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Trapped in the Wrong Sex

Weeping For a Life She Couldn't Have

by Rory Young

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As a young boy Kevin Morrow cried himself to sleep each night. Locked inside his tiny frame was a secret he kept hidden from everyone, even his mother. For trapped within Kevin's slowly maturing male body was the psyche of a girl weeping for a life she couldn't have.

The thought of being alone is far less daunting than not being who I want to be!"

Now, more than thirty years later, Kevin has achieved what he once thought was impossible - he has become a woman.

The little boy who was Kevin grew to manhood, fathered a son, even became a Rugby League referee. But earlier this year he disappeared under a surgeon's knife to be replaced by Christine, a woman so relieved to find her true-self that she has trouble holding back the tears. But this time they are tears of happiness.

"Ever since I can remember I had a terrible battle going on inside my body," Chrissy, forty-one, says. "Inside I knew I should have been a girl - but on the outside I was a boy. Unless someone has experienced these feelings, there are hardly enough words to convey how bitter and how confused you can become."

During his painful adolescence, Kevin would sneak into his mother's bedroom when he was alone in the house and run his smooth hands over her intimates and dresses.

"I would try on different garments and look at myself in the mirror." Chrissy recalls from her home in Sydney's west. "I even tried on her high heels. It used to feel so right. I couldn't tell my mother how I felt, but I think she suspected what I was doing."

Despite his inner turmoil, the young Kevin made a pact with himself. He would try to be "normal". He so desperately wanted the world to see him as a man that he denied the woman's instincts he was feeling.

"I felt attracted to men, but I didn't really know why," Chrissy says. "I wanted to be attracted to girls so I tried to tell myself that I was. But girls and I never really hit it off."

Kevin didn't have a physical relationship with a woman until years later when he met Roberta. Kevin was thirty.

"I loved Roberta, but it was more like a love that a brother has for a sister - or that a sister has," Chrissy says. "We moved in together, but when we made love, I would imagine that our roles were reversed. That seemed more natural for me. It was something I just couldn't get out of my mind. I told Roberta about my feelings right from the start. There were no secrets. She said that we could work things out."

Ten years ago, Roberta bore Kevin a son, Tommy. Each day Tommy saw his father come home from work to change into women's clothing.

"I guess part of me was still trying to prove that I was a man. When Tommy was old enough, we tried to explain why I was dressing as a woman," Chrissy says. "It was difficult, but he is very intelligent and seemed to understand."

But Kevin and Roberta's relationship foundered. It could not survive the overwhelming emotions surging through Kevin's mind and body.

"Roberta and Tommy moved to another house," Chrissy says. "In the end I don't think there was much choice for Roberta. We both knew that it had to be that way. Then one day, a couple of years ago, I was watching a television interview with some transsexuals. It was a revelation. I thought I was the only one who felt like this, trapped in the wrong body. I found out where I could get some counselling and within a few months I knew I wanted a sex change."

Intense counselling revealed that Kevin was indeed a transsexual. He went to his parents to tell them the secret he had kept hidden.

"My mother divorced my natural father when I was about twelve months old so I never knew him," Chrissy says. "I went to tell Mum and my step-father. It was the biggest shock of their lives. My stepfather said that people like me should be shot. I don't think Mum knew what to say. After a while they calmed down. I explained to them it was something I had to do. That was hard enough, but perhaps the most difficult thing was explaining my decision to my son. I wanted him to know that I would still be his daddy, no matter what."

Chrissy lives alone and has a job as a stores worker and packer. But her workmates have accepted her, as have her parents and her

neighbours. Even Tommy, showing remarkable understanding for a ten-year-old, seems to have come to terms with his father's change of sex.

"When we are alone I still call Chrissy "Daddy", Tommy says "That's something that will never change. Mum and I visit on weekends. We have a train set that Chrissy built and we play with that."

Chrissy says her operation was a complete success. She now faces a new life and an uncertain future. One day she would like to settle down with a man - but if that doesn't happen she won't be devastated.

"I am the person I always wanted to be," she says. "I wouldn't change my decision. I get on better with Roberta now than I ever did as a man. I am happier now than I ever have been in my life. The thought of being alone is far less daunting than not being who I want to be!"

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