

“won’t be back till late. there’s fresh pan fried tofu with mushrooms in the freezer.” although he feels her message is rather abrupt he doesn’t text her back.

“it won’t take that long but what if it does,” her collaborator says, opting for frankness, further arousing her and she relinquishes her attempt to juggle the time between enacting their liaison and getting back to her husband. at this point they are both half-dressed, her bra is unhooked, straps dangling below her breasts, the hem of her short skirt raised to her belly. his shirt is off, revealing a fine upper body, shoes and sox off. he removes his trousers and she is more than ready to receive the thrusts of a very stiff cock, having been begging the issue the entire afternoon, jettisoning the work load almost as soon as she arrived, continuing to incite, edaciously petting on and off, getting sexually aroused to the extent that their first orgasms are so compellingly intense what do they do next? fortunately for the sake of their full satisfaction horniness quickly returns, their subsequent orgasms even better, more deeply engaged.

it is late when they cease fucking. both feeling fulfilled and complete. it would be ideal for her at this time to return home in the containing density of darkness, truly spent, nurturing the euphoric abstract flow, going to sleep hugging her husband and waking refreshed. the caveat is ideals are fine less fact. so she needs to strategize. she desires a short period of grace to consummate her satisfaction before having to, if necessary, pay the consequences. her relationship with her husband is open and frank. but they are not swingers, and the exclusivity of their sex is vulnerable to the psychological and

emotional effects equal to the desires that threaten to exceed it. she is not the first, however, to break the simple rule as her husband and her closest friend had at least one sexual encounter during a time when the friend was staying with them, involving all kinds of confused emotions between the three of them. it was neither, however, as in this instance, either calculated or gratuitous – but that is why she's got so erotically off on it. yet wants to share the temporarily transformed state she's in with her husband.

her husband is up and quietly reading knowing she's had sex with someone because no other design would fit. "was it as satisfying as you look?" "yes it was, still is, and I want to share it with you while it's there. I feel both weighted and like I could fly. everything is beautiful, everything is pleasure like how you look sitting in that chair." "you look like a waif – but the most gorgeous waif alive." "that can be when we a bit overuse our bodies." she focuses on the book. "I was reading a poem." he hands it to her.

The Patterned Lute by Li Shang-yin ca 812-58
*Mere chance that the patterned lute has fifty strings
String and fret, one by one, recall the blossoming years
Chuang-tzu dreams at sunrise that a butterfly has lost its way
Wang-ti bequeathed his spring passion to the nightjar
The moon is full on the vast sea, a tear is on the pearl
On blue mountain the sun warms; a smoke issues from the
jade
Did it wait, this mood, to appear with hindsight? In a trance
from the beginning then as now.*
trans. by A.C. Graham Poems Of The Late T'ang Penguin
1965

"what is it about?" "Wang-ti sent Pieh Ling to deal with the floods and `debauched' his wife. he was consequently turned into a nightjar." "it seems it's about much more." "it is." it's interesting a poem that negative can be so beautiful." "yes, that's what makes it art. it's really not negative. it's more about transformation – dreamlike metaphors, subjective states involving memory and change." "do you think `debauched' is a fair word?" "it was the word used by the translator. classic morality doesn't mess around....I will never reject you just for your seeking pleasure," he says, as they look penetratingly into each other's eyes.

they go to bed. and after an almost content-less sleep she awakens, significantly rested but flat, without appetite but with a thirst and feeling mild malaise. she skips breakfast and drinks a lot of water, abrogating her considerable dehydration, making her feel much better and back on track. her husband has left for his first class at the university where he is a lecturer, and is extremely popular and physically desired both for his style-looks and views.

she allows herself the space to air things out before arranging with her creative partner who'd texted her earlier, to meet and continue to work on their project which has an overdue deadline. he is as anxious as she to get back to work. they have a somewhat ingenious thing going by pairing, mostly lyrics from songs, in such a way as to give each the opposite of their intended meaning. at present they are working with the lyrics to the Dory Previn song With My Daddy In The Attic, the content of which is eerily, and suspiciously, echoed in Dylan Farrow's accusation of Woody Allen.

during a lull she is home pleasantly alone when her husband calls. he has just left school and wants to bring a female friend, a student, home to meet her. she freshens up anticipating with mixed emotions. she is immediately struck by the poise and aura of the friend who is generous and open in greeting her without pretense, and also (of course) quite good to look at. appealing brown eyes, thin, medium height, long brunette hair, modestly dressed in dark skirt and soft cyan pullover sweater, neither showcasing nor hiding her assets. there is that feeling, a shock, at how young she appears and really is, given the context, which she does not want to wrongly assume is, at least tentatively, a sexual relationship with her husband. the friend, of course, is more than aware of the possibility of that assumption because it has become one of the clichés of behavior associated with interactions between female students and older male faculty. and as her husband hastens to explain, later, “there is no sex between us nor will there be as it would be quite damaging to the meaning and intent of our friendship which, by extension, **could** be yours as well.” “would it be accurate to say you function as a mentor to her?” “I think it would be more accurate to say we function as friends. there is nothing hierarchal about it. the age distance just makes it more sensitive and precious.” she nods, not particularly pleased.

he is not overly pleased with himself, either. like the author of *The Patterned Lute*, he sees himself, despite his image otherwise, as a relatively minor functionary dependent on his security in the system for his take home pay, self-esteem and respect. but where the poet compensated, by writing some of the most brilliant and sensual poetry in Chinese literature. he

fears he is stagnating.

many of Li Shang-yin's poems are altered observations of his court life including his infidelities:

(vii) *Where is it, the sad lyre which follow the quick flute?
Down endless lanes where the cherry flowers, on a bank
where the willows droop. The lady of the East house grows
old without a husband, The white sun at high noon, the last
spring month half over. Princess Li-yang is fourteen, In the
cool of the day, after the Rain Feast, with him behind the
fence, lookCome home, toss and turn till the fifth watch.
Two swallows in the rafters hear the long sigh.*

but it is the last line of The Patterned Lute – *Did it wait, this mood, to mature with hindsight? In a trance from the beginning then as now* – with which he most identifies. as it was in an earlier decade, totally stoned, living in a different, more extreme universe separate from the mainstream of society that much of his creative instincts still reside he makes the decision to give up the academic life while seeking to reactivate control of a radical destiny to charter his own. to this his wife and young friend are equally empathetic but for somewhat different reasons. for his wife, in addition to sincerely empathizing with his needs it means not having to honor or contend with what is separate from her concerns, while it frees he and his young friend from the stigma of the male professor-female student insinuation, and, perhaps, not consciously, from the restraint they've assumed as a counteraction to it. his wife, not unaware of this, is actually somewhat liberated by it, and it does prove to be the aphrodisiac between he and the young lady, devolving into unmitigated

lust which prompts them to ravish one another for a period of time before it gently, but permanently, subsides.

short silk cream hued slip, fine textured coffee brown hair combed stroking her cheeks, nude seamless stockings w/lace patterned tops, no garters, bare thighs. **date.** interesting word (aside from slang for paid sex). a formal commitment? if married, can one still, technically, date, she asks, applying a light coat of taupe to her lips. date. makes the inevitable outcome sexier. date. sex will not occur and consummate until very late is the forgone conclusion or expectation. after texting her husband she and her date have dinner then hang-out at various chic clothing, book stores, and galleries, savoring the ambience until the night life thins before going to his apartment. now it is up to them. they can maintain a creative tension right up to, or space out. they can drink or smoke pot but it is all procedure structuring their desire. there is nothing they are going to do she doesn't do with her husband but it is going to be infinitely more pleasurable than it's been with him in a while. she is the image ...his hunger for her which has been building all night. when it comes together under bright light, their awareness now only of two physical bodies between them, she removes all her clothes but her slip and sheer stockings. he his shirt, shoes and socks. they are now 2 primal images, hers, the catalyst, viewed sideways sitting on the bed, straps of her slip half off her shoulder, hem across her bare upper thighs, lace top of her nude hose wrapped inches below. it is with this image burned in his head that he approaches inhaling her perfume.. date night, all its structure will now dissipate into swirls of lust and satisfaction after which she will take her cell and call her husband.

