Feeling Wrong

By C. Jade Wyton

Toni and their ex-husband, Garrett, drive home after a hard day and Toni seeks comfort for their confusing feelings of dysphoria.

Contains descriptions of dysphoria.

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Toni's heart beat hard, as they sat in their ex-husband's car after Thursday therapy.

Their conversation had been brief; unusual, as usually the drive home was an excuse to talk after a long day of work.

Even after the divorce, Garrett had always met Toni in the waiting room with a smile that made everything seem like it was going to be okay in the end.

But, today, coming out from their therapist to find Garrett waiting in his usual seat hadn't made Toni's heart flutter and their anxieties ease.

Instead, it had made them freeze up with guilt they couldn't place the cause of, and they'd barely spoken on the drive home.

Even as Garrett had pulled into the drive-thru of Toni's favourite coffee shop and ordered their favourite drinks, Toni hadn't been able to muster up more than a quiet *thank you*.

But they had to say something.

Before they got home, where their teenage children would absorb the last of their energy and time; Toni wanted to talk with Garrett without listening ears.

So they knew they had to say something. No matter how hard it was.

'G… Garrett?'

'Mm?' Garrett acknowledged.

'I think it's more than being a lesbian,' they didn't mean to blurt it so suddenly; but it was all they could do to get it out. And, as they continued, they had to fight that lump that threatened to block their throat and suffocate them. 'I mean…. I was talking to Dr Helyer, and I don't think I *am* a lesbian? I know I said I thought I was, before, but I'm not sure anymore…. I think I'm….'

Garrett's eyes cut to Toni, and they thought there might have been a visible twinkle of hope. But, despite the look he gave, he was clearly careful as he chose his next words. 'What do you think you are?'

'I still like girls,' Toni admitted, seeing that twinkle fall from Garrett's eye; though his sympathetic smile didn't leave his beak as he watched his ex thumb at their drink. 'It's just…. I….'

The words caught in their throat, and one of Garrett's hands left the steering wheel to take Toni's own and squeeze it comfortingly.

'It's stupid,' Toni admitted, feeling their feathers rise in a blush. 'And it makes *no* sense. And….'

'Lots of things are stupid, that doesn't mean you're not allowed to feel it,' Garrett reassured. 'And it's okay to not make sense. Remember that I'm here to
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help you make sense of it all. Talk to me, Toni.'

'Do you ever feel like your body is *wrong?* Like you were supposed to be born as someone else?'

The weak smile fell into a concerned furrow of the brow, as Garrett pulled into their driveway and tugged on the hand-break. He turned to Toni, taking their hand again, before he spoke. 'Toni,' he began, softly, before hesitating. 'Toni,' he repeated. 'That's not stupid.'

'I like girls,' Toni repeated, pushing through the quiver in their voice. 'I'm just not sure I like *being* a girl.'

'What do you mean?'

'I'm not sure,' Toni admitted, looking away. 'I don't know what I'm trying to say. I'm sorry.'

'That's okay,' Garrett told them, turning their gaze back to his. 'I don't understand, but I'm here for you. Anything you need. I promise I'll do my best. We can figure it out together. Okay?'

Toni let him peck a kiss on their cheek, before letting out a long breath. 'Thank you, Garrett. I don't know how I would have survived this long without you.'

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