Forget About It

A Short Story

By Maryanne Peters

We have all heard the word “amnesia” and we think that we know what it means. It seems to be a go-to device in every television drama – somebody stumbles with no memory of their past. Well, it is very rare in this form, and usually accompanied by some other mental impairment from a serious injury. The idea of the otherwise untouched victim is a myth.

There is something called “Transient Global Amnesia” which is more common. Recent memories are lost so that you may not remember how you got to a place, and you may even fail to recognize people that you know, but it soon passes. TGA is called “not serious but terrifying”.

But that does not describe what happened to Tyler Roberts. When he woke in that morning in July he knew who he was, but he felt as if he had been somebody else. It was as if he was recovering from a bout of amnesia. There were memories that did not belong.

Perhaps not terrifying, but confusing. Even more confusing when his memory told him that he had once been a woman – A woman called Melissa. It seemed so preposterous that he hit his head with the palm of his hand as he looked in the mirror. Tyler was standing there.

But as he reached for his shaving kit, he noticed something odd. His beard was almost non existent. There were a few whiskers on his chin and upper lip, but that was it. Otherwise his face was remarkably smooth. Yet he would shave whatever he had every morning, but now he paused. He had another memory. It was of Melissa standing in front of this mirror applying lipstick.

It seemed crazy. If that were true, then where is the lipstick? Not in the drawers – he checked. He put down the shaving kit and went back into his bedroom. Was there any evidence at all that this Melissa person ever existed?

There was a chest of drawers. He knew it well, and yet he went through it again looking for something. But there was nothing there. Next the closet. It was full of the drab clothes that Tyler wore every day. There was no Melissa anywhere.

Into the living area of his modest apartment. There was limited space for anything there. The kitchen was full. There was a sideboard with the usual stuff inside. Then there was the closet by the door – the usual home of sporting equipment and a heavy coat. But there was a box there too. Quite a large box. Written on the lid was just one word: “NO”.

Perhaps Tyler should have heeded the obvious warning, but he was troubled and searching for an answer. He had no recollection of this box, and while the word could have been written by him, if it was then why could he not remember it?

But he was a man, and men sometimes disregard warnings. It is in their nature.

He opened the box. It smelt of perfume. It smelt like a woman. Perhaps the kind of woman that Tyler Roberts would like to fuck.

The box was full of women’s clothes. There were some shoes and hosiery, two handbags, and a box of cosmetics and another with jewelry inside. And there was a wig – a chocolate brown page boy wig. It was all very puzzling. Tyler decided that he would lay the clothes out on his sofa to try to remember the woman who wore them.

Did she live here before him? Did he bring her home from a bar? Why did she leave her stuff? And just not one outfit, but at least five by his assessment – day dresses and two items of evening wear with a single pair of heels to match both.

He examined the heels. Was he slightly aroused? Some men can be, he thought. They were very sexy … or would be at the bottom of the right legs. The size was quite large. Could it be?

Perhaps Tyler was stupid to even think it, but when the shoe slipped onto his right foot as if molded to it, he had to put on the other. Then he had to stand up and walk across the room and back into his bedroom.

Perhaps he should have stumbled. The heels were quite high, and it is a fact that a man cannot walk in heels. And yet he could. And he could swish his bathrobe around his legs as he did, as if it were a skirt.

But in the mirror on the wardrobe door he could see that the legs were his – hairy.

He turned and he could imagine how they might look smooth. His legs were not sinewy as some can be, and in the heels the calf looked well shaped. He laughed at himself for even considering it. Just glide a razor over them in his morning shower. Hair grows back. Every day he wore long pants until it did.

Shower? He checked the time. But he remembered his first appointment was out of the office. He had time. He would be inspecting placement of his company’s product at a few department stores. He had time. When he stepped out of the shower his legs were shaved.

There were stockings in the box. How good would his legs look in those in the heels? Very good, as it turned out. The dress he chose showed his legs off really well. And there he was standing dressed like a woman.

These were his clothes! He was a crossdresser! Somehow he had forgotten that important part of his personality. Perhaps he had shut it away … a rightly so. He unzipped the dress and let it fall, as if it was a poisoned cloak.

But in the mirror he saw somebody. It was like one of those illusions when you look at a face through a window with light behind you so that your reflection is merged with that face. Melissa was on the other side of the glass. She was smoothing out a bushy eyebrow with a look of disgust on her face.

How had she let herself get into this state?

There were tweezers in the cosmetics bag which was now emptied on the vanity top. Under the eyebrows and those chin and other face whiskers had to go. And everything else was there. Strangely, he knew it all and what had to be done.

The dress was back on, and the wig, and Tyler was Melissa, hailing a cab outside his apartment.

A voice came out of his mouth, telling the driver of his destination. It all seemed so normal – almost automatic. He adjusted the hem of his dress, admiring those legs again. He was a crossdresser in public now, but it seems like he may have done this before.

Tyler Roberts stepped out at the front door of the department store and walked purposely inside, dressed as a woman.

He should have felt nervous or embarrassed or maybe fearful that this ridiculous get up would be discovered and that he would be hopelessly shamed, but he curiously confident. He was here to go to homeware and check the in-store display, but instead he lingered in the cosmetics section, for no particular reason.

He should have bypassed women’s fashion, but he stopped there too, pulling some items off the rack and holding them in front of himself as he looked in the mirror.

Homeware was the next level up, but for some reason he went another floor above that – electronic and store management. He was not interested in electronics but he lingered there for a minute before he heard a voice behind him.

“Melissa?” Tyler turned as if responding to his name.

It was Justin. Justin was standing there looking at him. His heart fluttered, although it should not have.

“I thought that I was never going to see you again,” said Justin. “But thank God you are here”. He came towards Tyler, as if certain that he was this Melissa. Tyler said nothing, he just raised his hands to stop the advance.

“Darling, tell me that you are here to stay … please, I beg you. I cannot live without you. The thought of life without you is more than I can bear. These last few months have been hell.”

Tyler could sense a few people in the store had stopped to watch this unusual exchange of emotion, but as it was early in the day they were few in number. They could be ignored, and they were.

“I know that this is difficult for you, but I know that you love me as much as I love you. I understand that you needed time, but here you are, more beautiful than ever. Tell me that you will go through with the surgery and that we can be married. Please, Melissa.

And Melissa ran to him and into his arms, and they kissed as if it was the last kiss of all time, or perhaps the very first.

And whatever happened to Tyler Roberts? Well, he simply disappeared like some memories do. Apart from this story, you would never know that he existed.

And by the way, my name is Melissa.

The End

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Erins seed: A guy wakes up with amnesia but distinctly remembers having been a woman and slowly finds out he has been a crossdresser for years but always assumed it was just clothes. He's good at it. He gets dressed and goes out and finds someone at a bar who seems to know her. It turns out this is her romantic liaison and she has been in such a funk she went into a fugue state with memory loss to avoid the idea that she really does want to be a woman … but she does and her lover persuades her of it