

The Christmas Star

I'm not really sure why I agreed to this. I mean, it's literally Christmas Eve. I guess that's the thing about Sara; she can convince you to do just about anything. Which is why I now find myself out in the backyard of the house I rent together with her and my other roommate Alexis, wrapped in a blanket and freezing my ass off, searching the night sky for the north star. Polaris.

"You just follow the handle of the Little Dipper to find it, right?" I ask her, shivering in my boots.

"I think you're supposed to look for Ursa Minor, actually," Sara replies, completely unphased by the cold.

"That's the same constellation!" Alexis laughs, equally as unphased by the cold. Apparently I was the only one who actually preferred to be inside somewhere warm on a cold winter's night.

"Oh! Well how about that! Learn something new everyday!"

I roll my eyes and scan the northern part of the sky. Even though I'm sort of playing it up a bit, this isn't actually the first time I've ever bothered trying to find the North Star. I've always been a bit curious about astronomy and space itself fascinates me. And Polaris in particular, I'd found myself staring at several nights between the window drapes as a child. My eyes were drawn to it. Probably just because it's supposed to be brighter than other stars, but it felt like something else.

I pull the blanket tightly around my shoulders for warmth, pointing a finger out of my cocoon for only long enough that I know Sara's seen where, "Is that it?"

She looks at me, and then up where I directed her, "Yes! You found it. You're just full of surprises, aren't you?" She smiles, pointing for Alexis to see too.

"Huh," Alexis muses, tilting her head as she examines the star, "It's dimmer than I thought it would be. Isn't it supposed to be the brightest star in the sky?"

"That's all the light pollution from the city," I reply. "Back a century or so ago there would be visible thousands of stars, and brighter than them all was Polaris." I smile as I look at the north star's luster, dimmed as it admittedly was. "It's probably a testament to it's shine that we can even see it at all."

"Wow," Sara whispers in awe. "I'd love to see that someday." She turns to look at me with a knowing grin on her face. "You sure seem to know a lot about the north star, Mr. 'is that it.'"

I blush and look away from her. "Okay, okay. I might know a thing or two."

She laughs, then walks over and ruffles my hair. "Oh Jay, you're such a dork, I swear!" I groan and grumble. Sara doesn't really have a concept of personal space.

Jay isn't actually my name. It's more a nickname I developed over time based off, you guessed it, the first letter of my birth name. I actually like it though. It sounds better and more normal to me to hear than when someone calls me by my birth name. Of course, I've never actually told anyone that, let alone Sara. As far as she knows, Jay is just a nickname I prefer and use to introduce myself.

Enough down memory lane. I'm really starting to get cold now and I'd much rather get back to the warmth of the indoors. "Look, we found it, so can we go back inside now? I'm freezing out here," I grumble.

"Nope! Not yet!" Sara exclaims happily. "Now that we found Polaris, we all have to make a wish!"

"We what?" I ask incredulously. "You can't be serious."

"Yeah Sara, doesn't that seem kinda childish to you?" Alexis adds.

"Aw, come on y'all! It's Christmas Eve! It's the time of the year to indulge that inner child we all have and bring some magic into the holidays!" Sara insists with a pout.

"Pleeeeeeeeease?"

Alexis and I look at each other and sigh. "Alright, alright, let's just get this over with." I say, exasperation heavy in my tone.

"Yay!" Sara squeals gleefully. She pulls Alexis and I both into a hug and then looks up into the sky. "Alright, on the count of three we'll all make a wish! And remember, keep the wish to yourself, or else it won't come true!"

Alexis chuckles. "Okay Sara, whatever you say."

I nod in agreement. I look up into the sky at Polaris and furrow my brow. I don't really mind playing along with Sara. Her energy is just infectious, after all. But what even am I going to wish for? I guess some new video games, maybe world peace or something.

"Ready?" Sara asks. She doesn't wait for an answer though and immediately starts counting, "One..."

World peace sounds kind of generic, now that I think about it. I should wish for something more personal.

"Two..."

I've been feeling kind of sad lately. For a while now. Like something is missing in my life. If I'm going to play along, maybe I should wish to fix that?

"Three!"

I almost start to whisper, but catch myself. Staring intently at Polaris, I instead say my wish in my head.

North Star: for Christmas this year, I could use something that will bring happiness into my life.

Heh. That sounds a lot cornier now than I thought it would. But it's too late, the wish is done.

I'm about to look away, but something catches my eye. Polaris seems to be... twinkling? I mean, it always is, but somehow it looks brighter. And shinier. Like somehow it's brightness has grown to shine as much as I imagine it would if there weren't all these other lights flooding the sky. My eyes widen as it twinkles and shimmers like this for a few seconds. Then, after a blink of my eyes, it goes back to normal, almost as if it had never started acting strange to begin with.

"Did you both see that?" I ask Sara and Alexis in awe.

"Hm? See what Jay?" Sara replies.

"Polaris, it just... twinkled. Or something."

Alexis tilts her head and looks at me curiously. "You mean differently than stars already do?"

"Yes! It was brighter and shinier!"

Sara giggles. "Gosh, look at you, really getting into the Christmas spirit! I knew you'd eventually wanna play along!"

"No, this isn't--!" I stammer, then sigh with defeat. "Nevermind. I guess I must have been seeing things."

"Aw, it's okay Jay!" Sara gives me a gentle hug, one which I decide to gladly accept if only to feel some warmth out here in this freezing cold air. "Don't worry, I believe you. Even if I saw ab-so-lute-ly nothing."

I roll my eyes. "Thanks, Sara. Can we get inside now?"

Sara lets go of me and sighs, then replies with a nod, "Yes, yes, okay, let's get back in."

"Finally!" I run up the back porch and practically leap into the house. "At last, some heat and warmth!"

"Overdramatic-much, Jay?" Alexis comments with a chuckle. After her walks in Sara, who shuts the sliding glass door behind us. "It is nice to be back inside though. That was fun and all, but damn is it way too cold right now."

"Ugh, you both need to lighten up. It's Christmas Eve!" Sara scolds with a pout. "Don't you think it's important that we all spend time together enjoying the holidays and bringing some Christmas spirit into our lives?"

"I don't understand how standing in the freezing cold is supposed to conjure Christmas spirit," I reply with a shrug, plopping onto the couch. "If we wanted to do that, why not watch something like Christmas movies instead?"

"We can do that tomorrow!" Sara insists. "For now we all need to get to bed! It's almost midnight and we have to let the holiday magic do its thing. Maybe even Santa will stop by with presents!"

"You're kidding, right?" Alexis asks her with one eyebrow raised. "You don't actually still believe in Santa, do you?"

Sara looks at Alexis seriously for a moment, both of them locked in a staredown. Then Sara cracks up giggling and shakes her head. "No, no, not really! I think the true spirit of gift-giving has to come from us, not some jolly old man with a sleigh!"

I smile at Sara's comments. She's just chock full of childish energy, isn't she? It's almost kind of infectious. However, she's right about it being late. It's only ten minutes to midnight and I'm already feeling drowsy. Hell, my whole body is sorta tingling like that weird crawling feeling you get when a limb falls asleep. Must've been the cold.

"Alright, alright, let's take up Sara's first suggestion and head to bed," I say with a yawn, stumbling upward as I stand from the couch. "I'm pretty much exhausted and want to catch some z's."

Alexis yawns too and nods to me. "Fair enough, Jay. I'm feeling tired myself. Catch you two in the morning?"

Sara nods and lets out a tiny, squeaking yawn. "Yep! We gotta get up for presents, after all!"

With that the three of us go our separate ways to our bedrooms. The house is technically a two story home, but the second floor consists of just a single bedroom that looks like it used to be an attic. Of course I got saddled with that one while Sara and Alexis got the two downstairs bedrooms.

It's a surprisingly hard climb up the stairs to my bedroom compared to usual. For some reason I just feel extraordinarily tired. My muscles tingle and feel achingly sore. Every part of me is screaming for me to go to sleep. Luckily for my body I'm more than happy to oblige. Unceremoniously I plop down onto my bed and, before I even have a chance to pull the blankets over me, I pass out into dreamland.

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I yawn as I wake up, stretching my arms to the satisfying crack of my elbows. I feel lithe, flexible, and honestly? Absolutely fantastic. My whole body feels brand new and cleaner than I've ever felt before.

"Man, I must have had one hell of a good sleep," I hear a girl say frighteningly close to me. My eyes shoot open and I sit up lightning fast in my bed. I look around, but don't see anyone.

"Hello?" I call out to the room. Except something's wrong. I don't hear *my* voice. I hear *hers*. "Wait, what's going- eep!" My hands cover my mouth in shock. That sound came from my mouth! And wait, why do my lips feel so soft? And my palms? And what's this weird weight on my chest?

Slowly I look down at my body. I see twin bulges in my shirt that definitely weren't there before. One of my hands goes to grab them and I nearly faint. They're *breasts*! I have *breasts* on my chest!! And I can *feel* them!!!

I leap out of bed, intent on running to the bathroom, only to stop before grabbing the doorknob. God my whole body feels different and weird. But like, a good kind of weird? It's like all this old weight and awkward blockiness I had before is gone now. Despite the new weight on my chest, I actually feel lighter. Looking down at myself I see that the reason for that is the fact that I'm not only thinner, I'm also smaller. Hell, my old clothes look really loose on me now.

"I can't go downstairs looking like this!" I whisper to myself. My new voice still feels really strange to me, but at the same time I... kind of like it? I mean, aesthetically of course. And obviously I'm attracted to it. It's a girl's voice and I like girls. But also it just *feels* nice to hear when I speak.

Argh, but I'm getting distracted again. What am I going to do? I can't just hide up here all Christmas!

"Jay!" Sara's voice echoes up the stairs. "Get down here, sleepyhead! You can't hide up there all Christmas!"

Shit. What am I supposed to do now? Just walk downstairs, obviously a girl, in clothes too large for me?

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"Um, hey guys," I say awkwardly as I reach the bottom of the stairs.

"Wow Jay, did you catch a cold?" Alexis asks me with her head tilted slightly to the side. "Or is it just really cold in here and that's why you're wearing so many layers?"

"Um, uh, yeah, I'm just feeling a little under the weather is all, yep," I reply back. In a panic, before I went downstairs, I put on a hoodie, some jeans, and a scarf to try and hide as

many features as possible. I try to force my voice to sound deeper too, but all I hear to myself is a girl trying to sound like a man and failing miserably.

"And your voice sounds all weird too," Sara points out, to my disdain. Looks like she can tell too. "What's going on Jay?"

"I, um, nothing! Nothing at all!" I answer dismissively, waving my hands in front of me. "Nothing to worry about here!"

Alexis and Sara look at each other, then back to me with confused, worried expressions. "Jay... is everything okay? What's going on?" Sara asks me with concern.

"I... I..." Shit, everything is falling apart. This was obviously a bad idea. There's no way I'm going to be able to hide this from them, is there?

Alexis walks over and puts her hand on my shoulder, to which I unconsciously wince. "Jay, please, you can trust us. What's going on?"

I bite my lip anxiously. What do I do? I know they've been my friends since we were in high school, but can I really trust them with this? Ugh, I can't believe this is happening! What kind of Christmas is this?!

After a minute of awkward silence, I finally sigh and droop my shoulders. "Okay I'll tell you, but promise not to freak out?" Sara and Alexis nod in confirmation. Taking a deep breath, I slowly unravel my scarf and pull down my hood. I shake my head and out flops the long blonde hair I now have, which probably makes me look extremely girly with my no doubt more feminine face. "I, well, I seem to have turned into... a girl?"

Sara and Alexis stare at me eyes-wide. They're speechless. I shuffle my foot nervously and look at the ground. God, this is awkward. "Um... aren't you going to say anything?"

"Sorry, just--" Sara starts.

"I can't believe--" Alexis begins.

"--you look so *cute*!" they both finish at the same time.

I blush furiously and almost hide my face again. "Wh-what are you saying?! Isn't this weird?? Don't you want to know how this happened?!"

"I mean, yeah, definitely," Alexis replies. "But aside from all that, it's just the first thing that comes to mind!"

"And obviously this happened because it's Christmas!!" Sara exclaims ecstatically. "Is this what you wished for Jay? When we wished on the North Star last night?!"

"What? No! Of course not!" I protest, my head shooting back up. "All I did was wish for some happiness!"

"Awww!" Sara yells, leaping over and pulling me into a big hug. "And you got it right here! Doesn't this make you happy?!"

"Happy? What? N-no, this just," I stammer, fumbling to find the right words, "I mean... it's kinda interesting? And neat? And I like how my voice sounds. But I'm a boy! Of course this doesn't make me 'happy'!"

"But then why would you change if not? Polaris only grants the truest wishes you know!"

Alexis crosses her arms and smirks. "I don't know anything about that, but she's got you there you know. If this really is because of the wish we made last night, then somehow this transformation is supposed to bring some happiness into your life."

Sara nods, then gasps. She pulls away from our hug and looks me in the eyes, concern shining in them. "Jay, are you *transgender*?"

"N-no way! At least, I don't think so?" I turn away from her eyes. "Don't trans people know since they were a kid or something? I've never felt like I was supposed to be a girl before."

"Have you ever thought about being a girl, though?" Alexis asks me. "Or looked at girls with envy?"

"No!!" I shoot back defensively. Then I bite my lip. "Well, okay, maybe sometimes. But doesn't everyone? I mean, the two of you obviously have to know that it's better to be a girl than a boy. Why wouldn't I think about that?"

"What do you mean it's better? If anything, with all the rampant sexism and misogyny in society, it's oftentimes a disadvantage to be a woman," Alexis points out.

"Yeah, and clothes are way harder to come by. Sizes are all over the place!" Sara adds. "Not to mention all the harmful advertising that gets sent our way. Boys never have to worry about that kind of stuff."

"Y-yeah, okay, those are both fair points," I say back quietly. "But it's not all bad, right? You get to wear cute colors and stylized outfits, you get to show your emotions freely. And then even simple body things, like it's normal to grow your hair out and your skin is naturally smoother and softer."

Sara turns my head gently to look back at hers. "Are those the things you think about, Jay? When you get envious?"

"I, well... Yes. They are. And other things, sometimes..."

Sara pulls me into another hug, this one gentler. "Oh honey. You know boys can do that stuff too, right? Like there's skin moisturizer, and boys can wear dresses and do makeup if they want to."

"Yeah, I know, but it's not the same, you know?" I sniffle. My eyes start to feel wet. "Like, I couldn't ever do anything like that and be accepted like a girl would. Or even if I was, I'd still be seen as just a guy in drag or something. And that's... that's not what I'd want! If I did that stuff, I'd, well, I'd--!"

"You'd want to be seen as a girl," Alexis finishes for me.

I don't really know what to say back to that. Or well, I do, but it's scary to admit. Hell, all of this is scary. Somehow I manage to shakily nod and whisper weakly, "Yes."

Sara squeezes me tighter. Alexis walks over and wraps her arms around me as well. Both of their weight on me feels comforting in a way I've never imagined before. Suddenly I feel vulnerable, weak, and, most surprising of all, safe.

"Well..." Alexis pulls back just enough to see my expression, "You look like a girl to me? I don't think anyone's gonna have problems accepting you now."

"Really?" I rub a tear out of my eye. Oh god, I'm crying. How did I not notice when I started crying? "I don't feel like I look *that* good..."

Sara giggles, "Only people who know you already would guess you were ever anything else."

A thought occurs to Alexis, "Do you think it's permanent?"

At those words a whole range of new emotions flood through me. Relief, that my life might not have to change after today. But even morose dread, that my life *might not change* after today. I feel the tears starting to well up again.

Sara shakes her head, "Why would Polaris take back a Christmas miracle? Of course it's permanent."

More emotions. Opposite emotions, strong emotions. Fear of how people might react, quickly overtaken by hope, and excitement. The terror of change, and the exhilaration of new possibilities. I look down at myself again, and the many layers I had to use to fill out my old clothes, "If it is... I think I'll need some new clothes."

Alexis offers, "If they fit you, you can borrow some of mine. Just make sure you don't get stains on them or stretch them out."

Sara squeals, clapping her hands and hopping up and down with her eyes wide and a toothy grin. Alexis and I look at her, waiting for her to speak, "CHRISTMAS SHOPPING! We can buy you new clothes!"

"Shopping? What?!" I shake my head quickly and wave my hands in front of me. "There's no way I can go out in front of other people right now!"

"Nonsense! It's Christmas and we're going to get you all dressed up in clothes cute enough to deserve you!"

With that, Sara drags me to her room and immediately starts grabbing different outfits out of her closet. Alexis follows in and leans against the open door, watching the chaos unfold with a bemused expression on her face. Dresses, blouses, cardigans, jeans, jeggings, leggings, tights, bras -- every imaginable piece of women's clothing flies about as she looks for something that looks just right. All the while I'm sitting there like a deer caught in headlights. My heart pounds in my chest with one part nervous anxiety and one part brimming excitement.

"Aha!" Sara leaps out of her closet, clothes held in both hands. "I've got it! Here, try these on!" She tosses me a red Christmas-y sweater emblazoned with reindeers and snowflakes, white skinny jeans, lacy underwear, green socks, and a white bra. "I don't actually know any of your sizes, but I think we're about the same height so most of these should work? Let me know if the bra is too tight, okay? We might have to go without and grab you something at the store if it doesn't fit."

Holding everything awkwardly, I wait patiently for Sara and Alexis to leave. Alexis moves to walk out, but Sara instead stands there and looks at me expectantly. "Um, girls, aren't you going to give me some privacy?"

"Why? We're all girls here, so you don't have to worry about changing in front of us," Sara states plainly. She walks over and helps take the clothes off my arms and put them on her bed. "Besides, you're probably going to need some help putting these on anyways, right?"

Alexis walks over and calmly puts a hand on Sara's shoulder. "Come on, Sara. Jay just turned into a girl. Let's give him-- er, her-- um, *Jay* some alone time while they get changed, okay?"

Sara blushes and nods. "Right, right, of course." They both leave, and as soon as the door shuts I hear Sara yell, "If you need help with anything, just ask, okay?"

Finally alone, I take a deep breath and begin stripping out of my layers upon layers of old clothes. My hands are shaking all the while. I haven't really had a good chance to look at my body yet. What if I don't like how I look? What if something feels wrong?

Once the last bit of clothing is gone, and I stand stark naked in Sara's room, I glance down and take in everything that's new about me. My wider hips. My softer, more hairless skin. The thinness of my fingernails. The petiteness of my hands and feet. And of course, the new breasts I now have. I twist to try and look at my butt as well, but it's sort of hard to turn that way. Then I notice a full-body mirror Sara has, so I stop over to look at myself in all my new glory.

What I see catches my breath. I see a girl who looks not overly different from how I used to look. But there is obvious femininity displayed in her body. Distinctly subtle changes that have washed over her. Washed over *me*. She... is me. I'm her. And... I look pretty. Like, really pretty. Prettier than I've ever thought I looked in my entire life.

Prettier than I ever thought I would be.

Again I feel tears on my cheeks. I smile a goofy smile. Warmth fills my chest. I feel... happy? Yeah. I feel happy. This feels... good. It feels right.

Alright, time to get on with things and get dressed. The clothes themselves look surprisingly simpler than I was worried they would. The underwear fits on real nice and snug. The jeans too fit well, although they're a bit loose in the hips. Guess I'm not as wide there as Sara is. And the socks, well... socks are socks. Seems there's not much difference there between men's and women's.

Then I get to the bra and I find myself totally at a loss. How does this thing even get put on? At first I try to slip my arms through the straps and buckle it behind me, but that proves to be a huge pain. Then I try to buckle it up first and slip it down over my shoulders like a shirt. But that doesn't work either.

Frustrated, I call out to Sara for help. "Put the cups behind your back and buckle it in front of you first. Then rotate it around yourself so the cups are back in front. Finally, just pull it up over your shoulders and adjust the cups around your breasts," are her instructions back to me. So I try them out and, after a bit of a struggle, I finally manage to get it to work. The bra surprisingly fits rather well, although it's a bit loose in the cups. Guess that means my breasts are smaller than Sara's too. Damn, that girl is just stacked when it comes to assets!

The sweater is super easy to put on, and with that the outfit is complete. I look over everything in the mirror and find it fits me pretty well. I look rather festive and, honestly? Really cute. Like I look pretty freaking adorable. Yet another thing I never thought I'd be saying about myself. I can't help but keep looking at myself from different angles, even trying out a few poses that I never would have tried at any other point in my life. Cute poses. Silly poses. Even a couple, well, *attempts* at looking sexy. All of which just looked kind of awkward. Even still, I find myself having... fun? This is so weird. Why do I enjoy this so much? Is this really me?

I shake my head to snap out of it. Enough of these existential questions. I'll have enough time for that later tonight when I'm lying in bed staring at the ceiling, no doubt. I take a deep breath and walk out of Sara's room, to the eagerly awaiting roommates of mine.

Sara squeals and immediately pulls me into a hug. "Ohmygodohmygodohmygod!! You look so CUTE!!!"

"Wow, yeah, you actually look really good Jay," Alexis agrees. Her cheeks color a little with a light blush. "How, er, how do you feel? Wearing clothes like that, I mean."

I blush too and rub the back of my head with one hand, wrapping my other arm around Sara in a return hug. "I, um, kinda like it? It feels really normal, surprisingly. These clothes are comfy and fit mostly-well, and I feel, um," I look away, unable to maintain eye contact with Alexis as I admit this next part, "I feel kind of cute too."

"Aaaaaaah!!!" Sara squeezes uncontrollably, squeezing me even tighter. "You think you feel cute now? Just wait until I'm done with you!"

"Oh god, please Sara, go easy on Jay, okay?" Alexis asks with a hint of worry in her voice. "You know, hold on, I'm going to come along too, just to make sure she doesn't bombard you with too much, Jay."

"Yes please, thank you," I gasp. Sara's hug is extremely tight and I find it hard to breathe through her overwhelming enthusiasm. Hopefully that'll die down at least a little as we go shopping. Although, honestly? I'm kind of looking forward to this.

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Shopping goes like a blur. A fast craze that I never thought it could ever be.

First off, who would have thought any clothing stores were actually open on Christmas in the first place? I feel bad for all the employees who have to deal with us today, especially Sara.

The first thing we do is get my measurements. I end up being a 34C for bust, with a 33" waist and 37" hips. Which I guess is pretty average for an American woman? Funny to think that as a girl I'm overall pretty average.

I try on a lot of clothes. I mean a *lot* of clothes. Tank tops and tube tops and crop tops and cardigans. Black, white, colorful, flowery, navy, punk, wintery, pre-tattered (which I thought was kind of dumb before, but now I think I see why people buy them). Sara even makes me try on a swimsuit, against my protest that it's way too cold. But I eventually submit and try it on. And even I have to admit it's too cute to put back on the rack after.

The employees strangely seem to want to help us. But I guess for some of them a Christmas at work attending to the needs of a very festive and hyperactive trio of girls is better than a Christmas at work doing nothing but standing at stations.

Sara squeals as I come out in a tight pink knee-length skirt and a frilly seafoam green blouse, "You look so cute in everything! We are going to buy you a whole wardrobe now that you're a girl."

"Isn't that a little much? I don't need *that* many clothes..." I say as I admire the curves of my thighs in this skirt.

One of the employees, Christina, shakes her head, "You need a lot more clothes as a girl than as a guy. You need to *accessorize*." Sara had let slip earlier that I used to be a boy, so I'd told them I was trans. Who would believe I wished on a star? But when I'd said it, it didn't feel like a lie. It felt *good*. Christina returns from the shelves of clothes they haven't returned to their hangars yet, and tosses a scarf at me, "Here, try this on."

I hang it over my shoulders and it hangs down below my midriff, "It's kind of loose..."

Christina comes in for the rescue, "No, you have to double it over a few times to make it fit." She grabs the end and twists it around before looping it back around my neck and repeats a few times, "Like this, see?"

It fits perfectly, and looks fantastic. And I wouldn't believe I could feel this warm while looking like *this* if there wasn't a mirror right next to me.

Christina keeps helping us, for hours, offering her own item suggestions and fashion tips from her knowledge of the store's stock. She seems to revel in helping me try new styles and combinations just as much as Sara, and between the two of them by the time we leave I have a full shopping cart of new clothes.

"Christina was really nice." I say as we drive to the next store, trying to beat the sunset, "She even gave me her number so I can call her for tips later."

Alexis immediately sticks her head up between the front seats to stare at me with disbelief, "Jay... Christina is a lesbian."

"Oh." I think back, but I can't remember her ever looking at Alexis or Sara in a way that would suggest that, "Really?"

"And you're a girl." Alexis walks me through until the realization hits, and she laughs, "She wants you to call her."

Sara gasps and starts a slow, building squeal until Alexis casually slaps her arm, and she closes her mouth again, and clears her throat, "You absolutely HAVE to call her!"

I look down at the piece of paper with her number and bite my lip. She was definitely cute. I think about how she looked, and talked, and smiled, and it makes me smile.

Yep. I still like girls.

If I'm a girl now, that makes me a lesbian, right? So it wouldn't be weird to pursue her if she's interested in me. But, ugh, this is all way too sudden. I don't even know if I'm ready to do something like try and date somebody already. I literally just turned into a girl today!

"I dunno, maybe, this is all kind of fast," I mutter with a blush, looking out the car window at the snow and vehicles passing by. "Besides, it's still Christmas, right? Something like this can wait until after today."

"That seems reasonable," Alexis responds. I hear Sara sigh dramatically and chip in with, "Yeah, yeah, that's fair. But you're going to get back to her, you hear me? I'll make sure of it!"

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"Ugh, god, what a day!" I fall back onto the couch and let out a tired groan. I'm surrounded by bags of clothes of all different styles and sizes. Some I'm pretty sure I won't even be able to wear for at least another couple of months. "You both really didn't have to go all in on helping me get new clothes like this. This cost a fortune!"

"Nonsense!" pipes in Sara as she plops down next to me. She's still wearing the same silly grin she's had on the whole time we shopped today. "There's no way I'm letting my bestie walk around in old boy clothes that do nothing to show off her rockin' new body!"

"Yeah, and I didn't mind chipping in either," Alexis agrees with a nod. She sits on the opposite side of me after moving around some of the bags to make enough room for herself. "I'm not nearly as rich off my family's money as Sara here is, but don't worry about me. I'm not bankrupt from all this."

I look at Alexis, and then at Sara. My eyes start to feel wet yet again and my chest swells with gratitude. "You girls... Thank you. So much, for all this. Today has just been amazing!"

Sara puts one arm over her heart in a bit of an overdramatic fashion. "Awwww, you really mean that Jay?"

I nod. "I do. I really do. Like, jeez, I'm feeling so many emotions right now, it's crazy. I never realized just how little emotions I was feeling before today! I've laughed and cried; felt nervous and anxious and excited and ecstatic." I giggle to myself and blush once I realize what I

just did. "And I guess I giggle now too. Jeez. I feel like a completely different person from who I was yesterday!"

"Well I mean, you are different, aren't you?" Alexis motions over my entire body, particularly my breasts. "You're a girl now."

"Well, yeah. But honestly? That part of all this just feels... right."

Alexis crosses her arms and smirks. "Really now?"

I feel my face get even more red. God I feel so embarrassed admitting that. "It's true! Like, at first I was really shocked and kind of scared. But, I've had so much fun today, and you both have made me feel way more at ease. And now that I'm used to it, I gotta say: I think I like this a lot better."

"Would you say it makes you... *happy*?" Sara asks, poking me in the shoulder playfully.

I laugh and giggle some more. "I know where you're going with this, and yes! This makes me really happy."

"Then it sounds like Polaris granted your wish in the perfect way!"

I laugh and cover my face bashfully. How dare she get me like this! Alexis puts a hand on my shoulder gently. "She's right, you know. I've seen you happier all day today than I've seen you in a long time."

Thinking back on the day, I agree that both Sara and Alexis are right. I've had such an extraordinary Christmas, one that by all rights shouldn't have ever been possible. What's even more amazing than the transformation itself is how *good* I feel right now. My friends accept me as a girl. Shopping was a load of fun. I even got a girl's number! It blows my mind that any of this could possibly be real. I pinch myself just to make sure I'm not dreaming and yelp from the pain. Ouch. I'm definitely awake.

I lift myself back up and lean back against the couch. "I'm really thankful. For all of this." Looking at all the gifts, my heart skips a beat. "Oh, but wait! What about both of your wishes? Or your presents?"

Sara looks a bit guilty and bites her lip. "Well, to be honest... I just wished that this year's Christmas would be the most magical one ever." She laughs and rubs the back of her head. "And wow, did I get my wish granted alright!"

I look over at Alexis curiously. "What about you? What'd you wish for?"

Alexis shrugs. "I didn't really have anything that I wanted, so I just wished that both of your wishes would get granted."

Dumbstruck, my mouth falls open. "Are you both serious? That's almost like you both literally wished for this to happen to me!"

"Well, hey, I mean, I didn't know anything about you wanting to be a girl or what you wished for!" Sara protests. "I just wanted us all to have a magical Christmas together."

"I didn't even think the wishes would do anything, so I went with a really non-committal wish that I felt lined up with the Christmas spirit." Alexis smirks. "Not my fault you both wished for something supernatural to happen like this."

I shake my head in disbelief. "I didn't even know this would happen. I just wished for some happiness while having no idea that being a girl would make me this happy."

Sara pulls me into a hug and squeezes me tight. "You really had no idea you were trans, huh?"

"Trans," I whisper. It still feels weird to even call myself that. Like I haven't earned the title yet. "Yeah, I had no idea. It's hard to believe I really am too."

Alexis joins in the hug. Both of their warmth is really comforting against me. "It's going to be okay, Jay. We'll both be here for you while you navigate through all of this."

"Thanks. I really appreciate that." I wrap my arms around both of them and hug them against me. For a long moment we're just three best friends all scrunched together in a big cuddle pile. And for possibly the first time in my life, I'm really glad to have people this close to me.

When we all break apart, Sara claps her hands together in front of her excitedly and gestures to the tv. "So! Christmas movies then?!"

"Yes, absolutely!" I agree with a laugh. "What are we going to do about dinner though?"

"Don't worry about that, I've got it covered," Alexis responds with a wink. "I'll get something cooking while we watch."

"Then it's settled! Christmas movies, food, and friends!" She squeals and runs over to the TV cabinet and starts sifting through blu-rays. "Best Christmas ever!!"

I can't help but grin wide. She's right, this really is the best Christmas ever. I glance out the window and look up to the sky. To my surprise I can see Polaris shining similarly to how it did the night before. The North Star looks beautiful and white, and I smile even more at the sight of it.

"Thank you," I whisper, "For everything."