

The Red Dress

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She looked at herself in the mirror and she liked what she saw. It was not only her face and body that made her so pleased with herself. She was proud of her inner strength and courage as well. Nobody could have predicted the way her life would change after her book was published. And now she would receive the prize, a kind of compensation for all those years of pain and suffering. Tormented by her secret fears and desires, she found that only writing brought her peace. It was some sort of exorcism. Every painful memory had come to life again as soon as she had started writing about it but, in the end, the heavy burden had disappeared.

Her years at primary school have been the worst. She had felt rejected and mocked at by her peers on a daily basis. It was her hair or her height or her thinness, she never knew what was wrong with her until much later. “You’re a giant! You can’t play with us,” the girls would say. “Go and play with the boys!” but she did not want to play with boys. Once she had taken her mum’s lip-stick and painted her lips during a break at school. The teacher yelled at her when she went into the classroom but she did not understand. “Why is she so mad at me? she wondered while her mates burst into laughter. She was only 8 and that sense of being an alien in her own environment would accompany her even to these days. That sense of not fitting in. She could not figure out what was wrong with her until much later.

Fortunately, her home was not another battlefield. She grew up in a conservative but supportive family where she was encouraged to develop herself according to her own will and desire. The fact that she had never been compelled to fulfill her parents’ expectations made her strong enough to face the outside world. And the time had come to be true to herself and stop living in the shadows of deceit.

“Should I wear false eye lashes?” she wondered while looking at the long red silk dress which was carefully laid on the bed. Beside, a pair of matching stilettos would complete the outfit. They stood out because of the colour and the size. And the wig, a dark brown wavy wig. She would look stunning.

Tonight it would be a turning point in her life. The prize she was going to receive would give her the deserved opportunity to make a statement for her cause. No more living in the shadows as if she had committed a crime, leading a double life which had started to hurt her sensitive spirit. It was not her fault to have been born in the wrong body. She was a woman, she had always been a woman trapped in a man’s body. She would come out tonight, she would be born again tonight.

* 1º mención especial del Concurso Literario USAL en Lengua Inglesa – Categoría cuento (2018).