaining there was nothing too light or inconspicuous in the box and, eventually, with Alan’s resigned agreement, painted each nail a mother of pearl.

The nail lacquer on his finger tips felt weird to Alan, tight somehow and it made him feel embarrassed just having it on... it had been bad enough just having elongated ovals. But one thing he recognised in his senses was the smell of the polish. Was it from doing his own nails in the daily life of Marie, or was it recalling the sense of smell when his fiancée had painted her nails?

“There is one other thing ah would like tae add, if ah may, Miss?” Isla asked.

“What is it, Isla?” Alan asked, suspicious of further feminine additions.

“Can ah put this back oan yer finger?” Isla took out a beautiful sparkling diamond ring set in silver from her pocket. “Tis yer engagement ring, miss. It was taken aff yer finger whilst ye were poorly in hospital.”

Alan just looked at the beauty of the ring and almost without thinking, splayed out and offered his ring finger to the maid and she slipped it on.

The ring fit perfectly. It had been the real Marie’s but had a piece added in by the jeweller to fit Alan’s slightly chunkier finger.

“Ah guess, if ah am Brendon’s fiancée then ah should be wearing his ring... it’s beautiful.” Alan said as he continued to look at it’s sparkle as if mesmerised.

Through that day many of the staff called in to see him including other housemaids and kitchen staff, Angus the butler, Jamie Ramsay and Brodie the maintenance man... all asking if he was feeling any better and wishing him well.

Brendon had also visited several times. “Logan suggested it may benefit you to walk around the grounds and also to get fresh air in your lungs. It is a fine day outside.., would you like for me to walk around with you. Marie?” He suggested.

“Oh, not today, Brendon. Ah do not feel ready for such an ordeal. Maybe tomorrow.” Alan quickly responded. He thought he may be strong enough and knew the exercise would do him good when he had not used his legs much over the past few months, but he did not feel like walking outside and exposing himself as a woman when he still did not feel like one.

“Tomorrow then? Please say you will. You will deteriorate in here if you don’t get out and you need to strengthen your legs.”

“Yes, yes... then... maybe.”

<....>

You haven’t had any major headaches today? No Chest pains? Pains in your side; here? What about the area around your groin? You did suffer severe bruising and damage plus some lacerations around there caused by the steering column.” Logan asked Alan the following morning.

“No. Ah do have some minor discomforts and some...., like deep aches in mah body, but nothing too severe.”

“Well most of the bruising is now yellow which is good and the bruising around your nose and around the eyes have almost gone. The swelling around your vagina has also almost faded away.”

“Why would I have gotten swelling around there?” Alan asked.

“As I said, when the front of the car impacted, it pushed everything inwards and, with your legs apart on the pedals; that is the area where it struck you. Such trauma was bound to swell. Other damages

such as your head and chest were sustained as the car rolled on its side down the hill. It is lucky there was a car following, the driver pulled you out before the car exploded, as it had caught fire.”

It was a final test for Alan to see if everything he was being told, fit. He had wondered about the swelling and scarring around the vagina, he was also aware that such would happen if sex change surgery had been carried out... but everything seemed to tie in with the common tale he was being told.

On Logan’s part he was sticking pretty much to the truth of the real Marie’s accident itself as he knew Alan could read up on it at some point, and he had seen the newspaper report that Angus had shown him. Marie really had been pulled from the car by a following driver and she had still been alive at that point. She had later died from her injuries in hospital which had never been disclosed.

“Ah... ah don’t like thinking too much on the accident. Mercifully it is all still a blur. Even the accident ah was in, in my dreams, is blurry.”

“I still find it quite amazing that you created an entirely new life just in your dreams which culminated in a car accident just as happened in your real life. Dreams can do that, how often do we wake from a dream and a part of it still seems real from something happening in the wide awake world. The human brain really is quite fascinating. But with you, my dear, you seem still trapped in the dream and that is where we need to beat this thing. Stop the dreamt story that is in your head, move it out so that you can become you again.” Silently Logan was overjoyed that Alan was now referring to his real life as ‘a dream’.

Alan sighed. “Ah have tried so hard to not think on that life... and to try remembering mah own life. But it is so difficult.”

“Remember my advice. Get out and look around. Recall familiar things. I heard Brendon had wanted to take you out yesterday... go with him today. He misses having your company, you know. It hurts him

deeply that the person he loves so much cannot remember him.”

“Ah know. An’ ah do feel sorry for him and he has been so concerned and so tentative these past few days, it must be horrible for him.”

“Well then give him a chance. And, the fresh air will do you good, plus you need to get yourself mobile. You are still quite weak and I do not want your legs becoming unable to weight bare.”

Alan smiled. “Ah will go around the grounds this afta noon, ah promise. But I do not want to meet any knew faces ah should know but don’t.”

“That’s my girl. Hey, maybe we will even have you riding your horse again before long.”

“What? Ah have a horse?”

“Of course you do. You love her to bits, a lovely chestnut mare called Angel. Ask Brendon to take you to the stables when you go out.”

Images of the horse and videos had all been played to Alan while he was in a sedated state... along with lots of images of the grounds of Sedgewick Hall, all waiting to be recalled by Alan upon seeing them.

It was a little later that day that Isla came to Alan’s room to help him get ready to go outside. Alan flushed with embarrassment when Isla brought him some underwear. He had worn panties the day he awoke along with the nightdress and had swapped for a fresh set from then on, but that was all he had worn. But now, along with a fresh pair of panties for the day there was a matching bra, too.

“Do ah have to wear that?” He asked timidly.

Isla looked at him daft. “Ay, coorse ye need tae wear a bra, Miss. You’ve worn bra’s ever since ye developed. They will be swinging about an’ making ye sore if they arenae harnessed.”

Alan had to just deal with what was in his head, that he was a man wearing a bra for the first time, and that something in his head was telling him that wearing a bra was just wrong. However Isla soon had his breasts cupped and the shoulder straps secured over his shoulders before fastening the bra securely in the back. One trick that he missed was that she had to adjust the shoulder straps a little as Alan's shoulders were broader than Marie's had been.

“Right, I'll get you a pair of trews and a jumper ta wear as it's a bit braw oot there today.”

The mention of being given Trews, (Trousers), was at least some good news for the already chagrined Alan. For someone who was supposed to have been female all of her life, he felt very ill at ease wearing feminine clothes.

Isla helped Alan dress in a pair of black cotton ankle socks, a pair of khaki coloured ladies slacks and a thick, mauve coloured knitted jumper. She also had a pair of knee high brown boots for him to wear which, mercifully, had a low heel.

Isla then brushed through his shoulder length hair and put pins in at the sides to keep his hair in place.

“Ah'll just apply your make up Miss and you are ready for the aff.” Isla said as she finished up with a spray of hair lacquer.

“Oh, no... please, no make up. Ah won't feel comfortable.”

“But... Oh, ah suppose it's on account of feeling like a man because of the dream ye had.” Isla replied with a sad look on her face. “Ye so used to like looking pretty, I do hope ye will get tae feel that way again. What aboot just a tooch of powder tae take the shine off ye face?”

“Ah suppose that would be okay.” Alan answered resignedly.

Before leaving, Alan looked in a full length mirror. In spite of not being over femininely dressed, he looked unmistakably like a pretty, young woman. It gave him a very queer feeling inside.

For the first time since regaining consciousness, Alan left the sanctity of the bedroom he had been living and sleeping in and descended the stairs with Isla by his side. He was feeling a bit wobbly on his weakened legs.

As he stepped down the lower steps he looked around the spacious entrance hall. Flashbacks of seeing that hallway before invaded his mind. He...as Alan and with the woman he had married... Barbara. Alan stopped suddenly.

“Ah can’t do this. Ah can remember..., remember arriving here that night... with mah wife... this very same hallway.” He said in anguish.

Brendon, who had been sitting in a chair patiently waiting for Marie to be made ready, leaped to his feet and went up quickly to the former man. “Darling, it is okay... You are just mixing that cursed dream with what you are so familiar with again. I can’t start to imagine what it is doing to you, but you will be okay. This hallway, this whole house, it will all be familiar to you. You were born here, you love this house.”

Brendon took Alan’s hand and brought it gently to his lips, noticing the varnish on the finger nails. “Come along, let’s take that walk and hope it will bring back all of your real memories.” Gently he persuaded Alan to take the last few steps and coaxed him into going through the front door.

Outside, the air was fresh with a slight breeze that blew through Alan’s hair. It seemed so long since he had inhaled fresh air. He allowed Brendon to hold his hand both to keep him from stumbling and to lead him around.

In his ‘dream’ Alan and Barbara had come to Sedgewick Hall in darkness, they had gone in and out of the front door and not seen the main building of the home, the large garages, the fields or the sta-

bles that were fenced off around the back, nor any of the landscaped gardens. Yet, as he walked around, he knew he had somehow seen it all before. But how? Unless he really was Marie.

Brendon first led Alan to the stables. There were four horses stabled there. “Do you recognise your horse?” Brendon asked. Alan looked over each one. “That one, that’s Angel isn’t it?” He replied pointing to the horse with the chestnut colouring and stripe of white down the nose.”

“You see, you do remember?” Brendon said joyously.

Alan spent twenty minute feeding the horse some straw and stroking her face. For the first time he was really beginning to believe he was Marie and that he really had had the most realistic and bizarre dream. How stupid everyone must have thought he had been acting and behaving.

Brendon then took Alan down by a stream and they walked hand in hand over a stone bridge to the other side

“We often walked down here by the burn, come... come over to this tree.” He said in high spirits as he began to pull Alan along and up a slight slope. There was a large larch standing out alone, beyond it was a forest.

“Look... do you remember this. We carved our names upon this tree last year.” He said.

Alan looked at the tree. Upon the bark there had been carved the words ‘Marie and Brendon forever’, inside a large heart. The carving was a little weather worn, not fresh... If there was any chance at all that this whole thing was a set up, for whatever reason, those carvings had been made long before Alan had even come to Scotland with Barbara.

He turned to look at Brendon to apologise for his behaviour and saw there was now sadness in the man’s face. Alan realised that Brendon was remembering happier times, before the crash, when every-

thing had been normal and he and Marie had been a normal couple in love.

Brendon shook off the moment and led Alan back over the bridge and then following the stream down its course for a little while. Eventually they came to a stone built wishing well.

“This wishing well is where we first kissed and made a wish to live happily ever after. Do you remember any of that?” He asked.

Alan sadly shook his head. “No, not really, the wishing well looks vaguely familiar but is it any different to any other wishing well?”

Again the expression on Brendon’s face turned to sadness. Alan felt his heart drop.

“You know, your friend Logan told me the day before yesterday that with things I cannot remember right now ah should begin making fresh memories.”

The words from Alan surprised Brendon. Was he getting the meaning correct? He looked deep into the eyes of the person standing close before him.

Alan was feeling bad. It seemed certain that Brendon deeply loved him and was hurting that he had now, seemingly, lost that love. In fairness Brendon was a big, well built handsome man. Any girl would be pleased to have him on her arm. He felt he could be attracted to him if it wasn’t for the stupid dreams and feeling he should be a man. But, if he kept shying away, he could lose him. Brendon was being a rock for her to remember herself.

Two months of female hormones and anti androgens were also playing their part, slowly shifting thoughts and perspective. The Alan in the dreams had not been gay, but Marie was not gay either. It seemed now more than likely he really was Marie, a heterosexual female, who had been in love with the man in front of her. The two of them looked into each other’s eyes for the longest moment.

Brendon took the initiative. For him he had to get rid of any thoughts of the person he was with being a former man, do as Logan had suggested. Look at the person he was with as the pretty female she appeared to be. He leaned forward, hesitantly at first, and slowly touched his lips to hers. He was delighted when she responded rather than pulling away in disgust and they kissed for several minutes before breaking.

For Alan the kiss was strangely familiar, the firmness of his lips, his taste, the smell of Brendon's cologne in his nostrils and even the taste of the pipe smoke which he occasionally had. It all went even more to reaffirm in his mind that he really was Marie.

Alan looked up at the towering figure of Brendon. He had enjoyed the kiss, the sexual touch from another person after all the mental turmoil he had been going through, a person that he now felt sure he had been in love with and who cared so much about him. "Ah need to take things slowly Brendon. Please allow me to adjust in mah own time." He asked.

Brendon himself was overjoyed for other reasons; the plan was actually working. "Of course darling, take all of the time you need. I am just over the moon that you are coming back to me. I love you, just remember that." He said softly.

Brendon truly was delighted. He had serious doubts that anyone could make a person think they were someone else, especially a person of a different gender. Soon now he could reacquaint this bogus Englishman with Charles Taverner and hopefully get the marriage back on track before it was too late and Taverner died.

The two walked back to the manor much differently to the way they had left. Smiling, with a spring in their step, walking closely together with Alan's arm tightly linked to the muscular arm of Brendon, he felt as though a great weight had been lifted.

Through the following couple of days Alan had allowed himself to adjust more and more to the life of Marie. He now only used the bedroom to sleep in and, down in the living quarters, he talked frequently to the staff., to him, getting to know them all, over again... as well as trying to relearn about himself.

He took all of the medication given to him, looked through family album pictures and, more than once read and reread the article about Marie's car accident where he had been seriously injured and taken to hospital.

"I have to bow down to you, when you first made the suggestion that we could use this man as Marie I would have suggested you be locked up in an asylum. That we could make a man believe he was not only a female but a different person to his real self seemed preposterous..." Frobisher told McKlintock as they sat in the study having a glass of whiskey.

"I have to confess, I had little hope in the mind change myself though I knew with some of the breathtaking break through that we have had in recent years we could definitely change the body to that of a woman... the facial reconstruction was a little more difficult and, although not absolutely perfect, anyone looking at our new Marie and a photograph of the old one would identify them as being the same person." Logan responded with a little chuckle and a feeling of pride.

"The big test is when we introduce the Sassenach to Taverner... will the old fool buy it or has this been the biggest, costliest mistake of all time?"

"Or will Taverner even pass away before we get to the test? We have to have Marie fully conditioned and ready to meet Charles but we also need to move swiftly. According to Aiden Carson, Taverner is getting weaker and each passing day could be his last."

"So why don't we take the chance before losing it? It is something that does concern me greatly. Frobisher put to his friend.

“Because it has to be at the right time, it’s crucial. It could be a disaster if they meet and the artificial Marie still had doubts of being Marie, or Charles not being her father and Taverner will pick up on any uncertainty, he is no fool.”

“Well he is... okay, sorry, I mean she is coming along really well in the acceptance. I have been pulling out all of the stops, just as you suggested. Now don’t ye laugh or ah swear I’ll knock yer heed off yer shoulders... but we have kissed on a couple of occasions now.” Frobisher told his friend as he flushed red with embarrassment.

“Why should I laugh? That is excellent. We can assume the man was heterosexual given he had just married so, to kiss with another man shows that she is feeling comfortable with her given sex now or she never would have.”

Meanwhile, up in Alan’s bedroom, Isla was also working on the new Marie. She had a tray of cosmetics by her side.

“Ah will apply as much or as little as ye feel comfortable wi’ Miss, but ye always so valued the make up ye wore an’ hardly ever went oot through the duir not wearin’ any.”

“So what do you suggest? What would I normally have worn through a day like today?” Alan asked inquisitively.

“Ye need fooundation fur sure and ah would like tae put some mascara an’ a touch of eye shadow on for yer eyes and a tooch of lipstick... this reddish broon would dae just fine.” Isla suggested.

Alan thought it was time he really started getting back to being Marie; everyone had been so good and so patient with him since his illness and loss of memory. Plus, he had begun to develop feelings for the handsome Brendon... feelings, he felt sure, were the love he had always had for him which were re-emerg-

ing again. He had felt something inside of himself each time they had kissed over the past two days.

Isla smiled. She had always enjoyed the times when Marie had allowed her to do her make-up and it was just like having her Mistress back again. She could easily accept this person as being a near replica replacement for her. Carefully she applied the light gray eye shadow and tried to get Alan not to flutter his lashes as she awkwardly stroked the mascara on them, she then traced a lipstick over Alan's lips.

For Alan he was experiencing snippets of memory again. He kept his thoughts to himself but knew in his mind he had experienced the application of eye shadow and mascara before, he also knew he was familiar with the waxy taste of the lipstick. All of this helped put him more and more at ease with who he now thought he was.

When he walked down stairs with Isla, wearing black cotton trousers, black slip on shoes that had a low heel and a bow at the top and wearing an orange and white patterned top which had thin enough fabric to show the black straps of the brassier he was wearing... the bra tented out the patterned top in a feminine way so he couldn't help but feel feminine.

He wanted to look his best for Brendon; it was only right after all of the anguish the man had been suffering during Alan's loss of memory.

When Frobisher saw 'Marie' walk into the study he quickly raised to his feet, followed by McKlintock. "Marie, you look... you look lovely, it is so heart warming to see you getting back to normal." He praised whilst being astounded by the knowledge that this very attractive person, wearing full makeup, was once a man.

"Indeed so my dear, you look stunning, and looking again like the Marie we all love and care for." Logan complimented.

Alan blushed before walking to Frobisher and kissing him upon the cheek. "Thank you Brendon,

and thank you for being so patient with me. Ah really do want to look nice for you.” Alan replied.

Isla stood in the doorway, hands clasped in front of her and a look of satisfaction upon her face.

Chapter Thirteen - Reacquainted

A few more days rolled by as Alan did his best to try and remember a life that was not, in reality, his to remember. He wasn't yet ready to meet any other family members or friends as it was taking all of his time in just getting to know the staff and their names.

Throughout, Isla kept trying to push the transformed man along. He constantly felt awkward in allowing her to make up his face but, once it was on, he could almost forget that it was.

Isla encouraged him to attempt make-up application himself but he thought the eye cosmetics were too tricky and the most he attempted was applying lipstick. Isla also tried persuading him to wear dresses or skirts, Marie had two huge closets full, but for now he felt more comfortable in ladies slacks.

Each day he would walk out around the grounds with Brendon, more for the fresh air and exercise. He had now decided the story of his being Marie, a female, had to be true and yet there was always something that wasn't sitting right, in his head. He put that down to the memory loss and the long strange dreams he'd had.

“When you are feeling well enough we can walk down to the lake, darling... you always liked it down there and sometimes we would go fishing together.”

“Fishing? Ah used to go fishing? Ah have no recollection of ever going fishing at all.” Alan responded with a furrowed brow.

“Sure you did, and we used to go out hunting for deer.”

Alan couldn't get his head around any of that, the impression he had in his mind, of the man he had thought he was, was that he was an animal lover and disliked the thought of them being hunted and killed.

"Ah think there are some parts of my life I would rather stay forgotten." He suggested.

"You will feel differently when you regain all of your memories," Brendon laughed, "but for now, it is going to be your birthday in three weeks. Is there anything you would like as a present from me? And do you think you would be up to my arranging a birthday party for you?"

"Mah birthday! ...In three weeks?" Alan exclaimed. "No, that has tae be wrong. We will only be in July in three weeks. Mah birthday is the seventeenth of November."

Brendon screwed his face. "No, honey, your birthday is the eighteenth of July."

Alan was dumb struck. He really felt that his birthday was 17th November. If this was supposed to be a part of his dreaming, it was one thing dreaming he was a man, born in England when he was supposed to be Scottish... that he had just married the woman he loved and had dreamed up a whole family... but even in this most elaborate dream, why should he have given himself a birthday different to his own? He'd always had such a good memory for dates.

Alan didn't respond further to Brendon, his mind was in a whirl. 17th November was his birthday... the 9th of July had been Barbara's, his Mom was 8th April, and his father's was on the 19th February. Barbara and he had married on the 11th April, as close as they could get to his Mother's birthday. How could he have invented all of these dates in a dream?

Alan was subdued for the remainder of their walk and retired to his bedroom on their return. Brendon felt concerned about this new twist and phoned Logan for his advice. They had been doing so well up until now with edging Alan to believing he was Marie Taverner.

Sitting on top of his bed, deep in thought, Alan heard footsteps passing by on the corridor. He wondered if it was Brendon or maybe Isla... if it was Isla he felt he needed to talk to her and tell her of his latest concerns and confusion. Opening up the door he peered out he saw it was Angus.

Angus was carrying a tray of food and heading down a corridor that led to the back of the house, an area he had never been to and where he didn't think anyone else had a room... yet Angus was taking hot food down there.

Meanwhile, downstairs Brendon was speaking to Logan on the phone. "I've made the mistake of saying Marie's birthday; it has caused him to start thinking and analysing again." He confessed.

"No, you have not done any wrong. It may be a bit of a set back but, if we are to keep her believing she is Marie, she needs to know all of Marie's details... the fact of Marie's birthday would only come out sooner or later and needing explaining anyway. Getting married for one... she would need to give details of her birth to the registrar, and the date on her birth certificate. It is better to have come out now than later. I will try talking to her when I am over next."

"Don't leave it late Logan, come over tomorrow if you can. The sooner we fix this the better."

"I'm supposed to be taking Caitlin out all day tomorrow... my way of trying to make up for the lack of attention given to her recently and being away so much from her, that all of this has caused. She has not been very happy with me of late... it has been affecting my marriage." Logan responded in annoyance.

"But this is important. Time is a factor, you keep saying that yourself. If he starts over thinking things again it could jeopardise the whole thing, it could set us back weeks." Logan replied anxiously.

"Oh! ...I'll see what I can do, I'm not promising anything, nor do I see what true help I can be. You would be equally able to try talking to her and easing her,

yourself.” With that Logan put the phone down, ending the call.

Alan didn't have much interaction with Brendon since their walk. He had gone downstairs for the evening meal and had sat watching television a little before going back up to his room. He was feeling totally confused all over again. Why did he have a date for his birthday so deeply in head which, apparently, was not his birthday at all? It made no sense. And why could he recall birthdays of what was supposed to be, members of a fictitious family... a family invented in a dream?

Alan slipped out of the clothes he had worn for the day, cleaned his face from the make-up and pulled on his nightgown before sitting on the bed again.

As his mind worked overtime he again thought about Angus and the food he was carrying... where had he been going? Was anyone else living in the home? Maybe there could be some answers.

He stole out of the bedroom, barefooted, walking across the thick pile carpet. Down at the end of the corridor was a bedroom where Alan could hear classical music playing. With baited breath Alan walked down to the door and stopped, raising his hand ready to knock.

He hesitated and then tapped lightly on the oak wood door a couple of times.

“Hello? Who's 'at?” came a gruff male, Scottish accented, voice.

Alan didn't know how to respond so just stood there silently for what seemed a long moment.

“Whoe'er it is come on in and tell me whit it is ye is wanting an' stop annoyin' me.”

Alan lowered his hand to the brass handle and turned it, then, pushing the door open a little, he stepped inside.

"I... It's..." He began falteringly. His eyes found their way to a large canopied bed in a lavishly ornate bedroom. Under blankets on the bed was a broad set man staring at him. Alan recognised the face immediately. He had been shown enough photographs and videos over the past few days... it was, 'his' father.

"Oh! Ah'm terribly sorry. Forgive me." Alan apologised as he turned and fled back to his own room. Rather than feeling delighted to see that the person it was, was his own supposed father, he felt shocked and a little bit frightened. Here was someone he was supposed to know better than anyone, but didn't feel as though he knew at all.

It was also someone he had been led to believe was working in the United States, someone he had been told, not to see until he felt ready to see.

In panic Alan tripped back down to his own room and closed the door, leaning on it, his heart pounding.

Meanwhile Charles had pulled the chord by his bed to summon attention from his staff. It was only a few minutes before Angus responded and came in.

"Yes Sir? What can..., Sir, are ye feeling okay?" He asked as he saw the look on his master's face.

"Angus... I have just seen Marie in my room, or what looked like Marie, though not quite and her voice, her voice was not quite the same, a little higher. What is going on? Where is she?" He asked in an agitated voice.

Frobisher was not supposed to be in the house and Angus didn't know how to deal with the matter himself. He confessed that it was Marie and that she had been brought from hospital to convalesce in the home that day. He suggested she may just have wandered and that she was still in a poorly and confused state and with memory loss, she may well not have recognised Sir Charles.

When Frobisher heard what had happened he recommended that Angus call the family doctor and he

himself called Logan McKlintock, explaining the situation..., and begging him to come over to the mansion right away. As much as Logan didn't want to let Caitlin down he saw the urgency in the matter.

Dr. Carson was the first person to arrive and, after being quickly briefed by both Frobisher and Angus, visited Charles and gave him a mild sedative. Angus arrived thirty five minutes later and joined the doctor in Charles' bedroom.

"Yes. I can confess Sir Charles; Marie is here in Sedgewick Halls." He told the man.

"So why was I nae informed? You know how long I have yearned to look upon my daughter after the accident... and here she is right under ma roof." Charles stormed in temper.

"We did not believe that either of you were ready. You are still in a weakened state, Sir, Your daughter is struggling with her memory loss, but she is making daily progress. We decided to wait a while longer."

"You decided? ...You decided? And who are you to decide? I coulda' been told. Ye could have explained tae me instead of keeping me in the dark. And why does she nae look the same? She looks like Marie but then there is something different... and her voice, she hasnae the same voice, it's somewhat higher and different."

"All the things that we needed time to explain to you about Sir Charles. I have already told you, she had rather severe face trauma in the car accident and damage to her throat. We had to piece her back together., and I believe we did an excellent job, no scarring at all... the bruising almost faded. But the cosmetic surgery was always going to result in small differences where we had to stretch skin together or to pack underneath the tissue. As for the throat, there was damage to the voice box and vocal chords... I think we should count our blessings that she can talk at all." Logan replied skilfully.

"So when do I see her? When do ah see my daughter again?" Charles asked eagerly.



“Now that you are aware, now that you have seen one another, I see no reason to hold back anymore...but I need also to speak to Marie. She knows you and remembers you, but I have to make sure she is ready to see you... she has been through a lot these last few months... not least losing her memory and all of the operations she has endured..”

For now Charles was pacified. The sedatives beginning to work, he was calmed down and assured he would see Marie very soon. Now Logan just had to see Alan himself.

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“What were your feelings when you saw your father in the bedroom?” Logan asked Alan in his bedroom.

“Just shock ah suppose. Ah didn’t know he was there, Ah had been led to believe he was still in America.”

It wasn’t quite the answer that Logan was looking for. “Did you feel any sense of connection? Did you know this was your father?” He pursued.

“Ah knew it was who I had been told was mah father,” Alan replied honestly, “Ah instantly recognised his face from photographs.”

“Not from anything else... no memories?”

“Ah don’t know. Yes, I think so. In mah head I have memories of being with him but they are very vague and are getting mixed up now with some videos ah have been shown of him.” He replied.

“You felt no love for him upon seeing him again?” Logan pursued.

“Ah don’t know. Ah was shocked to see him and ah just left the bedroom quickly, I don’t know how ah felt, I just wanted to get away as quickly as possible.” Alan answered, his voice becoming shaky.

Logan placed his hand comfortingly upon Alan's. "Okay, let's not get upset. This is why I wanted to leave it a while before you saw him... until you were ready."

Alan nodded his understanding.

"Before this happened I received a call from Brendon. He said you also seemed to get upset earlier today when he had mentioned it would soon be your birthday. Why was that Marie?"

"Because ah know nothing about my birthday being in July... In mah head it is very clearly November... November seventeenth. Why would ah think that? I guess you are going to say it is all part of mah dream, aren't you?"

Logan waited a moment before giving his reply. "Well yes, in a way... it is part of your confusion. Your birthday is on the eighteenth... that is only a day after the seventeenth even though in a different month... maybe there are dates inside your head significant with November and, under the dream state you were in, those dates and months became confused. As I have said before, the mind is very complicated and, when we are in a Coma you are in the deepest recesses of your mind that you can be... like in our dreams, they become muddled and distorted by the time we wake up."

"But it isn't just mah birthday... I can remember mah Mom and Dad's birthdays too, and mah brother, Glen."

"Oh, my dear Marie... you do not have a brother called Glen... And is the date of your Dad's birthday September twenty second? That is your Dad's, Sir Charles's birthday. You really have to disengage from all of these things you are retaining from your comatose dreaming.

Alan sat staring into space, a contemplative look on his face. "Ah... ah suppose, if I am confusing days from reality to dreams, Barbara... the woman I had just married in my dreams, her birthday was in July.., the ninth of July."

Logan quickly grasped onto that. “Well, there you are then... you see how things can get mixed. Your birthday is eighteenth July, you dream this woman you married is on the ninth July... nine and nine are eighteen.”

“Can it work like that?” Alan asked.

“Indeed it can, our brain is like a computer, it stores lots of information and lots of numbers... it is capable of sometimes just jumbling those numbers and information up and they manifest into your dreams.”

Logan decided to push some invented information in for good measure. “You say you dreamed about having a brother called Glen... can you remember that you have a very good friend from university called Glenda? I rather suspect that is where you invented the name Glen from.”

“No... I’m not aware of that, ah cannot recall her.” Alan dropped his head into his hands. “Oh! I just wish ah could remember everything, get all mah memories back into alignment. It just makes everything so confusing.”

Logan patted Alan’s hand with his and then gave it a squeeze. “In time my dear, in time. I am going to prescribe some medicine that may help you with that problem. In the meantime we now have to think about your father. Not planned, but you have now seen each other. Your father, now knowing you are here, is keen to see you, he was very shaken by discovering you were here under his roof all of this time... that shock may set him back. As you know, he is a very poorly man and does not have long left on this earth. Are you ready to meet him? I would recommend the sooner the better.”

Alan became thoughtful again. This was going to be a very big step for him, meeting with a father he could hardly remember and yet knowing he had to show he remember him more than he did in case the disappointment took Charles nearer to his end.

“Yes, I guess I must, mustn’t I? What am I so afraid of... this is my father, the man who gave me life and has always cherished me. But, not tonight..., please. I need a bit of space in order to mentally prepare myself.”

“Tomorrow?” Logan suggested.

“Yes... tomorrow. I will meet with my father tomorrow.” Alan agreed.

“Can I give you one piece of advice before you do? Your father was already dismayed to see certain changes about you... your face is slightly altered after your surgery, not much, but it was enough for him to recognise. You were always so well presented and took care of your looks., seldom without makeup.”

“Yes, so I have been told.” Alan nodded.

“When you saw him this evening you were as you are now, bare faced., that in itself is more unfamiliar to your father. He is used to seeing you in full make up, your hair tied in the back. Present yourself to him as you have always previously done. And wear girly clothes too... show your father you are still the same you.”

“Girly clothes? What exactly do girly clothes comprise of?” Alan inquired.

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“Do ah really need to wear these?” Alan asked the following day. It was mid morning and Isla was getting him ready to meet the man he was told was his father.”

“Yes, you wore them often and they will look nice when you are wearing your skirt.”

Alan felt his face flush and warm up. Why did he have such issues about wearing regular girlish clothing? He looked at the light tan colored pantyhose that

he was holding in his hands. He could not recollect ever wearing pantyhose before, or a skirt for that matter. He had insisted on the pantyhose being as close to being flesh coloured as possible in the hope that anyone seeing him would believe he just had bare legs. He was baffled, however, as to why things that should be natural to him should seem so unnatural. Why was he so ashamed of wearing things like hose and high heels?

“So how do you put them on?”

“Oh, Miss Marie. Ye make me laugh so ye dae. First ye wake thinkin’ ye is a man and now ye ha’e forgotten hoo tae put on ye tights.” Isla laughed kindly. “Ye need tae gaither them up between ye’ finger an’ thumb fraem top o’ the leg reit doon tae the toe.” She instructed.

She advised as Alan did as he had been instructed then instructed him to put the first foot into the gathered leg of the pantyhose, then the other before slowly rolling the pantyhose all the way up his legs.

The sensation of nylon encasing his legs should have been totally unfamiliar to his senses if he had never worn them before, and yet it wasn’t. He knew in his mind that he had the awareness of feeling such soft silky garments on his legs before. It had to be true what everyone had been telling him, if only he could truly remember, for himself.

Once he had pulled the pantyhose all the way up both legs, smoothed them out and fit the panty section over his panties, he was handed the short blue skirt that Isla had selected for him to wear, this was followed by a red and blue soft knit top and a pair of two inch high heeled court shoes. Alan felt totally uncomfortable in the clothing, especially when he stood up and saw how much of his legs he was showing from the two inch above the knee skirt.

“Ye looks terrific Miss... yer daddy is gonnæ be sae pleased tae see his little lassie lookin’ sae healthy an’ good after yer accident.”

For Alan, he just felt so nervous, both at meeting with his father and people seeing him dressed in all the girly get up he was wearing. Others too were feeling nervous about this reunion... both Frobisher and McKlinton sat tensely drinking whiskey, hoping that Taverner would not see that this wasn't his daughter.

"How do you think it is going to go, Logan? D'you think he will be able to tell it isn't Marie?" Frobisher asked.

"Time will tell my friend. This is the moment of truth. Last night he knew the person in his room looked like Marie but could tell, even in a short space of time, that there were differences, both in the face and the voice. I'll wager, though, he would never believe the person in his room used to be a man."

Frobisher just looked at Logan and uneasily took a big gulp of whiskey from his glass.

"I think I managed to pacify him a little by saying that there had to be modifications done to his face and voice because of damage. But he is no fool, sat with Marie, more closely; he will be looking for anything he is suspicious about." Logan went on.

Isla gave a once over to Alan. She had worked hard on his face, putting lots of foundation and powder on to hide any flaws and give him a perfect looking complexion, she had blended gray and blue eye shadows to bring out his eyes, enhanced with liner and mascara... she had even re-tweezered a few eye brow hairs that had grown out to give him a lovely feminine shape, exactly how Marie's used to be. She then led Alan out from the room and up the stairs towards Charles' bedroom.

Taverner was expecting her, he had been told he could see Marie that morning and, even he felt nervous. He had felt sure his daughter had perished in the car crash and equally sure that they were trying to cover up her death until he died. He never expected to lay eyes upon her again... and yet he had,

she had unexpectedly come into his room the previous night.

There was a light knock on his door that had his heart pounding. He heard the voice of the maid in waiting, calling from beyond the door. "Sir Charles, I've brought yer daughter tae see ye."

His heart seemed to pump even faster at the sheer mention of the word daughter. He coughed to clear his throat. "Please... bring her in." He called.

Isla entered the room holding the hand of a timid looking young lady. He could see the strong resemblance in her face to his daughter, Marie..., enough to be almost perfect.

"Come in, come in... sit on this chair beside me, Marie." He directed, patting the seat of a chair by his bed. "Isla, have Angus bring up two drinks... I will have a large whiskey and whatever my daughter wants." He said, his eyes never leaving the girls face as he scrutinised it.

"Ah will just have a cup of coffee please Isla." Alan told her in a shaky voice as he sat down, conscious and embarrassed about his nylon clad legs and the shortness of the skirt.

Taverner looked directly at Alan as Isla left the room. "I am of the understanding that you lost your memory and that you may not recognise me." He told the girl sitting close by him.

"Ah do know you, you are mah father, but ah have lost a lot of mah memory..., Ah am truly sorry."

"Don't apologise my dear, it isn't no fault of your own. What do you remember?"

"Ah can remember just little things, like you playing with me when ah was small... taking us to places. You and Mom took me to Disney world before she died of cancer."

"You remember your Mother?" Charles asked, "Describe her to me."

Alan had a vivid picture in his head of how the mother looked, in the same way he knew how his father looked... all implanted, day after day, as he lay in a comatose state. He described his mother perfectly and, from videos taken on that day with Marie and her parents, he described the holiday. Alan surprised himself by how clearly he was recalling those events.

“Where did you go to university, sweetheart?” Taverner then asked.

“The Napier University in Edinburgh.” Alan replied immediately. He had a clear vision of the university in his mind’s eye without realising he and Barbara had seen it during their honeymoon a few months ago.

“And who was your best Dorm friend who you continued writing to?”

“Natalie... Natalie Stevenson.” Alan responded, a smile spreading across his red painted lips. “Oh, Daddy, Ah’m remembering things that ah had not thought of in my head since they brought me round.”

A smile was starting to form on Charles’ own lips. “And who is your Aunt and Uncle who live over in Montrose?”

Alan stopped to think for a moment, the smile starting to fade. “No, ah cannae think who that may be.” He replied, his accent briefly becoming more Scottish without his noticing. “Oh... Uncle Cameron and Aunt Grace... your brother, Cameron.”

Charles sat staring at the now joyful face of Alan; tears were starting to water his eyes. He could see the distinct likeness to the girl’s face; the voice was different, but still soft and melodically feminine as Marie’s had always been... this had to be his daughter.

“Tell me, lassie, what was it that I bought ye for your twenty first birthday?”

Alan didn’t realise he was being tested to see if he really was Marie, he just thought that this man, his

father, was trying to get him to recall his memories. “It was a beautiful Omega Seamaster diamond watch... Ah have it in mah room somewhere but I havenae seen it since I came out of hospital.”

Before he realised, he was being pulled in and hugged by Charles.

“Oh, my honey, oh, my darling little girl. I have missed ye so much; I feared I would never clap eyes on you again.” Charles spoke amidst sobs of joy.

Alan couldn't bring himself to feel the same joy or the same loving connection, he wasn't there yet. But this man was his father; he was his only child, his precious daughter. Compassionately, he returned the hug and spoke the words he knew this man, his father, would want to hear.

“Yes, it is me daddy; Marie. Ah have a long way to go in getting better, but ah am here, and we are together again.” He said as he hugged the man tightly.

Alan then spent several hours sitting in Charles' bedroom and taking. There were lots that he couldn't remember at all that Charles talked about but he was continuously amazed at things he was remembering... all things that had been subliminally planted, constantly, into his mind.

The two were only disturbed from their conversation when Angus brought in drinks and, later, their dinners. It had been Angus who had returned downstairs to tell the anxiously waiting Brendon and Logan plus other house staff, that things were going well.

Chapter Fourteen – Forgiveness and Plans

Seeing who Charles believed now to be his daughter; Marie, brought about a renewed energy in Charles. The following day for the first time in two and a half months, since his stroke, Charles came out of his bedroom and into the main part of the house.

Alan had already been in further talks with the man he believed now to be his father, that morning, and he had confessed to Charles that Brendon Frobisher was once more living in the home.

In his still confused state of mind and belief, Alan had also added how he and Brendon were still planning on getting married. Brendon had expressed over and over again to Alan how much in love they both were, to the point that, even if he could not remember himself, to Alan, it had to be true and he was in love with Brendon.

Brendon stood coyly in one corner of the room, sipping a cup of tea, when Charles appeared. He felt sure he would be kicked out of the home again.

Charles stared at the man and then beckoned him over. “So, Ah hear ye have taken it upon yourself to move back into ma hoose, young man?” Charles asked, frowning.

“I, er... with Marie being brought back here to convalesce I thought it best that I be here to look after her, ...whilst you were bed bound, Sir.” He stammered.

“Aye, well, it seems I owe ye an apology. I felt sure that you and that man McKlintock were lying to me about Marie being in a coma all of this time, I confess I felt sure she had died. I still dinnae like you Frobisher, but you will be all that she has left once I pass away, and with her not in command of her full memories yet, she will be needing ye.”

Frobisher couldn't believe what he was hearing. He was being told by Charles to stay with Marie.

"I ask for just one thing, that ye treat her well, love her and take good care of her once I am gone." Charles then asked.

"I will Sir, I swear. You have my solemn word."

"Then pour some whiskey and we shall drink to the continuing health and recovery of Marie. What plans have you made for your big day?"

It was Angus who went to pour the two glasses of whiskey while Charles talked to Brendon.

"I haven't had much time to think on anything but Marie, things have been a bit hectic and..."

"Well get her out. Fresh air man, it's good for the soul and it's a fair and sunny day out there today. Take her riding on her horse.., I hear that she hasnae been on her mare since her return.

"She has been to the stables to see Angel, Sir." Frobisher quickly pointed out.

"But not riding, she loves riding, man." Charles insisted.

I shall take her this afternoon, Sir Charles; we can take a picnic with us, and maybe stay out until the sun starts to set."

"Excellent idea young fellow. Now, where are my cigars, I feel I could enjoy one."

Brendon couldn't believe the change in Charles, certainly not his acceptance of him. For Charles, he was just so pleased to see his daughter again, alive and well, he would accept almost anything. He did now believe Brendon only had Marie's best interest at heart after looking after her and sticking by her all of this time, through difficult circumstances. And he was concerned, once he died, if she didn't have Frobisher, Marie would have nobody.

That afternoon Rabbie the stable boy, readied Marie's horse, Angel, and the one that Frobisher kept, Wind rush. Kitchen staff put together a basket of food and drinks and Isla was looking after Alan as if he really was Marie returned again.

Noo I ha'e all that ye will need when ye go out ridin'" She told Alan happily. Alan was helped into a pair of soft cotton ankle socks and a pair of Khaki coloured trousers. His top was a cream coloured woolen sweater with a motif of the designer on the front. Isla had also given him a pair of light brown knee length boots that zipped up the inside and had a chunky two inch shaped heel.

Of course he didn't escape make up, 'day wear', as Isla called it, which consisted of some foundation and powder, a light tone of eye shadow, mascara and a light pink lipstick. Alan still didn't feel overly comfortable with wearing cosmetics but he still knew, in his head, that he had been familiar with the tastes and feel before he was brought out of his coma.

Charles sat at a window, puffing at a pipe, watching out, as the two horses were brought, ready saddled, to the drive at the front of the house where his daughter, Brendon and Isla plus the stable lad were standing.

For all that he had been told he had a passion for riding his horse, Alan was clueless at how to mount Angel. Surely he should know; it should come as second nature? He was finally helped up after putting his right foot into the stirrup and pushed upwards by his butt by Brendon. But then he didn't know how to get the horse moving and saying "Giddy up" didn't work.

Brendon had already thought through something like this happening since Taverner had suggested the horse ride. Logan had done a great job with introducing certain feelings, senses and smells to Alan's unconscious form but replicating things like mounting a horse and riding it, had not been a possibility. He

had been fine with showing the Horse that had belonged to the real Marie but he had never planned to have Alan ride it before he had chance of wedding him or of Charles dying. It was Charles that had instigated this ride... why couldn't the old fool just keep his nose out of things?

Eventually Brendon took the reins of Angel himself and walked both horses along; he rode his own horse only as fast as he could control Alan's.

Eventually they had rode out to a clearing in a pine forest and Brendon suggested that this was a good place to stop and have a rest and their picnic. He dismounted Wind Rush and then helped Alan down from his. Alan couldn't believe how sore his backside felt from the saddle. He had no recollection of riding a horse, ever.

"I'll lay down the blanket on this area of grass sweetheart; do you want to start putting some of the food and drink out?" Brendon asked as he got busy.

Alan did as requested, playing the little lady role, but in his head he was starting to question things once again. Why could he not recollect anything about horse riding when he used to do it all of the time? He couldn't even get the stupid thing to move, and he was very sore from riding.

At first the pair first sat on the blanket and ate a few sandwiches and fruit and sipped some wine before laying back and stretching out.

"I am so grateful that you have managed to reacquaint yourself with your father, Marie. I was forever in fear of Charles passing away before you had that opportunity."

"Yes, Ah am glad too, but ah dae wish you had told me that mah father was in the hoose all along, it was quite a shock coming across him th' way ah did."

"Yes, it must have been. I am sorry for that but everyone agreed it was best to have you ready to see him only when you had regained more of your memory. How did Charles react to you not remembering

much?” Brendon asked, anxious to know for his own purpose.

“He understood an’ was very sympathetic. There was a lot of things ah did remember though, which seemed tae please him.” Alan answered.

“Oh! What kind of things was it that you remembered, you didn’t tell me.” Brendon then asked with interest. He had been dying to know just what had been discussed since last night.

Alan laughed a little, a soft feminine sounding laugh. “Och, that was about ma Uncle Cameron and Aunty Grace in Montrose, and aboot ma dorm friend, Natalie, when we attended Uni.”

It seemed certain to Brendon, just as he suspected may happen, that Charles had quizzed her suspiciously, even though they had created such a distinct likeness. But it also appeared that Alan had passed the tests, thanks to Logan’s subliminal messaging.

Feeling relieved, Brendon reached for Alan’s hand and locked his fingers with his, staring into Alan’s face. Logan had done so well in preparing this man into believing he was Marie and he remembered he had his own very important part to play.

Recalling Logan’s words to him and what he had to do for his part, although he could not clear his mind that this person with him was a man, Brendon leaned forward, slowly, and touched his lips to Alan’s.

“Oh, I do love you so much, Marie. You do still want to marry me don’t you?”

Brendon was a very handsome and desirable man, Alan could not deny that. But he just did not feel the spark of love. He did feel he could be very attracted to the man if it wasn’t for the fact that there was something there that spelt that this was wrong.

But then, he had once been in love with Brendon... before his accident, that shouldn’t have changed things, should it?. It was because of his loss of mem-

ory that he was now unsure of things, surely? That was no fault of Brendon's. This man had been there for him daily since he had waked, looked after him, protected him. He couldn't begin to think how he would have coped without Brendon being there."

"Of course I still want to marry you." He replied softly, looking into Brendon's eyes.

"Phew! Your hesitation there, for a minute... I thought you had changed your mind..."

"No, Alan replied with a little laugh, "I even said tae Daddy this mornin' that we still planned tae wed."

"You did? What did he say to that?" Brendon quickly asked. This was very important to him.

"He was fine with it. He thinks he got ye wrang. He wants only what is best for his wee lassie and he wants tae know ah will be looked after when he is nae longer here."

They had done it... they had only gone and passed off a substitute male for someone's daughter, so convincingly, that the old man was happy for the marriage to take part still. He would stay in the house, he would have equal share of the spoils whilst Marie lived... he would have a fortune!

Brendon had been told similar by Charles, but that may just have been a test. But, if Marie was saying it too...

Brendon was so overjoyed that he instinctively took Alan in his arms and kissed him passionately. The kiss was nice and Alan responded... after all, Brendon was his boyfriend and his intended. Brendon would even have been ready to take things further right then... he knew Alan had a nice girly pussy between his legs now, but Alan himself was not prepared to go that far. Again there was this thing in his head blocking him.

Instead they just kissed and petted for what seemed a long while until it started to feel cooler and the sun was beginning to go down.

“We best be heading back lassie, before the sun goes right down, especially seein’ you have forgotten how to ride your horse.” Brendon joked.

Alan pouted. “You wait, it will all come back tae me an’ ah will ride your arse off.” Alan returned, laughing, though in his head he was still puzzled by how he could have totally forgot such a thing, both the sense and feeling of riding as well as the know-how.

As they slowly rode back, side by side, to a beautiful sunset over the glen, they talked about their marriage. “I don’t want to rush you into things, Marie, but if we are both still in the mind of getting wed, we need to try and do so as quickly as we can. I am sure you would want your father to walk you down the aisle?”

Brendon’s suggestion made sense. He should be walked down the aisle with his father, every bride wants that. And the fact could not be hidden that Charles was dying. Time was very important.”

“I agree. ah will talk tae Daddy about it when we get back.” He replied.



When they did get back Alan found that, in his absence, Charles had been doing some planning with his staff. Although Alan hadn’t had any notion that it was supposed to be his birthday in just under three weeks, Charles had never forgotten.., he just hadn’t ever expected to see the day.

He was planning to give his daughter a big party for her twenty sixth birthday; a party which would also celebrate her being ‘back’ in the world again, alive and kicking. He told Alan that he could bring as many guest as he liked, all his friends from work, university and school.

“But, remember, Daddy, ah can hardly remember anyone. I’m sorry... I wouldn’t know how tae start. He apologised.

“Well why don’t you look on your social media networking? You were always on the laptop writing and posting pictures to your friends.” Charles suggested.

It was a revelation to Alan, something he had not even considered before; nor had anyone else. He had looked through diaries of Marie’s and through her photo collection and her cell phone... but there was a huge amount of stuff posted by Marie on the net... of all she did and people she knew and socialised with.

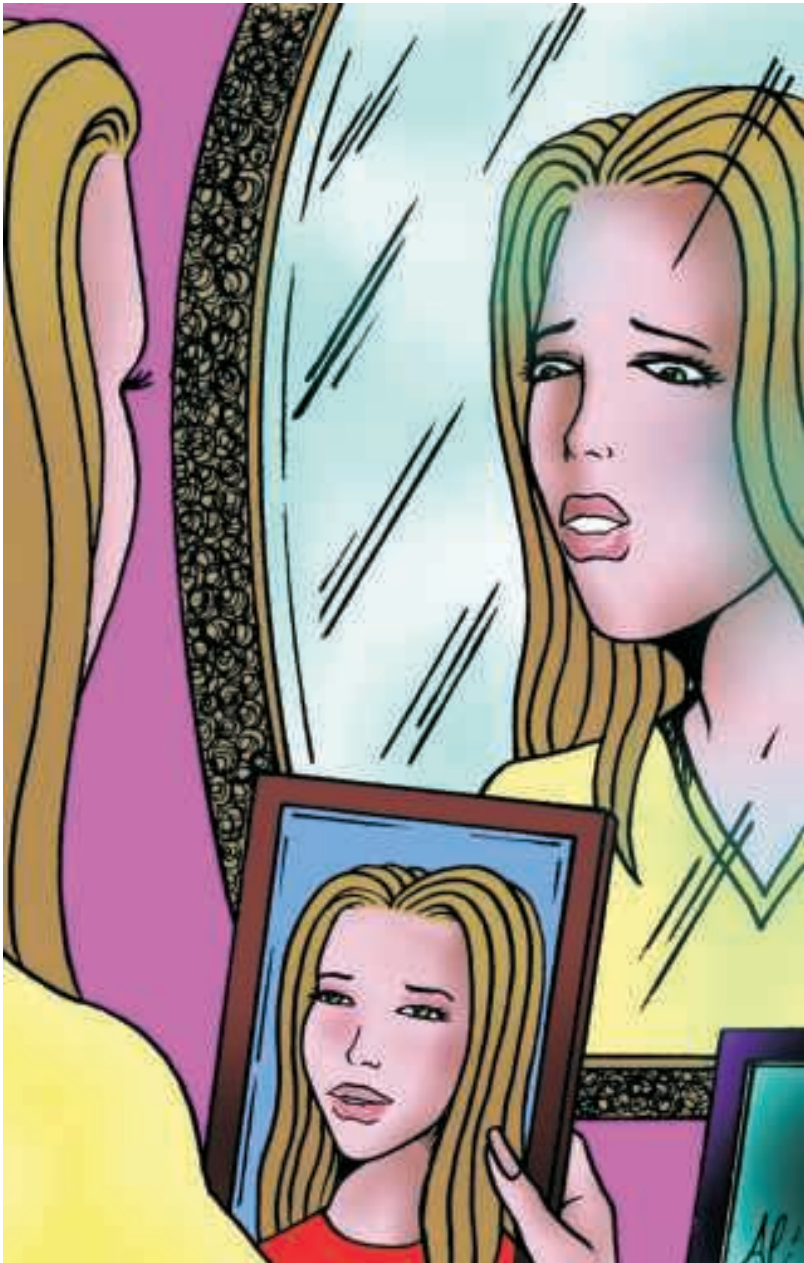
For Alan this revelation was a huge chance to try and rediscover who he was and help with his lost memory, so much so that he spent a large amount of that evening and the following day browsing through things like Marie’s face book account and time hop..., luckily Marie had allowed the computer to remember her log in details.

Brendon, though, was alarmed at this turn of events in case Alan came across anything that would cast more doubt on who he was supposed to be and he tried talking Alan out of not doing ‘too much at once.’

Alan had promised he wouldn’t but once he started he got sucked in. Marie had so many friends and there were hundreds of photos stored in the galleries of both her and those friends, both female and male. They all seemed like strangers yet there they all were, with her... Marie.

Alan also took note of her photos, looking at them and himself... comparing the likenesses to see what he could see of the changes that had happened to his face from the cosmetic surgery... sure, there was some, but overall he figured he looked pretty much the same and the surgeons had done a marvellous job of restoring him. His face seemed a little wider now and his chin a bit more angular and less shaped. His cheekbones didn’t seem as high as they had been... but he certainly didn’t look much like the image of the man from his dreams.

He also noted how ‘he’ had always looked and dressed. Isla had been telling the truth about his al-



ways wearing make-up, his face was always well made up, especially around the eyes and he wore sexy feminine clothes more than casual ones.

He began making a list of girl friends that he contacted most often, they would all be invited to his party so he could get to know them again. Also, and in way of forward planning, if he was going to get married before too long, he would need bridesmaid, meeting his closest friends at the party would help him select them.

Whilst watching some videos that Marie had made and posted, laughing and giggling with her friends and just looking and acting so feminine, he also listened to her voice and the soft Scottish accent she had. Every so often he had heard himself starting to talk with words more and more pronounced in a Scottish way but, of course, Marie had talked like that all of the time.

Alan recognised that his voice now seemed different to how Marie spoke then and he began working hard at trying to correct his tone to sound more the way he used to do.

He also asked Isla if he still spoke in the same Scottish accent as he had formerly done.

“Ye seem tae have lost some of it since yer accident... but ah hae noticed it is slowly returning, Ah am sae glad about that coz ye hae such a melodic voice an’ wi’ yer gentle Scottish accent alang wi’ it, you always sounded so bonnie in voice as well as ye looks Miss.” She replied.

That gave Alan food for thought. He wanted to return to being as near same as he had been before the accident. He made a mental note to try working at not only his voice but his words and pronunciations... as well as looking and dressing more like Marie always had.



With Brendon concerned at the possibility of Alan digging something up, he did as he always did when he had a worry..., he phoned Logan.

Logan was having problems of his own, with Caitlin; she had left their home to move in with her Mother for a while as their marriage had hit a rocky spot, mostly due to Logan's time away from home over recent months. He did, however, agree to stop by Sedgewick Halls as he was wishing to see how the development of, what he saw as 'his subject', was coming along.

So it was that Logan turned up at the home later that evening, he was greeted by Frobisher and, just behind him, a rather different looking Alan since last he had seen of him.

Alan was looking much more relaxed and composed and his new shape fit well into the short sleeved cotton top and light pink leggings that he was wearing along with a pair of low heeled slip on shoes. His face was fully made up.

Brendon shook his friends hand in greeting and Logan approached Alan with a kiss to his cheek.

"And how are you feeling today, beautiful?" He asked.

"Quite well," Alan replied, "Ah am still no closer tae getting all mah memory back but ah have been looking at things ah have done in mah life up until the accident, learning about friends ah had forgotten."

Logan was very pleased with the response, there was now no questioning by the former man that he still believed in being a different person..., just being the person he now believed he always had been but suffering memory loss.

"I've visited this evening just to give you a once over, if I may. I want to ensure all of the surgery that

you have had is mending alright, both externally and internally.” Logan told him.

Alan was asked if he could undress from his clothing and put on a robe because he wanted to be checking the entire body. Alan was uncomfortable with the request, especially exposing himself totally, but he did understand that this was the surgeon who had pieced him back together, a surgeon who had already seen every part of him.

The two went to Alan’s bedroom and Alan lay atop the bed once he had dressed as requested.

The main reason for Logan’s visit was, of course, to see if Alan had any concerns or renewed anxieties as to who he was from his searching information on the computer, but he also did want to do a check on his ‘patient’ and that seemed a good excuse for him to be there and asking questions.

“So, the last time I spoke with you, Marie, you still had concerns that you were some man you had dreamed about, are you still having these delusions?” McKlintock asked as he checked around Alan’s body.

“Not really. Ah still seem tae have clear memories of what ah had dreamed about but to be honest it is getting a little harder to see the man’s face that ah thought was mine, now... I can... but just not as clearly.” Alan replied.

Logan wasn’t too surprised by that, it was now seventy three days since Alan had last looked upon his own face and he had looked upon what was now his female image, the image of Marie, for the past twelve days solidly.

“I think that is good. The sooner you are able to discard all of these very realistic visions that you invented, then the sooner you open the path of restoring all your true memories and visions... those false ones appear to be blocking your full memory return for now.”

“Ah am trying, very hard. ah do remember more and more of mah own life now; Ah remembered the face of mah best friend from university...,” He said with a triumphant look, “Oh and some relatives that ah have living in the East.”

“That’s brilliant, well done.” Logan congratulated whilst knowing he had implanted all of those images and information into Alan’s brain himself.

Whilst they talked Logan took in some of the surgical scarring which had greatly decreased in size and had faded quite well. On Alan’s face there were only slight traces of yellowing of the skin now; easily covered by make-up.

He felt around the groin, there too it had almost healed and natural colouring had returned. He put on a surgical glove to feel inside the newly created vagina; there was no closing and he could probe quite deeply, there was natural lubrication. He also detected that underneath Alan’s saline breast sacs there was now an healthy growth of natural breast tissue development from all of the estrogens that Alan was being given. Overall he was highly pleased.., the recreation of Marie had been a total success, far more successful than he ever had dared to hope.

After the examination Logan spoke in private to Brendon. “There seems to be no cause for worry, Alan seems to now be truly accepting that she is Marie, and she is just keen to start reinventing Marie’s life. I cannot think there is anything she could find on the internet that would cause concern or incriminate us in any way.”

Brendon looked relieved by the report. “That is such welcome news. I don’t think I will truly relax until the old man is dead and I have secured things by marrying him.”

“Her... it’s her, and don’t forget or there may be no marriage. Oh, and speaking of which, for you two lovers, she is all healed inside, if you know what I mean,

there is nothing preventing you from doing what lovers do.”

Frobisher pulled a face. “Aw, come on, man... it is hard enough for me to kiss hi... her I cannae be going to such lengths.” Brendon protested, failing to mention the fact he nearly could have done after their horse ride.

“Why not? She looks like a woman, she acts like a woman and she has all of the right equipment... get rid of all your hetero macho crap and treat her as you would be treating the real Marie.” Logan told him firmly.

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Over the following few days Alan did just as Logan had told Brendon he was doing; trying to make himself as close to being the way he believed he had been. A less than necessary part of this was that he had noticed in a few photographs and videos that he ‘Marie’ was a smoker. Alan had never smoked in his life nor could remember ever doing... but to him, now that he had seen that he ‘Marie’ used to do... It seemed important to him to continue the habit.

To his reasoning, once he began getting re-acquainted with old friends, they would all know he had been a smoker and would expect him to still do so..., it was a part of who he, as Marie, was. He had asked Angus to bring him some cigarettes in and, in privacy, had tried lighting up and smoking them. At first it was a horrible experience, they made him feel sick and dizzy, but in his mind he just believed this was because he had not had one for a few months, so he continued trying to get used to them ‘again’.

He was going to such unnecessary lengths as smoking and yet he still wasn’t bringing himself to wear the type of feminine female clothing that Marie would usually choose to wear... he felt awkward in tight short skirts or even dresses, so he continued to wear slacks, leggings or jeans. High heels felt uncomfortable and he was unstable walking in them, and

so, instead, he chose to wear girl's flat shoes. He was wearing make-up on a daily basis, mostly by Isla's insistence, but he did request her to keep everything light and unobvious.

He began phoning some of the friends in Marie's address book and making contact with them. They were all aware of the terrible accident that Marie had suffered and they had all been eagerly awaiting chance to be in contact again. All were officially invited to the planned birthday party.

And so Alan's journey into becoming Marie continued now that he truly believed he was her.

Chapter Fifteen - Arrangements

It was the 4th of July, a week after meeting with his supposed father, Charles, that Alan was greeted with news by him.

"I have had the parish vicar phone me Marie, I have had some good news." He began to tell his 'daughter', "because of our influence in the local community, and because of my condition, he has managed to pull a few strings and has been able to supply an early date for your marriage with Brendon."

"Oh! That's terrific news, Daddy... when is it?" Alan asked, without perhaps as much enthusiasm as a normal bride-to-be would have. Alan cared a lot for Brendon and there were some feelings there, but he was still struggling to find the true love spark between them that there should have been and had obviously been lost, in his mind, due to the accident and injury.

"Write this down in your diary, bonnie girl... it is the twenty fifth of July." Charles announced joyously.

"The twenty fifth of July..? Just twenty one days from now!" Alan gasped.

“Ye do want your old man at ye wedding don’t you?” Charles asked with an half smile, “I have to face facts, I don’t have long left on this earth and I want to be at mah daughter’s wedding and I want tae make sure I am leaving you as safe and well as I can.”

Alan felt his heart move and he looked sad. He went over to Charles and wrapped his arms around him tightly, a tear trickling down his cheek. “Is there nae chance of them daein’ anything tae save ye? You are only fifty one... it is too soon an’ ah am only just getting’ tae know ye again.” He said sadly.

“Nae Lassie, Ye can’t remember obviously, but I had test after test before your accident. I saw special-ists whilst I was in America... it is too grown, even tryin’ to remove it would kill me. I am just merciful that I got to set eyes on my little girl again before the end... and with luck I will get to see her marry the man she loves.”

“Ye’d better.” Alan warned, tightening his hug even more and wetting Charles’s shirt with his tears in the process.

That day was cause for celebrations at Sedgewick Halls as word reached all of the staff and even outside, around local towns; Brendon, especially, was celebrating. Not only had that old oaf Taverner agreed to him marrying the person who was portraying his daughter, but he had managed to secure a date that was just weeks away.

Isla had her own plans for her young mistress straight from hearing the news. “We need tae go intae toon as suin as we can, ma’am..., ye need tae choose an’ be fitted fur yer bridal frock an’ we can shop fur somethin’ tae wear fur yer ceilidh tay *(party day).” She said excitedly...she loved shopping. So excited was she that her strongest Scottish accent poured out making it difficult for Alan to even understand all that she was saying.

“Oh, when?” Alan exclaimed, a fearfulness suddenly overwhelming him. So far, since he had woken from the Coma, he had never left the Sedgewick es-



tate; nobody other than house staff and the doctor had seen him. He knew it was folly, especially as he now truly believed himself to be Marie... but the thought of people looking at him, as a woman, still held a fear to him.

“Wa, tomorrow Miss, we cannae delay, there’s way tae many things tae do and tae arrange.” Isla continued enthusiastically.

As much as he didn’t want to admit it, Isla was correct. Twenty one days was nothing. But, in order for Marie’s father to have a chance of attending, the marriage had to be soon... which meant that planning was all going to be rushed.

Alan tried to suggest just ordering a bridal dress on-line but Isla would have non of it, pointing out it needed fitting to his body. And he also needed to know who his bridesmaids were going to be so that they could have their matching dresses ordered too. That only caused further headache for Alan.

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The following day Isla had the kitchen staff prepare early breakfast for Alan, herself and Angus, whom she had asked to drive them down to Fort William to do their shopping. As soon as they had eaten Isla applied Alan’s day’s make up, which was a little heavier than he would have liked.

Wearing a pair of black leggings and a pale blue tunic top along with a pair of one and a half inch heeled light brown ankle boots, his hair brushed out and styled with bangs in the front and pulled into a pony tail in the back, a pair of small hoop earrings and a set of studs adorning his ears, Alan was declared ready to go.

Nobody realised or picked up on the anxiety that Alan was feeling, everyone thought he had now just accepted being a female called Marie, but to Alan there was something very psychological about presenting himself to the outside world as a woman. Be-

fore they left he lit up a cigarette to calm his nerves. He still felt a little woozy when he inhaled the smoke but his system was starting to get used to it.

Angus dropped the pair off at a large shopping mall and then went off to do his own thing until he was called, he had no desire to tail two females out shopping. Isla knew all of the shops in the town and wasted no time at all in leading the reluctant Alan, full of embarrassment and trepidation, into the bridal shop.

Alan found that he was known in there from people having read of the car accident in the newspapers and on local television news bulletins, they were also, and more so, familiar with Sir Charles and his own condition, so they were bending over backwards to help this customer..., plus the fact that they knew Marie was from a very wealthy family and anticipated a big sale.

For Alan, he'd had the idea he could just walk in, choose a dress that he liked and walk back out again and go home, as quickly as possible... but there was a reason why Isla had ordered early breakfast, so that they had all day to shop.

“Och, Miss, will ye look at this lovely dress here...”

“Oh, mah gosh! Isn't ‘at jist th’ most bonnie dress ye ever did see? Why, ye would look an angel wearin’ that.”

“Over here miss, ye jist ha’e tae take a swatch at this one.” She was gushing at almost every thing she saw.

And the staff were no better.

“I would highly recommend this one madam; the lace and intricate design around the bodice would accentuate your figure beautifully.”

“Let me show you this one Madam, it is top of the range and has come from Paris.”

Eventually there were five dresses for Alan to have to try on, Isla going into the cubicle with him to help him in and out of them and to fasten them up. She took photos of him in each one.

Then Alan had to be measured... height; shoulders, bosom, waist; bottom. He was then shown all the accessories... veils, clutch purse, shoes, corselets, sheer white stockings, garters, long gloves.... It seemed endless!

With the measurements taken, Isla told the staff she would contact them later to put in an order for the dress they finally chose. Alan sighed with relief that he did not have to choose there and then and he could get outside.

Isla only allowed Alan time for a quick cigarette and then a Starbucks coffee before she was leading him into a boutique to look for a party dress.

“Thes is sae much fun isn’t it Miss Marie?” Isla said with a happy face. “Ah always cherished th’ times you would let me come alang shopping wi’ ye.”

“Yes, Isla... it is fun isn’t it.” Alan replied without sincerity.

Inside the boutique Alan found himself being escorted around rail after rail of clothing, mostly dresses but also skirts and tops... even new nightwear. He had to wonder if this was all necessary as he had already a huge closet full of clothes. Admittedly not all of them fit him anymore since his time in hospital, but there were plenty that did.

For each dress that Isla took a fancy to and had Alan’s nod of agreement, the items would go over her arm or into the net basket she was pulling along. Then it was time for the fitting room and he had to put on and take off each item selected and then pose for Isla’s opinion as to whether it was a keeper or not.

And then, even though he had a huge array of shoes too, mostly unworn by him, she had to have him looking at and trying on heels; strappy sandals, sling backs and court shoes as well as low heeled slip

on's. Some of the heel sizes concerned him but Isla promised he would soon get used to wearing them 'again'.

And she was still not finished as the shop assistants gladly took charge of selected items... Isla wanted to look at cosmetics... lipsticks, eye shadows, foundation, mascara and brushes. Panties, Bra's and Hosiery too, wasn't overlooked with six pairs of pantyhose being selected and a dozen pair of panties and three new brassiers.

"Are ye perfectly sure ah ever used tae go shopping like this with you?" Alan had to ask as his legs craved to sit down.

"Och aye, Miss, or ye would go shopping wi' yer friends or jist by yerself sometimes. Wa ah can't believe ye would ever forgit yer favoorite pastime." Isla laughed as she led Alan to the accessories.

Whatever Angus had found to do during the six and a half hour shopping spree, Alan had no idea. A phone call from Isla had him bringing the car around to the front of the mall though and his helping to carry the eleven bags of shopping back to the car and placing them in the trunk.

"Well at leest ye ure fixed fur somethin' new tae wear fer yer party Miss Marie, an' we can select which brides dress ye want efter we get home."

"Not right away, ah hope, Isla. I think ah want tae take ma shoes off and soak ma feet when we get in... maybe later in the evening." Alan responded.

"Aye well, we need tae let them ken at th' shop sae that they can alter yer measurements as suin as we can. Will it be alright by ye if I show Saiir Charles th'photos an' git his opinion? Ye don't ha'e tae worry, I'll nae be lettin' master Brendon see 'em." Isla assured with a wink.

OooO

First thing the following day Alan's choice of wedding dress was phoned in to the bridal shop. Alan had made his choice from the five and he was surprised that it was also the one that 'his father' had chosen. Charles had insisted he would meet all the costs of the wedding including the dress.

So he had chosen a wedding dress and he also had a selection to choose from for his forthcoming birthday party. He had hoped that would be all that there was left to be done..., but he was wrong. He had to choose with Brendon just who would be attending the wedding, write out wedding invitations, and choose a venue for the party afterwards... Oh, so many things still to do. He felt exhausted.

Brendon had also asked Alan where he would like to go on honeymoon but Alan had responded by saying that there should not be a honeymoon if his Charles was still alive for the wedding. He pointed out, that, with the situation of 'his' father, he may pass away whilst they were gone and then he would never forgive himself.

Brendon was annoyed by the response but he knew that what Alan had said was true; anything could happen to Charles whilst they were away... damn him. So instead he played the thoughtful fiancé and told Alan he understood perfectly and that he was right in what he said.

It was quite fortunate that he had now accepted he was Marie Taverner and not still believing he could still be the Alan Rutledge from his dreams as he never would have had time to pursue those concerns anyway.

"How are things going with the planning, Marie?" Brendon asked as he came and sat alongside him.

"Exhausting, what makes it worse is ah don't know anything about most of the folk ah am inviting. Dae ye think ah will ever get mah memory back?" Alan asked solemnly.

“Well, Logan seems to think that ye will, but if ye never do just also remember what he told you, start your memories afresh, relearn stuff you have forgotten, re-acquaint with your friends. Brendon replied nuzzling Alan’s neck affectionately with his lips.

“Ah have been looking on the internet, between trying tae rediscover mahself. It says that severe memory loss can be regained from almost immediately tae many years. It’s bin eighteen days noo since ah regained consciousness an’ it feels like I never will remember again.” Alan responded sadly. “Ah know it is right what ye say about starting as if from new, but ah should have twintie five years of memories, twintie five years growing up from a wee guirl, and ah can hardly remember anything.” He added

“Well if you want some reassurance, Logan said that memories are never really lost, they are all still stored in our heads. Even people with vascular dementia can still suddenly recall certain things that people believed they had forgotten. Stop stressing and give yourself a rest, this can all be sorted out later. It’s a fine day outside, let’s take a walk and get some air.”

Alan was grateful for the suggestion and the pair walked out through the main door and made their way down the track, hand in hand. Alan felt as though his hands were so small and soft in the clutch of Brendon’s large powerful hands. Brendon at six feet four was a strong solid man and stood seven inches higher than Alan. This helped Alan feel safe and protected when he was at low ebb.

They came to rest by an old stone wall that ran along the side of a cranny. Brendon put his arm around Alan’s narrow waist and pulled him in to him.

“This whole thing has been very hard for you, hasn’t it?” He suggested, “It would maybe have been bad enough just having all of those injuries from the accident, but being placed in a coma and reawakening to believe you were someone else... not just that but... a different sex. Then, while you are trying to

come to terms with the truth, you are getting your birthday party AND a wedding all thrust upon you.”

Alan looked up to Brendon’s face, grateful for the man’s understanding of what he was going through. “It has been tough but in a way recent events have allowed me tae stop thinking about the life ah had dreamt an’ just focus on the here and now.”

“Still, it’s all been a terrible pressure.” Brendon continued, “If you want we can postpone the wedding... six months, a year... I’m sure your father won’t regret not seeing you getting married to me, of all people.” He said, certain that Alan would not hear of it being cancelled.

“No! Brendon. Ah could nae have gotten by this past two weeks withoot your strength and support. Mah father has seen the better side of ye now and is happy for us to marry, he wants tae see me wed. Nae..., the marriage will gae ahead... an’ anyway..., I... I love you.” Alan wasn’t sure where that last statement had come from... from the past or from feelings he was having now. There were strong feelings for the man... was it love? He knew it must have been there once, had that love now returned?”

As Alan looked up into Brendon’s face Brendon leaned towards him and their lips met in a passionate kiss.

*****V*****

Alan woke the following morning feeling more calm and relaxed than any day since he regained consciousness. The female house staff had all helped in finalising arrangements, contacting everyone who needed to be contacted and getting a large amount of invites for both the party and the wedding, out to the post.

Pulling on a negligee Alan made his way to the bathroom and sat to have a pee. For whatever reason that his brain had once forgotten how he should re-

lieve himself, he was now back into the habit of sitting, releasing and mopping without thought.

He set the shower going whilst he brushed out the knots in his hair, then disrobed and stood into the refreshing spray of hot water. He soaped his body and let his fingers caress his boobs. They felt good; he had such a nice pair of breasts. He lathered between his legs and now his fingers gently caressed the flaps of skin of his pussy. He idly wondered what it would feel like to have Brendon inserting himself.

He stopped in shock and bafflement. Had Brendon ever done that? Or was he a virgin? If he and Brendon ever had made love then he should have some idea of it... know how it felt! Maybe he was a virgin? ...never been deflowered.

The thought now haunted him. He had forgotten so many things but how would he ever know if he was a virgin or not? He finished up his shower; towel dried himself and then began getting ready for the day. Somehow, he had to find out.

He was the only person at the breakfast table that morning. Charles was staying in bed as he was having an off day with bad headaches and Brendon had gone off to the gym with Logan and wouldn't be home until noon.

"I'll manicure an' paint yer nails when ye ha'e finished up wi' yer breakfast Miss." Isla told him when going into the dining room where Alan was eating. She had been painting Alan's nails almost every day now and manicured them every forth day. Alan felt he didn't have a say in the matter and, whether he wanted his long, to him, nails, painted or not, he merely just allowed it.

In the gym that Brendon and Logan frequented, they were working out, side by side, on the treadmills.

So how are things progressing between the two of you? The wedding is still going ahead, I take it?” Logan asked.

Brendon smiled in satisfaction. “You’re no’ going to believe this... he actually told me he was in love with me when we went for a stroll yesterday.”

“She!” Logan corrected for the umpteenth time. He was pleased to hear of the advancement though. “So, have you now taken it to the next level?”

“What do you mean by the next level? Do you mean have I had sex with ...her. No!”

“Then why not? For her to say she loves you is a massive step and you are missing a golden opportunity to really make her feel like a woman, man!”

“I think she is just happy the way things are. There is no need to go that far.” Brendon tried to explain.

“And, on your wedding night? Are you then going to consummate your marriage?”

“There would be no need... It would be too late by then. We would be wed.”

“Don’t be a fool Brendon, being married isn’t going to suddenly give everything over to you. It would be something expected from a new husband. If she doesn’t feel your love, if you let her down on your wedding night and she refers it to Charles he could take steps to stop you gaining a penny.” Logan warned.

“But then he will die, she will still be my wife and I will win her over.”

“If you get as far as marriage that may be possible, but if she is professing her love for you and not feeling it reciprocated it may cause great doubts in her mind. She still needs to feel secure and have none of her former anxieties as to who she is, resurfacing. She is continuing to develop... I was never certain how the subliminal messaging would work, it being new to me, but we loaded masses of information into

her brain whilst she was in the coma... over and over again, for two months.

“...Alan has only recalled maybe forty per cent of that information so far... but it is all there, stored away, ready at any point, to be accessed by her. I came to understand this more by how she is now, more and more, developing a Scottish accent, have you noticed that? All from the voice messaging we gave her, slowly developing and being enhanced by the strong accents surrounding her.

“... All the other messages and images are there too... but you need to make her feel certain of who she is for them to be released. She has voiced that she loves you and that was a major step for her to say, you need to be doing the same, whether you mean it or not. Have you even taken her out yet?” Logan asked in finishing.

“You know I have, we have walked together many times.”

“No, you fool. I mean taken her out somewhere romantic, made her feel special, and spoiling her. You are showing her no love at all, man.”

“Yes I am... yesterday, when she said she loved me, we were necking for about quarter of an hour solid... I caressed her, kissed her... that’s not easy when I still have the vision of what he looked like in my head, you know.”

“That is all to be applauded, but you do need to take things up another notch... woo here and seduce her. Get the image of what she used to be, out of that overly macho head of yours. Look at the image before you and forget who she was, she is really not that same person any more.”

“I’ll try.” Logan responded.

“Good. Now, I have a meeting in the hospital in two days with the team who helped me in creating her. It would be nice to give them some positive feedback.”

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Other than getting his nails painted, Alan visited Charles in his bedroom to see how he was. Charles was getting headaches and needed his pain killers... he had been told the pains would increase before the end.

“Ye are okay with Brendon and I aren’t ye, father?” Alan asked as he sat by the bedside.

“Why do you ask Marie?” Charles inquired.

“Ah just want tae make sure, make sure that ye are happy and that ah am happy also. Ah have bin tauld that ye were so against him. Are ye just saying yes now tae make me happy?”

“I don’t trust him. He has no job and has been a scavenger here way too long, aye, it’s true. But he has surprised me by how he has stuck by you when ye were having these strange thoughts. Are you still having thoughts like that at all, lassie?”

“If ah stop to draw breath an’ think aboot things then some things still seem really weird tae me. If ah think about this person ah created in mah mind then everything still seems sae real and crystal clear, which is strange that ah can remember all of that in such fine detail and yit mah memory of being me is so patchy.” Alan confessed.

“So does that mean you still think you are or were a man? That you still have that notion in you’re head? Charles asked directly.

“Well no, coz none of it makes sense. Look at me, mah body... ah am female. I remember things, things that happened afore th’ accident, I remember ye an’ growing up as a wee guirl, ah have a female voice, Ah have freckles on mah face which the image in mah head of the man, never had ...and it seems mah accent is coming back...,” Alan giggled lightly, “... definitely not snooty English. Ah remembered mah horse, mah aunt and uncle and mah closest friend. So, ah am me... ah must be. Dae ye think ah some-

how tapped into memories of a former life, memories in th' deepest recesses of mah mind that I accessed whilst ah was in such a deep coma? Ah've heard of such things happenin'."

Charles was a very prudent man. Whilst he was in America he had almost felt the loss of his daughter. He had felt sure he was being lied to when he returned and yet Marie had been brought to him once again. Whilst the girl looked like Marie there was differences about both her face and her voice, but all of this had been reasonably explained. He had mulled over how she had believed she'd had a different life... a life as a man... that along with the changes... but he had cast out the notion as pure folly, things like that belonged in science fiction films and he was just been silly. If Frobisher and his friend were to ever try get a Marie look-alike to pose as his daughter they would have chosen a genetic girl, not someone who thought they could have been male and cast doubt into his head.

What Marie had said to him about what she could remember before the accident rang true to him, she would know nothing of any of that. And what she said now about former life... he wasn't sceptical about such things and it seemed to make far more sense than that she had recently been a man remade to the likeness of Marie. How could he ever have even doubted this was his true daughter?

"You didn't waste your time at the university, lassie. Ye were always such a bright child, I'll bet that man McKlintock never even thought on that possibility. Yes, that would seem to make perfect sense." He told her. He almost felt relieved as he spoke his reply that the conundrum that had confounded him, and his daughter, had finally, seemingly, been solved.

That her father also agreed to that possibility also brought relief to Alan. There was the perfect explanation, she could now get on with her life and build it again. It brought a change in the way she felt about herself, as if a heavy weight had been lifted from her.

Alan bent over the bed to kiss her father on the cheek. "I'll go doon and get kitchen tae make ye a nice warming stew. Ye need tae keep yer strength up if ye are going tae attend mah weddin'." She said with a happy giggle.

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It was twelve twenty when Brendon returned to the house. He placed his gym bag down in the porch and searched out Alan.

"Get yourself all prettied up for me, honey, I'm taking you out to the town for a meal this evening." He told her before planting a kiss on her lips.

Alan cast a bemused smile, taken unawares. "What's brought this oan? What's the occasion?" She asked, unsure if she was ready for another foray into public so soon.

"Well, like we talked about yesterday, you have been through so much stress lately, darling. Still recuperating from the accident, all of the planning and with your mind in turmoil because of your memory loss..., I just think it would do you good." He told her. He didn't add that it was Logan McKlintock's idea for him to take Alan out and treat her like a lady.

Brendon seemed so sweet and sincere in wanting to treat his wife to be as well as he could, that Alan couldn't really refuse, no matter if he felt ready for being taken out for a dinner date or not.

Of course it didn't take Isla long in getting excited about preparing her young mistress and she wanted to get an early start. She insisted on washing Alan's hair after Alan had taken a shower. It would be the first opportunity for Isla to re-dye Alan's hair so that it remained a rich auburn colour and showed none of his own natural colour in the roots.

Once done, Isla wrapped Alan's hair up in a towel, turban style, for it to dry and then began pampering Alan's face with creams and lotions.

“I’m sae excited ‘at ye ure goin’ oot with Master Brendon, Miss Marie. It’s jist whit ye need an’, as it is yer first date together since, since th’ accident, ah jist ha’e tae make ye look special.” She gushed.

Alan just sat and took everything thrown at her. Isla tweezered her eyebrows, reshaping and getting rid of any strays, she used eye liner on both top and bottom lids using a liquid liner; coated the lids in midnight blue and gray eye shadows blended and brushed out to the sides of the eyes and a touch of white brushing just under the brow to make the eyes stand out and look wider.

Alan even had false lashes attached and mascara’d into his own, making them noticeable in her field of vision, something she felt she had not experienced before. Alan’s lips were then coated in a bright magenta with just a touch of gloss over them. Her nails, both finger and toes, were painted in the same colour.

As the time ticked on it was time for the choosing of clothes and Isla said the very thing was a classic little black dress. Alan, whilst agreeing to a dress for a night out, argued that she didn’t want anything too short and they eventually agreed on a long sleeved, low neckline dress that had a black silk panel across the breast and which fell to just an inch above the knee.

It was to be a cotton and lace black panty set as underwear and a pair of bisque coloured pantyhose. Black sling back shoes with a slender two and a half inch heel and a silver pendant necklace with matching large pendant earrings completed the outfit.

Isla finished her chores by styling Alan’s hair, putting some waves into it and gathered and pinned it all up in the back.

“Ye look a dream Miss, if ah may say so. Ye ure gonnae knock Master Brendon aff his fiet.” Isla complimented.

Indeed, when Brendon did lay eyes on his intended, he stood with mouth agape, astounded. It

was as much to do with how a former man could become such a stunning looking lady as to the excellent work Isla had done.

Alan smiled rather coyly at the way Brendon was ogling her. “Am ah suitable enough fur ye tae take oot?” She asked nervously.

Linking his arm with hers Brendon was also taken back by her perfumed smell, so womanly, as he walked her out to his waiting car outside.

“You look stunning this evening, darling”, he finally managed compliment.

Alan smiled and blushed lightly.

There was a moment of anxiety as Brendon drove the car up the long driveway and to the gates. It was the first time that Alan had been up here since... She immediately remembered the gates and had a flashback of driving through them. There was no sign of damage or repair... surely it was all a part of that horrible dream she'd had and although the vision was clear in her mind she was determined not to let it spoil her evening.

They had a lengthy drive to the nearest town and to a restaurant where Marie and Brendon had often visited together, but there was very little conversation between them along the way as neither really knew what to say to the other.

Eventually they reached the town and Brendon drove over to a parking bay. On the opposite side of the road was a posh looking, well illuminated restaurant.

Alan had still not worn high heeled shoes very often and was still trying to get used to wearing them. Several times, as she walked, arms linked, by Brendon's side as they made their way from a car park to the restaurant, she had to stop and hook the sling back strap back over her heel before they arrived at the door.

Alan was taken by surprise as they walked through the door and they were greeted by the maitre d' who gave them a wide smile. "Miss Taverner, Mr. Frobisher, it is so pleasing to see you back here again. Miss Taverner, I do trust that you are now fully recovered from your terrible accident... we have missed you greatly."

Alan wasn't sure how to respond at first, she obviously did not recognise the man at all. "Thank ye, ah am daein' quite well now, an' it is good tae be able tae dine in your establishment once again." He finally responded.

"Miss, Sir... If I can show you to your table? I will bring menu's over to you directly and if there is anything you require during the course of the evening, please just call for me."

After having her chair pulled out for her, Alan sat in under a table and tried to keep the skirt of her dress in place. She discreetly scratched at her legs as they awaited the menus; she was still getting used to wearing pantyhose.

"Are you okay darling?" Brendon asked as he noticed her discomfort.

"These tights are just irritatin' mah legs a wee bit." She replied, "Ah guess I have become unused tae the material on the skin o' mah legs."

The evening went perfectly. The three course meal that they had proved a bit too much for Alan's shrunken stomach and slimmer form, but the food was divine.

All of the waitresses also knew the couple and when first passing, would stop to say hello and welcomed them back.

Brendon had ordered a bottle of wine during the meal and as they rested their stomachs and talked, he then had glasses of whiskey for himself and ordered Alan cocktails, which he told her she always loved having. Alan was unfamiliar with cocktails, she

had been a beer drinking person when she was male, but she enjoyed them.

Brendon's idea was to get himself a little drunk to help relax his inhibitions and also get Alan in the mood so that on their return he may be able to initiate sex between them. As he was drinking quite heavily he phoned Angus to drive over and pick them up. In the morning Angus would then have to drive back over again with another member of staff to bring back both cars.

They were both feeling tipsy when they arrived back at Sedgewick Halls and Alan was on a high from having had an enjoyable evening... the most enjoyable since she had come out of the coma.

They sat in the lounge together having a nightcap and that turned to some petting and kissing on the sofa. Alan was feeling aroused and was enjoying Brendon's touch and the squeezing of her breasts and stroking of her leg.

"Should we use my bedroom or yours?" Brendon asked in a voice heavy with desire, the drink he'd had, working on clearing any psychological concerns of making love to a former man.

Alan was different, however. She knew what Brendon was suggesting but in her head there was something that she couldn't even explain that was holding her back. Something that was telling her that things still weren't right in having sexual intercourse with a man.

"Please forgive me Brendon... but ah am nae quite ready for doin' anything yet." She pleaded.

Alan felt frustrated, he had managed to get himself into a state of mind where he could actually perform with this Marie imposter, and he was turned on and had an erection... now he was being denied.

"What's wrong? I mean, is it me? Is it that, even after all of this time you still feel like a man? Are things ever going to be right between us again?" He responded temperamentally.

“No!, it’s nae ye.., it’s me, Brendon. An no ah am nae thinking of mahself as a man... in fact tonight ye has made me feel more like a woman since, since ah regained consciousness. I dinnae know what it is, but ah just don’t feel ready yet.”

As an after thought Alan voiced the question she had asked herself that morning.

“Brendon, has ye an’ I ever done it... together? I mean..., I cannae remember if ah am still a virgin or no.” She asked.

In spite of feeling rather angry and frustrated, Brendon laughed at the question.

“I can assure you, you are no longer a virgin... you have always told me I am your first but we have done it more times than I care to remember.” He replied, laughing.

Alan was, at first, unsure of his feelings about that but then he felt rather pleased that they had been having sex together, and that he was not a virgin.

At least Alan’s question had lightened things between them now. They walked up to bed together and kissed goodnight outside Alan’s door. If anything, Brendon was feeling a little bit relieved that they had not had sex... but he could honestly tell Logan that he had tried.



Chapter Sixteen - Things progress

It was just turned ten o’clock, the 10th July, when Logan McKlintock entered St Andrew’s hospital and made his way up a flight of stairs towards the small conference room. Already assembled there were three of the doctors who had participated in changing the sex of Alan Routledge, others were still on their way for the ten thirty scheduled meeting.

“Finley.., Douglas, how nice to see you both again. Ray, congratulations on your award last month.” Logan spoke as he shook hands with the three men.

By half past everyone was seated. Callum Fairbairn was chairing the meeting.

“Can I ask, Logan, how is the young person doing whom we operated on three months ago?” He asked.

“Certainly.” Logan began. “Gentlemen, you will all be aware that, for the operations we carried out, several were ground breaking..., never been done before. Even the duration of time we took was faster than on any previous procedure before and we were carrying out several surgical procedures at the same time.” He continued.

“... So far everything has been a success. There has been no complications, everything has healed as expected; there are barely any scars to be seen and all bruising has now diminished... a total success.”

“What about the person himself? Rather unethically, we attempted to change all recollection of who he was, including sex and gender. How has he responded?” Finley inquired.

“If I may correct you, Finley... it is She. Referring to her as her former self is something I would more expect from Frobisher, not someone in the medical profession who has carried out gender corrective surgery.” Logan responded rather disgruntled. “...That has taken time. At first the memories were all of her being male but, over time and with continued mental conditioning, she now readily accepts being female and is accessing many of the subliminal history messages that we printed into her sub conscious.”

Everyone was pleased at the report, and relieved that there would, seemingly, be no criminal charges brought about by a furious individual who'd had his sex changed against his will.

“I apologise Logan and I would normally refer to true transgender patients as she but, in this case it was not a birth defect that required correcting. I

shall, however, refer to our subject as ‘she’ from here-on-in.” continued Finley

“...One of the reasons we are here, Is, as you have said, together we managed many new procedures in gender realignment surgery. Annually we are experiencing an ever growing demand for this kind of surgery and it is creating a back log. Also, we know that many of our techniques are out dated and we are forever looking into ways of making a transsexual as near perfect to their required sex as we can.

“From the work that we carried out on Alan Routledge we can take great steps forward. Maybe we were rather callous in our treatment of her, moving things far more quickly than we normally would have been comfortable with... but it has proven to work, as has, some of the more feminising procedures. Before we can begin to start using what we have learned, carte-blanche, however, we do need other test subjects. What works with one individual is not forced to work with all.”

The company of surgeons all agreed in what Finley Baird was saying.

“So this brings us to our agreement. None of us here wanted to do what we did to Mr. Routledge without forcible reason and one of the main reasons was the financial profit to be made which could be transferred into medical practice and research. The work done on Mr. Routledge was very expensive and we are still to be reimbursed for that, let alone the promised donation. When do you see this money being given for us in order to finance further test experiments?” Baird then asked.

“I would think pretty soon. Brendon and Marie have set a date to marry thirty three days from now. Regretfully, it would also require Sir Charles Taverner to pass away before Frobisher has any power over the money... but Sir Charles has very little time left to live... he may not even manage the wedding.” Logan answered.

The talks went on for over an hour and at the end they settled down to enjoy refreshments.

“So, what’s the situation with yourself and yer wife? Last time we spoke ye said ye were having difficulties.” Ray Broadie asked his friend.

“I’m afraid Caitlyn is filing for divorce on desertion by me and irreconcilable differences, she says our marriage has irretrievably broken down. The bloody thing is, it was by trying to save my marriage that I allowed Frobisher into forcing me to help him with this whole resurrecting Marie plot.”

“Well, as it turns out that has done some good for us, hasn’t it.” Raymond replied.

“Done good for whom? It didn’t do any good for that young woman who died in the car crash. It didn’t do any good for the family of Alan who don’t know if he is dead or alive, nor did it do any good for Alan himself who has lost his entire identity, his new wife, his family and everything he knew. Do you not think I feel incredibly bad for doing that to the man?” Logan responded testily.

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Alan was nervous and excited all at the same time. It was her birthday and it was the day her father had arranged for a big birthday party in the home for her. This was going to mean meeting lots of people, lots of people she wouldn’t be able to remember.

Brendon had bought her a beautiful wristwatch for her birthday, some pendant earrings that had three mounted diamonds in each earring, linked one under the other and some expensive perfume.

Staff members had put together to buy small gifts too, a large vase of flowers for her bedroom and a box of Belgian chocolates.

The nerves really began to kick in towards the end of the afternoon when Isla was again like a mother

hen around her, wanting her to look her most beautiful for her party.

All afternoon hired party planner staff were transforming the gallery room for the party with long tables, chairs for the sixty guests, veils, food and drinks galore, dance floor and a DJ box... everything had been thought of.

Whilst Isla was busy with Alan the guests were arriving, some of them having travelled between thirty and fifty miles, some travelling up from England and some family members arriving from Canada. They were all kept entertained by Charles, Brendon and the household staff who served drinks and light nibbles.

Isla had brought in a woman that Alan had never seen before and who was introduced as Morag.

“Miss, this is all a part of yer birthday present frae th’ staff.” Isla told Alan, “As ye ken *(know), yer hair got damaged when ye had yer accident an’ th’ hospital fused some false hair extensions tae yer own, they need tae be taken oot an’ re-dain as they ha’e been in fur jist o’er a month noo.” Isla explained.

Alan was taken aback and quietly unhappy that Isla had not warned what her plans were, but she couldn’t be mean when she knew the staff were paying for this out of their own wages and only had the best of intentions; so she kept quite and just accepted it.

Morag took all of the extensions out from Alan’s hair and trimmed and repaired her own. Alan was shocked to see herself in the mirror and how short her hair looked, though in truth, it had grown out quite a bit from Alan Routledge’s hair of thirty eight days before when the extensions had been put in.

Morag put new extensions in which were longer than the previous ones and gave Alan a main of shiny coppery auburn hair that fell over her shoulders. She was delighted with the results and as Isla told her, she would be able to put it into so many different styles. Alan was upset about her own hair being so

short though and just hoped it would quickly grow so that her hair could be natural again.

Once her hair was done Isla set about making her face up, using dynamic eye make up. At the same time Morag painted Alan's finger and toe nails in a glossy coppery colour to go with her hair and glued small diamante stones to the nails.

Alan was helped into a full length blue gown which had a plunging neckline showing off her cleavage. On her feet she wore a pair of three and a half inch slim stiletto heeled strappy sandals that displayed her painted toe nails. Over the past few weeks Alan had been wearing high heeled shoes more regularly as she learned to walk and balance in them. One of the main reasons for doing so was so that she didn't feel so dwarfed by the six foot four Brendon when they were together, increasing her own height of five foot nine by three or more inches.

Once Alan's hair had been styled and she'd had the birthday earrings from Brendon hooked into her lobes, and a necklace fastened around her neck, she was sprayed with an intoxicating perfume and escorted down to meet her party guests. To say Alan was nervous was an understatement and even having got used to wearing heels, her legs felt like jello.

As she descended the stairs with Isla by her side, the guests, who were gathered in the hallway, cheered and clapped her arrival. The cheers and claps were as much to do with Marie having 'survived' her car accident as to applaud her birthday and this was their first time to see her since that day. They had been warned she may appear a little different from the plastic surgery, but also informed that she was in no way scarred or mutilated. Brendon couldn't believe his eyes at how stunning and feminine this man from England was increasingly turning out.

For the next thirty minutes People were coming over to her, giving her hugs and kisses and, in most cases, re-introducing themselves to the baffled Alan. "Ah'm so sorry, I pure am. Ah should know ye already

but I'll honestly try tae remember yer name and face." she apologised in turn. Everyone fully understood and told her not to worry about it.

There were however some faces she did recognise, all from the subliminal images, but couldn't put a name to. Others she recalled having heard their name but wasn't recognising their face. Then there were some she did know.

"Natalie!" She called out as she saw in the crowd of people someone who she did instantly recognise, Marie's friend from university.

The two embraced each other as they met. "I'm sae glad you were able tae travel up from Dundee. How was yer joorney?" Alan asked as though he had known the girl all his life.

"I wouldn't ha'e missed it for the world." Natalie replied with another hug, "I was so worried about you after I heard about the accident. Ah'd have come over to see you when it happened but Ah was told there were no visitors allowed."

Alan had to break from Natalie to greet other birthday well wishers. She had the strangest feeling concerning Natalie that she knew her and yet she didn't... but that just had to be because of some of her missing memory.

"Aunty Grace... Uncle Cameron. Now ye two ah dae remember." She said with glee as she approached her relatives from Montrose and gave them both a hug. She was given a birthday present of more jewellery from the couple; she was going to have so many birthday presents to open and enjoy from this birthday.

The more people she met the more Alan relaxed, it was evident everyone accepted her for how she was and her memory loss and everyone was being so sweet and kind.

Once all greetings had been made Alan found time to talk more lengthily with certain guests, including lots of friends of her own age who she worked or

socialised with. Throughout the party Brendon stood and chatted with several people whilst observing her and seeing how she was coping.

Logan, who had also been invited, stood nearby, observing himself. "This is really quite remarkable what we have done here; we have given a person not just a new sex but a whole new life, which she is readily accepting as having always been her own." He told Brendon when they were alone. "You are one lucky bastard, I had major doubts about any of this being possible but you seem to have pulled it off."

"Indeed I have. And soon I will be in charge of all that you see around you." Frobisher gloated causing a look of disdain from his friend.

For Alan, once his nerves were settled and the party was in full swing with everyone mingling, eating and drinking, she totally relaxed and enjoyed discovering more and more about 'herself' She had no recollection of ever having had such a lavish party before, or feeling so special.

Before the evening was through, Angus the butler, slipped outside. A short while later Charles made an announcement. "Thank you everyone for coming to my beautiful daughter's twenty sixth birthday party. I see ye have all bought her lots of lovely presents but, to my shame, I have not yet given her one myself... Sweetheart, if you would come over here and walk with me to the door, I hope to rectify that."

Alan looked over at her 'father' with a curious smile then walk towards him as people parted to let her through. Once they were together Charles took her hand and led her to the door. "This is my birthday present to you... I thought ye may need a new one after breaking yer last." He said with a smile.

As he opened the door, there on the courtyard was a brand new Aston Martin in metallic green, a huge pink bow tied around it.

Alan couldn't believe her eyes. "For me, Daddy? Ah dinnae know what tae say. Thank yoo... oh my! It's simply wonderful." She told him, leaning to kiss him on the cheek.

Charles placed the car keys into her hand and she tripped down the small flight of stairs from the front door, Angus was standing proudly besides the car. Opening the door with the keys she looked inside... she smelled the newness, it looked so clean, Alan had never had a brand new car in his life.

With her heart racing she ran back up to the house and wrapped her arms around Charles. "Och, thank ye Daddy, thank ye sae much... I don't know whit else tae say."

"Say that you will take good care of it, and yourself. No speeding, drive carefully."

"I will, ah promise, I will."

Many of the guests had come to the door to take a look at her birthday gift themselves and applauded her as she walked back in from the chilly night air. Alan felt as if she was on cloud nine.

Brendon had his own extra surprise for his bride to be once the excitement had died down a bit.

"I thought I would keep this from you until later..." He began with a smile, "I have booked us to go to the theatre tomorrow night in Glasgow. I've also booked a room and an evening meal in a top hotel."

"Oh, Brendon... you needn't have, but that sounds lovely." Alan responded. She wondered, though, about the hotel room... had Brendon booked two singles? A double room with twin beds...? Or would she be sharing a double bed with him for the first time? ...Was she ready for such a thing?

Towards the end of the night a small group had gathered outside, chatting. Alan was with Natalie and a bunch of female and male friends all of similar age to her. She was successfully remembering some of their names given to her and their details from

their accounts on face book or what Marie had written about them when they had gone out socialising together. It was like making friends all over again.

They had gone out for cigarettes and whilst they were outside Alan proudly showed off her new car. Martin and Dougie suggested she take them for a spin but Alan quickly chastised them. "Are ye mad? Ah have been drinking all night... are ye wanting me tae get involved in anither accident an' mebbe kill maself this time?" She admonished.

Both young men immediately realised the stupidity of their words and apologised profusely.

The party went on till after two in the morning and those who had travelled far were put up in guest bedrooms, others one by one, left and made their way home. Alan felt tired but on a high... it had been such a wonderful time. She was however, ready for bed and quickly retired after kissing Charles and Brendon goodnight.

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The following day, after a long sleep in, Alan got up, showered, dressed and was ready for a whole new day. At the breakfast table with Brendon, they agreed to travel down to Glasgow mid afternoon, and Alan insisted she drove... in her new Aston Martin.

Isla put together a case with clothes to wear for her night out and a make up attaché case. For travelling Alan wore a pretty patterned jumper, a pair of black leggings and some low heeled sandals. She went up to say bye to Charles before they set off, Charles was still in bed having an even longer lay in.

"Brendon an' I will be going doon tae Glasgee now, Daddy", she told him, stooping to give her father a kiss on the cheek, "I'll text ye and see ye when we get home tomorrow."

Charles returned the kiss and gave Alan a smile. "I'll miss ye... look after yourself and careful with your driving. Have a good time." He bade.

The drive to Glasgow was pretty much straight forward once they had hit the A82 and there wasn't much exchange between the two, other than occasional talks about the forthcoming wedding.

With Alan still having not recovered her memory and feeling she still had a lot to relearn about Brendon and Brendon himself not knowing how to converse with this person that they had turned into his fiancée over such a long period of time, resulted in a silence between them and with only music on the car stereo to break it.

Eventually they reached the outskirts of Glasgow and Brendon who was very familiar with the city, directed Alan in. They were booked at the Blythwood Square Hotel in the centre of Glasgow and the theatre was only a short distance walk from there.

The Hotel was opposite a small park and they were able to park the car on the road outside the hotel. As Brendon went to book in, Alan looked around at the spacious foyer. There was a bar to the left of the entrance door and the reception to the right, plus a wide staircase that went to another bar and the guest rooms. The hotel had three floors and they were staying on the top floor, away from any noisy disturbances from the bars.

"What do you think?" Brendon asked as he returned to Alan's side..

"It's very... posh looking." Alan replied as she had no memory of ever staying in such a classy hotel before, Brendon just smiled. "Right, let's go to our room shall we? We can relax for a while... I've order a bottle of wine then we can get ready to go for dinner and then a stroll out to the Theatre Royal." He said.

Their room was large and spacious... Just the one bed as Alan had feared, but it was enormous and

looked so comfortable, she could always create some distance between them.

As it came closer for them to go to the dining hall for their meal both Brendon and Alan began to dress for the evening. So far Alan had not looked into the case that Isla had prepared, if the ladies maid had been there right then, Alan may well have strangled her.

Alan was still, pretty much, learning to dress and be a woman again after, what she believed, losing all of that knowledge from the car accident. The dress, itself, that Isla had selected, was a crimson coloured three quarter length dress..., so not too short... but it was very figure hugging and there was a long split up the side of the dress for ease of walking. It was also very low cut.

Alan discovered that there was a half cup bra in the case, to wear with such a dress that would hold her breasts up and out. Another noticeable addition was a pair of beige coloured lace top stockings that were designed to hold themselves up on the thigh without the need of garters. Alan considered going out bare legged but her legs were so pale that, eventually she tried the stockings on.

Being separate legs, Alan actually found them easier to put on than wearing pantyhose and they did stay up on her thighs with the aid of some kind of an elastic rubbery band under the wide lacy tops.

It took a bit to adjust her dress to conceal the half cups of her bra and she was rather disturbed to see how much cleavage was formed and on show. She then sat to put on her make-up; she had become quite proficient from Isla's tutoring over the past twenty four days, she then thread a pair of chandelier earrings into her lobes and did her hair. Finally she slipped on the pair of shoes that had been packed, red with front criss-cross strapping and narrow four inch heels.

When Brendon saw the finished look he had delight and amazement written all over his face. "Dar-

ling, you look absolutely ravishing.” He complimented. Was it not for the knowledge of knowing this was a former man, he would have really meant it.

Alan was a bit too concerned with her dress to really take in the compliment; the side split of the dress came high enough up her thigh as to show a glimpse of the lacy top of her stocking when she walked and no matter how she tried she couldn't pull that part of the dress any further down, or the stocking top further up, eventually she just gave up on it... prompted by Brendon who repeatedly assured her that it looked just fine and was hardly noticeable.

Not feeling steady enough on the four inch stiletto's she wore, Alan took Brendon's arm for the walk down to the hotel restaurant where they enjoyed a lovely meal and table wine. Brendon had a cab ordered to take them direct to the theatre to save Alan any further walking difficulties.

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“I have had a fabulous evening.” Alan gushed much later that evening as she swung her legs out of the cab that had pulled up back outside their hotel.

Brendon paid the driver and then took Alan's arm to aid her up the eight steps from the sidewalk to the front door of the hotel. A few drinkers were in the lower bar and just one man working on reception as they made their way to the lifts.

“I'm glad you have enjoyed it.” Brendon told her, signalling to the receptionist.

Alan was feeling a bit merry; she'd had wine before they left their room, more wine with dinner and then more wine in the theatre where they had watched the show from a private box.

Entering their room, the first thing Alan did was to sit herself on the edge of the bed and remove her shoes. “Oh! This bed feels so soft and cosy... I'm going to sleep well tonight.” She said as she first kicked out

her legs and then allowed herself to fall backwards. She then sat up, atop of the bed with her legs curled underneath her.

She thought she had to be the luckiest girl alive. She had been nearly killed in a car crash, but she had survived and, in the space of ninety two days from recovering, she'd had a memorable birthday party, found she had lots of good friends and had been given a new Aston Martin car. She'd been taken out to a big city to dine out and see a top show, staying in a plush hotel and, she was wealthy, lived in a big mansion and had a hot sexy boyfriend whom she would be marrying in just a few weeks... all following that serious accident, life couldn't be better right now.

Just then there was a knock on the door and a voice called that it was room service. Brendon had requested drinks to be brought to their room upon their return.

“What’s this, baby? Are ye trying tae get me drunk?” Alan asked with a smile.

“Just a little night cap to round off our evening sweetheart.” Brendon returned as the drinks were brought in and placed onto a table.

Brendon was indeed trying to get Alan in the mood... and himself; he needed a stiff drink for what he was proposing to do. Logan had repeatedly told him he needed to ensure Alan of her femininity and his supposed love for her, they had come so far, and he couldn't allow anything to slip or ruin things at the last minute.

Pouring a glass of wine for her and a double Scotch on the rocks for himself, Brendon came and sat by Alan on the bed.

“I have really enjoyed myself tonight, too. It is so good to be able to take you out places again.” He told her as he handed the drink over, “I have missed doing such things with you, we used to do this all the time... before your accident and losing your memory, we had a great social life... and we will have again.”

Alan took a large sip of the wine and looked into Brendon's face. "Ah am so, so sorry, sorry that ye have had tae endure all of these months... me bein' in a coma in hospital, me wi' all of those strange dreams ah had and feelin' they were so real, causin' me tae concern ye more... me nae remembering most anything about our lives together." She apologised.

"No, don't apologise for any of that, it was not your fault... and apart from your memory loss, we are over the worst. You are back to feeling like yourself, we are starting to go out again... and you are going to make me the luckiest man in the world in less than a month." He told her as he took the glass from her hand and placed it on the bedside cabinet. He then drew her in and kissed her.

Alan was intoxicated from the drink that she'd had and easily surrendered to his lips and the kiss became more passionate as they fondled each others bodies. Alan became aware that Brendon was sporting an erection which was doing it's utmost to break free from its confines.

"Are you ready to make love to me yet, darling? I am yearning to have sex with you once again." Brendon asked in a heavy voice.

To Alan, she had declined him already and he had been so patient with her throughout her illness. It would be wrong to keep him waiting even more... and she felt ready. She had a warm tingling feeling all over her body, her nipples tingled, she felt moist between her legs... she was aroused and ready. Then a thought suddenly occurred to her.

"We have nae protection with us. Ah am ready tae make love wi' ye, Ah am ready tae marry ye, but I'm nae ready tae have bairns." She told him.

Brendon laughed as he stroked through her hair. "You don't need to worry about that at all. It's impossible for you to get pregnant. He chuckled, becoming absent minded.

Alan looked at him quizzically. “An’ why would that be? Whit makes ye sae sure ah cannae get pregnant?”

Brendon realised his error and quickly attempted to correct himself. “Because of the damage you sustained in the accident. I thought they had told you, you can no longer have children.”

Alan looked at Brendon in horror at what she was hearing. “What? You are saying I can’t bear you children, ever? That makes me feel terrible. Ye must hate me for that.”

“No, of course I don’t hate you. What really matters is that you were saved, you are alive. I’d have liked a son and heir but it isn’t that important... we can adopt, if we want to raise kids.” He told her without any intention of raising someone else’s children.

“Ah knew ah was damaged down there but ah was repaired..., or sae ah thought.” Alan responded as she thought more deeply about the situation.

“They refashioned you... I am told you look perfect down there. But it was more the internal damage that couldn’t be repaired. Have you never thought that you haven’t had any menstruations? It’s the same reason.” Brendon was now playing a blinder. From what may have been problematic he was now cementing even more surety to Alan that he was and always had been female and providing answers for any questions that may have be raised in the near future.

Alan had not even considered periods, it was something that, in life, he had never experienced and therefore it was not even in her thinking. But Brendon was right, she had been conscious for over five weeks and hadn’t had any period.

“Yes... when th’ time is right for us, we can adopt, ah suppose. It would be wonderful to raise children with you.” Alan replied smiling.

“So... like I said, I have been told the surgeon did a wonderful repair job down there, are you going to show your intended just how wonderful?” Brendon

then prompted, changing the subject back to the matter at hand.

The disclosure of Brendon had dampened the moment but Alan was still feeling tipsy, and a little turned on. Aided by Brendon she wriggled up the skirt of her dress to her hips then began to pull down her silky panties.

Brendon gazed in amazement. He knew what Logan had told him but... he never would have guessed this wasn't a real vagina he was staring at. The pubic hair had mostly grown back, there was no evidence of any scarring and she seemed to have perfect pussy lips. It also helped that Alan now sported wider, more feminine hips and her skin, apart from the pubic hair, was smooth and hair free.

"Wow! That's amazing!" He uttered and then lowered his face to her crotch and kissed her feminine mound.

Alan felt an arousal within her vagina and moaned as Brendon resurfaced and helped her disrobe more, pulling the dress up to her shoulders and then off over her head. The operation was made easier with the dress being so low cut.

Brendon's hands wandered underneath Alan's back at he expertly unhooked the two catches of her bra strap before the bra, too, fell to the floor revealing her naked, firm breasts.

Alan was becoming increasingly turned on as the pair canoodled on the bed and her right hand wandered down to between his legs as if it had a mind of it's own, she then began to stroke between his legs and was rewarded by feeling an erection growing under Brendon's pants again.

Brendon was kissing and sucking on her bare neck as, mischievously; her wandering right hand undid the button on top of his pants and then slid the zipper down. She felt naughty as it felt to her she had never done such a thing before.

Brendon was not wearing briefs and Alan felt for and took Brendon's stiffening cock in her hands to start fondling and stroking it. At first she felt awkward but she soon began to get into it as her inhibitions were rapidly lowering.

Brendon's cock quickly grew in both length and girth. Alan was amazed at what she had achieved and the sheer size of it and, in a moments thought, it flashed through her mind that she had never been anywhere near as big as that.

Immediately she realized what she was thinking. Why had she thought that? She mentally berated herself for even having such a stupid thought... of course she had never been so large, she was a woman, women didn't have cocks. She became concerned that she was still, in some way, harbouring thoughts from that stupid set of dreams she'd had. She hoped they were not returning and that she was becoming unwell again.

But she quickly cast the thought out of her mind when her attention was now being taken up with Brendon's mouth as he nibbled on her engorged nipple; it made her shudder with pleasure and warmth ran through her. She squirmed and moaned on top of the bed but her hand, still wrapped around Brendon's cock, never lost its grip as she stroked it with her thumb.

Brendon then slid down her body, kissing all the way until he settled between her legs, using his tongue to excite her created clitoris. Alan had never felt anything so pleasurable before. She grasped the bedding with her hands as she did all she could not to scream out in pleasure. "Oh yes, baby..., yes, right there." She moaned.

Alan orgasmed in waves of pleasure as Brendon began to mount her. She made no resistant against being penetrated for, what was really, the first time in her life. The feeling of having Brendon's cock inside her was new..., and yet not unknown, as her subconscious mind recalled the feelings that she'd had when they had inserted dildo's inside her whilst she was in

her comatose state. In her mind, it was merely remembering past times when the couple had made love.

Brendon began fucking her vigorously, his cock rising and thrusting into her. She wrapped her legs around his waist as if to hold him in place or to pull him deeper in. She moaned and stroked her hands over his body and every so often their parted mouths would meet in a French kiss.

What had not been replicated was the feeling of someone Cumming inside of her and yet she knew, moments before Brendon exploded his ejaculation, that he was about to do so. The feeling was intense and as her own juices flooded, she felt spent.

The two of them both relaxed on the bed and became drowsy, wrapped in each other's arms and, as sleep began to take them, they gravitated to getting beneath the sheets.

Alan woke first the following morning, feeling Brendon's arm draped over her body. As she got up she disturbed him and, after a few minutes to come around, he also got up.

Aware of what had happened the night before between the two of them each felt a little awkward, for different reasons, to talk about the subject and instead they made small talk as, each in turn, showered and dressed for their ride back home.

Alan only wore light make up and she dressed again in the jumper, leggings and sandals that she had drove down in. Once she was fully dressed and had done her hair, and Brendon himself was dressed, they went down to the restaurant for breakfast, helping themselves to a mixed grill.

"Thank you again for treatin' me tae this, it's been really nice." Alan said as they began eating at their table.

“Thank you, madam, for your company... and, for the afters.” Brendon replied, bringing up the sex, the night before, for the first time.

Alan’s face flushed a little and there was a slight pause before she replied. “I... ah, enjoyed it... nae, ah loved it. Ah had forgotten how great sex as a woman was... ye reintroduced me to it.” She said coily as she played with a sausage on her plate using her fork.

“Was there any complications?” Brendon then asked, rather thoughtfully.

“A little... at first. Ah guess after they stitched me up ah was a wee bit less givin’ in that area... an’ ye are rather a big man. I’m a bit sore this morn, but naithin’ too painful.” Alan was impressed that Brendon had been caring enough to inquire. Perhaps it was one of the reasons she had fallen in love with him.

Chapter Seventeen - Bad News and a Forced change of Plans

The pair shared the drive home, Brendon was keen to have a go at the car, and it was mid afternoon before they were turning into the drive and through the gates of Sedgewick Halls, both were in a rather merry mood.

There was a car parked outside the front of the house when they reached the bottom of the long driveway, Brendon suggested it looked like Aiden Carson’s car, the family doctor.

Isla appeared at the door to greet them but, rather than a happy face, pleased to see them, she looked worried.

“Welcome back Miss, Master... but can ah suggest ye gang up tae see yer faither? He’s been in bed since yesterday morning an’ he isn’t sae well.” She said hurriedly.

Alan did just that, going straight up to Charles's room, where the doctor was sitting by him.

"Ah! Your back home wee lassie, I am so glad to see you. Come on over here and give your pappa a kiss." Charles said as she came in. It was evident by the look on his face he was not well at all.

"Daddy... is ye okay?"

"Aye lass. Ah've been having some terrible headaches since ye left but I'm okay." He lied.

Alan knelt by his bedside, holding his hand and stroking his hair, she would have stayed there but the doctor asked her if he could have a word, in private. They left Charles' room and went into her own bedroom.

"What is it Doctor? Ye can tell me." Alan asked as soon as they were behind closed doors.

"It's not good Miss Marie," The doctor said gravely, "The tumour has spread... as we anticipated, your father only has a week left to live... two if he is very lucky."

"But... but, that cannae be, mah weddin' isn't for twenty four days! I want mah Daddy at mah weddin' or it's no happenin'." Alan sobbed.

"I'm sorry. I really am, but there's nothing more I can either say nor do. Is there no chance ye can move your wedding forward?"

"I dunno. We already got the wedding booked as soon as we could. We can try, under these special circumstances, ah suppose." She replied as she wiped tears from her eyes.

Alan broke the news to the staff, though they already guessed that the end was coming soon for the master of the house. Angus volunteered to go see the reverend and see if the dates could be brought forward. Isla and the female staff all said, if it could be brought forward, they would contact everyone involved to get things moving early.

Brendon would have been quite happy for Charles just to die before the wedding, he had no love for the man and, if he passed away before the wedding then he could try postponing the wedding altogether. Charles had now accepted him... but ...what if Marie commit suicide supposedly through the grief of losing the man she believed was her father? Then he wouldn't have to live with a transvestite, or whatever it was, the home and everything could all be his.

That evening, in spite of her concerns about Charles, Alan had a woman to woman chat with Isla. In spite of being one of the staff, Isla was the closest friend he had and they shared lots of things with each other.

Isla was brushing out Alan's lengthened hair in the study whilst she was deep in thought.

"Are ye okay, Miss Marie? Ye is very quiet... it'll be coz of yeur Dad?" Isla asked.

Alan smiled. "Nae it isnae because of that. Perhaps I shouldnae be telling ye this at all but I cannae keep it in to mahself any longer, Last night Brendon and I ...we, well, ye know... we did it." She announced coyly, her cheeks blushing.

Isla squealed in delight. She had really developed a soft spot for the new Marie, almost accepting her for being the real one.

"Oh, Ah am sae pleased, ah really am." She replied. A wry smile then came to her face and a twinkle in her eye. "But ye were not the only one tae get lucky last night, John an' I got it together too." She announced. John had been one of the party guests at the birthday party..., and he and Isla had some history together from a few years before.

"No! John Fornay? Ah ne'er even knew there was anything' between you... or perhaps ah did, ...Ah just cannae remember. She laughed at her own memory loss. "Ah truly am pleased for ye too... will ye be seein' him again?" She then asked as the two of them embraced in girlish delight, pleased for one another.



“Aye, but ne’er mind abit mah love life, whit happened atween ye an’ Mr. Brendon? Who initiated it?” Isla pressed after they parted.

Alan went on to give Isla as full an account of what had happened on her date as she could remember and it was obvious to Isla that she had ‘really’ enjoyed having sex and to Isla, the revelation was even more meaningful, taking in all that she knew about this false Marie.

It was later that day that the news came back that the local vicar, Lewis Carr, had been contacted about Charles and the marriage and, because of Charles Taverner’s rapidly deteriorating health, Carr had agreed to do a special service, in his own free time. The clergyman would have carried out the marriage immediately but it was going to take some days to get all of the wedding guest’s re-notified and for them to change their own plans, if they could, and setting up the after party.

Never the less, the wedding was now brought forward by three weeks..., just three days time, to the 23rd July. Now it was all systems go to make the wedding happen and hope that Charles could last that long.

Luckily the makers of the wedding and bridesmaids dresses were in advance and with a good money incentive, the staff at the shop put in lots of late hours. All but four of the invited guests could make the new, rushed date. The ones unable to make the new date, unfortunately, included Marie’s Uncle Cameron and Aunt Grace.

That evening Alan shared Brendon’s bed. She was now hooked on sex with him, more than she ever thought she could be and just wanted to make love to Brendon over and over again. She particularly liked the sensation of him going down on her. She felt guilty however; as she wondered if Brendon may want her to give him fellatio in return but she felt she was not mentally ready for having a man’s penis in her mouth.

“One step at a time, sweetheart...” she told him with a smile. She then got a mischievous glint in her eye as she then thought she may keep such a thing as a special treat for him on their wedding night.

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The staff of Sedgewick Halls did wonders over the next two days. They arranged transport for all wedding guests, they put up the bridesmaids in the home the day before the wedding to be fitted into their wedding dresses, the Gallery Room was again transformed, this time for the reception party, with silk veils, large tables, statues, large vases of tropical flowers and everything you could think of to make this a special occasion.

And it was... on the day of her wedding, Alan, dressed in her wedding attire of her beautiful satin wedding gown, Tiara and veil, long satin gloves, white silk stockings with a lacy garter belt, a lacy garter at the top of her right thigh and pearl coloured shoes. She wore real diamond chandelier earrings in her lobes and she was fully perfumed.

Memories of her morning were hazy as everything was rushed. She was shepherded out with her bridesmaids to waiting limousines as soon as they were dressed and ready, Alan travelling with Charles, and transported to the church situated in the nearest town to the Taverner estate. All party guests, most of the staff, and her husband to be were already waiting there.

The service was a long affair which, throughout, Alan had the strongest feeling she had been here and done this kind of thing all before... but instead of standing where Brendon was... and looking into the happy glowing face of Barbara. She was walking down the aisle, her arm linked with Charles and her bridesmaids following as the wedding march played. It unnerved her to be having those thoughts once again but she got through them and, before she knew it, she had her wedding ring pushed onto her finger, her veil lifted and she was kissing her new husband.

Coaches and a fleet of private cars transported everyone back to Sedgewick Halls where the reception party began in earnest for the newly weds. Photographs were taken, the food was served and drinks flowed.

At a moment alone together, Brendon stood by Logan.

“Well, you have done it. You have got your wish. Charles has days to live, you have married who everyone believes to be, his daughter. What now?” Logan asked as he nursed a glass of sherry in his hand.

“I guess I will have to wait for a few weeks... play the loving husband. It’s my guess, once ‘Daddy’ has gone, the grieving Marie would want to end it all. She has been in a near fatal crash before so she knows how it works.” Brendon replied.

“You are joking me? You would set up her death... murder her?” Logan gasped. He’d had enough of his friend’s callous disregard for the sex changed man and he was totally against Brendon’s thoughts of doing away with her.

“You will destroy a life just so that you get everything... your greed will take you so far as to murder?”

“He is not Marie... why should he inherit everything? Have the mansion, have the estate, the businesses, the wealth? He is a nobody... I am entitled to it,” Brendon argued, “And, no... I’ll nae be killing him ...he will kill himself old man. The loss of Charles... a husband who is keeping his distance and a few pills in his drink to make him feel depressed... I could even awaken those dreams of his.”

“Oh, for pity’s sake... She... Brendon... She... Whatever she was before she has become a most feminine of creatures... she has the beauty of Marie ...and she loves and trusts you. And how do you think the staff would take to her death... they have come to love and respect her for who she is... as you should have.”

“That bunch of worthless scum. I will give them all good references and a healthy redundancy payment when I sell this place.”

“You forget that they know your secret.” Logan reminded.

“Yes, I know... they will understand. My own grief for losing my new wife so soon. I simply couldn't bear to continue living in this big house afterwards... with all of its painful memories.” Brendon smirked in response.

Logan could take no more of the callousness of Brendon and stormed out of the party, and Sedgewick halls, leaving Frobisher to enjoy the evening and to get drunk.

In spite of all that he had told Logan, after the party was over, and the last of the guests had left, Brendon staggered up to his bedroom where he found Alan waiting, in a long black negligee, black sheer stockings with black garter belt and matching silk panties and a bra that held Alan's breasts up and out enticingly. She was wanting to please her new husband and Brendon had to admit his long-term friend was right... they had turned him into a hell of a beautiful sexy woman.

In his inebriated state Brendon was only too eager to have sex with this alluring looking woman and quickly had his pants falling about his feet and kicking them to one side.

As they kissed and fondled on top of the bed Brendon loosened Alan's bra and sucked upon the exposed nipple of her right breast. He was about to do what he had done each time they had made love over the past few days... go down on her... but Alan stayed him with her hand and a smile.

Her hand found his stiff cock and wrapped around it. “No... baby, it is mah turn.” She told him in a soft heavy voice. She worked her way down the bed, her hand continuing to pump and stroke Brendon's cock

as her head came in alignment with her new husband's groin. She released the erect member to then cup his balls as the top of her tongue reached out to touch the glistening dome of his cock.

Once she'd had the initial taste of cock in her mouth she knew in her mind that she recognised it... she must have done this before. Licking her tongue on the underside of his penis from mid shaft upwards she then parted her mouth to allow the quaking member inside.

Brendon groaned at the warmth and the touch from her mouth and he shivered as she continued down on him before closing her lips tightly against the flesh and pulling back up... this she did numerous times until, and without any warning, Brendon shot his load into her mouth, making her cough and choke. She found the funny side of it though and was totally forgiving as he took his turn to go down on her as she licked away the residue around her lips

The following morning neither Brendon nor Alan made any effort to get up out of bed; they had woken wrapped in each others arms; Brendon feeling the warmth of her body, her soft breasts flattening against his broad hairy chest. He smelt her feminine aroma and looked into her pretty, peaceful face. He desired to kiss her lips and he did, long and lovingly.

Their kisses and caresses led to more love making and more fellatio. Logan was right all along. The person they had chased over a hillside, captured and operated on, was in no way the same person lying in his bed with him. Logan admitted to himself he had enjoyed the two times they had gone out together, he had really enjoyed their love making and he was enjoying it again, completely sober.

Forget the past and just look at the present he told himself. This person looked like Marie and he was learning to love her as he had loved Marie.

OOOXOOO

The morning after the wedding, Brendon had repeatedly tried to phone Logan, apologise to him and tell him he was right... tell him he meant Alan no harm, that he was falling in love with the new Marie... no matter who she used to be. But Logan was not answering... he wasn't even at work, he had gone off 'for some respite'.

It was two days after the wedding that Charles Taverner lost his fight for life. But he died happy. He had seen the return from near death of his daughter, he had seen her marry the man she loved and trusted and, in those two days since the wedding, their love for each other was there for all to see... they were never apart.

Four days later, on the 29th July, Charles Taverner was cremated. Alan was dressed all in black; black knee length dress, black pantyhose, black stiletto court shoes with a four inch heel, black gloves and a black face net and bonnet.

Brendon, also dressed in black, was right by her side, his arm around her waist as he comforted her throughout the service and holding her as she wept afterwards. The constant use of estrogens and anti androgen pills had given Alan strong emotional... feminine feelings, and they poured out on this saddest of days for him.

The following few days the large household was solemn. The staff had never really gotten on with Charles Taverner but they had seen a marked change in him and his attitude ever since 'Marie' had reappeared into his life. But they were more down from how their mistress was feeling and Isla did all that she could to console the young woman.

It didn't help that Brendon had left home to go to America just two days after the funeral. He was trying to sell off Charles's assets over there and then take his new wife on a world cruise as a belated honeymoon. Neither of them had good business minds or

involved themselves in any of Charles' affairs so, by mutual agreement, they would sell the businesses off.

Chapter Eighteen - The truth is revealed

Brendon had been in America for three days when Logan suddenly showed up again at Sedgewick Halls.

“Logan... it's so good tae see ye. What happened? Ye jist disappeared durin' our marriage after party?” Alan quizzed as she hugged Logan on the doorstep. “Come oan inside... Brendon isn't here ah'm afraid... he's away closing doon some of ma father's businesses.”

Marie's words concerned Logan... To him, Brendon was doing just as he threatened he would, close down the businesses, sell off the estate, kill off Marie and then disappear somewhere with all the cash. He had no idea of his friends change of heart and discovered real love for the new Marie.

“Yes, I am sorry I hadn't time to say goodbye to you... I suddenly had urgent business to attend to at the hospital.” He apologised as he followed her through the door, taking off his hat, scarf and coat.

“Brendon tried phonin' an' texting ye, God knows how many times.” Alan told him, she had a soft spot for Logan... he had always been so kind and understanding towards her, giving her lots of encouragement and advice. He was good looking too... who knew, if she wasn't so in love with Brendon and had met Logan first?

Logan sat down in a soft, padded armchair opposite Alan. “Marie... there is something that I need to tell you about Brendon,” Logan began, angst etched on his face, “I cannot allow him to get away with what he is planning.”

Alan went on to reveal everything.... The car chase and crash, the transformation, all set up in order to

get the estate from Charles Taverner. He revealed how Marie had really died in the crash and now... now that Brendon had married the false Marie... how he planned to have her dead too.

“No... ye are lying tae me. That cannae be.... Look at me, ah am a woman, all woman... You are just using those dreams ah had against me...an’ Brendon loves me, ah know he does. We are talkin’ aboot adopting bairns.” Alan protested.

“I am not lying, you were correct right from the start... remember, those dreams were so real to you? You remembered family so clearly! Protesting so vigorously that you were really a man?” Logan countered.

“Nae, it’s impossible. Mah face is mah own... Marie’s, ...mah body, ye cannae create a body of a man tae look like this... an’ all the memories of long ago that are coming back tae me... how dae ye explain that...? even mah accent. In mah dream ah was English... but ah am Scottish, mah accent is Scottish.”

Logan explained all the procedures that had been done in order to have Alan Rutledge believe he was Marie Taverner, with a little bit of pride in his voice. As he spoke all of those early fears resurfaced... a living nightmare once again arose.

“Do you recall after the car accident? You rolled away, tried to hide? It was me that found you hiding?” Logan reminded.

Alan did recall. It was dark but in his mind he could see the vision of Logan standing over him, the cloth that was put over his nose. He looked at Logan aghast.

“I was forced into all of this, Marie... blackmailed... I would be in prison now if I had not done as Frobisher demanded of me...” Logan continued. “But I will not allow Frobisher to do what he intends... to take your life, I will stop him.”

In spite of the shocking revelations that he really had been a man, forced into a change of sex and

made to think he was someone else, Alan tried to remain calm and collected.

“An’ how can ye dae that? Would you become a killer too? You cannae just make him disappear an’ ah know ye would not go tae the police aboot him as that would implicate yourself. An’ what aboot me? What becomes of me if you did stop Brendon? Ah have had mah true identity stolen from me. I cannae just return home after all of this time of being missin’... as a woman and with a different face.” Alan sobbed as he began to believe this horror tale that was unfolding in front of him.

“No.., but you can continue living as Marie. That is who you are now. Nobody is any the wiser to that fact, other than the surgeons who transformed you and the house staff who love you as if you were the real Marie. And they need you to be here for their own welfare. My surgeon friends could never tell anyone the truth as then they all would be implicated, charged and given prison sentences. ...everyone else believes you are Marie Taverner, your birth certificate says you are Marie Taverner. And your renewed driver’s licence, with a photo of how you look now, all say you are Marie Taverner... and the real Marie Taverner is dead without anyone aware of that fact”

Alan had stopped fully hearing what Logan was saying for the moment... The disclosure that all the staff all knew his real identity was a shock to him... even Isla, the closest person to him... she knew and had been in on it, in on this entire deception.

“Marie Taverner is the sole owner of this house, this estate, of all her father’s businesses. You could live the rest of your life in luxury... well as soon as I dispose of Brendon and make you safe.” Logan continued.

Alan looked at him as she considered all that he said. There could be life after Alan Rutledge, a very lucrative one. She had already been living life as a female for a long time, she had become used to living and dressing as a woman on a daily basis.

“...But it would be sae hard living this lie each day, oan mah own, withoot mah father or Brendon’s support tae look after and protect me..., I had relied so heavily on them both during those first weeks, ah feel so vulnerable.” She lamented.

“Then let me look after you, I can move in here with you.” Logan said sincerely, surprising her. His wife had walked out on him and she was filing for divorce. He had always cared for Marie, secretly loved her, from the first time Brendon had began courting her.

“Ah, now ah see yeur game. All ye have tauld me aboot changing me may be true, but ye ur wantin’ Brendon out of the way now that mah father is deid, so that ye can move in on all mah inheritance.” Alan suddenly stormed.

“No, it is not like that... honestly. Your life is in danger when Brendon returns. I would love and protect you... unlike Brendon I can accept you for what you are... I created you.” Logan pleaded.

“Och aye, ye created me... ye turned me, against mah will, intae a woman... it was ye that found me hiding an’ took me to yer hospital... ye had your own part tae play in all of this and you are partly responsible for the death of mah wife, my dear Barbara.”

“...Ah just want ye tae go, get out of here and leave me alone or ah swear ah will confess everythin’ tae the police, an’ ye will be in prison fer th’ rest of yer life. I never want tae see you again. The true me is already dead, nae matter what Brendon does.”

Feeling guilt ridden and fully believing that Marie meant every word she had just threatened. Logan left the mansion home. But he still intended to stop Brendon, anyway he could.

Logan contacted Brendon on his phone, pretending to be unaware he was in the states. He found out the exact time that Brendon would be returning to Scotland and said he would come and meet him at the airport and run him home.... There were matters that he needed to talk to him about.

Brendon was looking forward to returning home. He didn't know how it had happened ... but it had. He had fallen in love with the man they had changed into Marie. He had come to accept this person was now, in body and in mind, a true and fully functioning female. He had brought her back an expensive gift to show her how much he did care for and love her.

Unaware of Logan's thoughts and plans, Brendon met his long time friend at Glasgow airport and accepted a drink of whiskey for their ride home. The whiskey was drugged and Brendon, believing he was just drowsy from the drink and jetlag, fell asleep and unconscious. He would not be returning to Sedgewick Halls... not in his present form, anyway. Logan was driving straight to the hospital and Brendon was going to meet the same fate as Alan Rutledge had. The team of surgeons, eager to begin work on a new 'test subject', were already there to meet him. They were also annoyed that they had not seen any of the money promised to them.

Whether it was just fate... a perfect way to dispose of Brendon Frobisher had emerged just the day before. A van full of illegal immigrants had crashed in Scotland, the van had caught fire and the immigrants were all badly burned to death... their bodies had been taken to St Andrew's hospital. Identification was impossible due to the state of the corpses.

Raymond Broadie had managed to obtain one of the bodies; for alleged medical practice. The charred body would be placed in Brendon's own car, with a few identification documents, Brendon's wedding ring on the finger, etc... The car was then rolled down a cliff in flames... when it was discovered, the police would believe the body inside was that of Brendon Frobisher without much, if any, forensic tests being carried out.

Logan then sent a letter off to Sedgewick Halls, attention of Marie. In the letter Logan explain what had really become of Brendon and, if she wanted, the sex changed Brendon could then be used by her as an additional maid in the home.

He also explained that, in order not to start developing secondary male characteristics once again, such as deeper voice and body hair; that she would have to keep taking female hormones for the rest of her life. Dr. Carson, who had been in on the deception from the start, would prescribe them to her. Finally, Logan wished Marie all the luck in her new life and apologised, emphatically, again, for the part he had played.

One Month Later

Marie sat waiting for her nail polish to dry as she sipped some wine from a flute. This house was so big... and felt so empty. Oh, sure there was all the staff about the place but it felt different now, quiet, now that Charles and Brendon were no longer around.

She thoughtfully reached for her cell phone as she pondered on her loneliness. There was no way ever of going back to her former life, she had changed too much. She felt sure; if she could ever convince her family that she was Alan Rutledge, that they would be so relieved she was still alive they would welcome her with open arms... accept her changes and what she had become. But she could not do it; it would be too embarrassing and too emotionally hard.

And why do it? She had everything here she could possibly need... great wealth..., as Logan had told her, she didn't even need to work ever in her life again, this huge mansion and a loyal staff. She was beautiful and she had become fully used to being a woman. If she returned to London as Alan, she would lose it all and have nothing, she wouldn't even still have a job down there.

Yes, she had everything, everything except someone to share the loneliness. She had needs and her memories were still filled with the wonderful feelings she'd had each time she had made love to Brendon. Dialling a number in her phone, she absent-mindedly rubbed her hand softly over the mate-

rial of her skirt where it covered her crotch as she heard the dial tones.

Logan McKlintock was at home sorting through some medical reports as his cell phone sounded.

“Hello? Logan McKlintock here.” He responded without looking at the caller id.

“Hello Logan... It’s Marie. Ah was just wonderin’ how ‘Brenda’ is comin’ along?”

“Oh, Marie. It’s so good to hear from you since our last phone conversation. Brenda is coming on very well indeed. I will be able to present her to you and you can have your new maid in about two and a half weeks from now.” Logan replied.

“Will ‘she’ remember anythin’? Ah mean know who she was?”

“Not at all. Unlike with you, we have totally erased her memory.”

“Oh, an’ Logan... Ah was also wonderin’ if ye may like tae come up tae Sedgewick Halls to have dinner with me sometime? There are some things ah would like tae discuss with ye.”

“Anything I should worry about?” Logan asked cautiously.

Marie laughed. “Nae Logan, naethin’ tae worry about. Ah..., uhm... Ah have forgiven ye for the part ye played in altering me. Ah just thought we may sit an’ talk about the possibility of ye holding your word and movin’ in and sharing this big old house with this vulnerable girl tae stop me being so lonely..., and looking after me like ye said ye would?”

The End.