

**HORNY
LOVE STORIES**

JERRY KATZ



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JERRY KATZ

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*every harlot was a virgin once nor canst thou
ever change Kate into Nan – William Blake*

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Don't Wait Too Long

I've been thinking lately how much I like women. how much just seeing them brightens my day. not the ones AOL pops in your face when you go online, but the feelings of affection for ordinary women when they walk by. the cell phone connection is destroying this ambience I might add. I also still like the ambience of the more traditional art galleries – the smell of acrylic paint and resin, the clean white walls. this one, formerly the Rosamund Felsen gallery, small, with typically shiny hardwood floors, is located in the back. I'm there by appointment before gallery hours, in the backroom, where a petite young woman is showing me a silkscreen poster I had seen in the Art of Modern Rock. I know her somewhat and there's an unstated tension between us. her description: brown hair (soft, slightly curly). cleanly defined nose, brown eyes, no makeup, white blouse, skirt about knee length. the poster shows almost no wear. I decide to buy it. slightly bent over the print our faces are almost touching. I smell the scented rose water on her neck. an impulse seizes me, and half expecting to get wacked (or worse), I gently kiss her. then, as there's no negative reaction, I kiss her a little harder, and instead of pushing me away, she responds. I reach my hand inside her blouse and feel her breast, expecting an alarm to go off. but instead, we're making out, Frenching, and I'm undressing her, and she, me. her panties are wet and silky soft. we fuck on a sofa conveniently stuffed between the stacks of art propped against the walls. when we're done and dress, we go into the main gallery. she rolls the print, and as she's meeting someone elsewhere, we leave together. I stand by the driver's side of the silver Lexus

she's sitting in, and we say goodbye. it's only 10:30 a.m.

of course something's been left up in the air, and predictably that evening when the phone rings, I know she's on the other end. "I'm having a problem with what happened this morning," she opens, "what made you do what you did? I need an explanation." "there's no mystery to it. I was standing there with you. we were going about our business and you looked so normal, so stable and functional, that I wanted you. I guess I was feeling insecure. I wanted the passion behind the mildness, the plainness, I sensed you were waiting to give in to." then we talked as if we had known each other a long time. "you may not believe it but this is the first time I've had sex in 30 years." she gasps, then laughs (she obviously doesn't believe me. just as well). "the best thing we can do is get together so we can work through this." "and have more sex?" it's my turn to laugh. "I enjoyed it immensely. I enjoyed every inch of you," I respond, a bit surprised at my boldness. I swear I can feel her blush. "ok," she sighs, "I'm free tomorrow, late afternoon."

women are goddesses. I don't mean in the mythical sense. but in our spiritually exhausting, daily travails. it's hard for a woman whose looks don't reflect a man's desires, and vice versa, and it takes a man who has the depth and will to look inside and see it's there. fortunately today, in this regard, I don't have to feel guilt.

we meet at Murikami on Santa Monica Blvd. and go straight to the patio. now I can look at her. there's something about the fragile yet sharply defined angle of her nose that arouses

me. she's wearing a silk, off white and avocado, colored blouse, open enough at the neck to partially show a strap and the top outline of her bra. a small gold triangle hangs from a thin gold chain around her neck. tiny gold loop earrings pierce her lobes. her soft, light brown hair, this time, neatly combed and lightly brushing her cheeks, is picking up glints of red from the setting sun. she's wearing black slacks and low cut black shoes, no socks. her delicately shaped lips are painted a semi luminous pink. there isn't an ounce of excess on her. she's gorgeous.

"I'm not hungry. I'll just have a beverage. why don't you order?" "I'll just have a drink," she answers. when the waiter comes she orders a Chardonnay, extra dry. "so you're a tee-totaler, you don't do drugs anymore, but you still like to fuck," she taunts, sipping her wine, her face slightly flushed. "I also have no friends," I confide. "but you're a creative person." she seems to be enjoying herself. (actually a bit of an exaggeration here. I drink wine occasionally, and would consider smoking dope in an intimate and romantic situation, if the opportunity arose). and although she hasn't read anything I've written, she did seem genuinely impressed by the color, form, and edginess, of my Joshua Tree photos, and I think she'd show them. "I'd like to lean over and kiss you," I say, testing the waters. "I don't think we should get physical again, tonight," she warns, taking another sip. it's interesting, I'm getting a buzz with her. I don't have to do those other things to get intimate with people, but sometimes it makes them uncomfortable that I don't drink or turn on or whatever. the sun is set now. it's a warm late summer night, and it looks like it's going to be a hot autumn. or no autumn, and

tonight she's untouchable. I feel a pang of regret we gratuitously had sex yesterday morning. if we hadn't there would have been something to build to, I tell her. "no, we wouldn't be here at all." "then I'm glad we did." yes, I'm beginning to fall for this woman, which means I'm now in the not necessarily enviable state of being vulnerable. it's the kind of feeling that makes me want to write in the dark, which I'm doing. I'm not sure, yet, whether she wants to make me squirm for so easily having had her, or for my reasons for having done so – the plainness, naturalness, etc., which to me is still valid. we're different people at different times, in different contexts. right now I'm desperately trying not to feel like a wallflower, re my age, my isolation, even my one bed apartment in Santa Monica – trying not to make them obstacles. she seems to be reading me. a look of compassion comes to her face which warmly glows in the patio lights. we look into each other's eyes for a moment. I spontaneously reach across the table and we briefly hold hands. "I like you but I have no intention of getting pregnant. how did you know where I was in my cycle? for all you knew you could have knocked me up!" we get up. I put down money for the drinks and a tip. we leave. as in the time before, she says she's meeting someone, in half an hour. this may sound melodramatic, but a surge of terror runs through me. "a man?" "yes." I walk her to her car. just as I'm about to turn away (in mortal pain) she hugs me and thrusts her tongue into my mouth, then quickly pulls it away. she gives me a warm smile, gets into her car and drives off. my heart is pounding. I walk away elated from her sudden and unexpected show of affection, trying not to be overcome with dread that the way she looked tonight may have been more for him than me.

things are beginning to look up (socially). in fact we're becoming quite close. when people of different perceptions and personalities unite it's the cross references that create the aesthetic. and the fact that we do everything alone together, so to speak, doesn't seem to bother her. in fact that's part of it. it also doesn't seem to bother her that there's almost 40 years between us. she's 33. although we haven't made it since that first day, we do make out like crazy, sitting in a parked car, hers or mine (we seem to prefer hers), or on the couch in her small house in West Hollywood. I've needed something like this to happen for a long time. time is getting short and there was definitely the possibility that nothing was ever going to happen. I may think I'm too passive, that I'm letting her call all the shots, but, again not wanting to seem melodramatic, she's saving my life, and I think deep down, she knows it. I want her to 'dress up' for me. I want her to taunt me. I want her to have sex with other men, which she does. I love her and I believe she loves me. is love the intermediary between desire and soul?

perfect worlds fall apart, however. there are physical laws determining that. for one thing I've already reached a plateau where I need to protect my work, vision, and the solitude that fuels it in fact for me solitude is an end in itself. more precious than art? she, on the other hand, flourishes in a social context. she still snorts coke, but not as frequently. while very confident in social matters she needs more privacy of self. with her gallery it's more politics than art.

one night, lights out, we're laying on her bed. we're both half dressed, or should I say, half naked. she tells me (orders me)

to take off my pants and underpants. she kisses my dick and I immediately get hard. I'm about 5'10 and there was a time when I was average weight. but after I stopped using psychedelic drugs, I went on a fruit fast for 7 months (among other things) to clean out my system, and regained only half the weight back. so now I weigh about 120 pounds. but I have a fairly large penis when erect or even a little aroused (other times it seems to recede back into my balls like a fat worm). you evidently don't lose weight there. "my what a big dickie you have for such a skinny boy," she laughs. "all the better to do you with, Red Ridinghood," I reply, not totally amused. but we don't that night. I forget to mention she has a gorgeous ass.

well, tonight is the night I'm going to resume carnal knowledge of her. whether she likes it or not. I'm going to lure her to my apartment and screw her with every bone in my dick. she comes, willingly, wearing a modest mint green summer dress, a strand of small pearls around her neck, and white pumps. the perfume she's wearing tops anything, in my presence, she's used before. I kiss her hard, she responds hard, and I lead her to my bedroom. I hold her tightly while we french kiss, breathing her scent. I unzip the back of her dress, and after unfastening her bra, pull the shoulders down, easing her arms out of the sleeves, and suck her hard nipples and warm breasts. she undoes the waist of my pants and caresses my penis. then we undress. I ease her onto the bed, and laying on top of her, kiss her all over, face, ears, eyes, neck, then her thighs and belly, and first licking the length of her labia, press my tongue hard against her clit. she pleasurable sighs, inserting her tongue in my ear. we lay, arms

around each other, and dry fuck, my cock pressed against her vulva until she raises her thighs, and like a magnet to metal, is drawn in. she tightens her thighs around my groin, locking her ankles around my legs, and we fuck ravenously, quickly and sharply coming together. I pull out and we lay together. relieved of our horniness we talk while I savor her body. I flash on her mint dress and pearls which lay, erotically, on the floor. then we kiss and resume, our bodies flush as we fuck, slowly, feeling out each other's rhythm, until we're close. our silent listening increases in direct proportion to the outside ambient noise, and the creaking of the bed. we fuck for a long time, slowly moving in rhythm to our heartbeats, breath, and our precious jewels. her nuances are affectionate and subtle. gone, momentarily, is the caustic dare and tease. briefly, she's become a sex goddess, an intuitive lover, and for the first time I have no fear of coming too soon. for the first time I'm totally tuned to giving, but when she begins to arrive at the threshold I know it's going to take a while and I've already started to get off. I just stay in, riding each of her waves, stoking her moans until she's still.

an orgasm is never completely over, there's always a little more, and satisfaction is ultimately what one allows. after sex there can be a freedom to look into one another's eyes without obstruction. her face is flushed. her rich brown eyes shining with warmth. we fuck twice more, later. once after dinner when her legs look so sexy I tug at the hem of her dress when she walks by, pulling her down to the floor. later when I take her home, we walk twice around the block, holding hands. at her doorstep we hold each other tightly "I love you," we whisper, almost simultaneously. she unlocks

the door, opens it, and goes inside. there are a lot of flower gardens in the neighborhood which is just south of the Bodhi Tree Bookstore. the perfumed scent is everywhere. I feel like I'm back in high school after that rare good date. *no, no, go from me. I have left her lately. I will not spoil my sheath with lesser brightness.* etc.

love was my first ambition. and when the usual cultural and personal ego traps subside, for a short time, there's no vulnerability. it's like being stoned. the high is love. there's also a peculiar pleasure, because at this time we aren't living together, I could take her home and have the almost metaphysical experience of watching her disappear through the door. is this pure masochism?

for a brief period I move in with her (at her insistence). she doesn't like me coming and going at night. most of her neighbors are gay and could care less. one evening I'm lying on the couch in the front room. she walks in from the bedroom all dressed up, wearing a short, tight fitting dress, a miniature black spear hanging on a chain from her neck, long black mesh hose (hose is something she never wears), and black stiletto heels. I have to admit she's a knockout. "what's the occasion?" "I'm going to a party." she comes over to the couch and I can feel she's in a sadistic mood. she pokes a finger as hard as she can into my abdomen. then she sits down beside me. I can smell her Faberge, and whisky on her breath. then she pulls her dress up to her crotch so I can have a good look. she unzips my pants, yanks them down and places my hand on her warm meshed thigh, lowers her head and begins to blow me. I know that being given head

until I have an orgasm by this gorgeous creature in black, in this darkened room, with the breeze coming in through the open window, would be ecstasy. but I also know she wants to top me off and leave me pacified, so she can be free to fuck some hunk, an hour or two later, when she's drunk enough. so I pull her off by the hair. "OK, if that's what you want," she spouts, spitting her excess saliva onto my stomach. she straightens up, reaches into her purse, applies fresh crimson to her lips, and leaves.

I'm still on the couch when she returns at about 2 a.m. a seam of her dress is ripped, hair askew, with a few scratch marks on her cheeks, and small bruise on her forehead. "what happened?" I leap up to grab her. "I got roughed up. three men were doing a lot of everything and wanted to have sex with me. a friend saw what was going on, opened the front door and screamed at the top of her lungs. another person called 911. the police were there within 5 minutes, but not before I got mauled, and they got away. she looks at me tentatively, sheepishly, then buries her head in my chest and bursts into tears. "Jerry, I'm so grateful you're here." "that's my role," I say. the next day I don't think she feels much of an aftershock. we take a boat ride to Catalina, lay on the sand in a hidden cove all day, with our clothes off, making love. I guess this is a good place to end.

"happy as clams." Laurie Anderson – *blue lagoon*

I've still got a secret.....page 2, paragraph 2, lines 11, 12

Slender Brunette

the door opens. she walks in at dawn. I don't say anything. she remains silent for a long time. then she says, "the shooting wrapped up early. but there was still a lot to do on the set with the scenery. we were the last to leave, the assistant director and I, at about 11:00. both of us felt like staying out so we decided to go to a club. we had been drinking and dancing," she says softly. "then we went to a hotel and had sex. it was good sex. I was very aroused. not because he was, or that he was, a good lover. it was the thrill of doing it with someone different. a stranger. even one I had no particular feeling for...for the surprises." "adultery?" "yes. I don't feel bad. I'm happy I did it. now I just feel mellow." "satisfied." "yes." "why didn't you just go to his place?" "we were equally responsible. I wanted to be where it was neutral."

I look at her. gray dress, slender body but smooth curves in the right places. plain/pretty face, dark eyes and hair. no makeup, no shoes. "where are your shoes?" "in my purse." we both laugh. her hair, what must have been a mess, is combed sleek, fresh, picking up luster in the light. what must be pain, or more accurately an intense feeling sobers me up. I can't help the love I feel for her. "don't worry, I don't want you," I say. "I'm tired, but I want to be with you. I feel close to you now," she replies.

the next days are very quiet. almost silent. the aura between us both separates and binds. a current independent of logic is absorbing whether there's reason any longer for us to stay

together. it's ironic. if I were to try to have sex with her now it would be a violation of her chastity. things go on like this for another week. we sleep together. we don't have sex. we don't even touch. there's a total suspension of the familiar. every gesture seems weighted with importance. how either of us makes our bed or vacuums the rug. we're testing the veracity of our relationship by the quotidian exercises we once only unconsciously performed. I take nothing for granted any longer.

one night in early January, the Santa Ana is blowing. we're standing outside breathing the warm fragrant wind, and gazing at the clear, almost starless, sky. our molecules are streaming, and the aura begins to thaw. I put an arm around her shoulders and fondle her breast. then we kiss. we look into each other's eyes. she passionately kisses my face all over. we go straight to the bedroom, but she stops me when I start to unbutton her blouse. tears in her eyes she raises her mouth to mine, and hearts pounding, in undulating tenderness, our mutual spite unravels, our souls entwine. then she unbuttons her blouse.

Colors

there's a girl with red hair, which she always keeps tied in a ponytail, who recently moved in down the street. she's small but well proportioned, high cheekbones, fair, clear complexion, and striking brown eyes, Irish, who seems to be always wearing green – usually, unless she's running in her shorts, a wool sweater or ski jacket, back pack, and jeans. her expression is generally purposeful, serious, and after we encountered each other on the sidewalk one afternoon when she gave me a warm smile, there's always been a little more (an itch) between us than just a neighborly vibe. she interns at a luxury hotel in Santa Monica, one of those that have been under fire, for while charging exorbitant rates, refusing to pay their workers a living wage. her husband, a self-described security systems 'specialist', who generally wears the ubiquitous t shirt, shorts, and baseball cap combo, and drives a monster GMC 4x4 metallic blue pickup truck with off the road stickers, is at present, unemployed.

one night at about 10 p.m., while sitting at my computer getting logy from typing there's a tap, tap, at my door. I'm pretty sure I know who's there. she's wearing her green jacket, her face and hair illuminated in the overhead porch light. she looks distraught. although I'm ashamed of my place (a mess) I'm more than happy to invite her in. "I left my cell phone at work and I just need to talk to somebody close by." "I imagine what's bothering you is domestic, right?" "I'm just tired of supporting him while he does nothing," she replies, quickly closing the door. "when I leave he's asleep. when I come home he's either gone or just laying around." "you

know, I'm always here, myself." "but you live alone. you're working, you're doing something. you're being the person you want, or have, to be." "well, at least you've defined your situation, so it shouldn't be too hard to change it." "that's why I'm here," she says, suggestively.

it's cold in my apartment. I had the pilot to the furnace shut off three years ago, but I have a small ceramic heater. "take off your jacket. I'll make some herb tea." of course I know what's about to occur, and I'm already aroused. in fact (and I think this is almost always the case) from the moment we met we were programming whatever possibilities there was, including this. I lay her jacket on the back of a folding chair in the kitchen. she's wearing a silver print blouse which reveals a nice set, etc., nice round ass, etc. here I go again. same old shit. sometimes I disgust myself. what does she see when she looks at me? skinny legs, old skin, grey hair? she looks around the front room, then points to a photo on the wall I took six years ago at the L.A. River. "that's fantastic. what is it of?" "the bright colors are algae floating in the water. the tiny black figure is my shadow." it's almost totally abstract.

up to this point we haven't really absorbed ourselves in each other's look. she stands very close and looks long into my eyes. "you have pretty eyes," she says, "they're both blue and green." "just like me," I lamely joke, not feeling any particular meaning in what I said. the drift of our conversation makes me think of a poem by an exiled Persian writer, Majid Naficy, *One Cannot Love*. I pick up a small book which I recently bought for a dollar at a library book sale, open it to the page and hand it to her. she reads to herself. *I want your*

gaze/Not your eyes/I want your kiss/Not your lips/I want your hug/Not your arms. I want to be in love/Because/One cannot have love. I want your honey/Not your hive. she considers for a moment. "yes, I know it's true inside. but can you kiss without lips, hug without arms?" good point, I'm thinking, but keep my mouth shut. how much play is really necessary, or even desired, to initiate the physical part of a tryst? "I'm hot for you," she says, consciously resolving the issue, closing the inches between us, pressing the front of her body up against mine. her breasts heave. "are we going to do it now?" I pull off her jeans and slide her pink panties to the floor. she presses up against me once more while frenching my mouth, then unfastens her bra and glides it off from under her blouse. "now let me undress you."

I pull her to me, quite sexy in just her silky silver shirt. "daddy gave it to me for my birthday. but I wore it just for you." "your real daddy?" "no." I suck her ripe breasts and nibble her nipples. she guides my head down to her thighs and pushes my mouth into her perfumed hair. of course I eat her. we go to the bedroom. I lay on my back. silk blouse still on, she bends over me, kisses and sucks my cock. but I feel claustrophobic in there. perhaps because it's where I sleep. I feel the erotic connection we've established is still in the front room. "let's go back in there. I'll put a lot of cushions on the floor. we can listen to music. it'll actually be cozier." stoking up the horniness again we rub together the fronts of our bodies, our conjoined mouths hungrily fucking. "how many times will you fuck me before I'm satisfied?" "let's see." I tug at her blouse. then pull it off and wrestle her onto a pile of cushions. we lay together and make out. then I roll

on top of her. the feeling of my weight on her flesh is ecstatic. I push my cock into her pubic hairs until she spreads. it automatically finds its way in. and we fuck. when we get close she whispers, "it feels so good to fuck you," tongue in my ear. we grind until there's nothing more we can reach. I slowly pull out savoring the gratification. now life is bearable. we fuck, on and off, the rest of the night. as soon as a void hits, we get horny again, and fuck some more, playfully exploring (parodying) positions but mostly intensely in hard drive, the frequent irony with which she engages adding to the edge.

it's early morn. we hold hands. "what will your husband do when you get home," I ask, actually concerned. "I sometimes have to stay at the hotel at night, though I generally let him know, if he's there. sometimes I pick up a man, or a man picks me up, there. it happens quite frequently as a matter of fact. in that way a hotel is very convenient. I'll work something out." "does anyone ever offer you money?" "yes, all the time. the hotel looks the other way with that kind of thing. occasionally I'll take money just for the kicks. but I like sex too much to just do it for that. I know a person, a friend actually, who I went to school with up in Washington where I'm from, who works at another hotel, also on the beach, who does. they have a system. once an employee whom they consider attractive, has worked there a while, someone will discreetly sound her. if she responds she'll be given a color. red or orange (spicy), is code for Latina or anyone with dark skin. brown (kinky) is scatological I suppose. Licorice (exotic) is code for black. green (fresh) is inexperienced but adventuresome. blue is true. I mean the

illusion of. then they'll beep the person they think fits the situation. no one is obligated to answer the beep. it's up to the individual's discretion. if they do they're compensated well. she has a home in the Brentwood Hills, with a mortgage of course." "what color would you be?," I ask, fascinated. "green," she immediately replies. "I may not be true but I am fresh," she laughs. I kiss her and walk her to the street. "next time we'll go out together and be seen," I say. but I wonder, even though she lives down the block, if I'll ever see her again. I go back in and lay on my ratty single bed with the smelly torn blankets, satisfied (physically), depleted. a pang of sorrow in my heart for her. I don't know why. she has a degree from Occidental College. she'll make out all right. maybe it's because I'm alone but attachments form easily.

Interlude With An Aquarian

the room over the Carousel on the Santa Monica pier is dimly lit. it's late, still filled with people. "then what is it you really want," she asks, finally facing me, close up, processing my hesitation. "if I told you it'd drive you away." "why?" "because of my age." "try, anyway," she urges, predisposing herself for the obvious. "I'd like to have sex with you." for the first time this evening we look into each other's eyes in a meaningful way. "I might just take you up on that. you look good in this light, this time of night," she adds, putting down her empty glass. "kind of like Vivien Leigh in Streetcar," I offer. "no, I was just teasing. your thinness and suppleness turns me on. let's go downstairs and ride on the merry-go-round." "I went to two parties here forty years ago. the first was given by Andy Warhol. but I didn't see him there. Naomi Levine his first female 'Superstar' who I had met at a friend's mother's apartment, a couple of days before, threw herself at me when I walked in. I didn't know what to do with her. I wasn't really attracted. I had her get me a drink, then asked her about the N.Y. 'Underground' film scene. I bored her enough she finally walked away. John Fles (the friend) later told me she rode off with Wallace Berman on the back of his motorcycle." she laughs. "who threw the second party?" "Claus Oldenberg. these people were all about 'fun'. that's what the pop scene then, and forever, is all about. L.A. was becoming more like New York. people who a few years before would've had nothing to do with the 'hipster' crowd or the counter culture, were now getting turned on."

after a couple of rides we decide to get on with it. the pier,

what we can see of it, is empty. booze aura turns to chilly fog. we're both wearing heavy coats. but under the collar of hers is a green silk scarf. *have you lost a lover, lost a friend, then come to the party, at rainbow's end.* we walk back to the end of the pier and lean over the rail, immersed, looking at the small waves slushing against the pilings, and beyond, at the darkness beyond loneliness. I think we're both happy we've found each other, if just temporarily, for the warmth of two bodies. life can be like an assemblage of found art. the shattering of glass awakens us from our trance. we look down at the lower deck to see several young hoods glaring upward. we quickly exit to her car which is in the lot on the pier, and she drives me to mine, I never pay to park, and gives me the address of her house, which is a few blocks north of Ocean Park Blvd.

there's a pattern to these secular encounters. they begin with humor, frank insouciance, verge on heartfelt fulfillment, and, too often, end in sorrow, pathos. love, like life, is tragic, because the eroticism that sparks it, consumes it. an hour earlier, a one niter would have been enough, just a fortuitous spin off for the both of us. but now the party's over, as far off as another planet. what lingers is the fog, the darkness. in its place, though, is the promise of an unfamiliar and possibly illicit pleasure. but at the same time apprehension, estrangement, can eat into desire. she greets me warmly at the door, and I immediately know that sex with her is going to be good. as if to prove it she gives me a sensual kiss. for the first time, in good lighting, I can see how pretty she is, thin, with nice curves. I'm not particularly attracted to 'glamorous' women, bottle blondes with flat stomachs, formidable asses and

bosoms. in them I don't see much erotic potential. first there has to be physical attraction. then we do everything we can to work around it, bare our souls. but without attraction there wouldn't be anything to start with. the interior of her house is all brightness and warmth. the thrill of an unfamiliar closeness returns. if she's experienced any of the trepidation I 'd been feeling on the way here, because of her enviable self-possession, I can't tell. I feel a comfortable heaviness in my genitals. maybe it's true there's only the moment but I want to devour her. "why don't I heat up a rum drink" we sit at an antique table in the small dining room, I look out the window at a well-lit, exquisitely detailed, exotic garden. the sparkle from the ornate crystal chandelier is blinding. "I've been thinking about your Vivien Leigh as Blanche DuBois remark," she says, handing me the drink. "I think the aura is more important than the image, anyway." "it's the essence of it." "yes. you know, I don't know what you do." "nor I, you." "we don't even know each other's names. isn't that strange?" "it's strange that I haven't even thought about it." "well, as long as we've managed this far why don't we let it slide a little longer." "I'm all for it. maybe you have an exotic biblical name like Talia, which means dew, or Zahara. that would be nice. you know like so and so *knew* so and so." "very funny. seriously, I would like to know what you do. are you a writer?"

"I'm an actress and it's ironic, I did play Stella in Streetcar in a local production when I was first starting out.. it was a short run. Stanley broke his leg. no pun intended." "did you make it with him?" "oh yes, we really got into our roles." "do you make it with a lot of men?" "yes." "women?" "occasional,

very." "don't you worry about HIV?" "a little, I'm pretty careful." then looks at me inquisitively. "you don't have to worry about me." "good."

I've never really gotten into theater. the contrivances have never appealed to me. I saw a lot of narcissistic performance art during the 80s and it bored the shit out of me. though I liked Laurie Anderson's early audio work. in the 60s I remember responding to Genet's, *The Blacks*. that was one exception. I'm a child of the cinema. *Streetcar* was a great filmed play, I guess, but *On The Waterfront* was a transforming experience. it set the tone of my mood as a young adult, even though I wasn't cool enough to live up to it. Brando and Eva Marie Saint, fumbling to communicate along a metal fence in the snow. the image of her in her slip when they kiss. the nuances were so erotic. that couldn't have happened on stage.

"my parents took us, my brothers and I, to the movies one night every weekend until I was twelve. they rarely went nightclubbing like the parents of a friend, or to parties other than at relatives, though they used to go dancing before I was born. I think it was a way of not having to play social games that might lead to....." "adultery." "yes, I feel I'm working out that karma." "with me?" "no, I don't think so. anyway, I haven't been inside a commercial movie house in 30 years. but let's not go into that." "aren't there ever movies you want to see?" "yes, but I don't actually have to. I read reviews. eventually I get to some of them on DVD." "like what?" "Annie Hall, Stranger Than Paradise, Blue Velvet, Mulholland, some of my old favorites, plus experimental film.

“que hora es?” “it.s about 2 a.m. “I could sit here all night.” “don’t forget why you’ve come.” I feel a little jolt. her confidence, while arousing me, is somewhat intimidating, but there;s a tugging in my pants. “let me show you the bedroom.” she takes me by the hand and leads me to the back of the house. she flips a little switch. fluorescent tubes lighting the pastel painted walls filter the room with a luminous blue hue. lace curtains hanging from the wooden window frames, and a dark mahogany upright mirrored dresser, strewn with sexy lingerie, give it a late 19th century, almost ‘little old lady from Pasadena’, appearance. but opposite the aqua covered queen bed is a large aquarium filled with brilliantly colored tropical fish. the mural of a gray whale is painted on the ceiling.

back in the dining room, my confidence still somewhat compromised, we kiss. this comforts me. it makes me feel she wants love as well. we go into the living room. she puts the John Coltrane-Johnny Hartman album of ballads on the CD player. “why don’t we dance to get in the mood.” “I’m already in the mood. I can’t wait to fuck you.” I don’t forget to not tell her I don’t dance. “let’s dance, anyway,” she insists, and turns off the light. listening to Coltrane’s phrasing on *my one and only love*, not to mention the strength and beauty of his sound, it seems almost sacrilege to have sex to something so pure. but the music is also gorgeous and sensual. it depends on the purity of your intent. we undress and leave our clothes on the same chair. the sensation of our skins touching as we quietly move to the music, naked, in a semi-embrace, charges our bodies. her hair nestles my face, her nipples press below mine. yes, we kiss while we dance. my cock

swells and when she caresses it with her fingers, I carefully lift her and carry her to the 'blue room'. I bury my mouth in her pubic hair and eat her. the aquarium light glows. the fishes swim. we fuck.

when I awake the next morning, the imprint of her breasts are still on my chest. traces of her fragrances in my nostrils. at first I walk around in a pleasantly nuanced haze. then I become deeply meditative. there's a subtle clarity in what my horniness has caused me to neglect. if not disturbed my day will be contemplative. people who have sex regularly may not comprehend this state. if this is not enough, at the moment, it is all there is..

The Nymph's Reply (to her spouse)

"I was hot and he was sexy. is that what you want to know? at one point I lay on my back. he knelt in front of me as if he were about to pray. then he raised my buttocks and I wrapped my ankles around his neck. he pushed against my thighs, jackknifing me, and we fucked - his penetration was deep - until we both had orgasms. his shoulders and chest were muscular, and I fixed on the silver chain jangling from his neck. it became a blur as I got close to coming. his semen was hot. I moaned and groaned with pleasure. is that what you want to know," she repeats. "I can tell you more. a lot more."

No Heroics

one Friday afternoon at LACMA I run into an old friend who works as a curator of contemporary art – special exhibitions. it's almost evening. I invite her to join me for a bite downstairs where we can sit in the courtyard afterwards and listen to the Friday evening jazz concert. the only catch is the acoustics are such that the sound bouncing back and forth between the buildings is so loud that even a small group with no horns can blow you out, and tonight it's the Vinny Golia Large Ensemble (bless them). so much for my sensitive ear drums. we survive by taking a table almost in the moat of the Japanese Pavilion. the people who attend these events (and there's always a big crowd) are not, for the most part, the young scenesters who hang at the gallery openings downtown, in Culver City, Silverlake/Echo Park, and Chinatown. the people who sit in the rows of chairs set up in the Plaza are the older, still bohemian, hipper looking artists, professionals, academics, dropouts, mostly couples (some with children), who attentively listen to the music. it's the usual mix of drink, perfume, and old trendy clothes, but the mood is not exactly celebratory. there's an undercurrent of grimness, a world view consciousness that things are not going too well on this planet. I'm not sure where to place her in that context. she's in her forties, kind of tall, freshly shampooed hair. a little too severe? she lives with her son, age 11. I sense an emotional fragility is the flip side of her logistical competence. I glance at her long sleeved blouse with the fluted cuffs and collar, at her rust colored skirt and long legs. she still has penetrating grey-blue eyes. I tell her that the idea I had just pitched to the powers that be for an exhibit

had been rejected. I'm neither surprised nor disappointed. I'm relieved to be unburdened of a project that at best would have been cumbersome. one I really didn't have my heart into. in fact, I think the idea sucks. there are too many lame ideas in the art world as is, and my willingness to add to the muck shows just how low I've sunk. anyway, I'm not a presenter. just a perceiver, and hopefully, a creator. we talk for a while and to celebrate my freedom I ask her if she'd like to spend the following day with me....take a ride up the coast. "I would like to."

"where is your son today?" he's attending a camp with the Yeshiva he goes to. he just started the 6th grade. I'll drive up early tomorrow so we can spend some time there before returning home." "what are his interests?" "film and music." "what does his father do?" "he teaches art history." "why did you split up?" "we got together because of mutual interests." she doesn't elaborate. I survey the wide curve of coastline, which seems to always provoke some kind of mental evaluation. there's just enough mist to mute the clarity. "I hope you don't mind the overcast." "I like that, the shrouded effect I don't mean to seem morbid but these days I'm mostly in a melancholy mood." "how does that affect your work?" "when we put together a show I look for the element of something lost. if the work is strong, it's that feeling which inevitably conveys it's preciousness, that gives it depth." "I know. I felt that way seeing a show at LACMA about the Russian avant-garde way back in 1980. I saw it a number of times. I even took my mother. one of the female artists, Liubov Popova, died very young. my mother, whose parents immigrated from the Ukraine, was moved by the

show. brilliant beginning, but the Stalinists gave them no breathing room. it was one of the first shows I remember where multimedia was used as documentation really effectively."

we pass Malibu where my brother, sister-in-law, and adult niece, are ensconced in the hills, and decide to take a walk on a stretch of sand before going to eat at a Chinese Restaurant in Point Dume. I ask her how her estranged husband (not being Jewish) relates to their son being raised as an observant Jew, going to a Yeshiva, yet. "he's very supportive." "but not of you." "he has problems with women in general." "he's anti-feminist?" "he's not against women having cultural and economic power as long as it isn't sexual. he's aware of the discrepancy, he just has a problem with it. I take her hand and we walk, not talking. "my former wife, I feel a little funny referring to her as such, because she had a longer marriage with another man after we split up, once told me she never got tired of holding hands with me, never was uncomfortable, never felt like pulling away. I think it was because, while together, we allowed each other our separate worlds." she smiles. we let go. "then why did you split up? there was no verbal communication. she wasn't philosophical. we just lived in an impasse on one level, accepting the relationship and each other's roles in it, and on another level it was total denial. after her father died...he drank himself to death, I think she ceased to care about our marriage. for me drugs were no longer working. 1967 was, possibly, the most difficult year of my life. both our lives, perhaps."

it's dark when we leave. "you're so quiet. you seemed

bothered, preoccupied. am I getting too personal?" "no, I'm just sick of being alone. I've got a cock and I'm not sure it even works." "is that why you wanted the live action sexual content in the show?" "most likely. but eroticism without interaction, physical work, just makes you more impotent. for the first time I'm aware of the necessity of power. not power over anyone or anything, but the power of the organism to function. functioning is power." "it's almost impossible to think of you as impotent because of your energy. your energy goes right through me. it turns me on that you're so intense, and at the same time, open." "well I don't think I am impotent. I mean not organically. it's mostly a matter of use it or lose it, I'm afraid. it's been a long time. if I get too horny the closer I get to an orgasm, the more my penis actually recedes. an adaptation, almost, as if without someone to put it into, an erection just gets in the way. for several months now I deliberately think of nothing but sex. I used to just take my penis for granted." she looks at me hard and the sharpness of her gaze cuts through the half-light flashing from the cars. I know she's a little bit moved and turned on, but she surprises me with her forwardness when she says, "if we're going to do it, let's not turn it into either a do or die, or a seduction. let's just let it be what it is." she moves closer to the seat separation and rests her head on my shoulder.

her 2 bed house is on a wooded street just north of San Vicente, in Brentwood. she opens the door and we walk through the dark hallway. I feel a warm, comforting vibe, even before she turns on the lights in the living room filled with antique furniture, figurines, and woven fabric. she

stands close to me, wraps her arms around my shoulders and rubs the front of her body against mine. I can feel the heat of her breasts through her white pullover sweater. again she surprises me with her forwardness when she says, "let's go to the bedroom and fuck right away. if we need preliminaries we can do them as we go along." I sit in an upright hard wood chair. she sits on her indigo covered queen bed, lifts her arms and pulls off her sweater. her breasts are bare. she removes her shoes, then stands up and drops her skirt and panties. her sheer beige hose fastened to the cream colored thong belt shaping her long legs, and bare skin of her thighs, gleam in the dim, reddish-yellow, lamp light. her curly muff is the same color and rough texture as her blonde hair. both aroused and somewhat intimidated, I swallow hard and undress. I feel a little bit like a boy caught with a hard-on in class. she lays back against the pillow and spreads. my penis is throbbing and I know I'm going to come as soon as I enter her. she wraps her legs around me. "go slow," she says, "so we can talk," and runs her fingers through my hair. "I'm going to come." "that's alright, just stay in." I spurt on her last word. my orgasm is short but sharp. she kisses my neck, and holds me while I rest. "I thought of my son as if he were in his bedroom, asleep, and it made me feel complete," all the while moving her vagina, until my penis once again thickens. now I feel grounded. "let me do the work," she says, rubbing her nipples against my chest, sexy, and my penis begins to move with her. "if I like a person I like to converse with him while we have sex. it creates leverage, a third connection I can reach deep into." "like my drawing with my eyes closed," I offer, a little facetiously. she's getting more and more excited. I'm feeling more and more power. I stroke the

beginning of her orgasm and we come together. we keep moving until there's nothing. when I finally pull out I look at my cock with satisfaction. but she need not let me forget who should be humble. "would you like to bathe together? it's a big tub." "a Taoist master wrote, never take a bath or shower after sex. water is a conductor of electricity, which is what our nervous systems are. it will deplete your energy. but we can sponge each other down," I say. and so the story ends.

plan B. begin page 30, line 15. but I'm not hard. she gets off the bed and stands in front of me. she grasps my penis, caressing it, and I shoot immediately. she tightly squeezes until the feeling is sated. "that's all right," she says, gently, "I'm not surprised. let's lay on the bed for a while." after about ten minutes of lying there we get up. she again grasps my penis and carefully massages it, rubbing the inside of the base and my testicles (while kissing my mouth) in circular motions. she rubs the pubic region below my abdomen, and my penis gradually swells to size. but not erect. "this is enough to get started," she says. "let's see what happens." she lays her head back on the pillow. I put the head of my penis at the opening of her vagina, and it's easy to work it in. she wraps her arms around my shoulders, her legs around my hips, and my penis stiffens as we fuck. cont.

2 Short Pieces

a young woman and I are smoking pot. she's a redhead, wearing a soft red pullover sweater, either lamb's wool or cashmere. she's laying on her back, looking up at me. she has nothing else on. her sweater is pushed up over her breasts. I lay on top of her. my penis is thick (three quarters hard). we fuck, slow and dense. like on peyote. my penis feels like it's yards away from my body, my brain. it's very sensual. when I get out of bed I fantasize turning on with the redhead girl who lives next door, then having sex with her. after breakfast, instead of running, I drive to an art supply store.

an older man and a young woman are lovers. to him she is devoted. pretty, gentle, sexy, and kind. one night he gives her a gift. a very expensive dress made out of muslin material, with intricate red, blue, and orange, flowers, embroidered in an ivory field. she tries it on. it fits perfectly, caressing her form. she looks sexy, lovely, virginal, in it. every time she wears it he looks at her and wants to fuck her, the heat of her calves parching his throat. but she'll never let him fuck her in it. as is often the case, their lives eventually begin to move in separate directions. and one night, with a younger man, she has sex, while wearing the dress. when they're finished she begins to cry. he can't understand why. their sex had been good, tender, affectionate. she cries for hours. days. and she never wears the dress again.

Fucking And Talking

"have you ever been raped?" "no, but I was once gang fucked." "how did that come about?" "it was an afternoon social at a mansion. I was sitting outdoors in the garden nursing a drink. I was wearing a snug fitting light brown brightly flowered print summer dress, and high strapped black stilettos. my hair was swept up and I knew by the looks I was getting, I was attracting a sexual response.. several men who had been drinking, not a lot, were paying particular attention to me, staring at my legs and making light talk. it had been a boring and unproductive summer, and when they asked me to go inside with them, I consented. in fact I was all for it. I didn't even finish my drink, because I wanted my senses to be sharp. we found a room on the top floor which didn't seem to be in use. and you can guess the rest. they took off their clothes, then undressed me. I was amused by the clumsy haste with which they undid the straps of my shoes. one would kiss me and squeeze and fondle my breasts and then another would do the same. almost, oddly, because of the grossness, by the time they got me onto the bed I was aroused. but when it became a kind of orgy, simultaneously being kissed, groped, and genitally palpated, I resisted, and they stopped. we agreed each could take his turn fucking me as long as it wasn't imposed. which worked out well. they were all adequate, each had a different style and rhythm which was interesting, and things just built, until with the last man, after having had two previous quick orgasms, I had a very intense, long lasting one. when it was over, we dressed quietly, and went back outside. there was a small group of musicians playing, and people were dancing. when I told the

friends I had come with what had happened, at first they were alarmed, but seeing the color on my face, and smile, they just got me a margarita, the most fabulous tasting alcoholic drink I ever remember having, which I quickly downed. a young, handsome man asked me to dance. he said he was smitten by my looks and manner. he wanted to take me home, after. but I told him I was committed to leaving with the people I came with. it was late afternoon and the warmth of the sun felt blissful." "interesting story."

driving back from her therapist's office she's thinking she'd like to get away from L.A. maybe move up to Seattle, where a former school friend with whom she still corresponds, has a band. she guesses the heat made her think of all that stuff she told her shrink. she feels she'd like to pull over to the side of the road, take off all her clothes except her underpants, like the girl in the Beth Lissick story, the part about Buddy the cat, and stare and wave at the passing cars. like the girl in the story she feels she needs to cool off. she's also been feeling, in spite of herself, she'd like to get fucked that way....again. she's been increasingly losing sight of her middle class background. she's not drinking or using drugs a lot, but enough that it's changed her. if she's ever to play the role of a domestic partner, it will have to wait. she has a yearning to be serious, involved, serene. her older friends indulge her. they think she's just going through a stage of rebellion. they feel protective, cautioning and giving her advice. to them she's their stray cat, their lovable slut. her newer friends are wilder. she's confused. but the one constant, the thing she feels she always has, is allure. it occurs to her this may be her Achilles Heel. that unconsciously she's

deliberately setting herself up her downfall.

the next morning she's working the front register at Skylight Bookstore on N. Vermont Ave. an older man walks in with a copy each, of four self-published books. he's skinny, almost tall, with an angular face, and prominent nose. his long, slightly receding hair, is grey. he has that combination of age and youthfulness some older men have, that makes it difficult to categorically dismiss him (as a potential lover). he looks at her with penetrating blue-green eyes. "Carl isn't in today. he's the one you have to see. if you want you can leave them and then call back." she hands him a consignment form to fill out. "give him a few days before you call," she advises. she watches him through the corner of her eye as he pushes the door open and walks out onto the street, affected a little bit by the intensity of his image. she's not particularly curious about what's in the books, but on her break she grabs the most recent. – practically everything in it is erotic. just a horny old man obsessed with sex (with younger women) she thinks. 3 days later, the day of the Griffith Park fire, he calls and asks to speak to Carl. "do you want to keep them?" "no," is the frank response. "if you want to get them they'll be up front." same old story. even though the book covers all have interesting photos (he's also a photographer), a book written by an 'unknown', with no ISBN bar code, or Library of Congress catalogue number, isn't even going to be looked at. then again, maybe it was. maybe it was the content. when he walks in she's putting greeting cards into a mobile rack. she avoids his gaze, but is solicitous to an uptight looking blonde in form fitting jeans and a tank top, who's standing in front of the counter with some knickknacks in her hand. he

matter-of-factly tells the girl at the other register he's come to pick up his books. then checks to see if all of them are there before leaving without looking at her. on the street he feels energized, like he's gotten rid of some bad karma.

they sit at an outdoor table and talk. it's early evening. they've both finished their drinks. the air is warm and intimate. their conversation moves from social politics to, inevitably, the personal and the sexual. "I'm a nympho but I'd like to think I'm not promiscuous. my friends think differently however." the discussion finally gets to his former marriage. when he tells her the last time he had sex was with his former wife, 35 years ago, less than a year after they split up, he expects he's dropped an irretrievable bombshell, but she doesn't seem surprised. strange, time suspended, the revelation seems to only enhance their veiled romantic inclination towards each other. he feels a little breathless. his heart is beating faster. "how did it come about that you haven't taken up with other women? that you've remained celibate for so long?" "a relatively short time after she moved out, I moved back in with my parents. what was intended to be six months turned into twenty-five years. it just wasn't conducive to having a sexual or any other kind of relationship." "Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant became NBA stars while living with their parents." "they hadn't yet moved out. they weren't going back to anything." "you don't seem oppressed. you seem capable and alive. that's part of what attracts me to you." "well, maybe that's the way I am now because I want something to happen, I nurture it." there's a long silence. "you can fuck me if you want." he looks at her intently. her face is glowing. there's a pleasant tension in his pants.

if only he can live up to the feelings he's having now. "let's make it definite. come over tomorrow. early evening." "she doesn't say what time.

how much does she desire him, and how much is she doing it for his benefit (salvation) leaves him in doubt. how much does she want to be at the center of a moment of truth in somebody's life when nothing's particularly at stake for herself? this is no way to think. and does it really matter? the only valid motivation has to be love. what should he wear? long sleeve t shirt and levis. same as always. and, if it's cold, a jacket. not that different than the clothes he wore in JHS. should he bring her a gift? a bottle of wine or champagne? his heart is palpitating as he stands on the front doorstep of her small, rented, craftsman house, and rings the bell, exactly like it did first dates as a teenager. it's no more than a few seconds before she comes to the door. she doesn't just look lovely, she looks divine, wearing a charcoal black, chambray dress, her auburn hair brushed back, standing bare foot on the thick yellow carpet that covers most of the hardwood living room floor, her brown eyes rich pools in the soft light. she smiles brilliantly, but her look is noncommittal. he can't tell what she's thinking. she takes his jacket and offers him a drink. then joins him sitting on the sofa. when they've finished their drinks she snuggles up to him. "I don't want to tease you, I'm a little apprehensive, myself." she reaches her hand under his shirt and rubs his chest. she brushes her lips across his without actually kissing. she looks into his eyes, drawing out his shyness. she strokes the rise in his pants, and then kisses him, a warm, tender, sensual kiss. he kisses her, first softly, then harder. among her antique furniture is a cuckoo

clock ticking distractedly on the wall. in the otherwise silence, they passionately make out. he kisses her all over and feels her up. she once again presses her hand on his crotch. she unzips his pants and moves her mouth on his penis until it has a life of its own. he reaches under her dress, caresses her thighs, and runs his fingers along the wet bottom of her panties. they go to the bedroom, undress, lay down on the sheet-less, semi plush, semi firm, queen mattress, and fuck.

the rest of the evening they talk. "working at the bookstore is oppressive," she tells him, "totalitarian and elitist." they have two more drinks, scotch with water chaser, talk warmly but don't get back to making love. when they fucked it was intense and short for both of them. they came together. and then it seemed that was that. there was no after play. no building into something deeper. they dressed immediately after. she remained warm and thoughtful, took his hand and showed him things she thought he might be interested in. he felt she was treating him as she would any other guest. but because of the circumstance he'd hoped (if it worked) the result would be, not just an extension of his fantasies, but a springboard to a new paradigm. he wondered what was it like for her. the realization didn't have to hit him suddenly that this was the first time he'd fucked in 35 years. he's become more self-absorbed. he needs her deeper involvement. "I had a strong orgasm. I like the way you fuck, quietly, intently, with a sense of purpose," she says, sensing his uncertainty. she gently places a hand there. "I don't think we should have any more sex tonight. I like you and I want it to continue. this isn't strange or as different an experience as you might feel." "but if we we were just two people

attracted to each other, not the difference, not the celibacy, we'd probably be going as far as we could with it." "is that what you'd like to do?" "no," he quickly realizes. "that's what I'm trying to tell you. it would be exactly the same. if things had not worked out well, then it would have been different. I'm complementing you." he nods. "I have sex with men all the time and never see them again. anyway, it's your energy and aliveness that interests me in you. your seriousness moves me. if there are sexual problems they can be worked out." "an ecstasy is beginning to take hold of him. "you've allowed me to be reborn, and to think the first time is with someone so gorgeous. she blushes, but her face registers a slight agitation. "best not to idealize, and I hope looks isn't all there is to it."

what does your former wife do, now?" "one thing she's doing is working for her PhD." her look is puzzlement. "how old is she?" "64." "how old was she when you got married?" "almost 19." "how old were you?" "almost 27." "that's amazing." "yes it is. I never doubted her common sense. I respected the tentativeness with which she'd describe an event that had taken place, precisely and accurately, relating what had been said and done, interpreting by implication rather than direct expression, but I never thought of her as an academic. it didn't seem to be in her sphere of interest or inclination. I was the intellectual, etc." "what did she do after you split up?" she hung out with her 'spiritual' friends for a while having sex and practicing yoga. soon, however, the film student she was involved with became her second husband. when years later, he fell for one of his students, she left him and eventually he remarried. possibly, as far as memories

and attachments go, she has stronger feelings for him than she has for me. she recently wrote me she was 'sleepwalking' during our marriage, that she was then a 'fearful' person, and 'afraid' of me." "how do you feel about her now?" I respect what she's done with herself, as she says she does with me. I admire her courage. she's a practicing Buddhist. I admire her for the rationality, awareness, and absoluteness, with which she's done that." "do you still want to relate to her?" "I'd like to be friends, see her from time to time. I want to know more about what she's doing, what she knows. she possibly could help me with contacts, but that evidently doesn't fit her agenda." "do you still have a physical attraction to her?" "how much was I attracted to her, although she was not without her physical attributes? and how attracted was she to me? her brother once told me that his family were carnivores, i.e. carnal, and that mine were vegetarians. he said he assumed our relationship was sexually based, but he was implying it was not. shortly before we got married I tried to back out. having a sexual relationship with her had broken the ice and I wanted to explore. there wasn't enough of the kind of communication between us I felt I needed. I needed more experience. I would have liked to have had sexual relationships with other, older, whom I thought to be more bohemian, more intellectually sophisticated, women. women who I thought more reflected how I defined myself. possibly more I felt marriage was a trap.. but her attitude hardened as she began to perceive what I was getting to, and I backed down. I didn't want to admit to myself how schizophrenic I was. I was afraid of losing face with my friends as well. she evidently did want my love and acceptance. then, the particular world we valued and inhabited, seemed more

mine than hers. even though she left me, she may have wanted the relationship more than I did. but she was able to go on to new life. I was in too bad shape, physically, and consequently socially, to move on. socially, things dried up. I pretty much had to start over from scratch.” she nods, her face generating genuine warmth. “and now you’re an outsider.” “pretty much.” “do you want to get back in?” “I just don’t want to feel shut out.” “even though you have contempt for the process.” “yes, I think most of the art world is about the ‘emperor’s clothes’.” “instead of taking the high ground and trying to make a better situation, you choose to be ruthlessly honest. you shouldn’t let honesty negate your higher intent, which takes faith.” “I’ll have to think about that.”

“would you like to come over to my place? ashamed as I am of the ratty hole I’ve made of it. I’d like to show you the work I’ve done, do.” “yes, but my friends warn me to be aware.” “you refer to them like they’re some cabal. don’t they have names?” “no more than we do,” she replies.

his apartment has only 2 chairs besides hard bottom folding chairs, so he brings the second chair in from the bedroom. they huddle together over the photos which he keeps in black archival boxes – water lilies, desert photos, a photo essay of rusted boiler parts, billboards, buildings, a lot of graffiti, some very abstract, and street shots of people. she’s impressed with the color, and the absoluteness of the composition, but wonders why there are no portraits. “because “I’ve no one to shoot,” he says, “no pun intended. just another example how lack of social access is hurting me at every turn.” but mostly he’s happy she gets that whatever there is in them does not

rely on obvious conceptual hooks. he refuses to compromise his vision on that level. he sometimes worries they're not edgy enough not enough to them. but at other times he becomes raptly absorbed in them. then he has to face the frustration of their just sitting there. the truth is you can look at things just so many times without getting sick of them. then, at fresh moments they once again become alive. "I'd love to photograph you." "nude?" "any way." "you can."

it's not so much his apartment is messy. books piled on the floor in the front room by the window can be aesthetic. it's the lack of care, almost contempt, for the space he lives in. but part of it is the bulkiness of his tools. the back side of the wall and all of one side of the room is filled with electronic equipment. three different printers for his writing and art, alone. the heavy old style monitor, a film scanner, and one printer, overloading a metal frame computer table, a network of wires underneath, add to the schlock appearance of the room. there's no cable. he doesn't watch TV. the thin, tough carpet is stained and worn. he's been there 8 years and never cleaned the windows or the screens. the kitchen linoleum is cracked and spotted. the bathroom cabinet is corroded. one sliding door to the bedroom closet is stuck. the other tenants take care to feather their nests, display potted plants, etc. but at least he doesn't have furniture to move. it hurts because he does have a very aesthetic sense of place, which because of circumstance, can, externally, only exist in his work. it's also ironic he has half the servings of the delicately fine Czechoslovakian china, his share, along with sterling silverware that belonged to his mother, still packed in a box since he moved there, still awaiting liberation.

this affects his feeling regarding her being there. he thinks about what it would be like negotiating to have sex with her there, then her having to use the bathroom. the bedroom, however, is austere, and because it's an upper, has good light. he'd just paid a lot of money for an expensive queen set (similar to hers). the bedroom is where he writes. there's also the factor that having sex with her at his place puts the psychological burden on him. she doesn't seem to mind, however. it doesn't touch the aspect of her interest in him, which, oddly, given her care in that area, is not material.

but the magic aura, their small, complete, indestructible, universe, returns. her strange, erotic presence, so incredibly touchable and real, standing serenely next to him, strange in that she is the foreign element to the context, and, therefore, the necessary ingredient of change, is the catalyst. everything....her clothes, her scent, her every gesture, is played against the static form, creating new motion and possibility. although not intended, they tenderly, intensely, blissfully, fuck for 2 hours.

"Basho, however, was not satisfied to remain in the kind of low-toned atmosphere of the 'floating world' for long. there was something in him which gradually rebelled against it." he wrote – *the leaves of the Basho tree are large enough to cover a harp. when they are wind-broken, they remind me of the injured tail of a phoenix, and when they are torn, they remind me of a green fan ripped by the wind. the tree does bear flowers, but unlike other flowers, there is nothing gay about them. the big trunk of the tree is untouched by the axe, for it is utterly useless as building wood. I love the tree, how-*

ever it's very uselessness...I sit underneath it, and enjoy the wind and rain that blow against it."

(trans. Nobuyuki Yuasa. *The Narrow Road To The Deep North and other travel sketches*. Penguin Books. 1966)

he's still locked out. which, perhaps, is his own doing. still hasn't been able to objectify the feeling of loss inside. there's a tragic element he knows he's not getting to. having reached another plateau with this story, he searches his piled up books. he looks for Eileen Myles' book of lesbian short stories, *Chelsea Girls*, but before he can dig it out, he spots a book by minimalist/movement choreographer and dancer, Simone Forti, *Handbook In Motion*, who is a friend and colleague of his former wife's. already over eroticized, he decides to pass on Myles' stories, and instead, start reading Forti's book (it occurs to him most of the books he reads are by women). as he reads a small portion, description of performances personal anecdotes and aesthetic musings accompanied by photos and drawings he begins to feel more peaceful. even the book itself, white with black print, smooth, non-textured paper, cool and comforting to run his fingers across, that for a moment (re his obsession with, young, pretty, women) he considers writing the words, 'sex is useless', but as he reads on, reconsiders. how nice it would be to return to a social universe more supportive of aesthetics. there's a price one pays for being alone, living among those who're indifferent, disruptive, or even hostile to that.

returning from her job interview wearing a black suit jacket and skirt, skin toned hose, her hair up, a caramel colored silk cravat around her neck, looking lovely, sexy, she moves to

where he's sitting, not saying anything, unzips and pulls down his pants, and gives him a blow job. only the quiet sound of her mouth on his organ stirs the increasingly intense silence. when he spurts and moans, she draws every bit of semen out, and swallows it. he lays back, blissed out. "did you get the job?" "no, I don't think so. I couldn't wait to get back to you," she answers, her cheeks flushed, eyes flashing. "I'm afraid I'm going to be docile the rest of the night." "I like you that way, sometimes." "he doesn't quite understand her sudden, unsolicited, show of affection, or what went on during her job interview. though she looks fresh, still, he considers that may be a factor. she kisses him gently. "I'll make something energizing to replenish you." "I get so much pleasure just out of looking at you when you're all dressed up," he says, sitting up. "your mother was pretty. it probably goes back to that." "yes, definitely. but it's in our DNA to appreciate beauty." "your old body and ravaged face is beautiful to me." there are tears in her eyes. "beauty is in the eye of the beholder." later, they lay naked, and just kiss.

the next morning she calls him from work. "would you like to come over for dinner tonight?" I have something to tell you." of course his curiosity is piqued.

"what we need is more physical involvement (with each other)." "what do you mean? all we do is fuck." I mean movement wise. in our movement together. for instance, when we walk together, I can feel the sensuality of your rhythm, acutely. but we're only superficially in synch. we use the space between us as a shield. we need to be more conscious of our body movements and how it relates to one

another,” he says, aping the stuff he’d read. “I’ve come up with an exercise. say we’re standing on a street corner, and the ambiguity of the distance between us is causing a disconnect. then we stand close, facing each other, almost touching. I put a hand on each of your breasts, nipples in my palms, squeezing tightly. then you take both of your hands and push against, and squeeze my genitals tightly. we embrace and kiss. then we walk, slowly together, using the energy we’ve made, as a compass, a conduit.” she laughs uncontrollably. “you know this is just another instance of how you need to eroticize everything.” she can’t stop laughing. “but I love it.” she runs her fingers affectionately through his hair. “I’ve attended workshops on body movement, relating external movement to inner vibrations, etc., but this is a new one.” she’s still laughing but stops as she sees his feelings are hurt. hurt...feelings. strange combination of words. “it’s interesting,” she finally says, dramatically shifting tone. “I’ve begun to lose my nymphomania. sex with you is that complete and reassuring. I feel a love for you I’ve never felt before, a happiness to actually be giving you something. but it makes me sad if I’ve passed that on to you. you’re so creative and yet sometimes you seem so lost, like a little boy. but I don’t want to be your mother.” he doesn’t say anything. he takes her hand as they walk. he still feels what he feels about movement. the metaphor (and that’s all it was) he came up with just didn’t work that well. he didn’t mean to imply it was just about sex. but he’s happy. he loves her, too. and what she said about giving hit home. it opens up an ache, and he realized how much he needs to give her something (other than his need). how much living is giving. and how much does she need him? so, how much of

this is a projection? and doesn't it go back to the thrill he felt when she said, in that endearingly subdued but confident manner, "you can fuck me if you want." how it changed everything. yes, but now they're beyond it. it's sink or swim. either progress or go under.

"hold this and push me forward. push harder. now stop." does his basic attraction to her now revolve around her giving him orders? because fucking again has come so easily, he's not been prepared for the effects of the residue his isolation has caused. and he knows using his cock won't compensate for a lack of fortitude in facing the void it made. in fact, their sex now should be more utilitarian, denser, geared towards a necessary satisfaction that allows them to proceed with meaning.. she's already there, already made the change. sex is just the come on. love can grow only out of pain, and the courage 'to stay the course.' (you know who said that. I'll quote anybody if it serves my purpose. let's get a Hillary quote in here for balance – "there are worse things than infidelity.") does he really believe this negative stuff he's spouting? no, but there's a full blown perverseness in him that needs to come out, that needs to fuck up everything. writing is not living, only living life can create a plot. he can't suppress the notion that with all the love she's given him, her main motive, still, is control. there's a love in both their hearts, however, that's pure, that doesn't belong to either of them. and they're trying hard. they both see this as an opportunity for salvation. but they fear they're both too vain. self-awareness, alone, is not enough. they're no different, in this respect, than all the other writers, artists, dancers, poets, they relate to. *but I would not be so all alone. everybody*

must get stoned. (there I go again. isn't it precious, how I've managed to avoid, so far, naming anybody. still no plot. do we need one? can't we get to true love without a crisis and catharsis? I'm afraid not.)

another 'romantic' interlude. or is it another regression? when she walks back into the room, wearing a cream colored blouse and red skirt, attracting as a bullfighter's cape, eyeing her legs, he grips, and tugs at her blouse, popping a couple of buttons, and pushes her onto the carpet. they fuck hard for two minutes or less, a quickie, and have short, sharp orgasms. he apologizes for his 'impulsiveness'. "that's all right, I liked it," she says, pulling up her panties, smoothing her skirt. then they eat dinner.

just when he thinks he's going to flunk the course (and lose her to boot), fate intervenes in the form of a Bugs Bunny cartoon. his all-time favorite cartoon short was titled, Racketeer Rabbit. artist Jean-Michel Basquiat must have shared his enthusiasm, because the words Racketeer Rabbit appears in one of his paintings. included on an anthology of major studio animation, they're standing out front when the DVD arrives. they go inside and watch the cartoon. they fuck one more time before she has to leave to finish packing for her trip to Amsterdam the following day, where she's to have a month long residency to participate in a multi-media event. this was the 'something' she had to tell him at dinner the night before.

driving her to the airport he's feeling very despondent. she's really become his addiction. "keep working. nothing else is

as important," she encourages. but sitting in the parking structure he's fighting off the urge to what would be the first really big cry he's had in years. "I don't want to lose you," he almost sobs. I won't be gone that long." "time and space can change anything. I suppose you'll be seeing your old boyfriend." "he's picking me up at the airport. we're friends. you know that." "you'll probably be fucking him." "I don't make those kind of plans. the last time I saw him I wasn't particularly attracted to him. I've never had the feeling of love for him, or anyone else, I have for you." he blushes with shame and remorse at the selfishness he's exhibiting, threatening to put a damper on what will certainly be a fatiguing flight, most likely not without anxiety. at the gate leading to the ramp, they touch lightly, and look long into each other's eyes, before kissing goodbye. "I'll call you as soon as I get there. I love you."

when she finally calls it's more than a day later. "eh, what's up Doc." "busy. I've got a lot of things to do." her ex has found her a small apartment and she's in the process of re-familiarizing herself with the city. she sounds happy. he wants to ask her if she misses him, but puts himself in her shoes, instead. she tells him her ex-boyfriend is very sweet, very thoughtful. "he's taken care of everything. it's made it very easy to adjust." "is he also performing?" "yes." one night, after the first performance, she calls. she's very excited. there's a lot of background noise...music, talking and laughter. it's hard to hear her. they really like her work, and want to extend her visit, if they can arrange for a grant. she also sounds a little stoned. "I don't know whether to do it or not. there's a lot of free drugs here." "there's a lot of drugs

everywhere.” “yes, I know.” the next time she calls he knows what to expect. “I’ve really taken to life here. the scene is so generating and free. I don’t think I could go back to the predictableness of working at the bookstore. I’ll come back eventually, though. I don’t intend to become an ex-patriot.” she tells him that she and her ex have again become ‘close’, and that she’s decided to move in with him to cut expenses. she asks him if he wants her to continue to call him. “no.” “I’ll always love you,” she says. he can hear her crying softly. “I’ll always love you,” she repeats, her voice trailing off.

unlike his reaction to petty conflicts and losses, he reacts to something very serious and final, initially, with calm. before the depression sets in. before the desolation and despair begins to work on him, and he’s eaten up by paranoia, there’s an actual euphoria where the soul is speaking. where he realizes love is all that matters. her aura is there in the room with him, abstract and ethereal. impersonal. a love that’s universal. the pain, at this point, though acute, still has a warm edge. love was his first muse. once, more important to him than either work or solitude. but it’s never, ever, worked out.

a week later he sends her the following short email: “Thank you. I’ll never forget you”.

he has these thoughts about his former wife. truth is, in real time, he’s had only one woman in his life. sad, that much of what defined it was the suffering between them, and that the memories now are mostly referential, rather than flesh and blood. but there is another side of it. in subtle ways she took

care of him. was the talisman, the presence. it's uncertain he would have survived in the world he lived in then, without her. their relationship was neither primarily romantic nor strongly sexual, but it was based on mutual respect and concern for the welfare of each other. a genuine love hidden in the silences. the Hassidic view of marriage – two people one soul. yes, that was also the trap.

Portrait Of A Fallen Woman (a postmodern love story)

"who's that woman?," he inquires, nodding towards a pretty woman demurely standing with a group of production people "oh, she's assisting the art director. I don't know exactly what she does. anyway she's taken, I'm told." "I get an itch when I look at her." "forget it." "just because she has a good relationship with her husband doesn't necessarily cancel out everything else. she smiled at me when we passed each other a couple of times." "she smiles at everybody." "well, if she does it again, or even looks at me, I'm going to hit on her." "with all the available stuff around here I don't know why you're making such a fuss." "that's it, I'm tired of these social climbing, tank top, belly button, whores." "she wears a tank top and jeans sometimes." "not today. just look at her." "what are you, a poet?" "oh, cut it out. it may take a little work, but I'm going to have her." "when." "tonight. today, even." "good luck."

when he walks to where she's now sitting, she looks up quizzically, feigning surprise. "hi," he says. "hi." I admit I've been watching you from afar and just had to come over." "she blushes modestly. "you probably hear this all the time, but you're gorgeous to look at." she accommodates him by blushing more. "has anyone ever asked you to try out for a part?" "yes, but I'm not interested in that." "well, you can be in my movie, anytime." she laughs. "I'm not sure I can get through the day without making some attempt to get it on with you." "I'm happily married, with a small child," she says, pointedly. "well, does that preclude giving your affection to a lonely 'old' man,?" he asks, sensing it better to quickly push

the point than to hold back. "yes," she answers, emphatically. "don't you ever want to do it with someone else just to see what it would be like?" "doesn't everyone? that's one of the temptations of life." "well?" "there would have to be an awfully good reason to give in to it." "what if you were feeling particularly horny and there was no damn good reason why you shouldn't?" he doesn't know whether it's the crudeness of his language, his reasoning, both, or something else, but her eyes reveal an almost imperceptible mental shift, and he feels he's made the necessary connection. "yes," she answers, thoughtfully, "but `just to see what it would be like', is a come-on. there's always something lacking in any relationship, so there's always the risk of forming other attachments." "you know this will keep coming up until, sooner or later, you'll finally do it. it might even be with a person less attractive to you than someone you earlier regretted passing on, simply because of the gratuitousness of the situation. he's right, she thinks. it's not specifically him. all along she's known she's been ripe for giving in. "I know," she sighs. then she looks him hard in the eyes. he didn't think it would be this easy. still, that movie set permissiveness does seem to work in his favor more often than not. "then why don't we go to a dressing room, he urges. "ok," she acquiesces.

he clicks the door shut and locks it. they stand facing each other. her face is flushed. he can hear her heart beating. he's thinking nobody could look lovelier and sexier to him than she does now, exquisite in a hand stitched, mauve blouse, and full, embroidered skirt, discreetly contouring the flowing curves underneath. and he has every intention of making her satisfied and enjoying sex with him. they both

undress. she pulls her blouse over her head and steps out of her skirt. she stands in a sheer white slip that clings salaciously to her body. she then slips a hand underneath it and pulls off her panties. she's not wearing a bra. as she starts to lower the straps of her slip, he places a hand on her bare shoulder. "no, not yet." shoulder straps hung, slip covering a third of her breasts, she playfully rubs her nipples against his chest, and they kiss, then kiss some more. she shimmies out of her slip they immediately get on the day bed and fuck hard for a long time. when they're done they both sit up. her cheeks are flushed from exertion. "in the movies at this point they light up a cigarette," he jokes. she laughs, this time more easily. "I don't smoke," she responds. "neither do I." she runs her fingers along his wrist, then his chest. "you've got a lot of hair." "sometimes it makes me feel like a Neanderthal." "I like it." he kisses her. "would you like to fuck some more?" "no," she answers somewhat automatically, "I'm satisfied." "are you sure?" she stares at him, thoughtfully. "no," she finally replies, thinking, they've done it once, why not go all the way with it. they resume fucking, hard as before, as if they'd never stopped, but more intimate, more immersed, until she arrives at a second, more intense, orgasm. when he pulls out, she lays back and sighs, thinking it was worth it. silently they rest, facing in opposite directions. then he slides his hand along the smooth arc of her rump, and lightly fingers her other hole. "have you ever done it there?" "yes." "would you like to do it now, just a little?" she thinks for another moment before, to his surprise, answers, "if it will make you feel complete." she rolls over onto her knees. he spits on and lubricates his still very hard cock, and inches it in. they move quietly, briefly, until he

ejaculates what's left of his semen. "have you ever made it with others?" "No, this is the first time. you already know that," she snaps. "that's right. has he?" "that's a good question. I'm not sure, but I don't think so." "you don't feel bad?" "no, I'm happy I gave in. I think I would have felt bad if I hadn't often fantasized sexual encounters. this is really no different than that. only it's in real time." "are you going to tell him?" "of course." "what do you think he'll do about it?" "I don't know. but I have a feeling it will work out for the better. we'll feel freer. maybe we'll both grow up a little. we've both been living in a bubble that just had to burst. shouldn't we get back to work?" "things are pretty much done for the day." "I mean everybody's going to know you 'made me', she scolds. "I heard you and your friend talking before you came over. and even if I hadn't it wouldn't have been hard to read your body language." "and you played innocent." "yes, it's the best defense." "don't worry, nobody was paying any attention, and what difference would it make." "it wouldn't," she decides tentatively. "actually, I think there's a bit of misconception here. I agreed to have sex with you for my pleasure as well as yours, even though you did the work of drawing it out. you didn't just make me. so why is the onus always on the woman?" "I concur."

when she gets back she's not sure she's glad nobody's there yet. in a way it makes it more difficult. her husband's car is not in the driveway, and her daughter is still in preschool. she contemplates taking a shower, soaping her genitals and anus, then changing her clothes. but decides against it. she lays down on the bed. they just got a new mattress and comforter. but can't rest. things just aren't going to be the same

now. she's no longer as confident as she was earlier that they could work it out. she has a little bit to do to get ready tomorrow's layout. so she goes to her desktop. she reads her email. she's deliberately left her cell phone off the last several hours, and checks the messages. nothing pressing or personal. good. it's early afternoon. they don't have to pick up their daughter until 4:30.

in spite of herself her heart leaps at the sound of his car in the driveway. minutes later he's standing in the doorway, smiling. light brown hair, pale blue eyes, slender, fair, wearing a beige t shirt and jeans. "hi," he says, brightly. "she smiles. he looks boyishly handsome, and the lyrics, *kind of sandy hair, eyes so soft and blue. that you couldn't help but care, when he looked at you, he called me baby, baby all the time*, runs through her mind. he walks over to her, looks her in the eyes for a moment, kisses her, then goes to a chair and plops. "did you enjoy your quickie today," she mocks, continuing their running joke. "she stood me up," he laughs. "seriously, they seemed to like my design. if it goes through our dire financial state will significantly improve." "how did things go on the set? you look radiantly beautiful and tired." her heart starts to pound. she'd been forestalling, hoping to ease it into the conversation at an opportune time, but can see that won't be possible. "I spent part of it fucking someone." his mildness evaporates. an intense look on his face replaces it. "how did it come about?" "one of the men on the set, an associate producer, put the make on me. I have to be fair, I gave in because I wanted to. there's something about the unreal yet hyper real atmosphere mixed with boredom there that makes you horny. I don't regret it," she

adds, now regaining a little confidence. "it was inevitable. sooner or later it had to happen, and now we can deal with it," she says, hopefully holding her breath. "you can deal with it," he rages. then stops. "no, let's talk some more. this just comes out of the blue. it doesn't sound like he had to work very hard to get you to do it." "he didn't. I may have, unconsciously, already made up my mind I was going to have sex with him by the time he approached me." "how did you know what he wanted." "I overheard he and his friend talking." "was he that attractive?" "not particularly." he shakes his head in wonder. "how do you feel about me now," she asks, testily, "hate, pain, lust, disgust?" "a little of all that." "what about love?" "I still love you. I respect what I've always respected about you, your honesty. I've never thought I owned you or your body, I just thought the context implied an unstated commitment regarding sex with others. looking into his eyes she nods in agreement. they remain silent for a while. then he says, "when you said, 'I spent part of it fucking someone', along with the shock I felt a thrill, a rush. for a brief moment there was intense meaning." she starts to blush. her heart is beating fast, this time with passion. "why is it so erotic for me to think of you doing it with someone." "because it compensates for your lacks. for the same reason it was for me to do it. also because it was forbidden, and the power my doing it with someone would have on your response. we have limitations, sexual, as well as anything else, and at least unconsciously, we're going to seek in others for qualities we lack with each other." she knows he knows all that. "it doesn't matter how much good sex you've had with a person, there's just this psychological horniness that builds up. it's unavoidable. but there's something else. sexual

attraction is part identification. when we picture a person whom we're involved with another, we partly identify with the roles both that person and the others are playing., and part of the thrill is putting yourself in that person's place." "all sex is bisexuality to some extent, the self and the other, strangeness and identification at the same time, or there would be no attraction." he nods. "he gets her yin. she gets his yang." "different, but that too." "and the other becomes a surrogate for oneself?" "possibly." "but I felt something else positive. I saw new possibilities with you in relationship to myself that had been closed off by routine." his mildness has returned. her heart feels like it will burst with love for him now. "if it happens again, though, with him or anybody else, we're through," he warns, the hardness returning. "I know that," she replies, softly. "what was he like?" "kind of gruff, full bodied, very physical. I think basically a decent person. by his light brogue I guessed he was Scottish. I suppose he still is," she kids. "very funny." "he tried to please me." "did he?" "yes, but there were no attachments. I went into it quite conscious not to let that happen." "if you did it again it could happen." "that's right, we just have so much control over our biology. but I also feel sorry for him. he seems, to me, a lonely, reasonably honest, man, who can't, or won't, verbally communicate with others." "did you want him to share his feelings with you?" "I don't think so. that might have tempered my desire." "what was sex like with him,?" he asks, still not able to let it go. drawing a deep breath, she answers, "good. I can't lie about that. not terribly sensitive, but like I said, he wanted to please me. we were very passionate. we kissed a lot, and our genitals were really in synch. he fucked me hard. I did discover I was horny. it was

easy because there was no baggage between us so we could put ourselves in the moment.” she feels a sharp pang when she sees how much this is making him suffer. “that hurts a little.” his eyes start to tear, “but I love the scent of your perfume,” he recovers, gallantly. she walks up to him, wraps her arms around his neck, presses the front of her body against him, and thrusts her tongue in his mouth. “I’m very hot for you.” “hotter than you were for him?” “No,” she shouts, defiantly. “you still don’t get it.” he slaps her face, hard enough it will probably welt. “you Jewish boys are all alike. stop visualizing, vulgarizing, and be, do,” she screams, the charged air, creating vertigo. (note. she’s Jewish, also). for moments they remain frozen in angry poses. then he takes a step forward and hugs her tightly. “right now neither of us are capable of being objective,” she says. “right now I’m exhausted. not to be redundant it was inevitable this was going to happen. the reverse is going to happen, I know it, so don’t lose perspective. even if I was just a pickup, which is all I was, period.” “ok, why don’t you lay down and rest”, he says, although that she’s desirable as a pickup flatters her, bothers him. “first screw me while I’m hot. **then** I’ll shower,” she says, looking at him with candor, suddenly relinquishing the façade of propriety, salaciously slipping her shoes to the floor, her eyes boring into his, heart beating wildly. “you can have the leftovers, sloppy seconds,” she taunts, intentionally sinking in the dagger, “secretly this is what every woman wants, never admitted openly but what really turns her on! then defile her and toss her aside. can there be anything more sensual?” this **finally** reaches him. she wonders if the corner-stone of their marriage is only sex, and she just a reflection of his desires, but no longer cares.

A Cunnilingual Visit With An Old Girlfriend

"it's bright and cheerful up here, kind of above your troubles." I'm referring to her high rise office with the large tropical plants, light streaming through the windows. "is it," she mimics, sarcastically. "something is obviously eating you." she smirks at the sound of the word, 'eating', and mutters, "I only wish," under her breath. "are you not happy? is some trifle getting in the way of your physical and spiritual satisfaction?" "sex, or lack of it." "I thought you had several paramours. wasn't this supposed to be a phase of heightened, liberated sexual activity for you?" "yes and no. all my 'lovers' care about are their own egos. it's all for their gratification." "what is it you're not getting?" her face reddens just a little. "I want to be eaten out." "doesn't everybody do that now a-days as standard procedure?" "oh, they lick and munch a little like they're doing me a big favor, and then stop. it's very frustrating. I want to be eaten out until I come!" I look at her. full face, hair pulled back into a knot. she has a sexy figure wearing a bright yellow pullover sweater, grey/black slacks, and low cut black shoes. "I can do that." "when, where?," she skeptically asks. "why not here, now." "what if someone comes?" "does anyone else have a key to your office?" "no" "then hang a notice saying you won't be back until whenever, and lock the door." a slow smile creeps across her face, then darkens a little. "you know I haven't showered in a couple of days." "you've got perfume." she nods. "wait." she takes her purse to the head. a few minutes later she emerges, smiling. "ok, now lean back on that sofa. put a pillow under your head and relax." she kicks off her shoes, pulls off her pants and panties, pretty and sexy

in just her yellow sweater. my cock is hard. I kneel in front of her, push up her thighs and spread them. I lick her pubic hair and vagina, moistening them with my saliva. I gnaw her soft inner thighs, slip my hand under her sweater and squeeze and fondle her breasts. I bury my mouth in her cunt, gnawing her labia, nibbling her clitoris until she begins to feverishly move. I lick the full length of her vulva. I lick her anus. I press harder, forcing my tongue deeper. now I eat her in synch with her rhythm which is now furtive, shorter spaced, and more intense. I press my tongue hard on her clit, and just as she's about to go off, I pull it away for half a second, teasing her with oblivion, then press my tongue down again, hard against her clitoris, bridging the gap, and she begins to orgasm, and for the first time with loud moans. I keep my mouth buried there until she's still. when she looks up at me her face is flushed and glowing. "I'll be eternally grateful to you for this, Jerry." "it was nothing." she takes a kleenex and tenderly wipes my mouth, then kisses me affectionately, warm and full. "I could have had an orgasm, myself, but it didn't seem opportune." "well, maybe next time I can help you with something." "for sure."

Back Seat Dodge

I arrive late afternoon, to pick her up, at the tail end of a discussion she's having with her fellow music writers in the L.A. Weekly office, about the fact that all of them, at least occasionally, look at internet porn, and why looking at it makes them horny, whereas watching attractive bodies having sex on an 'instructional' (Kama Sutra) DVD, doesn't. they suspect that the cosmetic ads in the front of the paper, and sex for hire ads in the back, not to mention much in between, foster a compulsive atmosphere there to be sexy. they also discuss how writers who cover the club scene have all had their experiences on a personal level, and how it's sometimes difficult, due to the permissive erotic buildup, to separate their professional lives from their private lives. one writer confesses that when she goes to cover an event, she makes sure her diaphragm is in her purse. another writer, who covers the related social scene, recounts an experience she had at an after club house party thrown by a notorious DJ, when, while checking out the sounds, she was prompted to go to an adjoining room, where, easily as touching someone's shoulder, people were arbitrarily pairing off, and 'doing it', in and on, whatever was available, and although she normally lives a relatively staid life, and is still happily married, now expecting her second child, she got down with the permissiveness, and had sex with 2 men (separately) she had never seen before, or after.

all of this graphic disclosure makes both of us horny, and we devise beforehand, to have sex in a parked car in the hills, while oldie pop love songs play on the car radio. she's in her

late 30's, willowy (not quite tall), sensual, straight, natural dirty blonde, grey-green eyes, smart (a very perceptive writer). partly because of her work she's more worldly, in the social sense, than I. she's modestly dressed today, wearing a white, cotton, ruffled blouse with cuffs red striped collar and trim along the button holes, and a billowy lemon pleated skirt with a red hem, that goes down almost to her knees. but I can picture what her beige, flesh tinted hose covering her long legs, is attached to. the freshly laundered white, and soft yellow, cheerfully reflect the light on her skin. she's also wearing tasteful white heels. her hair is up, fastened on the side and back with silver metal snaps. "maybe you should drop me off at home so I can change into something sexier, first." "no, you're perfect." I'm wearing my uniform, a t shirt and jeans. "won't we need something more if it gets cold? "there's a jacket in the trunk if you need something warmer. where can we go that's safe and romantic?" "I'm not sure they don't contradict each other, but I know a place not far from here, in the Hollywood Hills, way up, past the homes. there's a dirt road that leads to a cu-de-sac that widens into a flat plain, overlooking the city. it's not used. at least it never used to be." "do you ever think of things like the Red Light Bandit, or the Hillside Strangler?" "believe me I do, please don't get funny." we have no trouble finding it. I park in the most secluded spot, next to a grove of eucalyptus. below a steep drop and more hills, you can see all of downtown and the west side. I open the window on the driver's side and we breathe in deeply the sweet, wet, fragrance. we turn and look at each other. "how do you feel?" I ask." "a little excited and a little nervous. now that we're here I'm a little shaky as to what the point of it is." she takes my hand and

presses it to her breast. “feel my heart beat.” “I love what you’re wearing. it reminds me of the neat but casual way girls dressed in high school back then.” we flip around both the am and fm bands and finally find a station that’s playing a mix of older pop, rock, and jazz.

I flick on the inside light and look at her intently. in spite of my values in order to feel aroused I’m trying to objectify her as a sex object. “we better get in the back seat.” we embrace and tentatively kiss, gaze deeply into each other’s eyes, then separate. if this were a date back then, though the mutual intentions may be the same, the tension of the buildup, would be an arousing element. I raise her fresh skirt which billows up around her waist. a thrill goes through me when I see her salmon panties and cream colored thongs. I unbutton the front of her blouse and unhook her bra, leaving it hanging, as she whispers something in my ear., then kiss her passionately, caressing her hard nipples, feeling the warmth and softness of her breasts. she puts her tongue in my mouth, a female projectile, and we orally fuck. Shorty Rogers’ cool, suave, modulations hum intimately, contrasting an ambience where nothing else is there, save a potentially threatening presence, emanating from the isolation and total darkness, the colorful trappings of civilization reassuringly visible in the distance.

hot enough now to have dispensed with any self-consciousness regarding the premise, she glides her hand across my face, then helps me remove my shirt. I pull off her panties and lick her meat. no different than what we could have done more comfortably anywhere, but this is the first time,

just as it might have been on some long ago, but not forgotten, date. "I think we should turn off the light," she whispers. she helps me pull down my pants and encircles my cock with her lips, hungrily moving her mouth on it. by this time, as we hoped, we're a warm, vulnerable presence, only partially insulated from the impinging darkness on all sides. we make out, kissing to the refrain of the 1954 r & b song, *a thousand stars in the sky* (the original version by the Rivileers), while I finger her clit (stink finger, we so crudely called it then, though we didn't know exactly where to place it). I rub her mouth with mine, intentionally smearing her lipstick. I set a pillow on the seat, against the armature of the door, so she can rest her head, then pull her blouse down to her waist, and once again raise her skirt, stirring a slight perfumed breeze. as I settle onto her, my cock seeks the space between her raised thighs, and at last we fuck, first slow and dense, the tender reedy sound of Gene Ammons' tenor sax (*skylark*) running through us, and then faster, attacking the ambience, her thighs hugging my groin, hushed humping in the now total silence, wildly rubbing our mouths together, ravenous, licking, sucking, biting, tugging at her garters, until we climax, moanng and groaning, our high school hearts murmuring, respectively, you bastard, you tramp, I love you. panting we lay still, the night seeping in on us. I rest my face on her nipples. when we finally let go of each other, I turn back on the light. the windows are too fogged to see through. she leans her head over the front seat separation, looks at her face in the rear view mirror and laughs. her cheeks, even part of her forehead, are smeared. we gaze at each other, happy at each other's disarray, pleased with our performance.

"why is it, doing something like this can be so good?" "it can also be pretty sordid." "don't I know it. it's always been pretty sordid with me. I guess you've had sex that way a lot of times. "no, not at all. not consummated, anyway. the last time was when I was in the Navy. I was dating a girl, depressed about having to go back to the ship. she drove me to the airport. she made me wear two rubbers. I wasn't even sure I got in. and I just felt depleted afterwards." "then this is kind of makeup, getting it straight for the both of us." "definitely. I tried to give the impression I was fast. but I was actually pretty square. that happens when you're not willing to be open. but I didn't have the exposure to be anything else." "I'm afraid the boys I were dating weren't, either. where I went to school, girls were supposed to shut up and put out. "did you?" "not often." "I think we've done more tonight than just settling a score, however. we could have played more, made it last longer, but I was too horny for that." "I've decided that nothing's dirty if you like the person you're with, and everything's dirty if you don't." "but sometimes it's even more pleasure if you don't. well, not more, but you know what I'm saying." "that's true, we're all a little perverse but you feel like shit, afterwards." "not always," I insist.

we get back in the front seats. "in the older cars you didn't have to deal with the seat separation. if there's an 'emergency' the back seat is more dangerous." "I was comfortable. I wasn't afraid anyone else would come here." the strains of the Ellington orchestra playing *don't get around much anymore* is quietly filtering in. we have a good laugh when I ask, "didn't I hear that coming from Ed Keinholt's Back Seat Dodge? all we need is a six pack." "you know, it's interesting,

neither of us thought of including any imbibed nor ingested escape tools." "I like that." just then, a car full of boisterous young males, speeds in and screeches to a stop, windows open, dance music thumping from the stereo. they check us out, engine idling for a few moments, then, heaving a couple of beer cans into the dirt, hang a U, brakes squealing, and speed away. we inhale, exhale, a little shaken. "I thought this place was never used."

after absentmindedly listening to Blondie lushly crooning *in the flesh* I switch back to the 24 hour jazz station. the Bill Evans version of *my foolish heart* just come on. how perfectly tuned my feelings are to it. arms around each other we stare out the windshield at the night lights for a long time, silently absorbed in our thoughts. "I'd love to know what you're thinking." she turns her face, tears in her eyes, Technicolor, in soft light. I don't ask more.

still energized, we stay up 'till dawn, talking, telling each other stories. on the way home, P J Harvey's plaintive Broken Harp is playing on a college station. *I tried to learn your language/but fell asleep half undressed/unrecognizable to myself.* we nod knowingly. moments later we're standing at her front door. "cheapskate," you didn't even take me to dinner and a show, first," she deadpans, "I hope you have a sweet sleep. can you block out the light?" "yes, I have shades." "call me when you wake up." we kiss goodnight.

on the way home I'm so tired I know that, unless disturbed, I'll sleep well. but I'm beginning to have qualms. P J, for instance, has the where-with-all to make her universe (some-

thing anyone who isn't a clone has to do). all her creative devices are political acts used to deconstruct, exorcise, and recreate, an evidently extremely tenuous personality. and who am I, really? a person only attracted to deceptively plain looking women, who have that 'look' of submerged sensuality, or, vulnerable women who project the same eye ear, throat, and touch, candy façade, whose gorgeousness and sensuousness are apparitions I (literally) want to screw? am I any different, in that respect, than the preying psychopaths, except that I'm not psychically as much on the outside, looking in? but who would be attracted to the real vulnerability – a creative, yes, but lonely, aging man, but, perhaps, a domineering sadist? my social behavior (lack of), which has evolved into almost no willingness to compromise my solitude, is a commitment to a process of creative flow and staying psychologically unfettered even at the expense of physical and emotional fulfillment. then, was all that stuff about our exorcising our teenage demons, by having sex in a parked car, bull?" was I facilitating a sexually exploitive fantasy, and she, yielding to a submissive, masochistic one? no, I don't think so. but what other road is there to take save through our obsessions?"

"tell me what you dreamt last night?" "I was at a party, and one of the people...there was this guy who works at the Weekly supervising distribution. he's 6'4. a body builder, and he's bi-sexual. anyway we were somehow in a room together, alone. he was fully clothed, wearing a tux, and I was naked. we had sex. he overwhelmed me, physically. he was just all muscle. he pinned me down. his thrusts were exaggerated like in a hardcore video, and his penis was only half

hard, like theirs usually are. it wasn't particularly large, either, considering his size." "you said 'we' had sex as though it was mutual, even though he forced you." she laughs. "aren't dreams wish fulfillments?" "just out of curiosity, did he take off his clothes?" "well you know how dreams are. first he was dressed, then he wasn't. his bare muscles were an important part of it, but I liked the thrill and humiliation of being naked while he was clothed. and I liked being overpowered. but I didn't have an orgasm." I laugh. she playfully runs her fingers across my face. "tell me what you dreamt last night." "how do you know I dreamt anything?" "I don't." "I did have a very sexual dream where I was densely fucking a docile, but sensual, 14 year old, but physically mature, girl, who was wearing a red sweater and grey skirt. we were both fully aware of the consequences." "quite a contrast." "yes." I think awhile, then say, "why don't we interpret each other's dreams as to how it may apply to our relationship." "ok, go ahead." "assuming in both cases it involved suppressed desire, in your dream you needed a more overtly masculine image than mine to make you feel feminine. the more male/female crossover, which is part of what our communication is based on was beginning to compete with your sense of femininity. your turn." "pretty much the same. in your dream you needed an even younger, more innocent, more submissive, more vulnerable, image of femininity than mine, to offset even my level of sophistication," she says, facetiously, "which threatens or competes with, to use your term, your sense of masculinity." "we're just like two peas in a pod," I say, and kiss her. "I know, what we need is a whole book instead of one page." "and vegetarian meals," I add. "we already have that." "then we're off to a good start."

Not For Skeptics

we meet for the first time at Beyond Baroque. evidently, two copies of my most recent book were sold. I admonish her for their not keeping records. but I immediately feel a rapport with, and attraction to her. she's petite. I like her poise. cool without being cold. she seems to fit me (physically. I can picture her in my arms. but I get a sense of what might be an addiction by the timing with which she draws on the straw through the cover of the culturally ubiquitous latte or sweet drink she's holding. i.e. gen X,Y,Z, preschool loss of innocence fixation. *you were my adored one, then you became the bored one, and I was just a toy that brought you joy one day, a broken toy that you preferred to throw away.* (intro. to the pop standard, Blame It On My Youth). I think all of this may be peaking with the Murakami show at MOCA. my namesake at the L.A. Weekly reports, "Takashi Murakami is the most influential artist on this planet (right now)." that would be Oct. 2007. really? I see a libido gone wild version of Kandinsky's biomorphic period in some of his paintings. "post war Japan was given life and nurtured by America. we were forced into a system that does not produce adults," she quotes him as saying. and what is America's excuse for "lingering adolescence?" her term.

I read pieces of her novel, online, wanting to know what's in her brain, and end up downloading and reading all of it. I respect the knowledge and her ability to create images. is it a different knowledge than I have? upon reflection, no. but I need to know more about where her sexual interests are. internet voyeurism has not turned up an answer to that. and

I don't intend to ask. reality: individual reality is condemned as fantasy by society. but collective fantasy is condoned as reality. has she read any of my books? I embarrass myself by not getting her name right. I've been told by more than one person that I'm hard of hearing, but my hearing is acute when I listen abstractly. I must have trouble processing spoken words. I withdraw or block them out. it's fear, narrowed down to 2 things...opposites. fear of rejection, fear I'm not worthy of love, or is it fear my precious universe will be usurped or corrupted?

I'm in the B.B. office, talking with Fred Dewey, whom I haven't seen in a couple of years. she walks in. she's surprised to see me. before she goes back downstairs, she says, "see you later, Jerry." "I'd like that," I joke. Fred laughs. she doesn't think that's funny. moments later, I run after her. I catch her on the front walk, and tug at her shirt. "hey," I mug a mock grimace. a big grin lights up her face. we sit cross legged, facing each other on the dead, brown, grass (the landscaper gets an A+ for water conservation), sunning ourselves and seeing who can be sillier. then, straight out of a fifties sci-fi bug flick, a large, incredibly sculptured, metallic, reddish/-brown grasshopper or cicada, suddenly leaps between us. startled, she screeches as it momentarily settles on her lap. finally, I lean forward and bump my forehead against hers. then, she bumps her forehead against mine, and we bump foreheads together, laughing.

the sun is beginning to set. we leave to get a bite to eat, and later, kneel down, side by side, in front of my CD player, listening to a portion of a 69 minute sound collage I've put to-

gether, silently letting the sonic changes run through our bodies. when it gets to a fragment of Chet Baker singing, I've Never Been In Love Before, I turn sideways, she turns towards me, and we kiss, for the first time.

"this is really Forest Lawn." "yes, I know. I know people who make out at funerals." "well, it was your idea. the Getty people and all that." "I know. I apologize. none of them are here and it's getting chilly. cold wind in August," she sighs, shivering, running her fingers through her hair, but still looking fresh, in a white organdy summer dress and black heels, which raises her high enough that I only have to bend slightly when we kiss, then kiss again. "that's a poem written by the Tang Dynasty poet, Tu Fu." "what poem?" cold wind in August, though that wasn't the title. "I didn't know that." "it's about a boating party of young courtesans and their lovers, that gets rained on." we walk, hand in hand, along a curved, sandy, gravel path, following the sweet basil scent until we find a quiet arbor nestled out of sight, and sit beneath a trellis of clinging roses that swarm like mice. we make out for a while. she puts her hand on my slight rise. "do you want me to blow you?" "no. I want to fuck you. love you all over." "well it will have to wait until after the photo shoot back at the mansion." "for Playboy?," I ask, credulously. "no," she continues, unfazed, "with two other girls for the cover of *FranZine*, an online fashion magazine. that's why I brought a change of clothes." "why don't we go to a hotel instead of either of our places," I offer, "one with, you know, a noir ambience." "if you've got the money?"

in the darkened room, illuminated only by outside light.....

Blue now is the color
Love the drug I'm needing
Got to keep this feeling

With the headlights burning
We're looking for something
Answers on the ceiling

Watching out the Windows
Watch the way the wind blows
Soon it will be morning

Still the question lingers
I twist it 'round my fingers
could you be my calling?

See this winged boy falling
Falling out of something
Hits the drug I'm needing

Arrows that he's turning
Need to keep this feeling
Slow drug in the morning

With the headlights burning
Looking out for something
Something that we're needing

an' still the question lingers
I twist it 'round my fingers
could you be my calling? (lyric – PJ Harvey)

we walk west down Wilshire, past MacArthur Park, arms around each other, wiped out, singing, the Ansonia sign still on.

(dialogue from the movie, Guys and Dolls)

*what time is it?
it's dawn any minute*

*what makes the light
so strange and white?*

because only in Times Square...
____ *listen*
____ *what?*

footsteps

*now is the time you can hear
footsteps on Broadway*

"ha, ha."

long ago, in another hotel room, I sat, facing a thin, tautly structured, but sensual, natural blonde, with swept up hair, extremely sensitive face, and very white, tactile skin, wearing a skimpy, black, lace trimmed slip, barely reaching the upper thighs of her long crossed legs, sitting, brooding, on the bed, the ambient light flooding in. we had just met, downstairs, in the expensive hotel's coffee shop. she was there to model for a haute perfume line. she was looking so sexy and

desiring to bare her soul. but although we'd already `serviced' each other, when the moment came, her narcissism just wasn't going to allow her to consummate her desire. at least not with someone empathetic to her. she wanted to be violated, trashed, treated with contempt. it didn't get to our making it together that night. and I never saw her again.

we know each other a little, now but I'm still trying to decipher her code. for instance, she writes all that stuff about mutilation, self-inflicted pain. and almost all the men in her tale are either sadistic freaks, or dickless geeks. "am I the first Asian woman you've had sex with?" "no, I was in the Navy. naturally my experience with Asian women, Japanese, Chinese, Okinawan, was extremely limited." "I don't doubt it." "why do you say that?" "because all white men have sexist, essentially racist, attitudes towards women of color." "was I supposed to remain celibate?" "what would you have me do?" "just try to be truthful. I don't dislike you for it. I don't believe you can help it. it's too ingrained." "when it comes to sex and just about everything else, I'm pretty vanilla." "of course, and I'm a brownie with raspberry filling." "I just mean I'm not very far out," I say, a bit perplexed by this sudden display of bitterness. "if you really want to understand how my upbringing has affected my feeling for women, listen to Bill Evans." "should that be before we've had sex or after, when I can bring you your slippers." "it's funny, my relationship with most women has been at the opposite end of that spectrum. you weren't that way when we were out in the garden last night, or in the hotel room with the jungle of colored lights. you were sensual and loving." "pot and booze can do that." "are you saying you weren't you, then?" "no,

I'm attracted to werewolves. I'm a werewolf myself. when the moon comes out my teeth become fangs, and my nails become claws. or didn't you notice that?" "that wasn't the way you were at all. you were effectively willing, permissive." "I just wanted to be fucked into oblivion, that's all, but when I've had enough, then don't turn your back on me, Pierrot." "my name's Jerry.

"Zoey, I'm tired. this doesn't read very well, maybe we should knock it off for the day. we can finish up tomorrow. do you ever feel, by writing, even something good, you're getting further away from the truth?" "oh yes," she laughs. I breathe the scent of her hair, then rest my lips on hers, and kiss her gently, then passionately. driving back to my apartment, alone, I realize that our pretense of not knowing each other is just another illusion. we pick up one another's social-cultural backgrounds implicitly, abstractly, almost without having to experience them. the vibes are universal, waiting to be fleshed out, and then frequently discarded as useless, as we attempt to make newer, more meaningful connections with one another. the only barrier is the exclusionary aspect of the coded language. what's shared between us? what's different is how culture mutates. what survives? what is it that doesn't? and what's passé? that which is most trendy.

Godard's early movies, the Hollywood gangster covers, *Breathless*, *Band a Part*, *Pierrot le Fou*, *Vivre Sa Vie*, have this constant interactive movement between male and female – pushing, pulling, grabbing, hugging, mugging, and a lot of running (away from something, to a mythical something). fast forward, it's an intricate choreographed dance, really the

dominant element, other than the long, reflective shots, and the movement of the camera. but it's interesting to examine the morality of the outright glorification of surface and style – eating, drinking, kissing....and killing. all are equal, exist on the same plane. freedom is defined here as external motion, either living hedonistically, or as a romantic longing for nature. both, ultimately, fatally trapped, because inner freedom is not amoral. love is in our DNA.

“I was in the hospital with a fractured vertebrae in my neck. a cute, sexy doctor, who appeared to be of middle eastern or south Asian origin, burst into the room, discharge papers in hand. short, but zaftig (Yiddish term meaning physically well endowed), brimming over with energy, she handed me the written name of a primary doctor I should see, and when I asked her if I could see her, instead, she balked, and said she already had enough patients. bull. and even with my neck in an aspen collar, morphine still in my system, I wanted to throw her down and fuck her on the floor.”

this may not sound (or read) funny. but everyone laughs. still joking around, I put my arms around her. “Jerry, you’re a fast worker.” “that’s the easy part. believe me, I’m going to need your help and compassion.” we hold hands on the walk, outside.

♪ you are near so am I/ maybe millions of people pass by/ but they all disappear from view/ for I only have eyes for you ♪

postscript –
slightly overcast day. two fellows and girl (sister of one of

them) from Silverlake, whom I had been talking to earlier, wave and call my name, as they exit a driveway several buildings down the block. I walk over. one of them has on earphones. I flash on some reddish brown hills with an antenna, he's signaling to. "the Marshalls," he says. "by Marshalls do you mean the hills next to Marshall high?" "yes." "I'd like to hike there. are there trails?" "yes." they leave. the sister remains. it's early morning. we fuck, softly, quietly, in my bed.

disclaimer - all reference to actual persons, places, or events, is fictitious.

Superstar

she's wearing a snug lemon-yellow top with lacy shoulder straps that stops just above her pubic hair matted vagina. petite (looking very young and vulnerable), her braless breasts are perfect, smallish cones, full face with full, round shaped, pouty lips, medium slightly indented nose, dark eyes, mascara lashes, and long honey blonde/brown hair that hangs down in symmetrically clustered strands, over her shoulder, almost to her armpits, 3-quarter profile by the window, one hand resting on the sill, the other lightly against her upper thigh parallel with her genitals, shafts of light on her face, chest, the rise of her breasts, abdomen, and a tiny triangle of light, next to, and touching, the dark triangle of her pubic region. her expression as she stares out the window through partially parted pink curtains which lay behind the heavy drawn burgundy velvet drapes, is ruminative and brooding. in the darker part of the room, a portion of a lit lamp is visible... a perfect noirish portrait. that this image was culled from a porn page, makes it all the more attractive. the intent is sensitive and serious, though it makes one no less horny. her thighs and pubic areas are delectable. I view her with infinite tenderness. in black letters I type the word, **violence**, just below her right breast. on the way back from Whole Foods where I'd ground peanut and almond butter, in a melancholy mood, the song, Superstar, is running through my head.

Untitled

how many males of my generation have not had, known of, or wished for, the 'sinful' situation where a girl good looking enough to get anyone she wanted, who perhaps, during a period of extreme spirited compulsion, or just lust, placed herself in such a position (pun not intended) it could be said that everyone 'knew' her? in this instance, she was a smooth, coolly poised, seductive, girl named Shaina (beautiful), who sexually engaged with every boy she dated, which included more than a few of the male students at the J-school we both attended. with knowledge of this, just talking to her made me horny, and when the opportunity did present itself one autumn afternoon, and I was able to ask her if she'd go out with me that night, when she accepted, I actually got a boner, as they used to call it, on the spot, just in anticipation. when I arrived to pick her up, she was striking, wearing a virginal white blouse with ruffles, and a tight fitting blue skirt, her hair combed to a radiant sheen. as we walked out the door, her father fixed a hard but helpless stare on me, letting me know he was up to what was going on. she sat upright next to me in the car and said, in a provocative, almost whisper, "why don't we just park." we drove up to Kincardine Hill, then a popular necking spot in Cheviot Hills. my heart was pounding.

although we were both the same age, 17, she was sexually vastly superior to me. and as it was with girls who were gorgeous as they were bad, there was an air of unapproachability that made one think the portrait of oneself that had been carefully honed, was not adequate enough to be

considered. the image which aroused me was so perfected, that I felt any attempt to permeate her deliberately sexually infused demeanor, would draw her contempt. this turned out not to be the case, however. with the first passionate kiss she bestowed upon me, as in the opening line, act 1, scene 1, of an intimate, discreetly structured play, what had appeared to be intimidating was actually the perfection or precision of her intent. and she thrilled me beyond any threshold of projection I held. her warmth was both emotional and corporeal. and there was no subterfuge about it, because out front, our intent and purpose was the same. she did insist I wear a rubber (all the fantasies induced by the occasional spent condom spotted dangling in the bushes on a sparsely built section of Bagley Ave., while walking home from school, was now a reality), but that only added to the illicit thrill. it was the combination of illicitness and her warmth, that gave the evening such a compelling and unforgettable aura. there was one caveat – a kind of duality she sometimes manifested at moments during the lovemaking, in which while wildly giving of herself, she erotically provoked for more. she was always in control, so that only until after the final throes of our sweaty consummation did the helpless erotic sensation of not getting all the way there, subside. only then, did the release allow me to savor her exquisitely disarrayed beauty with a sense of satisfaction.

Untitled

one night, during my soph year in college, I was cruising in my '52 stick shift, sky blue, Studebaker, with the necker knob on the steering wheel, and a pair of dice, knit, a couple of years earlier by a high school girlfriend, dangling from the rear view mirror. I used to like to drive to parts of town away from my Westside neighborhood, sometimes going as far east and south as Vernon and Central Ave., and as I stopped for a red light at Olympic and Hauser, a girl, who appeared to be about my age, standing by the bus stop, caught my eye, and she, mine. she boldly stared. when the light turned green I continued a block further, hesitated, turned the corner to the next block, then right again, and drove 2 blocks in the opposite direction, so I could turn back onto Olympic, and come to the same corner where she was still standing. it was about 10 p.m. I leaned over, rolled down the window on the passenger side, and asked her if I could give her a lift somewhere, then watched her stare until a guarded smile broke, and she said, "yes," walked over, and got into the car. "thanks, I was getting tired of waiting. they don't run very often this time of night. I live in the West Adams district." as we rode east, we both took a good look at each other. she wore glasses and wasn't good looking, at least in the obvious sense. she had a good figure from what I could tell, bundled up as she was. it was a cold night. she relaxed her body, and unbuttoned her coat. we both knew more was going to happen than just my giving her a ride. she looked at me again. "are you Jewish?" "yes." I answered. "so am I. what do you do?" "I'm a student, I said, a little sheepishly. "so am I when I'm not working. I just got off from work. I hate

having to take the bus at night, alone. where do you go to school?" "UCLA." "oh, you're a grade digger." "no, I almost got kicked out of high school. I went to LACC my first year, before transferring over." "that's where I go. are you in a frat?" "I was...for only two weeks. that's not my scene. why don't we stop for coffee at Scribner's as long as we're in the area?" "that's fine with me." she looked at me hard. "am I what you were looking for?" my penis rose, involuntarily. "yes." she smiled a little cryptically, and slid over next to me. leaving Scribner's we drove south down Crenshaw, past Washington Blvd., and she directed me to turn left on 23rd St. we stopped in front of a gloomy looking stucco house, a few doors from the corner of 23rd and Bronson. the procedure reminded me of similar maneuvers I'd had with prostitutes living in the same area. "my place is in back," she said. I put my arm around her and kissed her. then squeezed her breasts. her lips were hot and there was a spicy taste to her breath. guys date her for what they can get, and then drop her, I thought. I pulled her closer, slipped my hand inside her coat, and under her blouse, and kissed her hard. then slid my hand between the warm crevice of her thighs. "not here," she snapped, pulling away, "let's go inside." we walked down the driveway past the front house, opened the gate to the yard, where a mix breed medium size dog blankly watched us, but didn't bark, and entered her smaller 1 bedroom stucco house, which was adjacent to an alley. still cold, she turned on an electric heater. she removed her coat, which revealed long legs and a nice set of knockers, and we sat down on the couch. getting up she offered me a drink, bourbon in a thick glass., and turned on the radio to Hunter Hancock, the R&B and Chicago blues DJ, who came on at

10 p.m. "dance." she motioned with hips. we put down our quickly emptied glasses, and danced, slowly rubbing up against one another, kissing, just a sex walk, then undressed each other, savoring the striptease, until we were both naked, kissing passionately, and dry fucking while we danced. "let's go to the bedroom," I managed to get out. "it's warmer in here," she replied, defensively, possibly wanting to protect her inner sanctum. still in an embrace we lurched and fell together, mouths rubbing, and fucked wildly on the couch until we climaxed with sweaty abandon. "that was awfully good," I offered. "sex like this is easy. no hassles. all pleasure." but on her face was an inescapable look of sadness. she's not that bad off, I thought. and someone (else) will eventually discover and appreciate, not only her indisputable sexuality, but what I perceived to be, without really knowing her, an indomitable strength of character. but everyone, even the most blessed, have this cross to bear, and it's always unfair.

Mr Lonely Hair

"after the party it was pretty late. I'm still recovering." "it's still on your breath." "and I didn't even have sex. what's good for a hangover?" "cock," he bluntly replies, mostly as a joke. "I'm fertile and very horny," she admits. "then why not?" "we better go to the pharmacy, first." she slides her arm into his as he pays for a box of Trojans, and smiles lasciviously at the cashier who fumbles the merchandise. "isn't that dress a bit warm for this weather?," he asks of the butterscotch, wool knit dress she's wearing, as they recline on the oversized sofa. "it was a chilly early morning when I put it on," she replies, pulling it above her abdomen, and dropping her panties to the floor, showing thick, but shapely, legs and thighs. "it's 10 o'clock, he usually gets back by 11," she hastens, as she wiggles her arms free of the sleeves, and lowers the top of her dress down below her naked breasts, almost to her navel. snuggled together, hair falling on his shoulders, she reaches for the red box, removes a rubber from its wrapper, and facilely rolls it onto his erection, then leans back on the arm rest and they fuck, slowly, densely, her full head of pubic hair deliciously rising and falling with each stroke, until they both climax. when they're through he sighs, "that was good. I wish it could last longer, forever. then she remembers the time. "you better dress fast and get out of here."

when he shows it's almost noon. "about time. did you stop off at your girlfriend's, first?" "she's out of town," he comes back. "then you must be pretty horny being we didn't make it last night." "as a matter of fact---aren't you?" actually she

still is.. she just smiles. "isn't it a bit warm to be wearing that dress?" "yes, it will feel sooo good to take it off," she answers, standing provocatively, bare feet on the cool hardwood floor. he lifts the hem of her dress and slides his hand between her thighs and massages her labia, unbuttons the front, and sucks both nipples. they undress. she takes lipstick from her purse, applies a fresh coat to her lips, and they dry hump while they kiss. he hunches over her behind, both hands squeezing her breasts." "this makes me feel like a cow," she complains. she bends over the sofa, face down on a pillow, unsure to which hole his cock will proffer. "I'm in the middle of my cycle, please don't knock me up." "then that makes it easy, he says, rubbing the palms of his hands back and forth along the soft arc of her buttocks, like rubbing 2 sticks together to create heat, spreads her cheeks, and probes the opening of her anus with the tip of his penis, then hands still cupping her breasts, he works his cock all the way in. they move silently together until he ejaculates. "that was good," he says, slowly pulling out his cock. "I've got to get back to work. I wish I didn't have to." "I think I'll try to get some sleep. the party wore me out." "you should. it's quiet enough here, now. it wore me out, too."

she thinks about how she's had sex with two men, separately, within the last 2 hours. but she feels better. now she's tired enough to sleep. she knows she'll never sleep with the other man again. but there will be others. she contemplates the gratuity with which it happened, trying to walk off her hang-over, and running into the last person she'd expect to meet, the former sexual partner of her best friend in college, exiting the home of the couple he was staying with, day before

having to return to the eastern city he lives in. she doesn't even have a pang of guilt, because she knows her boyfriend doesn't care. he'll fuck any woman who'll raise her skirt, and anyway, he'd rather she was satisfied, happy enough to be good company, her iconoclastic humor, a strong point. but she's not happy. she realizes both men are interchangeable, as will be most of the others she'll meet. both value being civilized over giving and receiving love. she dozes off.

when she awakes she decides she no longer wants to live with him. this is a little daunting because she has no particular skills. although she has a degree she's not really educated, has nurtured no particular vision, nor has any driving ambition, and she has no independent source of income – when they split the property and other assets, which because he is civilized, she's sure he will agree to, amicably, she can get by for a while. a sudden fear of being cast off unconditionally grabs her, but subsides, when she reasons it's better to leave now than after they've had children. in fact, she thinks, it would be better if she never had children. still, the loneliness, emptiness, and dread, that had been submerged to this point, hits her full force, and she starts to sob, violently. it suddenly dawns on her she has no strong external identity other than her sexuality, as filtered through the minds of men, and perhaps, less consciously, other women. men seem to define her sexually, as straight, genital, without the accoutrements of play, tease, etc., based entirely on her physical image, to solidly engage her to match the image she projects. that she's solid without being big or fat seems to excite their primal impulse to fuck hard and not do much else. but this does not touch the more tenuous

elements of who she is, and only serves to increase her lack of passion, which conversely, seems to inflame the desires of those who perceive her thusly. there must be some axiom here, that misconception is a basic element of, or necessary to, eroticism. she also disputes the claim that classic sex, i.e. belly to belly, has to be male dominant.

a thin, tallish, older man with long, greying hair, wearing a navy outdoors jacket, jeans, and silver running shoes, walks on a street in the warehouse district east of downtown L.A., sunning himself along a freshly painted over graffiti wall, when 2 younger men accost him, slamming him hard against the wall, and as he falls, hurry away. witnessing this from her car, she quickly pulls over, stops, and bending over him, asks, "are you all right?" "I guess I'll live," he replies, wryly, blood slowly oozing from a gash in his forehead. as he starts to rise, she takes her cell. "I better call 911." "please, my insurance doesn't cover an ambulance." "I can take you to emergency." "I'm all right. it was mostly the shoulder that hit. it's a little sore." "I can't just leave you here. I'm going to take you to emergency so they can clean your wound. it may require stitches." "I don't think so, it's stopped bleeding." he starts to get up, feeling a little dizzy. "that settles it," she says. she drapes an arm around his neck and helps him walk to the passenger side of the car, opens the door, and he slides in. they look into each other's eyes for a long moment. "you're truly a virtuous woman." she stays with him while they take his blood pressure, clean and bandage the gash, and satisfied with his responses to their questions, let him go without a scan. "where can I take you?" "to my car. it's a block from where it happened. I was coming back from the Geffen." "so

was I. I have a confession to make. I saw you there. I couldn't keep my eyes off you." "I saw you, too. you have a very sexy body." "shouldn't we file a police report? I witnessed everything." "I don't think anything would come of it. it would just be a needless hassle." "she nods. "they just walked up to you, and without saying a thing slammed you against the wall, then ran away. I can't understand what made them do it." "they may have wanted to jack me, then thought better of it." "look," she says, "I don't want to leave you until I'm sure you're ok.. why don't I follow you to somewhere close where we can have coffee?" "there're cafes around Traction and 3rd, a couple of blocks from here." "are you very familiar with this area?" "extremely, I shoot a lot of photos, graffiti, warehouse, but I don't live down here, so I don't really know what's going on." "where do you live?" "Santa Monica." "so do I. I don't mean to seem obvious, but maybe fate-----I really like your looks," she interrupts herself. "you look very romantic, heroic, with that bandage on your forehead, and I love to look into your eyes." the sun is setting mellow orange warmth on their bodies. for the first time in years her heart turns, warm and open. and now that she feels he's ok, she allows a healthy urge to possess her for the first time since leaving her boyfriend. "this drink (red wine) was what I needed. coffee would have given me a headache." both of them have found temporary sanctuary, and neither of them are inclined to relinquish it. a surge of confidence prompts her assertiveness, when almost swallowing her heart, she offers, "Santa Monica is a long way (actually 10 minutes on the freeway), why don't we go to a hotel." "her heart is pounding. "there are a lot of cheap, funky, but clean rooms with atmosphere around here. you do have an extremely

sexy attitude, but I have something to tell you. I'm not sure I can have sex. it's been so long I may be impotent." "well, why don't we see. maybe I can help you. I've been told I'm a good fuck," she adds, facetiously. "anyway, there are many ways to have sex. let's get a bottle of champagne and bring it with us."

they sit on the edge of the bed, hotel glasses in hand, sipping champagne, then put the glasses down on the night table, and look into each other's eyes, tentatively, before undressing. stroking his hair, she gently pushes him back, leans over him, almost as she did earlier in the day, licks and bites his nipples, lowers her mouth on his swollen part, then mounts him, caressing and kissing his face, while salaciously moving her pelvis. as she becomes deeper and deeper absorbed in a rhythm attuned to her needs, the space begins to pitch and surge in her head. she fucks until her spasms become little shrieks and moans. then they roll under the sheet and blanket, drunk, window open, distant traffic in their ears, and sleep 'till dawn.

half awake, they 'rumble' quietly before finally getting out of bed late morning. "I hope you won't think I was being selfish, but it worked so well for me that way. for the first time, I guess, I was able to work some of that male dominance out of my system." "it worked for me as much. I won't go into why. but the feeling of helplessness was liberating, putting myself in your hands." "one thing it shows, the issue isn't classic hetero sex. it's who's in control. so called pan sexuality can be just as stifling because of the role playing. our needs were perfectly mated. maybe that's what I meant

about fate." "but where do we take it from here?" "we don't have to have sex for a while." "I think that's a good idea. what did you do, earlier, before you `met' me?" "I had lunch with an old girlfriend whom I contacted after not seeing her for years. I'm afraid I was a little desperate. she was very warm and understanding. she brought her new boyfriend. funny she also met him at MOCA. though it was the other one, on Grand. I think you should meet her." "why?" "I don't know. things have a way of coming together. you can't, like Oedipus, run from fate." "strange thing to say." "I know, I guess I want our relationship to last for a while. now that I've found someone, I don't want him taken away." "that's a recipe for just the opposite."

"I think I'll stop shaving my legs and armpits," she says, self-consciously covering her lap. "this way my limbs look like chicken parts." Phone rings. she converses rather intimately. "no, I do too, we'll get together soon." she hangs up, her eyes a little damp. "that was my father. he nods his understanding without knowing what was said. the sun has swung around to the side of the house. a ray of light stripes part of her legs, dress, face, and hair, making her look both disembodied and incredibly desirable. "he was an anthropology professor at the Univ. of Maryland, at the time of the Korean War. they denied him tenure because of his activism. that was more than a decade before I was born. he's still active in the peace movement where he lives, in Portland, Oregon." "is that where you're from?" "no, we were living down here, then." "then you must have older siblings." "no, I'm an only child, from his second marriage." "this may be just coincidental, but I've been having nostalgic feelings for the

Eisenhower era, lately. I was serving a 2 year tour of duty in the Navy when I became eligible to vote, by the end of his first term. I was one of the few people on the ship who voted for Stevenson – they thought we were commies. but then Ike cut the defense budget, and I got out 5 months earlier than I had planned. it was one of the ecstatic moments of my life. and it happened all at once. I was standing in a passageway, alone. a fellow draftee ran up to me and said, ‘pack your sea bag, we’re leaving the ship in half an hour.’ one moment I was below decks in semi-servitude, the next moment I was standing on the flight deck with papers in my hand, waiting, listening to the ecstatic sound of an alto sax, Cannonball Adderley, coming from the open compartment of an all-black division of airmen. it was the ‘Beat’ era and I was just getting into all of that, which pretty much determined my trajectory from there on.” “but you’re still nostalgic for Eisenhower?” “not nostalgia and it’s not for him, personally. he did the right thing in making that cautionary speech prior to leaving office, that’s all. you have lovely bare knees.” “you just want to shag me.” “that, true.” “you know, I’m not a spring chicken, either.” “from my perspective you are.” “then it’s a whole era?” there’s a poignancy, in retrospect, to the aspects of everything we were reacting against. it doesn’t change my values, and I’m as much an outsider, now, as I was then. more, because I no longer have the haven of a subculture. but the vision I had in the 50s comes back to haunt me in funny ways regarding the dreams I haven’t achieved or fulfilled.”

“I am in the mood to be shagged. sex was so different when I look back on what I was doing before. the attitude more than the act. what seemed normal then, now seems a bit

pornographic.” “and the need’s still there.” “the primal urge is still there.” “and I don’t fit the fantasy?” she blushes, beet red. “No, you’ll do. you just caught me in a contradiction of roles.” “well perhaps I can help you bridge the gap.” he reaches for the hem of her dress, pulls it up, yanks off her panties, and as she lets out a little cry, pushes her to the floor. she struggles with him until it becomes a wrestling match. he’s barely able to pin her down, then lets her up. “I didn’t mean I wanted to be forced.” they’re both breathing hard. she looks him hard in the eyes. “I’m still in the mood to be shagged.” they fuck defiantly on the floor. “feel better?” “much better.” “so do I. this me Tarzan, you Jane stuff, really isn’t so bad.” “the issue, again, is control. if either isn’t controlling the other, then anything’s valid.” “the clue is, before it was erotic, but uptight. with us, we can laugh.” “you know, I have an intuition as to why you were so horny at that particular moment. it was right after you talked to your father.” “I’m sure that was part of it.”

re early 50s. smell of night blooming jasmine, Brubeck-Desmond, mid-century mod architecture, a feeling then, this was to be his future. late 50s. a Diebenkorn painting (N. Cal period), light and shadow on Berkeley cottage w/trees and richly painted expressionist portrait of moody half naked woman. 60s. drugs. all that was obliterated. the strange mix of iconoclasm, popular culture, and the American dream. “I’ve realized so little in material terms, partly because I was not willing to do the things, the social networking, to make it possible. it’s ironic that people I associated with, artists and poets, though it may not have been more their goal than mine, did, eventually achieve, through their work, and the

people who promoted it, both material affluence and fame, or, at least, recognition. my mother said to me, not too long before she died, 'some people are afraid of success.' I've spent most of my adult life, now, living in apartments, listening through the walls to people banging cupboards and slamming doors.." "what would you do if you had money?" "I'd build a small house in the hills, maybe 2 rooms. I spent some years living in the canyons. I'd grow my own food. I'd dissolve the space between the inside and the outside, a place where, at least, if I have to be alone, I can be alone. a place where I could die." "what else would you do if you had money?" "aside from the resources to pay for my creative tools and perhaps be a little more mobile, that's pretty much it – create a more absolute spiritual and material universe." "everything you've said, so far, has to do with you. do you ever think of doing something for others, I mean on a personal level?" "of course. it's a need to do something relevant to others. some artists have been able to, without design, do that just through their work. so far, I haven't. nobody knows I've done anything. a friend of mine, who lives in Oregon, who I recently saw for the first time in many years, and is also active in the peace movement up there, told me he had this feeling of emptiness before he got involved." "maybe he knows my father." "he might." "do you feel empty?" "no, just frustrated." "are there any people you admire who are involved?" "I've been thinking about what makes a 'public' person – Amy Goodman, for instance, the host of Democracy Now. do you know who she is?" "yes." "with her it's style. she sits there allowing the information, or misinformation, to run through. I'm not saying she's totally objective, but by style, alone, she's able to be more objective than most. it has

to do with how her process and goals seem to be in the same place. when I say I admire Amy Goodman, I'm saying I admire Amy Goodman the person – the way she uses her, by now, slightly gravel textured voice, the complete absence of the personal pronoun, the lack of sophistry, the brevity and incisiveness of her questions and commentary, most of all her insistence on clarity, and the care and commitment to social justice that seems to be behind it, all reflect and project the person she is. she's influenced alternative radio in the same way Edward R Murrow influenced the mainstream. it is a bit strange to see her on TV, trying to do a female anchor impersonation. the real danger, here, I suppose, is success. with wider fame the drift, however incremental, is towards the mainstream. as an aside, I watched her interview a friend, a writer /journalist one day, I found it difficult to both watch her facial movements, smile, etc. for the camera eye, and concentrate on what she was saying, frustrated by a feeling of wanting to fuck her. they were both wearing the same type lightweight jacket with shoulders and bare neck, that seems to be the uniform for such occasions – who can say image isn't as important to her friend, than what she was saying – and a very mainstream image of glamour, at that." "I have to marvel at the lengths you'll take your sexual obsessions." "not now, thanks to you." "well that was quite a mouthful. you mean she never bullshits, no propaganda?" "I didn't say that. I've recently observed her letting off the hook, or at least ignoring, the obvious transgressions of those whose ideals or actions she's sympathetic with.... and she does tirelessly stump for her causes. she also refers to every entertainer who uses his or her art to address social justice issues, as 'legendary', no matter how mundane their art.

a celebrity caught by the paparazzi in a so-called private moment, say, eating a pizza, is only a public person because she or he is being watched. Goodman is a public person because her actions are public, which includes, in the past, having put herself in a physically dangerous situation, and having had to pay the price for it.. I think that's a more valid definition of public than the celebrity one." "yet, she's a celebrity in her world. people relate to her image like she's a rock star." "and there are a number of others in that category. people crave entertainment." "and you're just the opposite." "there you go, I do my traveling inside my apartment. for me, taking a trip is photographing rusted boiler parts in Lincoln Heights. someone asked her in an interview, 'do you ever go on vacation?' her reply was, 'sitting on my couch late at night is like being on the Riviera. after 20 minutes, I feel like I've taken a month's vacation.' you can't deny the spiritual function of solitude, no matter what you do. you can't deny the inner life." "and you don't even have a couch." "that's right, it'd be dead weight." "I'm beginning to see how lack of appreciation and access are eating into you, Jerry. how much it has to do with the sharpness of your personality, the negative humor. it probably began very early in your life." "you're not that way." "I'm not very ambitious." "you have inner goals, and you're sexy in your quiet way. you have a very strong spiritual vibe. I feel very protected by your presence." he looks up from one of the books from the shelf he's been scanning. "what are you reading?" "about male sexuality. where did you get this book?" "it was one of my father's. read me something." "...the males' seed is his solar and nuclear energy, which he emits as radiant heat. the woman absorbs it and gives it back in material form

as cooling mystic heat which heals. the Taoists call the balance of mind within which this alchemical process of transformation, effortlessly occurs, Wu Wei – non action. what it really implies is a neutrality, or state of receptivity, so that anything can spontaneously happen....” “do you apply those thoughts to us?” “I think as a sexual orientation we have a capacity for that kind of communion, yes. but that comes with having more sex. being on the outside as long as I’ve been, surface eroticism is just too strong.” she nods. “you know, that throw you down and fuck you on the floor mentality is created by social factors. what they don’t understand is their current formulations are as socially formed as the ‘old model’ illusions they’ve rejected.” she nods again. “they don’t think so.” “do doves and dogs withhold ejaculation?” she laughs. “I doubt it. but you should share your personal creativity and art with others.” “I would if I could. I fantasize it all the time.” “while your time is being occupied I can make dinner. what would you like?” “what I have every night. a large salad.” “with what?” “grated carrot, diced radish, apple, and red pepper, a few cherry tomatoes, lettuce, with a garlic or vinaigrette dressing.” “do you eat anything cooked with it?” “seitan, but only the fresh stuff, not packaged, plus, sometimes, a cooked vegetable, microwaved.” “what about dessert?” “several bites of a large cookie, that’s all.” “where do you get the fresh seitan?” “Co-opportunity, Erewhon, carry it.” “it looks like I’ll have to shop. can you do without seitan tonight?” “anytime.” “I never see you eat anything at night.” “I fast until breakfast.” “every night?” “yes.” “and you don’t eat lunch?” “right.” “you’re a contradiction of lust and asceticism.” “that’s not uncommon. in this world it’s not really a contradiction.”

"would you like to eat me?" "yes." "now?" "yes." "kiss me first?" "yes." [*yes I said yes I will yes*].

a thin, acetic looking older man with long grey hair, wearing a navy outdoor jacket, jeans, and silver Nike running shoes, stands by the exhibit of photos from the Parsons collection (The Social Scene) at MOCA. among other things he's a photographer. his image contrasts the slick, neat, white walls, a bit like a bum, momentarily stepping in off the street, might. if he were formally dressed he might be mistaken for the conductor of a symphony orchestra. most of the photos, though worth looking at, he's seen so many times he has no motivation to focus on them. he's recently come to the conclusion, anyway, that commentary, other than whether one likes the content or not, is puerile. he starts to step backwards and bumps into, or is bumped by, a petite, young dark haired woman, wearing a black pea coat. unclear as to who's culpable, they both laugh. "thanks for knocking me back to reality." they stand facing each other, assessing one another's features. "don't I know you from somewhere? I know, you're....." "yes."

"let's fuck right away." the front room is so comfortable with the street lights coming through the blinds, falling arbitrarily on the objects that exist as amorphous shapes rather than as outlines. just a shadow world, mysterious, but comfortable and peaceful. "let me undress you." "let me undress you. "let me kiss you." "let me kiss you. you've got lovely, shape-ly, small breasts and nipples." "no, don't take off your necklace." "that's it, more." "your cock is very pretty and hard. not threatening. a gorgeous sculpture." "the couch is pretty

and soft." "tighter." "leave the coat on around your unbuttoned dress." "that's it, more. hair. sweet scent." "ohh." "willows. luscious lips." "neck." "hair, saint, you're so thin." "too hot to play." "tighter, around my waist. wrap your legs." "oh, more, ooh." "move, screw." "oh, ohh, ohhh, sucking, sucking lips, neck." "Ahhhhh, sweet come. no more." "is that what we live for?" "no (stray hand, stray dog). it's just something we have to get out of the way.....stay here." "we can start over but it always comes back." "I know." "I was too horny to look at the art." "I was too horny to look at the art, too." "when we 'bumped' into each other, ironically, I was trying to avoid all contact." "horniness can be such a burden." "so can lack of love." "the bedroom is where I do my art." "is that why we didn't fuck there?" "no, it was just more public in the living room. more connected to the outside world, where the stimulation was coming from. it wasn't to be that intimate. next time you can fuck me and my work at the same time." "I'd like to see it." she takes his hand. "come with me."

"would you like to stay with me tonight?" "sounds like next time has already arrived." "no, just sleep." "yes, I was dreading going back, alone, now." so much pleasure in warmth, bed, embrace with still strange woman, In familiar/strange place, familiar/unfamiliar smells, dresser, chair, clothes, refrigerator hum through open door. "I didn't realize how lonely I was." zzzzzzz. raise the shades. sun in my eyes. get up, hard (very). "would you like me to suck you off?" "no. would you like me to lick your ass, cunt?" "no." breakfast. "no eggs? what do you eat?" "brown rice." "that will take a while." "you should get a pressure cooker. you sure have

pretty eyes. I love you." "because you love a person's pretty eyes?" "yes, as a rule." "what else do you eat for breakfast?" "cheese, avocado, and peanut butter on toast, with lettuce, onion, currents." "now I know where you get your energy." "that's right." "you think you know everything?" "no, don't be silly."

as yet to be determined ring tone on her cell. "hi...." (surprised) "blah, blah.....I'll see you in a little while. ok, yes." ends call. "that was a college friend I haven't seen in many years. we're getting together for lunch. she'd left the man she'd been living with all these years not too long ago. what are your plans?" "I haven't any." "then why don't you come with me to meet her." "I don't eat lunch." "you can have a drink. I suppose I shouldn't feel this way, but I'm not really sure I want to see her. I was a very different person then. it's not a time I'd particularly want to go back to." "sure, if I can be moral support." she wraps her arms around his neck, presses her bodice to his chest, and gently kisses him – first time love pangs run through both of them. "I better call back and tell her you're coming. she's really a very nice person."

"your phone is always ringing." "men chase after me. they have X's for eyes. me as a synonym for pleasure. they assume I must be wild and bad." "maybe it's because, like me, you look for something outside the box. it's getting dark and I'm getting depressed." "are you bi-polar?" "no. but each nuance of meaning pushes you in one direction or another, until you can assimilate it. it should be instantaneous, but unfortunately, that doesn't always happen. bipolar, I imagine, is when the source of the changes can no

longer be assessed, and become automatic. it's maybe genetic. with your dark hair and glasses you look like a movie star, or better yet, Italian mafia." "I am Sicilian."

"a fresh can of paint does help a lot." "you look so professional wearing that cap." "would you like to do it?" "No." "then please hold the ladder." "watch you don't drip any paint on me. I would be wearing silk." "don't worry, it's acrylic." "I'll sue." "steady, you almost tipped over the bucket." "I didn't, it was you." he stretches and just reaches the last bare spot, admires his work, then climbs down, finds her mouth, and kisses her, a long, sensual, languorous kiss, paint smearing her face, a small spot smudging her blouse. when their mouths finally separate, he releases her. "I guess that was worth it," she says, breathlessly. he draws her to him again, breasts heaving, she strokes his bulge. he inserts his tongue into her mouth, then in her ear. "not now," she wrests herself away. "the floor should be scraped and sanded, then treated before being polished." "don't worry, you don't have to do the work." "it's going to do itself?" "they're paying to have it done, and we can keep whatever's left over." "money?" "yes. your impulsiveness frightens me a little. I've already the addictions of too many others to deal with." "I had no intention of fucking you then. I just sometimes need to be aroused. it builds up anyway, and unless there's some physical outlet it starts to work against me. but it keeps me motivated. I try to use it objectively rather than compulsively. it's not escape. it's in the service of love," he says, a little disingenuously. "I'm relieved to hear that." "you're really not as 'bad' as you like people to think you are. you're really quite sensible." "that's true." it's still raining.

clean fresh air coming through the open windows, mingling with the smell of paint. there are still things that can evoke paradise, add to it a woman's eyes that shine, and this is one. "want to see a movie?" "I don't go to movies. there is one I'm interested in that's playing at the Sunset 5." "what film is that?" "Mr Lonely." it's dark when they leave the theater. the rain has stopped. the air is colder and just as fresh. she buttons up her pea coat, kisses him tenderly, and puts her arm in his, as they walk back to the car, the red alarm lights of love now blinking dangerously on and off. standing together in the bedroom, a wave of lust overtakes him, and he pushes her onto the bed. "Oh, why did you have to ruin everything?" curled in a fetal position she starts to cry. hushed he sits down beside her. "I'm sorry," he says, caressing her cheek, and softly running his fingers through her hair. "it will never happen again, I promise you."

the Lord giveth. the Lord taketh away. that was a close call. he spent his last two years of high school bearing the heart-ache from similar behavior. if he had to suffer through that pain again, it'd probably kill him. he thought he'd gotten beyond 'acting out' compulsive, erotic, inadequacy induced, self-destructive behavior. love is both the process and goal. loss is only acceptable (bearable) if it's inevitable, can't be helped, i.e., is tragic.

it's raining cats and dogs on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. a thin, tallish, older man with long grey hair, wearing an old navy ski jacket, jeans, and running shoes, is sitting on the walk in front of La Perla, a lingerie boutique, people walking past, clutching their umbrellas, the rain pouring down on him,

unused hood dangling on his back, his black wool knit cap stuffed in his pocket. at first she thinks he's homeless, then looks at his shoes which seem to be in good condition, and wouldn't a homeless person have tried to find temporary shelter? "hello, are you all right?" he looks up as she stands over him, her umbrella partially shielding him from the rain. "why are you sitting there?" I feel like it, that's all. haven't you ever felt like just sitting in the rain, clothes on, looking at the grey skies, headlights and taillights on, while people hurry by, trying to keep dry?" his face opens into a big smile, and then she's smiling too, a punky looking redhead with large brown eyes, wearing a black pull over sweater, a very short black skirt, and a lightweight teal blue, plastic raincoat. "are you an artist?" "yes, I also work for the city's Art in Public Places program. that pays the rent." "where do you live?" "I've a studio in Silverlake. are you an artist?" "I write and take photographs. I used to work with film. I'd ask you to have coffee with me but I'm too wet to be served." "we can stop at a coffee shop on Beverly Drive and order to go, if you like.. here, stand under my umbrella. are you on foot?" "no, my car's just north of Santa Monica Blvd. her perfumed scent mingling with the fresh wet air, excites a predictable synergy. "these moments are the closest you can get, sensually, to paradise." "we can't just stand here. you'll get sick if you don't change your clothes soon. when I first saw you I thought you were a bum. strange, that's what I wanted you to be, what I may have even unconsciously been looking for. in L.A., homeless persons are so noticeably part of the landscape, yet distant, in bad shape, and untouchable. for the moment, I guess, I felt I had a legitimate reason to connect. had you been sitting in my neighborhood, however,

I would have been afraid to come near you.” people walking by, turn their heads. “where is your car?” “parked in the lot on Rodeo and S.M.” he sneezes, then sneezes harder. “see, you’ll get sick if you stay in those clothes.” “look, if you don’t have anything better to do, why don’t you follow me to my place in Santa Monica. I can show you some of my work, and if you’re still interested in me, we can go back to your place and you can show me yours.”

“feel free to check things out while I clean up and change.” “I want to watch you do that. I want to watch you undress.” he looks at her for a very long moment. “that’s ok with me.” he quickly undresses, piling the soggy clothes, including his socks and underpants, on the bathroom floor. still wearing her raincoat, she takes a towel and gently but firmly rubs him dry. his genital (of course) swells. when finished, she wraps her arms around his neck, her fully clothed body pressed against his nakedness, and kisses him. the bathroom scene is a vividly strange and welcome tableau. “I wish I’d brought my camera,” she whispers in his ear. “you can use mine. I’ve got a digital SLR.”

“let’s go to the bedroom.” the sun has momentarily surfaced, sending shafts of light into the room. she props him by the window, light and shadow playing on the contours of his face. portrait. “hold it.” click. “that’s it. look hard.” click. aroused just enough for it to look substantial, instead of receded, she zooms in on his jewels, click. “now lay on the bed. raise your leg so one knee is up. hold it.” click. close up of the face...eyes, hair, lips. click. “I think that’s enough. on cue, the room suddenly darkens. flash of lightening, loud clap of

thunder. it begins to pour again. she poses his head against the beaded window, clicks the camera one more time, then lays it on the chair, removes her coat, and sits down next to him on the bed. her legs (gorgeous), rubbing against his. his genital swells erect. faces almost touching, her eyes are pools of suggestion. she lowers her mouth, and begins to give him head "only for a few seconds," he manages to get out. she quickly stops. his hands on her bare thighs, they kiss. "wait." she runs to the front room takes mascara from her purse, hurries back to the bedroom, and applies it around his eyes. by lamplight she photographs him, close up, then laying in the bed.

he washes his face, dresses, and combs his wet hair all the while she's clicking the camera. "if you don't mind I'd like a copy of the shots. I'm excited about the prospect of working with them." "they're your shots. we can do it right now." he boots up his computer, interfaces the chip, and sends the files to his documents, then burns a disc for her. "you've got the goods on me now. my decrepit, skinny legs, loose and blemished skin, harrowed face." "yes, I've got everything." "what do you plan to do with them?" "at first I thought I'd use them as a basis for paintings, but they're so strong I think I'll just work with the photos. they're really very souly." "then what do you intend to do with them?" "I have an arrangement with a gallery in Culver City." "naked photos of a 70 year old man." "I'd never be able to guess your age by your looks. but you've aged very aesthetically." "I'm grateful to hear you say that." "are you being sarcastic?" "only a little bit. you know I haven't seen you undressed yet." "you could have fucked me a while back, but you stopped." "I felt we

were getting towards something and I didn't want to eject that possibility." "I agree." "anyway I brought you here so you could see my work." "no, I followed you." "same thing." "I came to see you undress." "ok, let me show you some of my photos." he pulls several black archival boxes from a closet shelf. one never knows what to expect when one begins to show someone their art. if there's something of value to the viewer, generally, there will be an immediate attraction, something both unfamiliar but gratifying. re his graffiti shots, "you've got so much good stuff I'm a little overwhelmed. but you can't expect a gallery to zero in on your work if they don't know you're there." "I'm not sure I want a gallery." "well, there you go. do you have a website?" "no. I'm not here to advertise my art." "I really like the ones you call your Pollocks. they're exquisite. so are the dark caverns of graffiti highlighted by the light from the carved holes in the ceiling, the makeshift skylights." he'd dreamt the night before, that while away, his home had been broken into and there was graffiti inside, on the wall. when they're finished, he asks, almost as an afterthought, "would you like to look at some porn?" "sure, if it's art." she doesn't expect anything so transformed. "they're a little shocking, but I'm not sure I'd call it porn." "I'd like to photograph you." "porn?" "no, just sexual." "erotic?" "very." "you'd first have to tell me a lot more about it." "of course."

she puts her raincoat back on. he grabs the violet umbrella lying next to piles of books on the floor in the front of the room, the kind that suddenly, and dangerously, pops up with the force of a sprung stiletto, and they walk out to the street. the rain has once again ceased. the last rays of afternoon

light rim the dense dark grey clouds. "I guess I better follow you. I don't want you to have to drive back late at night by yourself." he realizes he's making a bold assumption. she gives him her address. they get in their cars.

by the time he gets there she's already inside and has changed to 'something more comfortable' – a breezy rust colored cotton skirt, a pastel blue-grey, silky blouse, and black plastic thong sandals. the top 3 buttons are deliberately undone, and he has the urge to unhook her bra and feel her up. "you're still dressed like you've just returned from the North Pole." he takes off his jacket, then removes his cotton pull-over shirt and, in a spontaneous gesture unties his shoes and pulls off his pants as well. standing in a cobalt blue t shirt and charcoal jockey shorts, he says, "let us not forget our roots." she smiles broadly and hugs him. "oh, I like that! now that we're both comfortable let me show you around. the heat gets to 3 digits here in the summer. the reward is the nights. come outside in the back." they arduously make their way along a narrow dark path leading to the hillside, no moon, perfumed flowers on wet, choking vines, a shriek of undetermined source from far off, laughter closer by, a bike rider, bare back in khaki shorts. "do you own this place?" "are you kidding?" "I'm going to make you shriek and moan." "I bet you can't." "one thing that puzzles me is that you're an artist, and given the scene you seem to be a part of, you're neither pierced nor tattooed." "I'm a chameleon. I don't want to relinquish any options for change. I work on being beautiful."

her work is two things. place and person. organically there

seems to be no boundaries. she has down the codes for the artiness of the social world she inhabits, the low end antique and thrift store accumulations, the kitschy, pop mysticism. what 's different is they're merged together in an indivisible, sensual and spiritual whole, that could be totally taken for granted if not perceived aesthetically. it's doubtful she ever thinks about the process. he's just the opposite. his books (the ones he's written), his photographs, are in boxes. furthermore, he sees no reference to anything topical, political, etc., they might want to discuss. but history, to her, the newspaper article she read, of a young street girl who was strangled in a nearby motel (the Olive Motel, which he'd photographed when it was still painted pink, a number of years before) gave her misgivings. "your work is so sexy. I'm more puritanical. that's why my images are frequently so hardcore." "it's because you don't accept." "that's what my brother said when I visited him a few days ago. but I do accept a lot. I just can't give allegiance to any group, thing, or idea." "it's your problem with people in general, why you've been left out, why, from what you've told me, you no longer have any personal friends." "you know a lot for someone who's known me for so few hours." "that's what I saw when you were sitting in the rain. the ultimate outsider." "it's a burden." "the white man's burden." "are you not a white woman?" "I'll come back to that later." "I accept you." "that's because I picked you up." "I'm a thorn in their sophisticated, hypocritical, hides, and I'll have to continue to be for some time longer." "are you sure that's not just a rationalization." "no, it hurts too much to be just that."

"I haven't eaten since breakfast," she suddenly remembers.

"neither have I." "would you like some hot chocolate?" "yes, that would be perfect." "would you like a muffin or toast?" "no, I don't want to spoil my appetite," he says, pointedly. she stands, facing him, the top 3 buttons on her cool, softly braised blouse, inches from his chest, still undone. she looks into his eyes for a long time, then inserts her tongue into his mouth. "don't worry, I'll satisfy your appetite when the time comes." it's interesting, he thinks, she couldn't wait to be fucked over at his apartment, but then, perhaps, that would've been it. he doesn't try to conceal the hard-on straining in his shorts.. "be patient," she says, her hand stroking his cheek. he begins to think she's torturing him. "let's pick up where we left off." "when?" "in the bedroom at my place. you have such gorgeous legs I can't stand it." "do you have to create an idealized portrait first to have sex." "it's typical when people first meet, that erotic desire has a visual component," he says, now feeling genuinely putdown. the perfumed smell of laundry detergent from somewhere wafts in through the open kitchen window." "I know when it gets beyond the point where you can take it, you're going to, like a number of other men have done, throw me down and fuck me on the floor," she responds, defensively. "you've got me one hundred percent wrong. I won't bite you," then thinks about what he's just said. "well." they both laugh.

"you asked me if you could take erotic photos of me. what did you have in mind?" "obviously of you naked, but outdoors, at night, in front of an industrial building." "go on." the brick warehouse on Mateo and Palmetto would do. I've always wanted to pose a naked woman in front of it." "what happens if someone comes?" "if we go there late enough,

and no homeless persons are camped where we can be viewed, at that time the area is utterly deserted. we check out the scene first. if it's clear we park with the headlights beamed on the wall. you disrobe, we get out, and you stand against the wall. I shoot you, close up, full body, whatever I see, quickly, and lickety-split, we're back in the car, your robe back on, guerilla shoot accomplished. we could also try costume variations like sensual classical Japanese courtesan, or even something humorous." she gasps and laughs almost in one breath. "a squad car could be cruising, or worse! it makes me question how 'real' is your sense of danger." in the wildness, or better said, reckless, category, she assumed she was a step ahead of him. now she wonders. "and any artist in the nearby lofts could do the same thing without risk in a more controlled situation." "I suppose the risk would be part of the thrill. besides, they don't have you, or my eye. you've got beautiful skin. it would be porcelain under the brights." "then what would we do?," she asks, flattered.. "we could leave that up to you." she laughs again. "what an imagination."

the evening is beginning to drift. he momentarily dozes on the sofa, and a dream comes to him shrouded in white gauze. she goes to the bedroom, undresses to her underwear. she takes a stick of orange, almost yellow ochre, lipstick, and a tube of green eye liner, and sitting in front of her mirror, carefully applies them. she then pulls her hair together, ties it with a ribbon in back, removes her panties and bra, before slipping into a chocolate, silk, print wrap, and securing it with a carmine sash. she glides her feet into black heels and walks back into the front room, to a ripple of applause. 'I did this

once before, almost, for a school performance when I was seven,' she says, as she turns into a little girl, lacquered hair up, white powder on her face, wearing a kimono, and bows. shirt off, he adroitly positions her, coaxing and sculpting, camera loving and toying with her naked body (if a camera could fuck), Japanese theater, white woman's flesh under the klieg light, soft focused and pastel, then vivid color, suddenly sharp, clear, or distorted. beginning to stir he's moved by an exotic scent permeating the aura. when he opens his eyes, she's sitting next to him, the same perfumed scent on her neck. "I'm glad you were able to get some rest. shall we continue?"

"my turn to undress you." "you undressed yourself." she unfastens her skirt and lets it drop to the floor, a succinct color change to her pink salmon see through generic Victoria's Secret, or whatever, panties. in the spirit of cooperation, he unbuttons her blouse the rest of the way, and unhooks her bra. she slides her arms out of the sleeves, and drops the bra to the floor, then slips her arms back into the blouse. he hungrily sucks her nipples. doing a strip tease she slowly pulls her panties down, past a generous jungle of soft, amber colored pubic hair, steps on it, then kicks off her sandals. he pulls down his shorts and starts to remove his shirt. "leave your shirt on for a while, it's such a cheerful color, and your genitals are so pretty." truth is he's not that far from coming, and he's not completely hard. she holds his penis in one hand, rubbing and stroking it with the other, probing with finesse, causing it to swell erect, while gently squeezing his balls. this permits some of the power to flow back into his penis, allowing some of the horniness to subside, stabilizing

his mind. "I was almost a goner," he says, gratefully. "there are no rules regarding sex. you do what you can." standing naked from the waist down, they stop playing. first, they ravenously kiss. he then lowers his mouth down her belly to her soft lair, and eats her. her hips, pelvic area, is the most sensuous thing about her. perfect under-accentuated curves that fuck with a discretion of movement that considerably raises the ante, guiding the action, unselfishly stopping and allowing his penis to reinvent and establish itself against her walls, engulfed, after the long tease, in her skin, until clutching, they arrive together, at the end of an actual journey that began in the morning, but, it seems, in the last century. although he realizes both of them were hotter then, and their contrivances more spontaneous, and they could have fucked, quickly, densely, and reached a simpler, more erotically raw, unanticipated, physical satisfaction, the metaphysics of love would most likely have been absent.

"did I win the bet?" "not exactly. I'd call it a tie." "that's too generous." "well, there are little things that, maybe, matter. for instance, I like your dick. every man's dick is different, beyond whether or not it's been circumcised or not. your dick is erotic, just enough of an edge, but at the same time not intimidating, friendly, I'd say. I've had sex with men whose dicks frightened me. if I don't like the way a man makes out, I'm inevitably not going to like his dick, either. I like the way you make out, sexy and gentle." "you know, now that you mention it, I feel the same way about a woman's genitals, mostly from the photos I've seen, I admit. yours are sensual and clear. to me, clarity and beauty are closely related. in the area of sexual behavior you're more radical than I am." "you

mean group sex, same sex?" "yes." "men and women together is not a big deal. if there are inhibitions they're more social than sexual, but it's too hard to maintain any sustained pleasure or satisfaction, unless you're drunk or stoned, maybe. then, whatever happens, happens. and things can get out of control." "but you do it." "I don't. I have done it, that's all. I don't like to put up unnecessary barriers." "what about with just women?" "that's rare, too. but in kissing a woman there's a kind of empathy for oneself." "do you ever play with sex toys?" "like what?" "like dildos." "this is beginning to feel like a cross examination, but if you want to know, with a double dildo there's the pleasure of playing a double role. I don't suppose you'd let me use one with you." "do you have one?" "yes." "my mother used to give us enemas when we were small boys," he answers," evasively. "I won't even ask you about you with men." "the whole body is erogenous. the issue is to where one projects one's desires. to what does one allow one's desires to correspond." "allow sounds a bit suppressed." "that's what sublimation is all about. to several gay men I know, heterosexuality is homophobia. that's their defense." "it's different with me. although I came up too late for Punk, I'm still socialized in such a way that I don't relate well to either men or women if there's no erotica."

"would you ever consider marrying me? no, I don't mean marry, I just mean having a child, your child. I try to think of what it would be like to conceive by you, and I like the idea. strange, I never considered it with younger men." "marriage or conception?" "neither." "I think I understand. time is getting short, and for the first time, leaving a legacy has some

meaning. funny that I've waited 'till now to have this awareness that sex is related to procreation, no matter how we try to disguise it. even though they teach that in every JHS sex hygiene class, related to death, too. and sex can be so good, so erotic, for its own sake, without pretense. it would be painful to create a new life and then have to leave. though, I suppose, in our case, that would be precisely the attraction for doing it besides where would we get the money" "I think those things work themselves out. I'd be willing to work." "that's what my former wife said. well, even more, is the magnitude of commitment, and there's no greater commitment than having a child" she nods. "I know. it goes back to that image of you sitting, alone in a public place, in the rain. you have so many conservative hang ups, yet the desperation for wildness is pretty transparent." "romantic love, however, no matter how disillusioned, I've never backed away from. it's still the muse. if we could fuck the way we did tonight, and this became my legacy to you, only. but I know better. the pleasure of sex is a biological trap to hook you in the opposite direction. I think we have a lot going for us, whatever our differences. our beliefs are similar. we both acknowledge the possibility of the moment." "do you believe in God?" "no." "neither do I." "as far as illusion goes, you have to do something before you can see through it. unless you want to be just an intellectual, of course. what we've demonstrated, so far, is an ability to function together, at least once, affectionately and passionately, in a tightly sealed vacuum, dictated by our desires. you're the goddess of love and creation, I'm the hermetic part. but what we do in the 'real' world remains to be seen." "what will you do tomorrow?" "I run in the morning." "how far?" "2 miles,

only." "that's enough." "and I'll be thinking of you." "we'll be thinking of each other." she looks at him long and hard. "Jerry, why don't you move in with me for a while. I can use the help and protection. nothing's forever." now that she's shined the light of love on his fears he'll never relinquish his self-induced solitude, he wavers, leaving a decision up in the air. "I'll call you what time to come over tomorrow, Mr Lonely Hair," she says, running her fingers through his thinning, grey hair. "don't be a stranger."

Black Velvet Black Lace

the air on the terrace of the 8th floor Otami hotel room in downtown L.A. is sensual but vexingly hot. they've downed a couple of aperitifs to assuage their extreme boredom, but decide not to get drunk. she's wearing the same short, scarlet print, summer dress, she wore, that excited him so much he had to pick her up on a breezy afternoon in front of Disney Hall. "what do we do?," she asks. he thinks for a moment. "why don't we kill somebody, just for kicks." she laughs, but at the same time a strange compulsion shoots through her, and she doesn't recognize the voice that inquires, "are you really serious?" "no, but I do think we need a third person." "a man or a woman?" "a man." she hesitates a second, then says, "I know someone. just the person" her face lights up. "I'll call him right now."

a thin, aesthetically featured man stands next to her in their 8th floor suite. she runs her mouth across his, rubbing her breasts, pelvis, and legs, against him. "this is going to be good," he says, as she loosens his tie and removes it. just then, on cue, her lover enters and stands next to them. "what's going on here?," the man asks, a trifle alarmed. "are you going to rob me?" "no," is the woman's straight faced reply, "we're just going to expire you." "very funny, you didn't tell me there was going to be anyone else." "well, you can still opt out," she answers, smiling tantalizingly. but before he can make a decisive move they've bound his hands behind him with his tie her lover can't help admire her acumen. looking at her gorgeous legs as she rubs her body once again against the 'victim's', he gets an erection. "shall

we pants him?," she gushes excitedly, as the victim squirms. she takes a handkerchief and presses it against his nose and mouth cutting off his breath. "this will teach you to behave", she says , finally pulling it away as he desperately gasps and sputters. "do you want to fuck him?," she inquires hopefully, getting futher into her role. "no." "are you sure?," she asks, a bit disappointed. he shakes his head. they drag the victim to a chair, tape his mouth, and undeterred, she pulls down his trousers and shorts, lowers her mouth on his (in spite of itself) stiff organ, and in the stillness save for the cool, circulating air, as her lover watches with impotent, but uncontainable excitement and blows him, deliberately, thoughtfully, luxuriantly, until he comes in spurts, and she swallows., allowing him to experience momentarily, ecstatic relief and satisfaction. "what are we going to do with him, now?," she asks, a dead serious look on her face, as the victim squirms in panic. "he's useless, now, let him go." they pull the tape off the victim's mouth and unbind his wrists. "you're free to go. enough is enough." "this is not what I bargained for." "no, what would you have had us do," she asks, poking her thumb into his esophagus, then slaps him. "consider yourself lucky. we could have strangled you with your tie." face reddened, he exits. "till nest time (Freudian slip)," she calls after him. what her lover doesn't reveal is what he really had in mind, was a stronger, more aggressive agent, through which he could watch her being screwed.

hot and impassioned she throws herself backwards on the bed and pulls up her red dress, her sheer beige tinted hosed legs stirring up the air. sans panties, opaque brown webbing banding her white thighs, bare open vagina and dark muff,

stare at him like a face. throbbing, he pushes down his pants, jumps her, and they fuck as if they've just invented sex. when they're through, both breathing heavily with exertion, she allows herself a rare occasion to light up. "we've got to be careful," she cautions, taking a deep drag and forcefully releasing the smoke through her nostrils, takes another drag and blows smoke in his face, then gets off the bed, walks over to him and gives him a languorous kiss. "yes, we've got to be careful," he replies acidly, pulling his pants back up. he moves to the bed. she smiles deliriously as he sweeps her up into his arms and carries her quickly to the open, screen-less window. suddenly panicked, she vainly struggles to free herself from his grasp, then flings her arms around his neck and desperately clings to him, as he hoists her above the ledge and tilts her towards the street, briefly suspending her there, before pulling her back in and gently setting her down. he carries her back to the bed and they fuck some more, this time, softly, subtly, the clutching moist meat encompassing him. there seems to be a commotion below. they can hear distant sirens. "maybe someone jumped." anything for a good fuck, he thinks, and she's that.

"did you really consider dropping me out the window? I was so scared you were actually crazy enough to." her face is contorted with concern. "no more than we seriously considered expiring our friend." "I feel bad about that. we were worse than brats. do you think he really believed we were going to hurt him?" "it depends on what you mean by hurt." "our relationship, our routine, is somewhat bdsm. but nobody likes to be played for a fool." "unless that's really the point." she laughs. "well I doubt he'll ever speak to me again."

"we've never talked about you and women. so far all our 'mutual' contact has been with men. "well, it was your suggestion." "have you had sex with women?" "oh, the usual stuff, erotic, but as vapid as a typical online lesbian clip." "a woman's body is so different," he says, "so yielding and sensual, and the flavor is so different, you can taste the estrogen." "sometimes a woman needs to taste that, too." "when did you first have sex with a woman?" "when I was still in high school. she worked at the branch library I sometimes used to go to after school." "a librarian?" "a young one, probably in her late twenties. I knew by the looks she'd give me where she was at. finally she invited me over. I knew what to expect, but I was drawn to it enough to be curious to see what would happen. I thought there'd be some room to play around a little. I thought I would be in control, because I was in control in most situations. but I wasn't prepared for her sureness, or her aggressiveness, especially her sureness, and she quickly seduced me." "how did she do it?" "while we were standing, talking in the bedroom by her dresser, kind of joking around, she gave me a hard look, which segued into a naughty, seductive leer, and then she kissed me. her timing was just right. I backed away, but she closed the gap and kissed me again, this time feeling under my sweater and squeezing my breast. there was no space to move. I had to quickly decide whether to struggle with her or give in, and I chose the latter." "interesting choice." "yes, I don't believe she could have forced me into sex." then what happened?" "she lifted off my sweater, dropped my skirt, then she undressed herself. she had a firm, almost mannish body, with a nice set, which fascinated me a little. then she unhooked my bra, feeling, caressing, my nipples, and, finally,

she yanked off the black g string panties I wore the few times I had sex with my boyfriend, reached under my buttocks and skillfully massaged my clit before leading me to the bed. she leaned me back and I stretched out. she laid on top of me, rubbing her breasts against mine, and we made out. I was confused, but mostly hot, so hot that when she got off the bed and went to the dresser, I kept moving my pelvis while she pulled a strap-on out of a dresser drawer – run through the inside of the pad was the short, thick end of the cream colored dildo, which while kneeling on the bed, she inserted into her vagina, tightening the black straps she had attached around her waist and crotch, and then, settling on me, she slid the longer, 5 inch, curved, grooved, end, into mine, and started humping me. we fucked slowly, building, until I peaked, moaning. she got up, leaving me and I rested for a very short time, then returned, and abruptly flipped me over, raised my buttocks, and slid the dildo as far as it would go into my anus, and we humped until she had an orgasm, and ceased moving.” “then what did you do?” “after she pulled out I laid there for a few moments, got up, and immediately dressed. I could feel her eyes watching my every move as I put on my panties and bra, pulled the black, soft wool sweater over my head, fastened my short, pleated skirt, slipped my feet into the pair of low cut flats I wore, then carefully measuring my steps, walked to the door, and without looking back, closed it.” he takes a deep breath. “how old were you?” “seventeen.” “did you report her?” “no, I didn’t tell anyone, except my boyfriend, later.” “how did you feel about it afterwards? did it traumatize you?” “no, not in the sense it had any lasting effect, everything we do has effect.” “did you see her again after that?” “no, I completely

broke off contact.” “that means you had to stop going to the library.” “you’re right about that. I never accomplished much there, anyway. arguably you could say she raped me, but I allowed it.” “legally she did, no ambiguity there,” he says, making little attempt to hide his admiration for her. “how did it affect your relationship with your boyfriend?” I had to contend with the fact that the orgasms I had with him were nowhere as sharp or intense as the one orgasm I had with her, partly because the, I wouldn’t call it a tryst, with her was forbidden, and with him there was no hidden attraction, and partly because that wasn’t the way our relationship was. there seemed to be something missing, as though we were too good to really let ourselves go. he was very smart, mature for his age, and I was, I mean perceived to be by our classmates, very sexy. we were a status couple at this private school, and we played our roles like people expected us to. but neither of us knew very much about sex, and we were, or at least he was, too conservative to explore. I think he possessed as much sexual potential as I did. it was mostly socially imposed inhibitions. and I learned from her you don’t have to pretend to be moral to enjoy sex.” “it’s interesting, in your telling me the story, your attention to erotic detail, the clothes you wore, and all, was as though you were trying to sustain an erotic picture of yourself through her eyes.” “I suppose, in a way, the experience made me feel like a grown woman – the unmasked desire she had for me.”. “with her you were totally submissive.” “I was only 17. I’m generally not very assertive with women. I’m more assertive with men.” “you’re assertive with me, that’s one thing I like about you.” “and you’re assertive with me, we’re similar in that way. but I’ve noticed you’re pretty passive in group

situations. you kind of lay back, withdraw into yourself.” “I’m more assertive in one to one relationships. did you and your boyfriend have anal sex?” “no, I don’t think either of us even considered it. whatever spice we gave to our love-making was oral, which was perfectly acceptable then.” “but didn’t the ‘humping’ you got from her bring that more into focus?” “it may have served to create a small wedge. the reality was no longer just possibility. we actually approached doing it.” “what did you do after high school?” “I got a degree in art history from a small liberal arts college. I was going to get a job in a gallery or art museum, but I never followed through. what about you?” “I’m a college dropout. we’re both drop-outs.” “you seem well educated.” “I went to college for five and a half years, but I didn’t go to classes regularly. on campus I was kind of an intellectual bum. I spent a lot of time out of class, discussing everything under the sun with my friends. I intended to be a writer, anyway, and I ended up making film for a while. I still have dreams about my procrastination. I had one very recently.” “I’d like to hear about it.”

“the head of the film department at UCLA or an arts institution somewhere, asked me to go get my film for their archives and a presentation. ‘both?,’ I asked. ‘yes, the original and the copy.’ I’d been thinking seriously, for the first time in years, of getting some equipment, or use of, and editing my only extant film. a film I shot in the early 70s. I was happy about that and he confirmed it was in storage close by. I was walking to get it and then the locale shifted to the UCLA campus, and then it was somewhere there, and my mission got more diverted, *the falcon cannot hear the falconer*, etc., still

trying to get to my goal, on the walk in front of Royce Hall, where a number of students were also walking, evidently between classes, a hip appearing, tall, lanky, good looking young man with longish black hair, wearing a long, lightweight, black coat, walking behind me, arms around a pretty young lady, started to hum the melody (intro) to *this isn't sometime this is always*, as I looked north, across the quad, to the School of Architecture building, which housed the Art Dept. when I went there. the sky, trees, lawns, were incredibly bright and sunny, like how a young man might view it on a particularly carefree, but auspicious, day, only denser, like it was covered in an otherwise invisible, transparent shroud, and I thought this is no longer for me, this is for them, and the effort to locate and get my film was getting more and more difficult. I no longer knew where it was. I was beginning to feel fatigued, each step created new obstacles, and I said, to hell with it and woke up. I've had many other dreams, dreams of procrastination, where I was on the UCLA campus carrying books, intending to go to, or register for, a class, or take an exam, but was always being diverted in much the same way by shifting context until it was too late. in fact, one of my most typical dreams has been one of futile striving, where change of scene, or something intervening, would obfuscate a clearly defined, single minded goal."

when he sees a woman he's attracted to it's hard for him to explain the thrill. the object of which is, perhaps, unattainable on the level he perceives it, tantalizingly desirable and strange, yet identifiable, and consumable, on occasion, by threading the initial expectation through the effort to consummate desire at the moment of transaction. one afternoon while sitting in the sun, looking at the shadow of his leg,

and thinking of a woman's thigh, he realized how his response to the external was a projection of his inner needs at any given time – is where his mate lies. and he thought, can I ever find a mate outside myself without separation?

"there's no greater love than to come together in one another's arms." "perhaps you should say, no greater pleasure." "well, if you appreciate the source of the pleasure, and the need is deep enough...." "for most people, once they get used to each other, sex becomes just another routine. they feel an obligation to have sex, just as they feel an obligation to love, when they're capable of neither." "of course, I'm referring to when they are capable." "what about anal sex?" "the ass becomes a cunt" "some people would say that's homophobic." "it's not a value statement and others may differ, but just talking to you makes me hard."

standing behind her he wraps his arms around her breasts, turns his face to the side of hers, and as she turns it slightly, suckles her lips, then rests his groin against her bump. she doesn't answer but instead raises her skirt, and knees braced against the side of the mattress, leans her upper body across the width of the bed in compliance. his hands greedily rub the naked fleshy curves of her rump. he lowers his mouth, gnaws and bites the meat of her thighs, fingers reaching down, squeezing her calves, then leaning forward, spreading her buttocks, he works his cock all the way in, and self-absorbed, they move together in silence.

"you always say exactly what you think is necessary. nothing more. you're totally purposeful. even the eroticism which

drives you is subjected to your totally serious vision of life and death. you have a good sense of humor, very witty, and sometimes even silly, but even then it's geared towards a specific goal. I think I can feel the deeper love, but your melancholy gets to me sometimes. I never hear you laugh just out of joy. I can't really love a man without a certain amount of play, without being with someone who can let himself go. I need that in a relationship." "what you perceive to be melancholy, is also my meditation, and smoking pot every night for so long certainly conditioned it. I used to be more the way you say you'd like me to be, way back in grammar school. in the 6th grade religious school class at the reform temple my parents belonged to, we had a graduation party at a classmates house. I was kind of chubby for a few years prior to puberty, and at the party I guess I was goofing off a lot, acting very silly. a tall, older boy who'd been kept back a couple of grades for some reason, told my friend to tell me that if I didn't shut up he was going to 'beat me up'. that quieted me down. later, our teacher organized a game of spin the bottle. this was my first boy/girl party. when it was my turn to spin the bottle it stopped in front of a quiet, not particularly attractive, somewhat stuck up girl who was also in the same elementary school class I attended, and she refused to kiss me. to make matters worse, the teacher, who had previously, at times, been solicitous to me, showing her other side, snapped at me, while excusing the girl, even though I neither objected nor said anything. after I got to junior high I grew several inches over the period of a year and started to cultivate a cool image." "did it get you the response you wanted?" "yes, there were vibes between me and some of the pretty girls I was drawn to, but ironically, the

role I assumed may have made it more difficult to follow through.” “so you’ve developed this big defense because long ago some little girl wouldn’t kiss you.” “no I don’t think so. give me a little credit. the teacher initiated the game and then didn’t play by the rules. when I think back then, there was a girl in my class, this was earlier, possibly the 4th grade. she was short, with large brown eyes, she played the piano, and that summer the class bully and I bonded, and would meet every day at the school playground, and frequently, she’d come there, and we’d take turns pushing her on the swing. she was just naturally seductive at that particular time in her life. one day, I’m not sure if it was that summer, my best pal, who lived 2 blocks down from me, and I, were with her across the street from the school, and this is totally vague, but in my recollection, she managed to, separating me from my friend, suggest I come over later, and after lunch I started cutting through the vacant lots, heading down to her apartment, feeling this strange aura, thrill, my heart was pounding. I have no idea what she did to arouse this desire, and two blocks ahead, there was my competitive, untrustworthy, friend, already cutting through the lower lots, heading in the same direction, then the both of us stood on the lawn in front of her living room window, listening to her practice the piano – a real Peanuts moment. she didn’t come out. maybe if he hadn’t been there she would have.” the story softens her attitude towards him, and she smiles, warmly. you have to work every second, he thinks, for love.

a dusty road terminates at the entrance of what must have been a farm house and orchard, not much more than ruins and a few olive trees. framed in full, dull/bright white light,

she sits just inside the half unhinged gate, on the broken steps of what was once a small porch, lacing up the black leather straps of her 5 inch heels, fine legs crossed at the knees, and elegant, partially shredded, silky, peacock purple/green skirt, splaying her chalky white thighs. she wears no makeup. her half buttoned milky, silk blouse exposes most of her soft breasts. large round cargo sunglasses cover her dark eyes. she uncrosses her legs, she's wearing no panties, before she stands, the skirt strands dropping to her ankles, the upper material clinging salaciously to her hips, pelvis and long legs, looking taller than she really is. just then an old battered black Continental sedan, raising layers of dust, speeds to the entrance, and like in a thirties mob movie, abruptly stops. three men, soldiers or gendarmes, clamber out, and walk up to the gate where she's waiting. they all smile warmly. she shakes each one's hand. she then leads them to an empty courtyard, an area located before the front entrance to the setback house. in its center, next to several broken stone statues and a dry fountain, and bordered on all sides by the tile and stone ruins of a stage, is a sun bleached mattress covered with a large, sky blue comforter. she goes into the house and returns with a bottle of red Mercuri, and four glasses, fills them and sets them on a stone pedestal. she explains to them her rules, the main one being, while anything more or less standard goes, they can do it with her only one at a time. then they negotiate the price. the exchange of money (Euros) to his eyes, seems considerable, although he doesn't know what it amounts to in U.S. currency. the soldiers or gendarmes each remove their boots, pants, and jackets, then flip a coin to see who goes first, second, and last. looking as sexually attractive as any woman can look,

she doesn't undress. the kissing, good natured groping, sucking, eating, etc. commences, becoming mostly fucking, in all the usual configurations, but with a lustful openness on her part which is contagious – first one man, while the other two smoke, then the second, and finally the shortest man with the biggest cock. in the bright/dull white light, flashes of her white thighs, breasts, rump, in motion, engages, tangled and intertwined with masculine forms, bodies rising and falling, hair flying and falling, is the most sensuous erotic imagery he's ever seen. an hour later, satisfied and smiling, they walk to the gate. she waves to them as they turn around and leave as they came, in a cloud of dust.. then, when their car can no longer be seen, she walks over to where he's concealed, halfway between the courtyard and gate. "I'm sorry you had to wait so long," she says, in good English, the rise in her voice inflected as a question, her smile, radiant, warm, innocent, almost pure. "it looks like you made a pile there." "they were very generous, very polite, respectful. they're Corsicans who live in Southern France." "then you're a prostitute." the expression on her lovely face darkens a little. "no, I would never be that. every once in a long while when we really need the money, my brother will say to someone he knows, "I've got a nice woman for you. that's all. he has to know them, and they first have to be tested before he sets something up. it's pretty isolated here. I'd hadn't had sex in several months before this." "it looked like you, as well as them, really enjoyed it." "how else should it be? I'm not a prostitute. I had at least one orgasm with each of them." "I could see you in the throes." "you know, women get horny, too. they were very considerate about our financial situation." "you don't look particularly Greek, nor is your accent."

"my father is Greek, my mother is Serbian." "I guess they don't live here." "no, they both live and work in Athens. I went to modeling school there for a while. actually my father is in jail right now" "for what?" "a tax fraud scheme that left us penniless." "do you live here, alone?" "no, with my brother." he nods. how old are you.? "20." "you're the most gorgeous, dare I say, creature I've ever laid my eyes on. you're the real Mediterranean image every Hollywood star and starlet at one time or another tries to appropriate, right down to the come to sunny whatever, shades." once again she gives him that warm, radiant, innocent, almost pure, smile. "I'd like to do it with you sometime soon," she says, looking hard into his eyes. I wouldn't charge you anything, because you are very nice, and we can talk, but in a week when I'm fresh. he seriously thinks of canceling his flight which leaves in several days. "come inside, we don't have to stand here getting sunburned. I know I'm still keeping you waiting, but please allow me first to shower and dress. then we can get down to the business that brought you here," she says, suggestively, mysteriously.

"unfortunately at this moment I woke up. I have no idea what business she was referring to or why I was there, other than the sexual attraction to her." "one interesting thing is you didn't have sex with her, but it's all about her sexuality, and your responses." "I know. in dreams most of my wish fulfillments, whatever they are, are not consummated. in this particular one, what it's really about is possession of image." "in place of action?" "maybe. though it can make you impotent. the image remains a motivating factor long after the act. that's the issue, I guess we're trying to explore"

love, violence, neutrality

“your concern with white skin, flesh, is interesting. some people might say, a little racist.” “well, objectification of one’s external characteristics to the extent it’s a fetish is an issue in itself.” “I mean white to the exclusion of black.” “you’re probably right, and I could lay out a history of my attraction to women of different races and ethnicities in that way, beginning with having grown up in a white, middle class, predominately Jewish neighborhood, where almost all of my early friends were assimilated Jews. the girls I dated were Jewish, and I married a Jewish girl. however, there were always other attractions. I think I would have loved to have had a Catholic, Italian or Mexican, girlfriend, and I had frequent sexual fantasies about that as a teenager. when I got into jazz, the second phase, the first phase was in my late teens, which was the cool, white, mod scene, it coincided with the early stages of the modern civil rights movement, and a lot of my icons by then were black jazz musicians. I went to the clubs and hung out at the late night jam sessions. I associated, somewhat, with a few of the attractive, ultra-competitive, ‘spade cats’ who were part of the same scene – to this day Gene Ammons’ tenor sax says more to me than speeches about freedom – and for the first time I felt a vibe between myself and hip, young, black women.” “who is Gene Ammons?” “he was a jazz musician.” “I gathered that.” “...who did serious time for heroin possession, a total of 9 years, during the prime of his career, when the particular kind of jazz he played was most relevant! in the pantheon of jazz greats he was considered to be, although well regarded by the critics and his peers, just one of many ‘journeymen’

musicians who defined the 'soul' of jazz at that time, but he had a gorgeous sound. there were very few who could play a ballad with the feeling and meaning he did." "you have a way of meandering from whatever issue is at hand with us." I think it's a more oblique way of addressing it. I think my immersion into the cool world of that period was, to some extent, born of a new, mutual spirit for confrontation, and while held back, the possibility for friendship. but due to further social changes, for most of us, the window to that opportunity closed. at that time the term, 'jazz is dead', was thrown around a lot, which while by no means true, did reflect its decreasing appeal, i.e., social relevance, to mass culture. the civil rights movement had stalled, black power was on the rise, and a diverse, white, hipsterism had moved into the cultural forefront. at that time as many of my friends were white Christian males, white Christian women, or perhaps, white non-Jewish women, became objects of my desire. when I was a boy a friend's mother told him the dubious truism the reason gentiles get divorced more than Jews, is because 'shiksas' drink, while Jewish women don't. but after I moved out of the Westside Jewish social club orbit, I began to feel resentment for 'those' women for being manipulative, game playing, over materialistic, and superficial." "but you married a Jewish girl." "she wasn't that way. in that area we had rapport. her brother was part of my group. he was a bohemian and iconoclast like me. my experience had been, that frequently, older brothers tend to play the role of pimp in their relationships with their sisters. there is suppressed desire and it functions as a means of control." "there you go, meandering again." "after we broke up," he continues, "she actually offered to have sex with him. however, I admit I'm

sometimes moved when I look at the hopeful faces of Jewish girls, many of them daughters of recent immigrants, in the high school graduation photos printed in the Jewish newspapers." "what about now?" "although I've pretty much evolved on my own for so long, I still see my sexual fantasies corresponding to what I think is in my social and psychological best interests. I now sometimes feel like an outsider among racial minority groups, where there was once more of a feeling of commonality." "you fail to mention, specifically, Asian women." "I know. you're right, I don't know why that would be an afterthought. that attraction goes back to a period of transition between the white jazz and the black jazz years, when I spent a year or so in Japan and had always been attracted to Asian women of course, and was influenced by Japanese culture then, and am now, urban popular culture in Tokyo, but what I've been referring to more, is what my sexual exposure had been growing up in Los Angeles." "what is it about white women that still attracts you." "sexually, you'll probably think me racist and sexist for saying this, it gets down to physical characteristics, color, hair, eyes. as for the Christian part, it's an area where, ironically, I perceive there now to be the possibility of mutual empathy." "why do you say, ironically?" "the only face to face bigotry I've experienced has been from white Christians." "Christian women?" "not directly, no." "do you really believe all this stuff you've said about race?" "no, but I think it's been there, lurking, seeking expression, triggered by scars. we all have them." "what was your image of white Christian women back when you were young?" "well, I told you what my friend's mother said." she laughs. "sounds pretty bigoted to me. "it was. are you Protestant?" she laughs again. "by upbringing, yes.

you know, it's interesting that neither of us have had any tendency, whatsoever, to discuss our religious backgrounds. it never occurred to me that might matter." "it doesn't." "well, I didn't know how much it was festering in you." "now you know." "would you like to screw me?" "yes, the effort to convey, verbally, anything complex, of length, makes me horny." she laughs again, this time with a little more warmth. "well, this anyway, I think I can help you with." "maybe you're a bigot, too." "maybe I am."

fate and karma

several days later they've reached another impasse. then she turns to him. "before we really get into it I can call for more help." "I don't need more help." "I do," she responds. "I know two guys who service both men and women." "I've never had sex with a man." "why don't you try it. they're not at all aggressive, and they can bring a younger fellow who dresses in drag." "some other time with that." "I'll call them." "who's going to pay for it?" "I am."

the billowy white sheets are a comfort, as he lays naked, her fingers caressing his hair, his face resting on her thighs. she gets up, and dress up, sits on a chair by the bed. the two men get on the bed with him. one man in front of him, one man in back. the man in front sits with his back up, legs spread. the other man kneels behind, raising her lover to his knees. the front man's cock is already hard and erect. "don't worry, we'll both use condoms," he says. seated in the chair, hands on her thighs, she squirms a little, and blushes. the man in front slips on a rubber, then firmly lowers her lover's mouth

onto his cock. the mass of cartilage and flesh feels good, but he quickly moves his mouth away. now the cock of the man kneeling behind is hard and erect. "do you want me to use a lubed one?" her lover shakes his head. the man then puts on the rubber, spreads her lover's buttocks, readying himself to push his cock into his anus. breathless and flushed she again clutches her thighs. "how do you want to do it? we can do it separately or all together." her lover shakes his head. "I don't want to do it." "ok," the man in front says, and both of them get up off the bed. "discuss what you want to do with her, we'll wait outside. they partially dress and exit the room. "I thought you said you needed more help? I expected we were going to do something together. why didn't you let them do you, too? I thought that was the plan." "I was going to but I was so hot watching you with them, it wasn't necessary," she says. "then the thing you really wanted to get yourself on was to watch me being fucked." "evidently. yes." before she can continue they are interrupted by a tap and she says, "enter. we have decided what has already been done will be sufficient." she smiles graciously, "Thank you." "well, is there anything else we can do for you before we leave, he asks, giving her a more than frank stare, which she holds for several seconds and returns, sizing up his body while looking extremely sexy, and it is predictable what happens next. without bothering to undress she gets on the bed, her lover moves to the chair, the one man picking her up like she's weightless settles her on her back. raising her head, her mouth moves up and down the full length of his erect cock, stopping, teasing, licking and gnawing the man's balls, and locks on the upper half until, groaning, the man shoots, filling her mouth and spilling her lips and face as she swallows. at

this time the second man kneeling in front, tightly grips her ankles, pushing her legs backwards, holding her in place as he smoothly guides his cock into her vagina, nudging until she hotly responds, then moving in furtive, even strokes, stopping and pushing in to connect. ecstatic, she pushes back in rhythm with the thrusting cock, intensely coming, as, his cock still thrusting, groaning, he ejaculates, filling the Enz tip, the overflow contained but squishing the sides of the condom. he s-l-o-w-l-y pulls his cock out, then closely examines the condom, and satisfied no leak has occurred, gets off the bed. the other man is already showering. she remains silently lying on the bed her lover sitting by, her hands quietly turned in her lap, body flushed, dark eyes moist and shining. she reaches over and tenderly strokes her lover's face and neck. the two men walking into the room wave goodbye. "hope this was helpful to you," one of them calls, as they exit.

"there's more if you want me now," she says. face still flushed she smooths the bedding and, modestly, but for no practical reason, closes the bedroom door, then, slowly, undresses.

Projection

“what’s wrong, you look ghost like?” she stares at him, pale and forlorn. “I’d like you to do something for me,” she finally says. without waiting for an answer she lifts her dress over her head, folds it neatly, then lays it on the arm of the cushy burgundy chair. she removes her panties and bra, lays them on top of her dress, and stands facing him, wearing only 5 inch black heels. her skin is slightly chalky, slightly pink. her firm breasts are small, the nipple tips, erect. straight dark hair splays her shoulders. the long, thin muscles of her legs ripple when she shifts her light weight. “there’s something I’d like you to do for me, now. go to the bathroom and get the rubber bag with the long hose.” “is it because you don’t feel good?” “partly that, partly for pleasure.” ‘his penis stiffens. “we better sterilize the tip.” he cautions. she soaps it with hot water and dries it, then swabs it with hydrogen peroxide. he partially fills the bladder and hooks it onto the wall above the bed, the long hose suggestively dangling. he sits on the bed next to it, and stiletto heels still on, she lays across him, her butt up, on his lap, her face, breasts, and stomach, resting on 2 large, soft, pillows. he lubricates the old fashioned black boner-like plastic enema head with Vaseline, and slowly, gently, slides it into her anus. then he reaches up and releases the snap. as the water flows in, while cupping a hand under her breast, and caressing her cheek and shoulder with the other, she sensuously murmurs. he massages her clit, and carefully tugs the head from side to side, pushing it in as far as it will go, as she feverously moans. while the water continues to flow he reaches back and tugs on the heel of her shoe, making her moan, more. when drained, he refastens the snap, pulls the tip out, carefully lifts

her into his arms, her shoes dropping noisily, and carries her to the crapper. she stays there a long time relieving herself, then perfumes her neck, breasts, genitals, and anus, and emerges, face glowing.

in the bedroom she steps back into her heels. their hands are all over each other as they swallow each other's tongues, rubbing together the fronts of their bodies. she turns and leans forward, palms pressed to the mattress, and he puts his warm, stiff meat and cartilage in where the hard, black, simulated boner had been. they fuck that way, losing themselves in pleasure. when he sensuously pulls out, heels kicking, she undulates onto her back, raising her entire lower body expectantly, they immerse themselves in a slow deliberate fuck. one overdue, pent up, orgasm follows another. when she's reached her final climax, and leaves go with a sigh, with him sitting next to her, his hand on her cheek, a distant smile on her face, she turns sideways to the pillow, and images coursing through her brain, she slips into slumber.

Untitled

this is the 'virginal' 50s. I'm 'doubling' with a streetsy couple who appear hardened about sex and life. my date is a sexy looking dark haired girl with a pristine figure, and a reputation for being fast. we're parked on a cul-de-sac after movie and eats. the couple, without addressing us, immediately start making out and petting in the front seat. I turn to my date and lean against her. her first kiss is long, wet, and hot. in no time we're fucking on the back seat. hearing our sounds, the girl in the front seat turns her head, and quickly jerks it back. "they're fucking," she gasps. they don't say a word to us on the way home, and when we get to my date's house, and I walk her to the door, we have a laugh about the salty attitude of our companions. "my parents will be going to Las Vegas for a week, leaving early Wednesday," she says, her dark eyes searching mine. she scratches the inside of my hand with her index finger, then settles her palm on my crotch, as we kiss good-night.

when I arrive Wed. I'm rested and extremely horny. especially that circumstance didn't allow us to have orgasms previously. though mid-afternoon, she answers the door standing in her bare feet, wearing a floor length terrycloth bathrobe, with the sash pulled tight enough around her waist I know she hasn't anything else on. we go to her parents' bedroom and fuck for a long while on their luxurious king bed. there's a pent up urgency in her motions I don't fully comprehend. when we're both tired enough to stop, we dress, and go back into the living room. she slides open the glass panel, and momentarily happy and mellow, we go out

to the patio to bathe in the sunshine. theirs is a substantial backyard with numerous colorful flowers great for an Easter egg hunt – snap dragons, irises, gladiolas, pansies, lilies, etc., and a well-cared-for lawn. rustic redwood fences on both sides, and a high brick wall in the back, separate the house from its Cheviot Hills neighbors. she tells me her father is a moralistic tyrant, and her mother is submissive and shrewish, and she plans to move on as soon as she graduates high school. I ask her if she intends to go to college. “they’ll still pay for that.” “pretty good deal.”

from then on, until the end of high school, we meet on a weekly basis, whenever her parents are out, sometimes in the afternoon, sometimes in the evening. just often enough that for the first time I have no need to masturbate. neither of us tire of it. we both, always have something new to bring into play, maybe because we know it’s not going to last. oddly, we never go out together. sex seems to be our only motivation, and because of it neither of us often date others. I don’t know any of her friends, and she doesn’t know mine. finally, in the fall of the following year the inevitable happens, and she goes off to an east coast college. when we kiss goodbye there are tears in her eyes. her lips are warm and full. we kiss again. she doesn’t write or call. ours was just a marriage of convenience.

PJ And I

I'm sitting in the shade nursing an Amazaki rice drink in the garden of the Chateau Marmont. it's a very hot day (95) for April. a group of trendy looking people with earmarks of celebrity written all over them emerge from a suite. when they get closer, I recognize the center of attention of the rest is none other than PJ Harvey, who in the rock celebrity world, is the current heroine on my list. she looks positively gorgeous, wearing a dark blue print silk dress and a lot of makeup, her dark hair combed out lightly curly, like in her most recent PR videos. in the company is a person with a camera and equipment, so, I suppose they're headed for some kind of photo shoot. has fate planted me here to suffer or is there more to it? as they pass my table, I gamble to look up. she stops and smiles. "I envy you sitting in the shade like not a care in the world. you look so comfortable." "I know, it's pretty hot," is all I can think to say. "I suppose you have a gig in L.A." "John (Parish) and I were at the El Rey on March 23. right now I'm here for other reasons," she replies, mysteriously, her gaze deepening. "after we get back and I remove all this," she raises a hand and gestures towards her face, "we're to do an interview and record a little at KCRW, a radio station in Santa Monica. are you staying here?" "no, I just stopped here to beat the heat. I live in Santa Monica." her friends who are getting a trifle impatient use their body language to get her to move on. "anyway, nice meeting you." she smiles, turns, they walk away. class, I'm thinking. open. no pretense like asking my name when it's almost certain she'll never see me again. I'd read she's generally unapproachable, but evidently she's not afraid to spontaneously interact if it suits her. I feel

both elated and depressed, a state I'm almost always in after receiving any unexpected kind of stimuli, lately. my heart sinks when I consider the last few moments was the closest I'll probably ever get to her. and the comfort of the anonymous, lonely, observer, that I most value, and most likely was what attracted her to me, has been momentarily shattered. but a brighter, more uplifting current runs through me and I think, you can never tell. anyway, easy come, easy go.

it's 10 p.m. still hot. I've been thinking a lot about the past. I have a crave for ice cream, something I haven't had (nor desired to have) in years. back in the fifties there was this chain named Foster's (old fashioned) Freeze, that sold ice cream (soft serve) blended with air, in a cup or cone. I remember driving through Kansas, heading for N. Y, seeing a group of teenagers, who could have easily been from Palos Verdes or anywhere else, hanging out at one. although their moment has passed, curiously, a number of them still remain in California, one on Pico Blvd, next door to Santa Monica College, to this day, still bearing the original name. I get into my car and go. while standing, waiting for my order, I look at the still lit buildings. the dim lights project that same aura of absence and a muted trail of activity, that office buildings and community colleges give off at this time of night. of course I'm fully aware that KCRW is situated on the Santa Monica College campus, and that she might still be there. not to prolong the suspense, as I sit down on a bench with my freeze, several people leaving the campus approach. one of them is the station's DJ, Jason Bentley. with him is a female I don't recognize. the other is Polly Jean. evidently, they too, have a crave, because they go right to the open window.

then she sees me. she walks over while the other two wait. at first I fear she might think I'm following her, but she's smiling broadly, looking lovely, hair up, face scrubbed (just a touch of red lipstick), and a braid hanging on either side, fastened with multi-colored clasps, a low-cut white blouse, and a pink and red clingy skirt. "this is beginning to be a habit. I'll have to consult my tea leaves." "I told you I live in Santa Monica, but this is the first time I've had a craving for ice cream in years, so I don't know" "quite a coincidence," she says, with just a hint of sarcasm, then adds, generously, "excusable in this heat." "maybe I hoped you'd be there," I confess, my nerve suddenly returning, "my name's Jerry." "I have the feeling I know you from somewhere. you have a very familiar vibe. have you ever been to England?" "I've never been anywhere," I answer, "except the Far East. that was a long time ago. I don't travel." "well we seem to speak the same language. I can tell immediately if there's going to be any communication or not. are you an artist or a poet?" "yes." her face lights up. "a musician?" I shake my head. "oh, that's too bad," she says in an exaggerated tone, a mock grimace on her mobile face. her friends arrive with 3 freezes, and sit down next to us. she introduces me to each of them, and we talk and eat. "Jason is music director at the station. the former director is British so there was a connection." "part of a subversive attempt to take back the country," the thin blonde quips. "jerry, if you were a composer we could go back into the studio and lay down a couple of tracks," PJ teases. "do you listen to KCRW?," Jason asks, his curiosity somewhat stoked. "I listen mostly to KPFK," is my honest answer. he shakes his head. "I've nothing against them, but they don't pay you anything. what music shows do you listen

to?" "just the Thursday edition of the Global Village with John Schneider, and sometimes the late night jazz show, Rise, with Mark Maxwell, when I'm up." he nods with appreciation. "then you like the serious, avant-garde stuff." "yes, but I'm also an aficionado of the standard American song, and pop culture in general." it surprises me somewhat PJ is intently taking all this in. there's a party back at the Chateau Marmont, and she invites me. "threesomes make me feel incomplete," she jokes, look pointedly at her friends. "yes, why don't you come along with us," they agree. "I better move my car. I don't want it towed when I get back." "why, instead, don't I ride there with you in your car?," she suggests. "that way you won't have to come back here." "my heart is beating a mile a minute. all of a sudden that strange reality I felt when we first met, returns. "we can talk on the way and get to know each other better," she says, in that charming west country accent. as we leave the lot and turn north towards Sunset Blvd., in my head I hear singing the words, *I did nothing wrong/riding in your car/the radio playing, we sing up to the 8th floor/rooftop Manhattan one in the morning /and you said something that I've never forgotten.* I've always wanted to ask her what he said. I mentioned this to a friend and he scoffed, "those are just the hooks they use to keep you in it." "I'd still like to know, even if she made it up, and it was just in her head. at the same time I flash on the famous This is Love album cover photo of her almost naked.

"do you do readings?" "no, I've never enjoyed the readings I've gone to, and I can't see turning myself into a pointless, meaningless object, just to read what has already been written, and meant to be read alone in the afternoon by an open

window, or late at night by lamplight. it would embarrass me." "it's interesting you think that way. then you don't believe there can be a transformation?" "yes, there can, if that's your goal. performing is your art." our eyes meet and absorb for the first time. "I do wish people would read and talk about my work. I do want to be known and affect people's lives." "can I ask you about the content?" "a good deal of my most recent writing is erotic." she smiles enigmatically, and nods, as if she knew all along. "you need a publisher. do you have an agent?" "no. I've always placed my writing in the 'small press' category. I do publish, you know. it's just that I do it myself. but for the first time I've been thinking about it." "maybe I can help you with that. I know a lot of people." "I imagine." "I'd like to read some of your work." "I'd like you to."

we fall silent for a while, shyness (which is the threshold to both love and desire) again overtaking us. car lights flashing haphazardly in our faces, we take discreet but peremptory looks at each other. "what do you see?," she asks. I've actually given that some thought. "light, mischief, laughter, searching, love, sometimes sorrow when you're more deeply absorbed." "eyes are like pretty marbles, that's all." "well it's the feeling there's a brain and soul behind them. you have pretty eyes, hazel?" "not sure, so do you." then her look becomes far off, and seems to drift emotionally inward as we drive down that lush stretch of Sunset bordered by 'real' mansions. "I went to parties there as a teenager," I tell her, pointing to the Beverly Hills Hotel, while stopped for a red light at Benedict Canyon Blvd., her head close enough if there wasn't a seat separation, to be resting on my shoulder.

"then you were a rich boy?" "not really. L.A. was a little different then. there was more mobility, but it was more lateral than vertical. it was how well you were able to get around." "Hollywood had something to do with that, I guess." "yes, Hollywood had a lot to do with it." with the late moonlight, a warm dry breeze blowing through the open window on PJ's side, and the dark stretch of boulevard just before the Strip, I open up a little. "a lot of us had this F. Scott Fitzgerald dream a lust for love, sex, fame, and wealth." I assume she has some very strong opinions about that, but she just nods. I put my arm around her. she doesn't object. "when you take an extended trip do you always find a lover?" "it would be much more difficult, harrowing, if I didn't because everyone's on the make, anyway." "then when you leave it's over?" she reddens just a little. "every experience is different. it wouldn't be fair to compare. the one similarity is it always occurs naturally." she looks at me hard. "I can accept anything but something being forced." as we cross Doheny the sudden change of scenery alters our mood. we pass San Vicente and I point to the Whisky. "the first time I really took notice of you was when I saw your name in big black letters on their marquee." "that was a long time ago," she sighs, wistfully. "a female rock star named PJ Harvey," I continue. "that fascinated me. PJ, like a corporate CEO or movie mogul. especially when you see her." "very funny, Jerry." "well, there were all girl groups but that didn't interest me. still doesn't." "I totally agree." the Strip looks a little more swank as we approach the, what seems like permanent, Gucci billboard, settled in dense foliage, and we turn up the hill to the Chateau Marmont. PJ arranges with a valet to allow us to park. my nerves are beginning to get jittery "now you're

going to see what a wallflower I am, Polly.” she smiles facetiously, and it’s clear she’s not going to accept any excuses. I have no expectations, Jerry. when we walk in I’ll put my arm in yours and everyone will think, if they bother to look, you’re somebody because you’re with me,” she prompts, without a trace of her customary modesty.

it turns out she’s right. something I’ll learn to realize (when-ever she makes an out and out assertion) is almost always the case.

“Jerry, go up with me to my suite while I change to something more appropriate. I don’t feel I can get in the mood the way I’m dressed now.” “you have so many personas.” “that’s right.” while PJ ‘s in the bedroom I pick up the Chateau’s promotional brochure which is laying on an end table and start to read it to her in an exaggerated tone while she’s changing. **the white curtains billow seductively with the softest breezes. the balconies offer the perfect perch for looking out or being above it all – with views reaching from the wide panorama of the spreading city to the twinkling lights of tinsel town down to the pulsing beat of sunset strip and deep into the lush green of the hotel garden. at night one can unwind to soporific lullaby of gentle conversation, laughter and clinking glasses wafting up from below through an open window or drift into a deep and sentient sleep in the deep lure of sheets simultaneously soft and crisp head cradled by the most perfect pillow. this is dreamland.**

laughter coming from the bedroom all the while, she finally bursts into the room, a picture of perfection, in a low cut bur-

gundy satin dress, considerably more made up. my apprehension of being tested is mostly for naught as the party turns out to be, for us, pretty boring. PJ doesn't know anybody there except the two other people she invited, Jason and Karen (his blonde) who provide the high point of the evening after being asked to do a set. she's a classically trained vocalist (extended) who can use her voice as an instrument, improvising surreal sounds that resonate in space. we decide to walk on the grounds for a while instead. we leave a little drunk. a state I haven't been in, in years. I've wondered what her habits are. I, myself, don't drink, smoke, use drugs, or eat meat. I run every morning and make all my meals, using only fresh, organically grown food. in the past it's been my concern how this may hinder, or even preclude, communication with the artists, poets, writers, musicians, etc., in the world I inhabit, including those from a distant past, with whose indulgences I once shared. but lately I've stopped caring. I no longer feel it's my problem that I no longer do those things. it's been a natural evolution, and when I did them I did them totally. when the need, the magic is there, what does it matter? I think drugs really change us. even if, or when, we stop using them, we never go back to where we were before. that's the result of all experience, of course, but for me, so much of what I do, creatively, comes out of my having been stoned (pot) for almost a decade. in 1960 the person I shared an apartment with that summer in NYC, mentioned in a letter, a party he'd gone to where a stoned (heroin) Charlie Haden, lying on the floor, stared at a coke bottle for 2 hours. years later, in an interview, Haden said everything he creates begins with silence. I know it's that way with me. but to my knowledge

he's never publicly talked about that part of his past. would For Turya, Nocturne, Nightfall, American Dreams, have come about without the extreme pleasure of the coke bottle and the extreme pain of the withdrawal? in an interview with Jane magazine, 2000, she told the editor, Esther Haynes, regarding touring, the year 1995, that she "lost track of it....self-destruct more in all areas of my life." when asked if any drugs or alcohol were involved: "I didn't choose those methods of destruction, but there were others." she also said, "our sexual side is very important. it's an essential part of being human." that was 9 years ago. I guess I'll find out soon enough.

love's the drug I'm needing/got to keep this feeling.

"nobody knows I'm in town. this wasn't a planned visit." how many intimate relationships have begun this way, walking through a garden, holding hands. there's a thing about her, going back to when she was a little girl, I imagine, that seeks and inspires affection. and here I am walking hand in hand with possibly the most influential female rock music performer of her generation. but I'm definitely not a fan, it's not how I relate to art. and it's mainly the image, arousal and seduction, that shamelessly motivates me at this moment. though the women I'm generally attracted to are anonymous, not performers, women who are relatively unused, therefore fresh, and possibly capable of hidden, hitherto unexploited responses, it's for the same reason. this, however, is mostly illusion. PJ, while in control, is anything but unused. and besides a peep into the fame and glamour, there's a poignancy, because she wears her vulnerabilities on her

sleeve. of course it's also an act. because of having grown up in L.A., and as a result, having known, and occasionally been friends with, celebrities my entire life, I'm aware of the accessibility of fame. "you're more attainable because you're famous than if you weren't. your standards can be broader, more inclusive." "I know it. people don't understand that. it's actually the separation that allows the accessibility for anyone, on either side, who will cross over the line. no one wants to be locked into a stereotype, though we all are." we continue to walk, still hand in hand. "I've fantasized having a relationship with you many times," I confess. "having sex with me, no doubt." "no, believe it or not, and it always begins, or maybe I should say, deepens, with our taking a long walk on the beach, or somewhere." "you'd love Dorset." "I'm very sensitive to cold weather." she nods. "for all the amenities this place had, it's a little bit like Forest Lawn. not that I've ever been to Forest Lawn." "I have. I agree. the Orpheum, the Wiltern, the El Rey, for instance, where I've performed, have charm and character. it has to do with integrity of function. but the view here is romantic at night with the warm breezes and perfumed air. why knock it?" "we sometimes went to the El Rey, like we did all the other movie houses on Wilshire Blvd. when I was growing up. I once had a traumatic experience there when we went to see a 40s film version of Phantom of the Opera, the one with Claude Rains in the title role. it was a very disturbing experience for me, and after the show, while parked in our car with my father and brothers, a block away from the theater, while my mother was inside Joseph's Delicatessen and Bakery, getting lox, corned beef, pastrami, cream cheese, dill pickles, onion rolls, armadillos, bagels and rye bread for

our Sunday breakfast, I opened up the rear car door and vomited into the gutter.” “and that’s your recollection of the El Rey?” “it’s the only movie I remember seeing there. we more often went to the Fox Beverly. the Warner’s Beverly, the Fox Wilshire, or the Ritz, because in addition to being more luxurious, they were first run.” “I’m beginning to see with you I’m mostly the listener. that’s somewhat a new experience for me. with John it’s just the opposite. John’s a very good listener.” “you can hear it in his music.” “that’s a nice thing to say. It shows you’re a listener, too.” “nice to still have the relationship with a man that began when neither of you knew what it’d become. those things, generally, only begin early in life, sad to say, when our consciousness is less formed. what about Nick Cave?” “neither of us were listeners. we tried to be, but both of us were too narcissistic. I’ve never been with someone who’s as given as you are to telling stories. I’m drawn to you, but you frighten me a little. because I don’t know you and we come from such different backgrounds, I tend to listen.” “that’s why I tell you stories.”

is there anything she needs to relate to in me? because I’ve had many fantasies of being with her. realistic in the sense that I strive in my thinking to make those things I fantasize possible. I talk to her about my past use of drugs, alcohol. about my fear how those who are on that plane now can’t relate to me, about the 60s, that I’d risk arrest by driving all the way from my home in Topanga Canyon to the corner of Beverly Blvd. and La Cienega at 2 a.m., to photograph my own spurts of semen in the public photo booth in front of Rexall Drugs, while smoking marijuana, and again in a filled bathtub,

wearing only a black wool turtleneck sweater, my wife holding the camera, etc. I know she comprehends the compulsion that sometimes comes with the turf of being an artist. *when you call out my name in rapture/ I volunteer my soul for murder.* what I suspect about Polly Jean's nature – she didn't love Nick Cave, she doesn't love John Parish, and she isn't going to love me – *lalalalala lalalalalee.* “do you go to the clubs?,” PJ asks me. “never. my ears can't take the sound.” “then you wouldn't go see me?” “I would make an exception.” “Jerry, it's going to be deep or won't be anything.”

the issue of 'celebrity' is another thing. the result of the globalization of technology has led to a globalization and consolidation of celebrity, a new aristocracy of artists, writers, performers, etc., designed to enhance by name association one's own star power. you can hear it in the name drops gossiped about in the media and in interviews. it's a growing consolidation of wealth and image that translates into power. years ago, I recall artist George Herms telling me, “it used to be at gallery openings and parties, the person standing next to me with a drink in his hand would be an artist, now it's Pee Wee Herman.” well things have gotten just a little bit more that way – commodity to the point where there's ceased to be any distinction between brand name and art, between personal vision and fame. why is he bothering with this shit? well, you have a point. as for the academic elements of the avant-garde, their art is frequently really a more subtle and refined grasp of social behavior (which can be, but isn't necessarily, art), and how to work the system. it's a world of cumbersome, didactic, locked into, sterile, institutionalized codes they've built up to cop the grants (there are graduate

classes on how to fill out a grant application), scholarships, prizes, etc., good boys and girls...ironically by sporting a façade of being rebels... for status in the so called 'art world' – ditto with the non-profits. it's no accident that any 'serious' artist who breaks through enough to be popular or have any influence, has to negatively deal with that. of course the link to popular culture has to be maintained, because that's where a lot of, if not most, of the energy is coming from. nor do all the high end, low down, quasi-streetsy, invitation only, parties, make any attempt to hide that. at the same time, however, great art can come from anywhere, on all cultural levels.

"Jerry, do you mind if I rest awhile, it's been another long day." I'm a little drowsy myself, and before I can recount anything I begin to nap...."I'd love to meet her but socially I'm not in her league," I tell the hostess. "I don't mean to either denigrate myself or glorify her. we all have our attributes and weaknesses." then PJ and John Parish come into the front room of my apartment where I'm kneeling in front of the CD player, listening to Charlie Haden's American Dreams. tenor sax player Michael Brecker is soloing on one of the ballads. "what are you playing?," PJ asks. "a cut from Charlie Haden's American Dreams." "what's the title?" "A Love Like Ours." "Oh, that beautiful," she says, mouthing each syllable of the last word. "it's such a lush sound with all those strings behind him." by the tone of her voice I'm not sure whether she's teasing me or means it. "it's a great album," John interjects, "and I love the orchestration. it's solid warmth without being sentimental." "that's the point," I say, "Brecker's gritty yet lyrical passion intermingling with the

romantic, subtle, incursions of the orchestra is very moving.” “he’s got you there, Polly,” John says, taps me on the shoulder, and leaves. she warmly turns to me. “he’s just giving us a chance to see how far we’ll go.” her gorgeous eyes fix on me. “I didn’t mean to hurt your feelings,” she says, softly. a thrill goes through me when she whispers, “I can’t resist a lonely man’s hunger.” then we’re laying on the floor, writhing to the music she was taunting me about, moments before.

when I awake, Polly, refreshed, walks into room and stands over me. “who’s staying in the other bedroom? I saw a woman’s clothes there.” “a friend from England. an athlete.” “where is she now?” “down in the San Diego area, La Jolla, I think, playing soccer. are you going to fuck me tonight?”

“I viewed the Harris video interview with you and John Parish. the volume was so low I couldn’t hear what any of you were saying. I enjoyed your tonal inflections, but I couldn’t make out the words. so I could just watch you in pantomime, facial expressions, trying to intuit who you were at that time in your life, and what I saw was how the harshness of living had begun to leave its mark on your face. maybe that was due to lack of makeup or low lighting. you seemed very close to Parish like you both genuinely cared about each other. less the insouciant girl, more, a still desirable, woman, now. of course you always seem demure in interviews. just your bare knees showed and I had desire to kiss them. I so envied your ability to be social, I mean, to animate your introspection. even though it doesn’t seem as though it’s particularly easy for you to do, and for the first time, I felt something more

than just attraction, something closer to genuine love. there's no getting around how we suffer. the short film clips of the English countryside where you were, so damp, even more than cold, in the low lighting, the frames of flowers, roses, abstract, made me recall a whole movie I shot in the early 70s in the rose garden in Exposition Park, which is in south L.A., over a 2 year period. it's the only film of the dozen or so films I made that still exists – there's some similarity in meaning. maybe you'd like to see it." "I definitely would."

we're standing very close searching each other's eyes, the front of our bodies touching, and for the first time kiss – a long, deep, sensual kiss. then we're making out , intently, quietly, allowing the suppressed hunger to pour out. outside murmurs float through the open window, contrasted by the sharp click of a woman's heels close by on the walk. we undress.

2 hours later at about 3 a.m., there's an insistent knock. PJ gets up, wraps herself in a sheer tunic, goes into the front room and opens the door. her friend stumbles in. they speak in whispers for a short time, then her friend goes into the other bedroom. "she's feeling sick with a hangover," she says, and climbs back into bed.

early morning, whited out, hour past dawn. after a sensual but mostly sleepless night, I'm on the open veranda with her friend who still has a hangover, a tight black wool skirt pulled up above her crotch, long shapely legs pale as a ghost or white chalk. she pushes my head down to her vagina and I eat her until she has a very intense orgasm. we go back into

the suite where PJ has just risen. "do you feel better," she asks her friend, rubbing sleep from her eyes. "much," her friend replies, dreamily. a few minutes later she calls me into the bedroom. "Jerry, what were you two doing out there?" "I ate her out. without saying anything she pulled up her skirt and pushed my head down there." "my friend," PJ says, shaking her head, less bothered than bemused. "I didn't satisfy you last night?" "yes, you did, and I had no need for another orgasm. I didn't give up more semen. there's something disembodied and sensual about jaded early morning sex, especially in unfamiliar surroundings, when you haven't slept well and you're spaced out. the oral connection grounded me. there was no involvement either way and she needed to have an orgasm." "well, it's not from lack of opportunity. when her male friends want to get high they just pull up her skirt, lay a line on each of her thighs, snort it, then have sex with her. she's insatiable." "how do you know that?" "I've seen it. I'm her confidante, sort of." then, quickly changing the subject, she says, "I appreciate your honesty. I didn't sleep well, either." "you could have slept alone." "that's not the best way to get to know one another." we then embrace, and tenderly kiss. we both still have something to prove.

we leave, not knowing exactly where to go. "would you like to see the house and neighborhood I grew up in?" "oh, yes." we ride south to Pico, west to Beverly Drive, then south a mile until we reach a small private park. I point to a 2 story southern colonial style house with 3 pillars in front. a lot of greenery has been added since I moved, and the formerly white stucco has been painted a dull avocado green so that it

blends in more, now. "people used to tell us it was the most noticeable house in the neighborhood." "it looks like a small mansion." "Bob Dylan's road manager and his girlfriend almost bought it, but at the last minute backed out. she wanted it. he didn't. about a year later after the carpets were removed and the hardwood floors refurbished, a couple with a little girl bought it for about the same price." Beverly Drive becomes one-way as we round the circular park (called Circle Park) and stop on the side of the house at the corner of Beverly Drive and Sawyer, facing north. "why don't we sit in the park for a while?," PJ suggests, squeezing my arm. "ok, I hope the patrol doesn't bust us." we cut across the grass and sit down on a bench next to one of the two pine trees we used to mark opposite goals when we played football back in the 40s and 50s. "it wasn't always built up like this. when we moved here there were lima bean fields bordering our house on 2 sides, a creek with tadpoles, frogs, and small fish, and a farm house with a windmill. once my friend, our brothers, and I, were fooling around in the fields near there, and an old farmer came out with 2 German shepherd dogs barking, pointed a shotgun at us, and told us to get out of there. it was a little countrified." "not like Dorset." "no, of course not. I saw a photo of Corscombe on Wikipedia. it looked really idyllic. I also get a sense of the religion of the region when you deliberately get that desperation in your voice. I think I hear you trying to exorcise something ancient out of your genes." "which can't be done." "that's right." "maybe sometime you'll come to England and I'll show you where I grew up." "on a sheep farm." "yes. oh that's right, you don't travel," she laments with a sigh. "I've always seen myself as a city boy, but L.A. still had a different aura, spread out and laid

back, as it wasdreamy." "I can identify with that. harsh reality, but that too, because of the isolation, though not idyllic." "but there was Hollywood, your need to perform." "yes, I always wanted to be the center of action wherever I was." "dancing in circles on the kitchen floor?" "yes, I'm impressed with your knowledge of my work." we're sitting very close, her face almost touching mine. I'm looking into this famous adorable face, adorable eyes, in real time. "when did you live here?" "1941 -1960, minus 19 months of military service, then moved back, 1973-1999." she gasps. "almost all your life." "we, my brothers and I, sold the house. that's how I get by." just then a patrol car (Bel Air) circles slowly, checking us out. finally determining we don't belong, it stops on the wrong side of the road. the young security guard gets out and approaches us. "do you live in the neighborhood?" "no. I was just showing my friend from England the house I grew up in," I say, as I point to it. PJ just stares at him. "I'm sorry, the use of this park is for Beverlywood residents only. I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to leave." I say nothing but PJ thanks him profusely, giving him the most engagingly sarcastic smile I've ever seen. "this is just like the haughty sections of London, how can he know we don't live here?" "they have a sick sense about these things. when I moved back in with my parents, they'd shine a light on me when I'd take a walk at night. I had long hair and a beard then. there are a number of Orthodox Jews here now, and some of them dress traditionally, but we don't look very bourgeois." "I should hope not," she laughs. "I'm glad you shared this with me, Jerry." " he didn't put a damper on it?" "oh, no. things like that are an everyday occurrence. I expect it." "where your celebrity is of no use?" I prefer it that way.

you can't build a wall around yourself to protect your privacy." "Bob Dylan built walls around his house." "we all have. we'd never be left alone if we didn't. and it's not the people who really appreciate our work, either."

"I have to go back now and do some editing with Maria, who does my videos. but I can see you later. she'll be taking a limo to the airport this afternoon. it wouldn't be out of the way, being you live in Santa Monica, for them to drop me off at your apartment. will 4:30 be too late?" "not at all. we can go out to dinner."

with the front door open and PJ still not here, I'm sitting in the darkened room feeling melancholy but refusing to speculate, listening to a Bill Evans version of the Rodgers and Hart song, *my romance* – funny, I can feel more affection for her while I listen to this kind of music right now than when I listen to hers. in the space provided by our separation, literally, and by the span of 3 generations, the love I feel for her is embodied in the song bridging the gap. as I continue to stare out the open door, I hear faint footsteps on the stairs, and then she's standing there gently tapping on the screen, looking incredibly sweet. I get up as she rushes into the room, throws her arms around me, and passionately kisses me. "there was a change of plans, it couldn't be helped. for some reason I just couldn't call you. I'm so glad you're here. I don't know what I would have done if you weren't." her heart is beating fast. "it's a little late for dinner. I feel like Shelley Winters with the melting ice cream and a birthday cake in A Place In The Sun," I half joke. "I was afraid to call you." she starts to say something else but trails off as I hold

her and kiss her eyes and cheeks. “now I feel like Billie Holiday singing Don’t Explain. anyway I feel more when I haven’t eaten.” “I haven’t eaten, either.” I walk over to the CD player and reset the song. we sit close, listening to, or rather, I’m listening to her listen, letting it be the bond to deepen our love.

“where is Maria, the photographer?” “she’s probably still at the airport. her flight was delayed.” “is she alone?” “no. she’s with two friends. please don’t ask me about that, Jerry.” almost instantly our mood becomes erotic. *lick my legs I’m on fire lick my legs of desire no, you’re not rid of me.*

“it’s still not too late to get something to eat. there’s a macrobiotic restaurant and bakery in Palms I’ve been wanting to check out.” on the way there I ask, “what are you thinking , Polly?” “that you’re a good fuck, Jerry.”

lights out kneeling together on the floor by the CD player, holding hands, we listen to a track from one of two sound collages I’d made by taping sonic sources from various CD’s (including input of her work) on my boom box, and then having it transferred back onto CD – very low tech. we listen intently to every note. PJ is very moved. then we go to the bedroom and make serious love.

I’ve begun to look and feel hip again. like I did in my 20s and 30s. “what did you do back then besides being stoned?” I made films and did still photography. that was back in the 60s.” “that’s ancient history to me. except what I’ve gotten from my parents – the music from that period is still an

inspiration to me.” “mine goes back a little further to, as I’ve mentioned before, the standard popular song and jazz. re the 60s, I was left out of an art show several years ago, even though the premise of it included me. the co-curator told me I could have shown anything I wanted had she known who I was at the time. so I’m pretty bitter. I don’t think they even thought of me. either that, or I was excluded out of personal animosity...but it served as an impetus to move beyond it.” “Jerry, from what you’ve told me, even not knowing the specifics, I think it’s **foolish** to dote on this kind of thing.” when does collaboration become collusion?,” I persist. “it doesn’t matter. don’t try to make me feel sorry for you, I’ll feel just the opposite.” “I grate a carrot, dice a radish, red pepper, apple...” “I’m getting out of here if you don’t shut up,” she interrupts, practically screaming. “oh, *is that all there is*, Polly?,” I say, and we both break out laughing.

“I like what you said in your interview with David Byrne – about contentment aiding creativity rather than hindering it. I think Byrne really meant to say complacency when he asked you about that.” “I think he did.” we watch Broken Homes online, the video she did with Tricky – his words, *too scared to live/ too quick to die*, incanted by her, a slick, but succinct, commentary on gang violence, twilight ambience, faces flashing in and out of the frame (some really nice shots by her friend, Maria). a few make obvious her lips are only partially painted. it doesn’t work. dare I tell her that? perhaps not. I’ve always respected the pride and passion with which she shows herself in her work. her debut album, Dry, is an amazing album if you listen closely...raw and abstract. I must be working backwards. “I can be very homely and shrewish,”

she confesses. "I know, I've seen photos of you that way." fortunately (for my shins) there's sufficient distance between us at the moment. "I have this feeling there's a whole universe of sex you're into, an advanced decadence I don't know about, that you're not sharing with me, Polly." different people bring out different things in me, Jerry." "we'd both end up being freaks if we tried to be normal." "I've another confession. without being with you in your apartment, I don't think I could have fallen in love the way I have." "what about the first night at the Chateau?" "I desired you, but it was along the lines of a standard seduction. one I could forget." "that was the point, wasn't it?" "you made it with my friend." "I didn't make it with her, I just serviced her." "well, maybe you can service me, too." "maybe I can."

she's taken her parameters further in the title cut of her most recent album, *A Woman A Man Walked By*. there is, of course, more than one connotation of the phrase, *I want your fucking ass*, and while the violent one is front and center, how much weight would there be to it without the sexual one? in the piece, *Soldier*, because of her intonation and pronunciation of the word is like a little girl's, although this song deals with genocide, there's a touchingly formal (archaic) atmosphere to it.

back at the Chateau Marmont, we walk on the grounds, basking in the healing rays. afterwards we stand on the terrace surveying the view of the hills. "I wish I had a place further up, way back, where it isn't lush – where it's dry and pure – no sound but the crunch of white pebbles under my shoes a breeze stirring the leaves of the one tree, a eucalyptus, as I

step along the flagstone walk to the front door of my small glass, steel, and wood frame house, the fresh, clean, purifying smell of fennel filling my nostrils – peace and quiet, suspended above it all.” “between fits of laughter, PJ manages to say, “Jerry, you’re so dramatic. that was even better than the brochure.” “I think in the area of melodrama, you’re a little like the pot calling the kettle black, Polly Jeanzie.” still laughing, she wraps her arms around my waist, and presses her bosom against mine. “I like very much what you said.” then we kiss hungrily, her hand caressing the bulge in my crotch. before leaving as planned, we go back inside and fuck some more. in my late teens I backpacked in the Sierras. it was late August and already below freezing at night. water in our canteens frozen solid, boots stiff as stone – gorgeous beyond description, as we happened on green meadows and tiny pristine lakes almost at every turn of the trail – abundant wild life and flora, and silence, except for the birds, and the sometime howling of the wind. but it was the opposite of being above it all, because we were totally in it, immersed.

“I hope this is the right key, I don’t mean musically,” she laughs, before it finally catches and she pushes open the studio door. “I don’t generally write music to other people’s words, but let’s give it a try.” later she gives me a lesson in performing. “I’ll walk you through it. there are things you definitely need to know about being on stage or you’ll get swallowed up.” “I wish I could dance.” “you don’t have to. as long as the feeling and rhythm is coming from you. that’s what I care about.” she plays some chords on the keyboard (guitar setting), chords she frequently uses....hard, a-rhythmic, dense surges, and plenty of space. the mood is

somber, with lyrical undertones. I draw a blank when I try to come up with words to fit the sound, which doesn't work, generally. there has to be a more spontaneous interaction with the elements. but I'm moved by the intensity. of course there will be other musicians involved if this ever gets off the ground. "I'll record the music and you can work on it when you're alone," PJ says.

it's breezy on the courtyard when we leave the studio. we watch the crisp leaves swirl and dance, and on an impulse I sweep her up into my arms and whirl her 'round and 'round before setting her down. "you think I've been through the mill, don't you?" "yes." each of us tries to connect first, a fencing duel, modulating our looks and smiles into each other's eyes, trying to get past each other's guard. I want to let her know I take nothing for granted. that I appreciate the vulnerable state living on the edge can create. but things have to open up to that. then, suddenly, she throws her arms around my neck, buries her face in my chest, and starts to cry. when she finally opens her eyes and looks up, tears are streaming down her cheeks. "forgive me, Jerry, I don't know why I did that. I guess I just needed to have a good cry," she shrugs. "Norman Mailer once wrote about Jack Kerouac, that he traveled in a world 'where the adrenalin eats the blood'," I say. "yes." we remain silent for a long time, staring at the 'cracks' in the pavement.

"I'm going to be gone for a few days. we've added 2 shows in S.F. to promote the album. John's flying there for just that time." "I see." "I'll miss you." "I'll miss you."

late afternoon on the back terrace. in a melancholy mood, I watch her friend, wearing a white t shirt, black shorts, ankle less socks, and athletic shoes, on the grass below, kicking a soccer ball. when she's through she comes up, sits on the lounge next to me and looks at me hard. without further ado I ease off her shorts and panties, and pull off my pants, springing the stiffest hard on. she lays back and we fuck, meat in meat, hard, solid, oblivious that we might be seen. when we're done we quickly dress and go back in. I panic slightly at the thought that, finally, I've been unfaithful. but fucking her felt so good, so gratifying, outdoors, the cool light magnifying and clarifying the rough texture of skin. "I feel a little guilty, too," she says, reading my thoughts. "she'll probably be done with me, but I don't want it to ruin it between you two. she's told me how fond she is of you." "how long have you known her?" "about 10 years. we met at a celebrity soccer match I was playing in, in Madrid, when she was on tour. we're just a good mix." "have you ever had sex with her?" "no, it's not that kind of thing at all. I like men as much as she does. and that's saying a lot." "yes, I know, you're a good fuck," I allow. "I've been told that. I've also been told I have no scruples or morals." "the first night we were together PJ told me that what she does with other men is her business, only. she may be with someone at this very moment." "you may be surprised how attached to you she's become. a lot of what she says about those things is to protect herself from being hurt." at her words a wave of emotion wells up in me, and I say, "I love her." "you should tell her that." she's very suspicious of sentiment, revulsion at even the hint of falseness. I respect her for it. you'd think our cell phones would be ringing if we were really lovers. but

that's another way we're alike. we both have a phobia of them/ and the way they're used by most people is a complete invasion of privacy. it makes it impossible to miss someone. for love to mature." "it can be just a tool to function." her phone rings and my heart drops 2 stories. she hands the phone to me. "Jerry, I tried to reach you at your apartment. I wanted to let you know how much I miss you. I've some things to tell you. I'm cutting the visit short. I'm flying back to England in 3 days. John and I are getting married. the wedding will be in Bristol. we'd very much like you to attend. later, there's to be a celebration of my 40th. I know it would be difficult to travel there, but I can arrange it so Island will cover all your expenses. this time of year you won't have to put up with the winter cold. I'd still like for us to do our album. and you deserve to be known for your writing and visual work. I hope you won't think I haven't been forthright with you, because I have, and I love you, too!"

no one but me is walking under palms that give no shade I'm leaving you today, California. I told no one I'd stay. they all say that. but how many end up buying a manse with a wall around it, when they come back.

it's interesting. nothing seems sexy, now. there's already a blank space. it's so easy to desire everyone when you have someone. strange, but loss doesn't seek compensation.

when I get back I look at myself in the bathroom mirror. dark blue t shirt. greenish blue eyes. grey hair slightly mussed. I don't look bad. kind of romantic. in July I'll be 75. maybe I'll

go. an old Mills Brothers song from a 10 inch vinyl album a then friend got used from a record store in the 60s, is playing in my head. *too many irons in the fire and too many hearts you desire. it's off with the old and it's on with the new. you'll never know what it means to be true. too many heart-aches and then you'll find sadness and tears in the end. you'll never hear a baby coo you'll never know a honeymoon with too many irons in the fire.*

I still love her. I can't help that. I just have to get used to the idea, so do a lot of others.

note: -----the contents of this story are entirely fictitious.-----

Don't Go Yet

'don't go yet.' another french kiss. she quickly considers. ok, she decides, nodding inwardly. she will, for valid reasons. "ok, I'll stay a little longer." the edge in her tone is , something of worth better come out of this, smoking out the issues. "the point is you're not going to just score." "I know that." moments later she's half naked, bare ass on the floor, brown hair mussed up, still wearing the light weight pastel blue-grey suit jacket with shoulder pads over a creamy white unbuttoned blouse, watch on wrist, rumpled matching skirt hastily tossed aside, light skin on gorgeous, edible legs. "you're still resisting." "you're still seducing." "keeps the tension alive." "screw me subtly." sharp, miniscule pleasure. the opportunity keeping it compact. beating up horny fantasies. "forget where that's at?" sharp instruments used for design. and fine lines. "don't stop....we fucked two hours ago," she manages between breaths. "he tangled me up but there was no edge. too much control, too little pleasure. I held off." sharply thrusts her. "oh, be careful. be more intimate." "give it." "it won't." "you can." "unhhhh ohhhh (moans)." "you like talking it." "shouldn't I?" "yes (abruptly moves)." "ohhhhh." wraps her legs around him. "cocker spaniel." she laughs, "am I? getting close." "penetrate or be penetrated. I mean psychologically. otherwise you become inert." "not when you're in love," laughs sharply. "time to turn over (anal). do you want that?" "of course, easy. don't just push. move it against the sides." reaches behind, sinks in her nails. "turn me back over, spur me on." "it works." pressure, harder. "he likes to wear rubbers. makes him feel horny. makes him feel masculine. just to prove he can rise to

the occasion. we weren't supposed to be there. I had a cough. but I had to come back to talk (intensely moving her pelvis)." "you're sharp as a tack now." "dirty." "you like it dirty." "that's beside the point – tight now, yes." "keep it dirty. "let's work on it." palms on her breasts, erect nipples. "you want me to do this?" teeth clenched in his neck, like a rabid dog's, won't let go. "ooooohhh," she screams. tight incremental movement. "ohhhhhhh." blackouts, sharp flashes. "we'll work it out." "I admit it," she sighs with satisfaction, slowly pushing herself up with her hands, then crossing her legs. "did it work itself out." "no, it didn't. it worked sexually, but we didn't get to the words that would have been equal to the orgasms. so the issues buried in them didn't get out. the issues that got us together still remain unsolved." "then this a one night stand?" she looks the other way. "yes, but that doesn't exclude more, there can be more. we're free." "will be, I hope." "we'll see."

A Strictly For Cash Transaction

when I walk into the lounge at Saks 5th Ave., in Beverly Hills, I'm arrested by the sight of a gorgeous young dark haired being sitting on a plush divan, dress up well above her groin, adjusting a garter attached to the sheerest black high hose. as soon as she sees me she quickly pulls down her dress, then stares hard like I'm a Peeping Tom. we're the only two people presently in the room, and I shrug. "did you get a good look?" "it took my breath away, but things like that just make me feel helpless." "she nods, grudgingly. "you'd like to fuck me but you know you can't." "that's right." a slow smile envelopes her face. "how much would it be worth for you to be able to?" it seems unlikely she needs the money, though one never can tell, so I play along. "will \$100 for an hour \$200 for 2 hours be enough?" she pulls up her dress about halfway to where it was when I walked in, and smiles provocatively, thinks for a moment, then says, "I don't see why you can't come up to my place. how are you going to pay?" "I'll give you cash. I can stop off at the bank on the way there." "make it an hour from now, I haven't finished shopping." "she opens her purse, writes her address on a small pad, tears out the page, and as she passes it to me, stares sententiously into my eyes, then quickly turns and exits to the elevator. left alone, amazed at the fleetness of her decision, I'm thinking, in an earlier time, this could have happened, but the buildup would have had to take a lot longer. I'm a little nervous, shocked, bemused, but mostly aroused. I would stop at nothing now to have her.

I arrive at her apartment, which is in a high rise with an

Italian marble lobby, in Century City. she promptly comes to the door, greeting me with an ambiguous but lascivious smile. as she lead me to the front room I'm struck with the scent of spicy aerosol that all upscale rentals of this nature seem to have. a quick look at the rugs on the polished hardwood floor, the art objects and furniture, assures me she's more than well off. "this is my cousin's apartment. I'm just staying here while he's in Asia on business," she says, reading my mind." "we better talk first about what we're going to do." "we can do all the usual things most people do. that's up to you." it's crystal clear to me she's never done anything like this before, and I'm wondering what it is I can exploit. "you mean there's no `this will cost you that, and you can't kiss me'?" "no," she laughs, warmly. "I don't want that, either. you can be my lover if you want." "will you participate in that or just play a passive role?" "let's see what happens." I hand her the money. she mischievously lets the bills drop to the floor and (like the prostitute in Antonioni's L'Avventura) scrunches them under her stocking'd toe, smiling provocatively, before picking up the money and leaving it on an end table. it pleases me she's enjoying herself. I take her in my arms, kiss her and she kisses me back. we make out standing up. "this is going to be nice. do you want me to undress now?" "not yet. I want to see you as you were when I saw you at Saks." she reclines on a sofa and pulls up her dress. "take off your panties." still fully clothed I sit down next to her, raise her legs, rub my tongue along the inside of her thighs, then eat her out, color coming to her face as she squirms with pleasure. I stop her when she starts to sit up. "no, lay back. let's fuck the way I wanted to when I first saw you with your dress up." I untie my running shoes, kick them

away, pull off my pants and underpants in one fell swoop, at which point she grabs hold of my waist and hungrily gives head, then lays back, as my cock, thick and pulsating, almost painfully, plunges in. we fuck densely for a short time before I pull out. "that was too good and we've a long way to go. I'll never last, that's for sure." "you paid for 2 hours. "don't worry, we'll use up the time." "do you want me to undress now?" "yes." "you undress, too." we take off our clothes, sit back down on the sofa, kissing and petting. I bury my nose in her perfumed hair. did you just perfume your hair?" "yes, I did it as soon as I got back. men seem to like that." "do you have a lot of men?" the phone rings before she can answer. she looks at me, inquiringly. I nod my consent. she talks briefly before hanging up. it's obvious it's personal. "that was my boyfriend. don't forget this is a business call." "all right, let's get down to business.." we go to the bedroom, which with the windows open, is airy and full of afternoon light, get on the white chiffon coverlet, and fuck furiously in frenzied surges, breaking only between orgasms, and finally, exhausted, lay in each other's arms, satisfied, as the room, obligingly, begins to darken. about an hour has passed. "I'm going to miss you when the time's up." "you've still got about a half hour." "you mean then you're going to kick me out?" "business is business." after resting a precious ten minutes, I move my mouth to her genital and lick her anus. "that feels good," she murmurs. "then can we....?" she doesn't object. I pull her to her knees, and because my cock is still slick it's easier to get in than I expect. tight as a glove we move quietly together in the late afternoon. "have you ever taken semen in there before?" "no, never." "how did it feel?" the phone rings again. "let it ring," I say, pulling her

to me. I take her into my arms and kiss her passionately, her voice mail prompting, then a man's somewhat garbled reply. "the rest of the time we'll just have to sit and talk, I'm not a marathoner." our faces inches away we rub foreheads, noses. we kiss. I kiss her erect nipples. intuitively she reaches under my buttock and slides her index finger into my ass, deftly probing, then pushes it in as far as it will go. my cock, suddenly, abruptly, rises, and she sinks into me. we fuck one more time (our swan song), intensely, riding the merry-go-round with unconstrained purpose, until she comes again, and we wearily stop. she gets up off me, looks at the digital clock on the dresser. "time's up. but you can lay there awhile if you want. I don't count minutes," she says, standing naked, sensual hips, damp breasts, hair mussed. "won't you lay with me? "I can't....." "just for a short while?" "ok," she sighs, "I'm not a very good business woman, I guess." "just the opposite. this is the way to build a clientele." "well, to tell you the truth, I'm retiring." 15 minutes later, dressed, we stand in the front room. she picks up the money from the end table, hesitates, then lays it in her purse. "would you like a small glass of wine? I raise my glass, "till the next time I see you," I say, a little embarrassed by the way it comes out. "this was just a onetime thing," she snaps, "I'm not a prostitute. her voice softens, "I'm not saying I won't see you, but from now on you'll have to compete like everyone else." "I guess I'd been living in a fantasy for so long that when it finally came true I took it for reality. why is it I think I love you," he asks trying to put a tag on his feelings. she finishes combing her hair. "if it will make you feel any better, right now I think I love you, too. we put so much into giving what we were saving up, but it will dissipate. all feelings are

temporal, and if you think we can continue to do this without crashing you're mistaken."

she writes her number down on a piece of paper and hands it to me, of course, doesn't ask for mine. in fact there isn't one thing she knows about me. "are you going now to see your boyfriend?" "I won't be seeing him for several days, fortunately. I want to maintain the state I'm in now. I certainly wouldn't want to see him at this moment. just like you do, I imagine, I have to absorb what transpired. I've got some business to attend to and I feel I can do this better going out, than staying here thinking about it." "back at Saks did you think you'd have any thoughts about it afterwards?" "none at all, that's why I've no regrets." "was the reply to your voice mail your boyfriend's?" "no. it was my cousin's." she smiles. then we both smile, shyly. "I've never been so satisfied with sex," she says. I'm buoyed up by a sudden wave of happiness. we hold hands in the elevator to the lobby, true to the end to our double fantasy. "just think," she says, as we stand on the street corner, "it all began with you innocently walking in while I was adjusting my ummm, garter snake – Eve, this seductive power of women, totally gratuitous. some of my friends might say this is propaganda and sexism, but I say, it's in our genes." she winds her arms around my neck, kisses me with genuine affection, then turns and walks away, evening breeze stirring her hair. I turn in the opposite direction and walk to my car, mentally, emotionally, and physically, spent. this may not be true, but I fear I'll never see her again. it seems wrong.

Untitled

I like to stand next to you when you're dressed. that comes from knowing each nuance of your body. there's a lightness coming from you, and an easy energy between us. it's like a beautiful meditation. the flow of your lines, the suppleness of your hips. if there was a cartoon balloon over my head you'd see hearts.

The Tyranny Of Benevolence

1

every 'romantic' relationship ends in inevitable sadness, even if it continues on a purely humanistic level, because there's no way to indefinitely sustain the magic, which peaks at the moment the elements of love and strangeness merge. it can take a long time to peak, or it may have its highs and lows, but eventually one either transcends disillusionment with wisdom, or allows for the inevitable disintegration of the relationship. there can be talk about reigniting the romance, but, most often, the result is a dim shadow of what once had been. familiarity does not breed contempt, and one may not be able to experience love without it, but it does temper desire.

Japan – Yokosuka, Tokyo, Kobe (1956-7)

there was a very visible 'skivvy' house with a bright colored red tiled roof situated villa like on the top of a greenly vegetated hill overlooking the bar district just outside the main gate to the naval base where most of the ship borne sailors hung out when on 'liberty'. one evening several shipmates and I climbed up there, and seated in a large wood paneled parlor, drinking scotch, negotiated with the mama-san for girls and rooms on an all-night basis. and while my friends accepted the arrangement, I balked at the last minute, and pulled out. it was the all night part more than the amount of yen that made me do it. I climbed back down the hill, and drunk on the street, I hooked up with a prostitute, who walking by, gave me a lascivious smile, and asked, "do you want to fuck?" she was an older woman, mature, you might say, not big, but with a solid build. she took me to her place which

was right on the street close by. I paid her much less than what I would have had to pay up there. we undressed and fucked on a mattress raised just above the bamboo matted floor. she was a good fuck and came when I did. as we were dressing she told me not to pee on the floor, and as it seemed more an invitation than an admonition, I did just that. neither visually disturbed nor angry she quickly wiped it up. this was part of her routine, it seemed. immediately hard again, I picked her up and carried her to the bed. we fucked some more and she came with me again. I was still drunk but getting sober, and after dressing, opened the door and started to leave. "where are you going?" she asked, in a genuinely concerned voice. "just for a walk." "then you'll come back?" she almost pleaded. "yes, I just need some fresh air," I lied, then headed back towards the base and the shipyard with the giant cranes, where the carrier I was stationed on was docked, while my friends were bedded down up on the hill in cozy luxury, no doubt. sated but not satisfied, lingering questions about my virility (coming too soon), the inevitable letdown setting in, I yielded to the dependency that made me return to the ship (I had a weekend pass) even when I didn't have to. yet, beyond issues of my weakness of character, I liked it better that way – the clandestine pickup on a dark street or alley, the anticipation and the quick results, suited my temperament. she wanted me to stay with her all night, but uncomfortable and hung over, not being able to sleep, what would have been my motive?"

I didn't hang out in service bars, however.* I walked the streets of wherever we were, sometimes with friends, sometimes alone. this was 50 years ago, and I'm still not sure what

it is I want to say about it. taking walks in Tokyo, Kamakura, Yokosuka, and Kobe, there was always the outskirts, spaced out neighborhoods, dried up river beds, gravel and sand, abandoned toys and appliances, empty bottles and rusted cans with colorful, unreadable labels. central Japan, mid-century, I mean the area between Tokyo and Kobe had other similarities to L.A. of the same period, such as climate, though more humid in the summer, and a laid back sensual aura of distance, desire, and longing, mostly my projection. one major difference was the scent – perfumed pomade, burnt fish, and dung, which permeated everything, even on the coldest winter days.

an exception. a bar in Yokosuka, 1957

a pretty young woman slips her arm in his, a second before a fellow in his division who evidently has a relationship with her, and who's shown animosity towards him in the past, bursts in from nowhere, asks her to dance, and she (her name is Shuko), to placate him, agrees to one dance. they sit upstairs overlooking the dance floor, drink, engage in relaxed talk with the shipmate he came with and his girl, interspersed with Shuko's periodic, "buy me a drink." which he mostly manages to forestall, as he does her, "let's dance," which has, unfortunately, been the bane of his post-puberty dating life. when he asks her for a date she doesn't respond, but they seem to be getting it on. drunk, and frustrated by his non-dance inhibitions, while a young Japanese male in a navy blue suit and black pomaded hair is singing *because of you*, a somewhat maudlin 50s ballad, on the dance floor, he stands up, crashing glasses, and shouts, "fuck you." silence. people stop dancing. the singer looks straight ahead, his face

pantomiming silent rage. a middle age bus 'boy' quickly cleans up the spilled drink and broken glass. the music starts up, room back to normal. no reaction from employees or service personnel. Shuko, evidently to assuage him, arranges to meet him on a street corner at 2:00 p.m. on a subsequent afternoon. he arrives at the appointed time and waits until it's certain she's not going to show, then goes to the bar. he's not sure but thinks he glimpses her for a fleeting moment (scurrying away), before she disappears. shortly after, he's in sick bay with the Asian flu. this same fellow comes snooping around. wants to know if he got it from her.

one afternoon I accompanied a friend who wanted to buy a judo outfit. up to that time my knowledge of Yokosuka was limited to a naval base where those with permanent shore duty lived comfortably, some of them married to Japanese women, a 'pleasure' district of bars, prostitutes (a separate entity), everyday small shops with banners, cafes serving sake and traditional Japanese food, and locals on bikes, or riding around the tunnels in mini (Toyopet) pickup trucks. it wasn't until that afternoon I came upon the knowledge that beyond that narrow view of Yokosuka was a fairly large city, with a busy downtown, streetcars, department stores, school children in uniforms, etc. but then my image of Japan before a barge in Tokyo bay pushed us to dock the first time in late afternoon-early evening, and I perceived the green hills and smelled the scents, which stirred in me an immediate ecstasy, was one of dark brown wood and dirt roads, straight out of the movie version of Pearl Buck's China. when we got to the department store my friend purchased his outfit. then I bought a judo coat and pants to wear as a bathrobe when

going to and from the latrine on the ship (I already had a pair of wooden clogs for that purpose). in addition I bought a black belt to use as a sash. "you must be very proud," the young, pretty salesgirl said. I quickly realized you were not supposed to wear a black belt unless you earned it.

our first night there, myself and 2 friends were able to get a 3 day pass to attend Yom Kippur services at a synagogue in Tokyo, but instead, we spent the time wandering around the city (Ginza), watching a live skivvy show (a large woman diking a small woman), then two of us going to a whore house, etc. there's a snapshot of me standing in front of the fabulous, now defunct, Imperial Hotel, rebuilt by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1923, where the waiter chafed at having to serve lunch to riff-raff (3 sailors in uniform). the evening train ride there was almost empty, and the first class section, because of the dark, reddish-brown paneling, had the ambience of a classic English drawing room. actor Glenn Ford was the only other Caucasian on the train. he had an unhappy wrapped up in himself look on his face and grimaced with displeasure when we dared look his way. so much for fellow Americans. but the landscape was beautiful, which included small farm communities with rice fields.

Kobe had been totally rebuilt a decade after the war. it's buildings of steel and glass made it seem more modern than other Japanese cities that hadn't been as devastated. one day we took a long walk on the outskirts, not that different than some outskirts of L.A. at that time (Rodia's towers would have been a good fit there). when we came to a neighborhood in an outlying area, there was a group of boys

playing, aged around ten. two of the boys, who appeared to be brothers and had faces which were clearly deformed, glared at us with silent, unambiguous hatred. one can only speculate, but given their apparent ages and reactions, birth defects due to atomic radiation seemed the likely cause.

Kobe's red light district was more traditionally Japanese than Yokosuka's. the small wooden buildings with screens and lanterns were off limits at that time because of alleged instances of venereal disease. several of us went there one night, anyway. the kimono clad woman I was with, in addition to being pretty, was very nice, bathing me as well, in between sex. after leaving and meeting one of the two guys I came with, the Shore Patrol caught us but didn't bust us. "go and get your buddy," (the person who brought us there and evidently had a steady girl there), they told us. we did, but after getting him to leave, he went back, the two of us left, and they busted him. but it didn't really matter. he got out on a psycho which he deliberately staged, because he was just unwilling to take the confinement any longer. later he called the ship from the hospital to tell me how easy it was, and encouraged me to do the same. the same thing happened to another younger guy who also called me after going berserk in his compartment, screaming and throwing things, urging me to do the same. the thing was, however, I couldn't fake it. they didn't have to worry about that because they were really on the edge. a guy I bonded with in boot camp (a physically tough but sensitive street smart Method actor) talked them into sending him to the psycho ward. he was willing to pay the price of humiliation and deconstruction to get out. and he did. though I contemplated it, I wasn't willing to do that. but I had been kicked

out of school and had voluntarily had my number moved up to the front of the draft list. I had no excuses, and anyway, it would have been just another defeat.

what it boils down to is I wasn't at all suited to play the role of the conqueror. I actually felt shame that I was in the Navy, wearing, literally, that Donald Duck uniform. strutting to meet Daisy in some Yokosuka dive is how I viewed many of my shipmates. it made me feel low class and inferior. in fact, locked in conformity as they seemed, still, I admired the general purposefulness of the Japanese office worker, hurrying from the train stations at dusk, men in starched white shirts and ties, women smartly dressed in suits and heels. it seemed like a mirror image of S.F, N.Y., L.A. in short everyday civilian life, at least the urban white collar version which I'd forfeited. it's true, a very pretty prostitute, my first one there in Yokosuka, did tell me I looked like Tony Curtis. back then, with a smooth, fuller face, blue-green eyes, the way I wore my hair, it wasn't entirely flattery. and there were the cooler, dapper males, like the person who ran a Jaguar dealership in Tokyo, whom I waited for to return from somewhere, just because his pretty secretary was so nice to me, and when he returned spoke flawless English when I inquired about having a car shipped back to the States, only a commissioned officer was allowed to do that, and he continued to call me "lieutenant" with a marked emphasis on the word, indicating he knew I was lying, because my half-hearted performance was so bad. truthfully, I was just hanging out, futilely trying to make contact with the everyday life of modern Japan. buying a Jag would have been, of course, under any circumstance, way beyond my means.

Tokyo, Kyoto. 2009. lolling with a Caucasian, American woman, my new girlfriend – not tall, not short, solid, nice body, wearing green blouse, just underpants, like a fully sexually mature baby. I hallucinate her in a baby bonnet, nursing bottle, and diaper in place of panties, like the baby in R Crumb's Mr. Natural comic. she leans over and kisses me luxuriantly, as we embrace, and sinks into me. I inexplicably begin to weep as my lips burrow in the naked, exposed part of her bosom, through the open green blouse. "let me go with you." "it's not close." "and anywhere else we can be together." "all the way?" "all the way." "all the way," she repeats, thoughtfully, as she pulls off her panties.

it's another lukewarm, spaced out afternoon. I remove my shirt when it starts to sun and the heat gets more intense as I walk towards the street corner, where standing in the shade of a pepper tree, I'll meet her at 2:00 pm. I'm not sure exactly what time it is but I suspect I'm a little early. after about ten minutes I start to anxiously scan each figure in the distance, until her outline emerges and a happy feeling encompasses me. "where would you like to go," she asks, her face flushed, several long strands of hair partially covering one eye, which I gently brush back with my fingers.

"that's not true, I'm much more attracted to you than them (the other women in the agency). sure, they look good the way they dress and make up, bare legs, swinging their hips when they walk down the street, or in a bar, or half drunk at a party. but you look good in a bedroom...sexual, healthy." "but not walking down the street." "when I saw you appear

my whole being was transformed, like whatever was missing was immediately accounted for."

we're to take the 4 pm train to Kyoto to visit with her father, an American professor at Kyoto University, where he teaches classical Japanese art to English speaking students. "it's a long ride." "maybe it's not too late to fly," I suggest. "by the time we get to the airport, book and wait for a flight, it would take longer than the train, and be a bigger hassle." "I'll take your word for it."

"he's really more interested in Harajuku girls than Utamaro prints." "you mean the style, or the girls, themselves?" "both. he's got a girlfriend. she's pretty cool. she's younger than me." "and I'm older than your father." "he won't have a problem with that." "do you?" "no, I'm turned on to it." "where's your mother?" "back in the States." "what does she do?" "she teaches, too, at the Art Center College of Design." "I'd think with your background you'd be an artist or academic." "things don't necessarily work that way."

there's unhurried fascination when one is freed from the usual patterns of context. people become apparitions, familiar and detached – unwitting performers doing a mystical dance.

"what brings you here to Japan?," her father asks, matter of factly, careful not to overstate his interest. "I was in a romantic relationship with a 16 year old girl and I felt it was in my best interest to leave the country for a while." "did she report it?" "no." "dad." "it was consensual," her father states, rather than asks. "of course." "well what do you do if she

does report it? there's no statute of limitations, you know." "Dad!" "I know." during the brief pause that follows, the smiling face of a young lady appears in the open doorway. she's wearing long mesh stockings and boots, a scarlet mini skirt over flimsy black shorts, and a beige silk blouse with an open collar. she walks over to Helena's father and stands next to him, face flushed with pleasure, looking at us, as he puts his arm around her.

"you never told me about the 16 year old girl," Helena says, back outside, as we walk on the campus grounds. "it wasn't a secret. I wasn't keeping anything from you." "where did you meet her?" "in a club. there was this incredibly sexy looking girl who kept staring at me. she noticed me because I looked a lot older than the other people there, and didn't seem to fit. after some hard looks between us she came over. we had a couple of drinks before she brazenly suggested we go to a hotel. I didn't know her age until after we had sex. she was very mature, confident in her persuasive ability." "did that translate sexually?" "yes.... but she was sensitive as well as sensual. we both reveled being in a place we had never been before in ourselves, in a cool, dark place, industrial, transformed on a grey night, out of this world, strange yet intimate, lights off, ghostly, egging each other on. afraid to come down, we fucked all night long. neither of us had many orgasms. the fucking was an end in itself, just indefinitely prolonging the erotic, and postponing the inevitable letdown afterwards. something I'd never done before. there was a momentary scare when we realized we'd been so aroused neither of us had sought to protect ourselves. fortunately nothing came of it." "what did you do after you found out

her age?" "I was too hooked to quit. we had sex on a regular basis." "for how long?" "about a year, until she went away to school." "and you're hiding out in Japan." "I'm not hiding. it was several years ago already. I'd planned all along to return here for an extended visit. take my word nothing's going to come of that." "how do you know?" "she's an adult now and nothing's happened so far. from what I've heard she's living a productive life. there were no negative issues between us." "the law, unfortunately, doesn't take that into consideration," she says, sounding a bit like her father. "the law is the problem. it just makes matters worse. it creates guilt through condemnation supported by psychologists and counselors whose job is to reinforce the rigidity of the system. we both benefited from the exchange. we did nothing wrong. they'd have to prove I knew she was a minor. she lied about her age to get into the club and drink." "then why did you tell my dad it was in your 'best interest to leave the country for a while'?" "I don't know. I didn't want to hide anything that might come back on us about myself because you and I are seriously involved." her look softens as we walk hand in hand.

at the wheel en route back to Tokyo, driving on the Nakasendo road, with its mountainous grades and dark forests, Akemi, in a pensive mood, tells us about a trip with Helena's father, taking the Takamatsu Ferry, on a very cloudy day, to Shikoku. how the islands in the Seto Inland Sea appeared in a gorgeous silver-grey mist, prompting him to lecture her on traditional (silk) screen art. then later, when they visited the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, and viewed the Japanese-American sculptor's stone work, how she felt frustrated, even

resentful, at his unintentionally officious tone. I tell her on my first visit to Japan, on a train, passing rice fields (not far from the ones that bordered the potter Rosanjin's 200 year old farm house and garden) at dusk, I was moved, but felt cut off, unconsumed. "that's different, naturally, you were an outsider....and he's patronizing about contemporary aesthetic trends in Japan, especially popular street culture fashion." "yet it turns him on," Helena interjects. "erotically, yes," she laughs. "but he doesn't think we've assimilated or transformed anything. he thinks our attempts in that area are laughable." "what about the beauty you experienced on the way to Shikoku?" I ask. "that's beside the point. I don't think a person, no matter how educated, can just assume he knows the culture that isn't his own. I didn't mean to give the impression we don't care about each other." looking straight ahead at the darkness the three of us fall silent. "I'm not the only young woman in his life. there are his students." "what about you, Akemi?" "don't worry, I have a much younger boyfriend," "Japanese?" "yes." "what does he do?" "he's a writer. crime mysteries." "like Alice Arisugawa? locked room who-dun-its?" "yes, how did you know?" "totally by accident. there's a free book cart at the entrance to the library I went to in California, and one time there were a number of books in Japanese, and after checking them out I took the one which most aesthetically pleased my eye. I thought I might use the text visually in some way, or draw graffiti on it with colored markers like I did with my copy of Finnegans Wake. the text was very fine. I scanned a page onto my computer and layered it on photos. it worked very well." photos of what?" "scantly clad, mostly naked, women. of course I can't read a word of it. there's

evidently no English translation of this book.” “I can translate it for you.” “I’d like that.”

“how did you and Harold meet.?” “he was sightseeing in Harajuku with two of his colleagues. I was at the Meiji Bridge that day wearing a lacy peach colored dress and white make-up on my face. he asked me if he could take my picture, and then asked me if I was a student. I told him I had just graduated from an art school in Tokyo, and he asked me if I’d like to visit him in Kyoto, he’d pay my expenses, and I said, yes. you can take it from there. I’m not his concubine. he’s really interested in what’s going on outside the mainstream, and for all the things I’ve said, I enjoy his curiosity, intellect, and humor.” “he’s loosened up a lot since he’s been seeing you,” Helena allows.

it’s about an hour past dawn when we hit the outskirts of Tokyo. the sun is a freshly gleaming silver-yellow. Akemi drops us at Helena’s apartment (both of our apartments are in Shinagawa, west of the rail station), and after mutual hugs and kisses, she drives off. we’re too tired to sleep and she begins probing me as to what attraction I may have for Akemi. when she’s satisfied it’s nothing out of the ordinary she makes us soufflés that taste like the matzo meal pancakes my mother made for breakfast around Pesach. then, wearily we get into bed and fuck furiously, almost desperately, before falling asleep in each other’s arms. neither of us awaken until the sun sets. “this kind of depresses me,” I say. “me, too,” she replies. we manage by staying up late, spending a restless night in bed, then getting up early. Helena goes to work, and I do some more wandering around the city.

both Helena and I prefer the more impersonal, utilitarian, semi-industrial atmosphere here to live in than in the trendier neighborhoods of some of the other wards. when I get back to my apartment there's an email from Rachel. she's coming to Japan to temporarily live with an ex-patriot musician who plays in a band based in Osaka, and wants to see me.

two weeks later Harold picks up Helena, Akemi, and I, at the airport, and we drive to his rented house in the Sayo-ku district, which is not far from the university. it is a century old machiya style wooden house with refined but generic bamboo blinds, futons on tatami mats, paneled screens, and a dry landscaped garden. a gorgeous Hiroshige print of a farmer scattering seeds in a rice field (actually done in the area) hangs on an otherwise bare wall. I ask him if it's a reproduction or an original, which amuses him that I would even think he could afford, or have the connections to possess, something that rare and precious.

we sit down to a vegetarian lunch in the garden (I haven't eaten meat in almost 40 years). Akemi is wearing the white makeup she had on when Harold first saw her, black eyeliner, and orange lipstick, a knockout today in a charcoal woman's jacket, checkered shirt, tight black skirt, and heels. Helena is wearing an olive green cashmere, jeans, black flats (no socks). her sorrel colored hair hanging in strings picking up the sun's rays. I'm wearing my usual – jacket, long sleeve solid colored t shirt, jeans, and running shoes. Harold has changed to a robe with a crimson sash, and sandals, dapper with a full head of prematurely white hair. so much for description.

on the flight to Kyoto, Akemi told us a little about Minoru. ---
“he’s even more into music than crime fiction...pop, but very avant-garde, like the musicians who play with John Zorn. you should meet him. do you know who John Zorn is?” “I’ve got a half dozen of his albums,” I say. “which ones?” her voice rises excitedly. “oh the usual suspects. the older stuff... Spillane, Deadly Weapons, the Film Scores, but my favorite is his Classic Guide to Strategy.” “I’m not familiar with that one,” she says, her voice dropping. “it’s really amazing. there are sonic portraits of some of the musicians you’re probably referring to. ask him about it.” “I will.” ---

“I don’t want to give the impression I’m really into, or even knowledgeable about, Japanese culture, either traditional or contemporary. I’m not sure what my real interest is, and I can’t define it. but it’s not trendy. I was here a long, long, time ago, through circumstances that went beyond my will, at a critical time in my life, and among other emotions it’s left a wound, a pain in my heart.” I stop, surprised at what I just said. Harold, for the first time looks up, a sympathetic, comprehending expression on his face. Akemi nods. “believe it or not, I think I understand.” all the while Helena has been listening intently. I brush against her gently and take her hand. Akemi for a moment seems to be in deep thought. then she says, “that’s because it doesn’t have anything to do with Japan.” “you’re half right,” I reply.

back at Helena’s apartment I tell her about the email from Rachel. “the former 16 year old?” “yes.” “obviously you have to see her,” she says, facetiously. “maybe we both can. I don’t intend to start keeping secrets.” “I think dad was

upset when he found out about Minoru, which in Japanese means truth," she laughs. he's much more vulnerable than he lets on. of all of us, his dependency to Japan and it's culture, is strongest." "more than Akemi's?" "well with Akemi it's not something she's had to cultivate. but she's in conflict with it. I don't think she feels the appreciation he feels, which is partly compensation for his bitterness about the divorce." "what about your mother?" she fits in well in the laidback west coast academic milieu, though I can't say she's happier than he is. the older you get the more you have to account for your failures....would you like to come to work with me tomorrow so you can see what I do?" "yes, if you hadn't asked, I would have, eventually."

"so you stand half naked all day modeling underwear. how long have you lived in Japan?," I think to ask for the first time. "seven years. I moved here shortly after I graduated college. I wanted to be close to my father." "but you live in Tokyo." "it's better that way." "are you close to your mother?" ".not particularly." "do you have siblings?" "no." "I can see you're not in a good mood today." "I get sick of people staring at my boobs." "you look sexiest when you're just wearing a sweater, especially green, and nothing else on. I get hard every time I see you that way." "you think I'm just meat." "and potatoes. mmm. I thought my coming to work with you today would make you feel just the opposite." "I did, too." "why don't you just quit." "how would I pay the rent?" "your father?" "being close to him, doesn't mean I want to be dependent on him. he's actually been very generous in that regard...when he's not 'helping' Akemi, or buying her things. anyway, they treat me well here. that's not always

the case in fashion industry. in fact I'm going to be on the cover of the next edition of their lingerie magazine. they like featuring Caucasian women, and they pay well. then maybe I'll quit," she says, pulling off a flesh toned slip and stepping into her skirt while they finish setting the lights for the next shot. "if you do I'll try to help you if I can." "financially?" "with what? no, I mean help you find your way."

as soon as we get back to her place I say, "seeing you half naked all day in a work environment has made me very horny." "I'm sorry but I don't want to fuck right now." "ok, I think I understand." it occurs to me her bad mood may have something to do with the email from Rachel, but more likely, I think, it has to do with her father and Akemi. "if you don't mind I'd like to rest before we go out to dinner. there's a great vegetarian restaurant in Shibuya. you've been a big influence in that area."

just as we're about to leave a motor scooter pulls up in front of the apartment. two people wearing warm jackets get off. Akemi and a young Japanese male come to the door. "we were just going out to eat," Helena says. the four of us decide it will be cheaper than paying individual fares to take a taxi. Minoru, who is thin, energetic, immediately engages me in conversation about music. I also see, quickly, he has eyes for Helena. "I just heard from a friend who's coming to Japan to live with a musician whose band is based in Osaka." "there are a lot of bands there. do you know the name of the group?" "no, I suppose I'll find out. isn't Shonen Knife three girls from Osaka?," I ask, to get a laugh. only Akemi does. "I'm not into groups at this stage," I tell him. what are you

into?" "it's pretty arbitrary, there's no particular music I'm into right now." the cab honks and we clamber down the stairs. on the way there, when he isn't, despite my reply, questioning me about the music scene in the U. S., of which I'm no authority, he's giving Helena looks.. she doesn't seem to mind. Helena's right about the food, with which they have several more drinks. I've never seen her drink this much. she looks particularly good to me tonight, flushed and loose. of course a little competition helps. but her boldness is a surprise. and while Minoru, who has become, at this point, very cool and brooding, sits and stares into space, she moves next to him and wipes his forehead with a napkin. we decide to walk off our meal before heading back to the apartment, and though it's a cold night and we're bundled in our jackets, *there's something in the wind*, to quote the Four Freshmen, a warm, delicately perfumed breeze, a little like a Santa Ana, is coming from somewhere. it is a very sensual night. one with intimations of promise, and we grace ourselves with the images in the windows of the nearby shops. Minoru constantly walks ahead of us, and Helena makes every effort to keep up with him. Akemi, unusually subdued, and I, hold up the rear. at one point they turn the corner together and are out of sight for several minutes. "they're probably having a quickie," Akemi jokes, taking my hand. on the train ride back, we sit, hunched together, Helena leaning on me, Akemi leaning on Minoru, not saying anything. at our point of departure they get on his scooter and go off into the night. Helena turns the key in the door. we stand in the dark for a few moments and I have the urge to kiss her. then she turns on the light. "I guess I'll stay here tonight?" "of course." "I'm too tired to go back." "Minoru kissed me when we were

alone. he asked me out on a date. I accepted." she's still a little high. "actually I understand, you're a free woman, and if you think I'm going to make a fuss, you're mistaken, but if you don't mind I think I'll sleep on the sofa." (audience laughter) "if you wish. I'll talk to you first thing in the morning." after tossing around for a short time, I get up and write her a note - 'I'll call you later, or you call me, whichever of us gets the urge first', place it on the kitchen table, and leaving her to the reveries she's probably having, walk the several miles to my apartment. it's a shock to realize that although I've taken her for granted, I love her. without her I'd have no connection here, whatsoever. I'd be floundering. also, like it or not, there can be stimulation in being sexually rejected. the object becomes that much more desirable.

in a group one or another remains the same. you shine a light on somebody and they become desirable. you turn it off and they move back into the background. you shine a light on somebody else and they emerge.

Helena is visiting her father. Minoru is visiting his parents. Akemi and I are at the club where she works. it's after hours and we're the only ones there. she reemerges from the dressing room where she's disrobed her blouse, skirt, and orange mesh stockings, washed and removed her makeup. what she has on now is a skimpy, pale violet-grey slip with tiny red and burnt black flowers, which look raised like they've been crocheted, and extra sheer skin colored hose. she sinks back onto a pile of throw pillows on the floor and stacked against the wall, drops the straps to her elbows, so that the slip falls to just below her perfectly formed cone shaped breasts,

raises her legs, exposing her thighs and the outer curve of her buttocks, and wraps her arms underneath her legs, looks demurely down, her lightly dyed persimmon hair, bangs just above her eyes, hanging over the crook of her shoulders, her underexposed skin a soft pink. a faint berry stain is still on her lips. only her eyelids are visible from where I'm sitting. "come over here," she calls, unlocking her arms, as a rainbow of colored lights plays on her face, neck, and nipples, and as I kneel before her, unzips my pants and slides down my shorts. lowering her head she takes my cock in her mouth, moving on it until it's slick, stiff, and pliable as hard rubber. she rises up and pushes my head down, 'till my lips are on the rough banded surface of her hose, then lower, to the incredibly soft and smooth, by contrast, bare upper thigh, then down until they meet her meaty vulva. I lick her silky hairs like a sated cat purring in the dark, then, still kneeling, enter her, leaning forward, almost vertical. she rests her back against the wall, and I rest against her, my mouth buried in her scented hair. for a few moments we fuck, horny, obliterating the visual, then neither of us move for a long time, our genitals reconnecting, feeling, and accommodating, and almost imperceptively at first, we begin a nuanced dialogue, both of us inhabiting separate worlds, until the movement, gradually becoming more erotic and intense, we merge, before settling back and separating once again.

Akemi recites this lullaby which she entitles, Soapland: *day is away/night is close/I love Helena/Helena's a ghost/Harold buys me flowers//I'm excited/he won't have to go now to Yoshiwara.*

"Akemi told me you have a book by Arisugawa. what's the title?" "I think it's S.O.S. either that or the letters are an acronym for short story. the O frames a portrait of him. there's nothing else in English. there seems to be 5 stories. I'm not even sure I'd like to read him, is he famous?" Minoru shrugs. "I'll see if there's an English translation, though I doubt it. if there is I'll give it to you." "Akemi said she'd translate it for me." "that could be a lot of work and her English isn't that good." "that could make it more interesting." he smiles, boyishly, his look becoming thoughtful. "yes. how's your own crime writing coming?" "I think Akemi somewhat misled you," he replies, furrowing his brow. "I don't really write crime fiction. I'm more into the process. how it relates to social behavior." "like our...?" "yes. she also mentioned you like John Zorn's Classic Guide to Strategy." "I think his Cartoon Music, solo improv is brilliant. all of it is." his face brightens despite an attempt to suppress it. "it's amazing." "the title is apropos as well, wouldn't you say?" he laughs, somewhat edgily. "he also has an obsession with celebrity." "you mean Japanese." "yes, exactly." "he's brought recognition to Japanese artists outside Japan." "cult recognition. who else has heard of names like Shigeru Katsumi, Toshinori Kondo, Jun Togawa, or even, Ikue Mori?" "have you published in Japan?" "just in a music journal that did a special issue on Bob Dylan." it's in the mag I'd been reading which covers mostly noise artists. I turn to the page and hand it to him. *'blonde on blonde* sets the tone for most of Dylan's later work – re his relationships and affairs with women. maybe that's why it has such iconic status – now rich and famous, still is music, always a reflection of the life he's living at the time. his later work may be underrated, though I'm not (at this

point) the one to testify to that. yes, Bob, like all the rest, has to live with the contradictions of wealth and fame, doing , or having to do, everything he's criticized. yet, he seems, at times, to transcend it with a basic frankness and sporadic lyrical flair.' "is that all there is?" "yes." "what are you writing now?" "mostly fiction. right now about my stay here in Japan." "do you plan to stay here long?" "I don't know. I could go back soon. or, barring some natural disaster I could decide to live here. to some extent that depends on Helena." we talk a little more (about the supposed attributes of plum extract) before I say, "I want to get back before dark." we shake hands. I get up and go.

"I could, tentatively, regarding future possibilities, stay here with Minoru. I've no special reason to move back to the States. right now, at least, I feel little nostalgia. I don't love him more than I love you but it makes more sense. he sees something in me, a potential involvement, something to do. you have nothing to do. you've made it that way. you have no culture to the degree of commitment. your choices are all reflections of the moment. maybe you're just more honest but I was raised in a broken home. I don't want that." "what you suggest solidifies things, stops the flow. that's death." "that's just it. you put the words in my mouth. you're denying death. so you can't live in the grosser sense of living." "so you think living is just external?" "no, I agree with you on that and I respect your choice." her eyes start to tear. "the pain I feel for your loneliness. I can't live, love, with that. you're all sunset and longing and sensual breezes, but there has to be a plot. with Minoru I know there would be things to do. there would still be the possibility for having children.

even if you were younger you wouldn't want that burden." "what about Minoru? he's a womanizer." "that may just be a stage. he's young." "I know, that's obviously part of the attraction. how long would it be before he'd be stepping out on you?" "I'm not counting on anything. I'm thinking hypothetically. this is more a reality check, regarding values." "the most satisfying level of living is being in harmony with an inner vision." "I know that and I wish with all my heart you find a woman you can share that with." "maybe it can't be shared." she starts to cry. "I've had a problem all my life with friends – in their eyes my lack of esprit de corps. it's torpedoed my rapport with every group or individual I've been close to." chastised, she wraps her arms around me and hugs me tightly. "I love you, Jerry," and buries her face in my shoulder. "there's a lot to what you said and I don't want to lose you. but if so, so be it. I don't want to queer your romance with Minoru, either, even though he hustled you right before my eyes. I actually admire him for that, but he's ambitious." "it's more predictable and materialistic than yours."

"I don't agree with you about plot, everything is a narrative. but I think most of all I need to be open to love." "we can't just sit and look at each other, and there's just so much sex we can have – anyway, sex depletes you. so what we do most of the time with each other is an issue." "I do my work." "artists and poets like you are committed only to their visions. Noguchi is an example. my father told me all about his personal life – women all his life, but only when he needed them. aside from that it was all about his work." "well, maybe it gets down to you need to be doing something for yourself." that seems to connect. "and I care about

relationships, at least with women, more than I care about objects. it frees you. Norman Mailer said towards the end of his life that the ultimate tension may be the tension between the group and the individual. Francois Gilot quoted Picasso as saying we're all doomed either to always being alone or always being with people. that was just his projection. I don't believe it's either/or but I do gravitate towards absolutes. I want to live with oneness. even if it isn't possible." I'm beginning to reach her. "you know, this is the first time you've actually talked to me, Jerry, at least in the philosophical sense, and I realize how little I've known you." "there has to be a context for it to be meaningful." she nods. "well, all I know is your obsession with the clothes I wear, my legs, my breasts, my hair." "I take great pleasure in that. it also allows me to love, and when that's no longer where it's at I'll be willing to accept it." "there's still the issue of what to do, and who to do it with." "I've no answer to that, we'll just have to see." the current that was pushing us apart has gradually shifted in the opposite direction, drawing us together, and we hungrily kiss. "you can talk about my obsessions, Helena, but sex seems to be becoming more an issue with you than with me. I can feel you coming out, and I would do nothing to interfere or inhibit it." "are you talking about Minoru?" "it doesn't matter who, maybe he's just a catalyst. maybe it's serious. I can't be burdened with that." she looks at me long and hard then walks into the other room.

you see a pair of laughing eyes, and suddenly you're sighing sighs. you hurry to a spot that's just a dot on the map. those eyes those sighs, they're a part of the tender trap, said Sinatra

more. some starry night when her kisses seem to tingle. she'll hold you tight and you'll hate yourself for being single.

"we went to a pottery class he goes to. I've always enjoyed working with clay. predictably, Minoru is good with his hands." "have you made it with him yet?" "I just managed to hold him off," she laughs. "he wants me to go camping with him for the week he's off." "are you?" "of course. I'm looking forward to it. it will be different. I can't see why not." "it's cold this time of year." "we'll have the right stuff, I imagine." her face is flushed and she has that same excited lilt in her voice she had ending the evening the four of us spent together. "don't be angry," she soothes. "you're as free to do what you want as I am," she adds, somewhat disingenuously, and so far, it's been mostly you who has." "I'm not." but there's a hollowness in my stomach. a flame inside of me wants to throw her down and screw her with every bone in my dick. it's primal and can't be helped. she runs her hand through my hair, still trying to soothe. "it's not a matter of preference, Jerry. please try to understand." "it's also interesting, that at least partly, because of her infatuation with Minoru, I need her nearness now, more than ever. "I could say I love Akemi, too. she's been very supportive, but it wouldn't be accurate." "it sounds like you should make it with her." "I have." "what...when was that?" "a couple of nights ago, at her club." "who initiated it?" "she did, she seduced me." "her reasons are obvious." "well in this ménage a whatever, I don't think any of us have the right to..." "I agree," she says, cutting me off. "Akemi is the most Japanese and the most exploited. as a result she's the most extreme. with the tools she's developed she would have been a

courtesan in ancient times. that's why she and Harold are a good match." "strange thing to say."

Rachel calls from the airport. her flight to Osaka has been cancelled. she knows 'it's imposing,' but could she 'spend the night' with me? there won't be a flight out until the next day. "sure," I say. "I don't have a car so I can't pick you up. take a cab here. I could never direct you as to what public transportation to take. if you're straightened I'll help you pay for it." "you're as sweet as ever." I give her my address and directions and we hang up. had she called a week ago I would have been apprehensive, but this week the timing is just right. an hour and a half later she arrives. I walk down, she pays the fare, and as the cab drives away, we stand, close, looking into each other's eyes. she's as gorgeous as ever – same dark eyes and hair, same full lips. but she looks worn, lines of care that weren't there when I saw her last. then she kisses me, pushing her tongue into my mouth. "that's for old times." I help her carry up her luggage. she sighs and plops down on the sofa, the only thing you can sit on in the front room. I'm notorious for not having furniture. "have you eaten?" "yes, on the plane." "that must have been some time ago." "I'm not hungry." "I imagine you're nervous." "very." "if there's anything I can do to help." "you already have." her energy is different than it was then. I suppose it should be. maybe more resigned. there's no effort to command. I sense she's suffered, as we all have, but I mean a lot. "it hasn't been easy for me, Jerry", she says, reading my mind. I feel a pang but am ambiguous about wanting to know why. "tell me about how this all came about – you, Japan, your boyfriend?" "first of all, Nathan, that's his

name, isn't my boyfriend. he's a friend, a former classmate, but you know how I am with 'friends'," she jokes, showing a little of the old fire. "it's purely opportunism on both our parts. from the demo I heard, they've got something going, and I may do some of the vocals." "do you do drugs?," I ask, sensing there's more to it than that. "we're both dependent," she quickly responds. "and the scene he's in, in Osaka, evidently is supportive of that." "are you ok 'till you get there?" "yes," she says, reaching for her purse, "I'd like to clean up." I show her the bathroom. when she returns she's wearing a wrapper and a sexy figure. "do you have a girlfriend?" "yes." "is she Japanese?," she asks, running her hand along my neck. "no, she's a white girl, American." "what does she do?," she asks, as she brushes her lips on mine. "she models lingerie, for a living." "do you want to fuck me?" I don't know what it is she has. my penis is straining as I remove my clothes. we go to the bedroom. she lays back, removes her robe, and I literally jump her. "I'm ovulating," she remembers. I reluctantly pull out and she jumps off the bed, runs into the front room, and comes back with a packet of condoms. she carefully slips one on my pulsating organ, and we fuck, tentatively at first, getting acquainted, not just sexually, then strenuously, our hearts beating wildly. with sex, at least, she hasn't lost an ounce of passion. we fuck and fuck and fuck. slipping off the bed we fuck on the floor. we continue fucking, inching along the floor, into the hall, until we climax on the cold kitchen linoleum, my face and shoulders bleeding where her teeth and nails have sunk.

in the morning I make us a small breakfast, before, carrying her luggage, we walk to the train station. when her limo ar-

rives, I pay the ¥3000 fare. we hug and kiss goodbye.

a little more than a week's time has elapsed before I hear from Helena. "jerry. can you come over now?" "when did you get in?" "late last night. I just got up." "I think I'll walk over. I'll see you in about an hour." the first thing that strikes me (of course) is the ruddy color from exposure and activity. "have you ever done any camping?" Helena asks, as I watch her unpack. "yes, long ago. I did a lot of hiking, back packing, and camping, in my teens. my friends were all into that." "did you ever sleep in the snow?" "yes, once, the cabin was actually colder so we threw our bags outdoors. it was warmer, but still freezing. I always had the worst equipment. they learned in the Boy Scouts how to camp properly, so I suffered the most. I still love the space, scents, silence, and exertion though. I liked to climb in the Santa Monica mountains, semi regularly, before coming to Japan." "you still run." "I need to do that as nothing else I do, besides walking, is really physical. you should start doing it." "but you say you have to run alone." "it's a matter of energy. being unattached." "here we go again with the issue of sharing," she frowns. then seeing the pain it's causing me (she knows I know what's coming), she smiles, gently, apologetically. "sometime I'll tell you why and how this has come about." "I'm willing to listen. why don't you tell me now." "it doesn't matter right now, Helena."

the camping trip –

"it was an experience. one I'll probably never forget. his original plan was for us to hike the trails on Mt. Fanzawa, but this time of year they're covered with snow. he said in

warmer weather it's better for viewing the cedar pines, cypress, beeches and maples, as well as the wild life – raccoons, flying squirrels, silka deer, kingfishers, all of that, but thought it might be too hard on me, and decided we should go to the Izu Peninsula, which is in Shizuoka Prefecture, his parents live there, instead, where there were wooded trails to climb, and we were also able to camp on the beach. it was cold, but with the warm clothes and sleeping bags, it was mostly comfortable even.” “that’s quite a mouthful. what do his parents do?” “they’re wasabi farmers.” anticipating the next question, she offers, “we were so close together, and alone, it was natural we fucked as well, searching my eyes for a response. “sharing the routine of survival while experiencing new and unexpected moments, totally alone in proximity, can bring two people very close together.” “that’s why he invited you to go. and it’s why you went.” my heart is pounding with hurt. “all lovers should go camping together at least once. it would be the same with you and I, if we did, Jerry, only MInoru, naturally, at this stage of his life, is less sophisticated, and more open to respond. you’re more conscious and it can get in your way, jade your appreciation.” “I don’t buy that. he’s more of a manipulator. from the very beginning he was on the make.” my voice is seething with hatred. “that’s true. it was apparent on the trip.” “in what way?” silence. “and what about your sophistication?” “it still had to do with a natural response to something new and different.....

....is my having sex with him that important?” “yes, it is. I’ve longed for those kind of intimate moments with you though I’m not sure I realized just how much until now. that’s what

hurts the most – the camping trip, your discoveries, your closeness, the way you tell it, should have been ours. is really what I've always wanted. to be away from everything and be with someone. maybe you could have only experienced it with someone new, whose habits you weren't too familiar with, but I don't know if I can get over that." Helena has been paying such rapt attention to my words she's practically stopped breathing. for a few moments she weeps silently.

"I've begun to feel you, at least I, can love only one person at a time, because it permeates everything you do together, and even more, when you're apart. so it gets down to having to make a choice." silence. "it's easier for me, " I finally respond. "as an example, I have warm feelings for Akemi and I care about her welfare, and I had as erotic sex as I've ever had with Rachel several nights ago (Helena's eyes stir), and I'm concerned about what she's doing to herself with drugs, but you're the only one I love. the only one I feel pain at the thought of losing." "if Minoru wasn't there would you still feel that way?" "possibly not, but if I didn't feel that way it wouldn't be because I didn't care. if you love him more than you love me the choice should be easy." "I love you more than I love him. I feel I know your soul. but you thrive on emotion. it's emotion that's motivating you now, and emotion is unpredictable." she's right. I can't deny that. love is emotion. but how predictable are our thoughts, and even less so, our desires. "Jerry, the buildup with Minoru was totally predictable out front. we both knew what the outcome would be! and I knew if it was enough you felt you'd have to reject me, I'd have to accept it. I love you very

much. give me a little time to sort things out.” she zips her backpack shut and stacks it in the closet. “I’ll try.”

that evening, back at my apartment, looking through *no such thing as silence: John Cage’s 4’33*, by Kyle Gann, a book I checked out at the Shinagawa public library, I come across the following quote by Cage. *I’m entirely opposed to the emotions – I really am. I think of love as an opportunity to become blind and blind in a bad way – I think that seeing and hearing are important, in my view they are what life is: love makes us blind to seeing and hearing.* I agree with the prime importance of seeing and hearing, and there’s no diminishing the effect of the paradigm he’s created re listening (silence and sound), but why is it when you are moved deeply you begin to notice every detail of the things around you. perception can provide a resonance for love, and, or, meaning. of course, that involves projection which is something he was trying to avoid.

a week later I bus over to Helena’s without bothering to call to see if she’s there. she still radiates a freshness as well as a new brightness and warmth. she’s more openly affectionate towards me and less critical, or should I say less resentful and picayune. “I’ve been thinking about you a lot, about the things we’ve done together, how happy it’s made me and how little appreciation I’ve shown.” “it’s pretty much the same with me, Helena.” “what would you like to do today?” I see her freshly, like when she appeared the afternoon we met to visit her father for the first time. that was only several months ago, but it was clearly in a different era of our time together. “why don’t we walk...anywhere.” before we leave I

ask her if she's heard from Minoru. "he called to see if I got home safely. predictably we didn't have much to say to each other. we both got what we wanted," she says, without a trace of bitterness. the pang returns. "it's surprising how quickly that's faded. I don't mean the actual experience, but the need." I nod. I once wrote the words, *hurt me into poetry, hurt me into love*. another time I wrote, *where is my love, my meaning, my place of grace*. one of my two brothers was visiting from wherever he was living at the time, Aspen, Colo., or maybe he had moved to Hawaii by then. they, my parents, my other brother, sister-in-law, and two nieces, were all sitting in the den, and I left it on the kitchen sink.

I'm sitting in the sun, staring at a pathway in the courtyard of an office building 2 blocks away from my apartment, crisp red –yellow leaves on the ground, bright light and deep shadows, wooden outdoor chairs and tables, the sounds of aircraft – the tonality of ambient sounds...machinery in the distance like a church choir on a sustained note. it goes back to those first conscious perceptions, those responses when one first consciously reflects on the relationship between beauty, loss, and longing. when one codifies and tries to indefinitely recreate the images and experiences as something to be attained and eternalized. when, in fact, it is the result of reflections upon what has passed. am I forgoing living to pursue this beautiful dream...what all the poets from Keats to Mallarme have sought?

Helena, whose name (Helen was my mother's name) has become the symbol of the original longing, seems to think so. it's otherwise pretty women who hesitate to orchestrate

their glamour I become attached to. in the beginning she wasn't the one to whom I was most drawn. but it's not how I was, lying on my bed as a teenager, looking up at the ceiling, it's how I feel now. fresh air and gentle breezes in your face and nostrils, the fragrant medicinal scent of the eucalyptus, are of now, and refer to the future as well as the past.

she's wearing a tight red dress and gold and emerald green earrings. her hair is up, held together with an amber tortoise shell comb. she's wearing jet black 5 inch heels. the look on her face is impassive, cool. my brain is strained. everything about her cries out, "fuck me." and I think for the first time, I'm tiring. I'll never be able to hold her. but what to do about it? if there was no desire this wouldn't be an issue, but it's there, as strong and more centered than ever. and there are no memories of 'great' moments from the distant past to sustain or compensate for it.

"why don't we go to a bar, first? a drink or two would do you good." I laugh. "alright, Helena, I haven't the will to protest." we go to a bar in Shibuya, a hip one with a lot of action, drink, and play the usual adulterous games – it's called mixing. but it's just playacting and we leave sans satisfaction.

then comes the lecture. re the red dress. "you still totally misconceive the intended function of the images we create, because you frame it totally in terms of its desirability to others, when it's only one aspect of its function. by aggravating the thought of a woman stepping out on you, you could eventually make yourself impotent. it happened to my father." how does she know I feel that way? I admire her

practicality, her father's intellect and logic, as I do anything else about her. but I'm sick of her criticism. I wish she'd get off my case.

"let's go to the bedroom. I've something for you. first, undress." standing by the bed, backlit by a lamp on the night table, she slowly lifts off the red dress and stands facing me in black heels and a sheer off-white slip. she raises one knee and removes a shoe, then the other placing them together at the foot of the bed. then she raises her slip and pulls off her black lace g string panties. braless (very noticeable in the bar), she shimmy's out of the slip, and with only her earrings still on, rubs up against me and I deeply inhale her perfume. rubbing sensuously we fuck for a long time, standing up. when I pull out she drops to her knees and blows me full throttle, the classic image of the willing female in erotic supplication, before we lay on the bed, legs and arms entwined, fucking firmly, quietly, softly, kissing lips, nipples, necks. when we're done we walk, naked, hand in hand, into the front room and do something we (at least I) never do, turn on the TV. "can I fix you a nightcap?" "yes, indeed." with only the light and hum of the TV on, it isn't long before we fall asleep.

we wake in the morning rested and satisfied. I have these thoughts. generally when we've had sex together in the past, it happened spontaneously, simply when we were mutually horny. but since her affair with Minoru, it's been more elaborate (quite the opposite of the sex she had with him, I imagine), a more self-conscious attempt at foreplay, as it was last night, with her assuming the role of the sex goddess,

giving me a gift, even teaching me a lesson. I suppose I could say a less conscious spontaneity has yielded to invention, there was a generosity on her part, and it was good but I've got to watch myself. I'm as much her lover as she is mine. maybe I'm maturing, but I don't need a sex goddess for a lover as much as I need mutual respect. is this just another way I refuse to kiss the Blarney Stone? perhaps not.

Helena and I get high –

I toked and swallow all the smoke as if I'd never stopped smoking, and hand it to her. she tokes, letting out a little smoke, and hands it back to me. we pass it back and forth one more time and I'm stoned. my mind has already intently tuned in. the room is a misty grey. there's a subtle pink glow on the white walls. every detail in the room stands out with meaning. Helena's eyes are soft out of focus marble, glazed. when we look tentatively at each other we trip. but it's a good trip, a good deal of humor in it, and what we perceive is both lovely and ridiculous. we each take another toke. her dress is grey checked, logical to the grey mist and the distinct detail. I tug on the upper strap of her bra which seems both detached and in sharp focus, and she laughs hysterically at the absurdity of it. this is more like a peyote trip than anything I ever experienced with pot, and I used to turn on quite a bit. then I look at her face which is sad, beautiful, but slightly paranoid (afraid), the texture of it fine grained, almost like ivory or porcelain. "your eyes are like jade," she says, tears forming, as she runs her fingers the length of my nose. "Mount Rushmore," she intones. we move to kiss. it takes so long to get there our lips can't seem to connect, but the love the gesture generates, remains. then she says, "this isn't

about sex.” and in that silence, finally the lucidity, which was always the first thing to occur when I turned on alone, encompasses the both of us. also, when I turned on in the past, alone, I got right to it. I tended not to trip.

the next morning Helena is pretty spaced. this is one area, although in the distant past, I’ve had a lot more experience than she. she’s alternately flighty, moody, serious, humorous, confused. by evening, however, she’s become thoughtful and tender. I think, for the first time, she realizes she can’t project her own self-awareness onto me.

now that Helena and I are, once again, close without drama, I turn my thoughts to my work. Helena and Akemi are talking about, with Harold’s help, starting up an apparel line, one conforming to Fair Trade guidelines. I’m not sure what there is left for me to do here. what am I looking for? what did I hope to discover returning here I didn’t already know? it’s not more evident than when I arrived. I’ll probably eventually go back. no place on this planet is a good place to live for the poor. Shinagawa is architecturally a mish-mash and noisy. fortunately, there’s a relatively quiet riverfront trail I can run on. what I do know is one has to make one’s own world if one is to experience any grace of happiness. I put a CD into the player and tune my ears to Bill Evans’, Your Story.

The Tyranny Of Glamour

"I'm not in the mood for more work today," she says to her colleague, "I am already bored out." "I'm not either,," her writing partner replies. "then why don't you come up with me for a while," her neighbor offers. "yes, why don't you," her colleague sarcastically seconds." "yes, why not," she agrees, her voice for the first time showing a little color. "I'll be back in a couple of hours. you don't have to wait unless you want to," she says, turning to the second man, the word, 'hours' framed more as a question, and they both smile. after climbing the outside stairs, she stands on the wooden deck, hands in the pockets of her skirt, ruffled reddish brown hair clinging to a plainly pretty face, white wool sweater and black cotton skirt hanging loosely, not quite disguising the satisfying flow of her hips and legs, as he fidgets with his keys, then opens the door.

"would you like a drink?", he can barely think to politely ask. "no, why don't we just begin. I don't know why. I don't believe I've ever been this horny." his hands roughly grope and squeeze her breasts through the soft sweater. then they hotly kiss. forgoing the usual courtesies, they expeditiously fuck (and suck), at first not bothering to undress. one minute two minutes, become the equivalent hours of oral, anal, and climactic genital gratification; ultimate and inconsequential, intimate, dirty, sensually thrilling, and banally repetitive love-making, until she rises and dresses while he's still naked, satisfied, happy, exhausted. "thanks for helping me out," she calls from the doorway, then glides down the stairs to the lower apartment.

"you're not going to even ask me how it was?" "no, it doesn't matter." "but you waited." "I just wanted to keep your couch from dozing while you were gone." he gets up to go. "it was," she laughs, now disposed to appreciate his humor, "really good. too good to last forever." "I'm sure it was a lot of fun." "you don't have to go. as long as you're still here I'd rather you stay a while. I don't mind having company right now." "it would seem as though you could use a little rest." "that's true, it would seem, but my present state is not quite ready for sleep. it wants to fondle, formulate, and explore." "well, under the circumstances I can't help you with that." "you don't have to, I understand. we can work some more tomorrow. maybe we can work it into the script." "that'll be the day." he opens the door, steps out, and decisively closes it. she sinks back into her chair, a weary smile on her face.

the next morning she awakens from the most restful sleep she's had in ages, showers and shampoos her hair. if she could only lose herself in that kind of sensual pleasure once a month, life would be worth living after all. she goes outside to the shared garden in back, and gratefully sniffs a still dew sprinkled rose, and lifts her head to the upper apartment. he's already moved his things and said he won't be back. it wouldn't be as good the second time around, that she's sure of. there would have to be (as always) someone else. she goes back in and fixes herself breakfast----5 grain cereal heated until all the water is cooked out and toast with peanut butter and sliced banana, then dresses. she'll probably see her colleague in about an hour, and oddly, she wants to look good for him. for the first time she considers him in a sexual light. their working relationship had been deteriorating even

before yesterday, and now she's just beginning to connect the dots. when he calls he asks her if she wouldn't mind his skipping coming over today, he's feeling depressed. she pauses while thinking what next to do, then says, "I could come over to your place. we don't have to work. maybe I can cheer you up." "ok" she brushes her hair and changes into a shorter, tighter, skirt. she can't completely comprehend, given the sex she's already had, why she's suddenly and fully aroused. but now it's her intent to have singularly sweeping, uncompromising sex with him. she slides her feet into 5 inch heels. when she arrives, he promptly feels a rushher inviting legs, her brushed hair, her heaving breasts, her face flushed. "would you like to fuck me?" his penis strains, his heart throbs. she seduces him, commanding every motion with a subtly taunting lascivious edge – with her mouth, spread thighs, and smoldering hips, smothering his face with her hair and lips, as her firm, delicate cage dips and hotly stays, and he, unable to hold off, quickly and loudly comes. but she's nowhere done, and holding him in a vise, placing his hands on either side of her pelvis, fucks him, slowly, deliberately, relentlessly, until he involuntarily rises and comes again, as she arrives and crashes into spasms of abstractions.

pleased and satisfied, she separates from him, and modestly pulling down her skirt, lays on her back. she lays there a long time, fresh forms flowing in her head, then leans over and starts to kiss him tenderly, but he pulls away. puzzled, she sits up, reaches into her purse and pulls out a packet of chewing gum, offers him a stick, as she puts one into her mouth. he snorts, brushing her hand away. "you're just a

nympho, slut, and a tramp, who'll sleep with anyone." she should be surprised at his reaction, but she's not. she should feel hurt, but she doesn't, and not wanting further conflict to eat into her satisfaction, she gets up, momentarily considers slapping him hard, and leaves.

outside, the day is as appealing as when she left, only the anticipation signaled by the chirping birds has yielded to a thoughtful, still tender, consideration of nuances. but it's hard to reconcile it to the behavior of the source of the pleasure and relief she's now feeling. she's never before experienced such fundamental power, not even from the marathon matinee of the preceding day, because there it was mutual, and part of that thrill, she can now admit, was adulterous. she's very tired, but still happy, happier than she's been since she was a small girl, aware that her heart, mind, and body, have spoken up for freedom and openness, and she doesn't intend to turn back. there's a desire to go somewhere and share. but the initial charge is beginning to dissipate, and as the dullness of depletion sets in, she decides to go back to her apartment and get more sleep.

she timidly opens the door to the office-suite at American Apparel's downtown L.A. facility, and is greeted by a tenured employee, and led to a high ceiling, white walled space of the warehouse, where a thin grey haired man (who she'll later discover is in his 70s) is being photographed wearing a grey short sleeve 'gym' shirt and green running shorts. their eyes connect as she passes, and she smiles brightly – somehow the delight of seeing a man that age under the klieg lights, scantily clothed, dissolves the slight foreboding she's been feeling

(mostly casting couch anxiety). oddly, she's buoyed by the sensation he may turn out to be a confident, or even a soul mate. she's to model a short, pleated, navy blue skirt, and lemony tank top, for an ad – at AP they tend to lean over backwards (so to speak) when it comes to exposing legs, and even more, butts. in this she envies the older man whose most discreet selling point is his age. his shoot ends halfway through hers, and when he returns, momentarily, after dressing into his jeans and a long sleeve maroon t shirt, she's standing around between shots, tanned skin deliciously showing through a thin as paper, clingy beige wrapper, there's the inevitable erotic surge, and he resolves then and there he's going to hit on her at the earliest possible moment. and her anything but dissuading smile tells him that moment may be close at hand. a modicum of discretion does seem to be called for, however. after lounging in the office for a while, knowing sooner or later she has to pass through, he gets up to go, just as she fortuitously enters, and smiling, heads towards the door, brushing her shoulder against his arm as he holds the door open for her, enabling them to walk out together. he watches her legs as they descend the stairs leading to the street. it's got to be now, he thinks. in a few moments she'll be gone. why does the burden of what to do almost always fall on the man? it's an extremely hot day, a little muggy. maybe he should ask her if she'd like to join him for a drink. he's a vegetarian and a non-drinker, so it would have to be a juice bar. but the banality of that most likely would dissipate the remnants of passion he senses they still both feel from watching each other 'perform' partially undressed. no, it would better to be open and honest. from the direction they're coming from in the lot, her car is closer

than his. they stop and both hesitate. she smiles warmly, enigmatically, perhaps a little wantonly, as if she's waiting for him to say or do something more to bring their initial meeting to a conclusion. "how did you happen to get this gig? do you model professionally...are you with an agency?" "no, I was in their West Hollywood store and someone there asked me if I'd like to model. I imagine that's typical of how it's done. but it surprised me because most of their models seem to be barely legal," she says, her eyes flashing mischievously, "and I don't wear leg warmers, leotards, etc., but they've always sold skirts and dresses and they've gotten so big they're appealing to a wider demographic now, and you?" "I sent a photo, just head and shoulders, windswept hair, standing on a deck overlooking a field, along with a pitch as to how they could benefit from using an 'older' man to model their clothes, to their model email address. they called me, saying they were interested in the idea, and to come down." "oh, I really like that." by this time his ardor for her has built to the point of imploding. he can't think of anymore hooks to reel her in. he knows the torment he'll go through just waiting for the next opportunity, good a beginning as this has been – there's even the possibility he'll never see her again – and tossing rationality aside, he decides to level with her. meanwhile a carefully masked struggle has been taking place in her as well, as to whether she should forestall for a possible future advantage, or give in to their mutually stirred up passions, and when he practically blurts out, "I can't keep my eyes off you. I just don't want to let you go, yet," she's already decided on the latter. they stand quietly, close together, the late afternoon light making shapes on them through a dilapidated elm. "I don't want this to be a cheap

thrill," she says, softly. "I saw you as a soul mate when I passed through your shoot, earlier." he nods. upon reflection, she realizes that at the behest of this almost totally male dominant enterprise, her reflexes have been uncharacteristically submissive today. she understands that subsequently, part of her attraction to him is identification, that psychologically they're equals and she determines to reassert herself. "I'll follow you to your place so you can leave off your car. then I'll take you to my place. is that agreeable?," she crisply asks. "more than," he gratefully accepts.

"pay up now or it's your skin and your wife's as well." "I don't have it." then one of them turns and looks at the man's wife. he turns to the other man and they both smile. "nye-plokho (not bad)," the other man says. the man's wife stands there, dense, natural strawberry-blonde curls, brown eyes, medium height and solid build, with compact, smooth skin, wearing a very short red and white checkered skirt, white button down blouse, and white heels, gorgeous by most men's standards, blushing lightly, nervously twirling a curl around her finger. "we're giving you a choice. we'll let you off the hook, this time, if you let us fuck your wife." stunned, he tries to stall them. "what if she says no?" "then you are dead. we can have it both ways you know," the first man warns. "that would be a lot more dangerous," her husband replies, looking helplessly at his wife, knowing she's the only card he has to play. "I'll go with them," she tells him, then looks away. "you won't bother us after that?," she asks, "the slate will be clean?" "that's right." "what are you going to have me do?" "anything we want you to do. there will be no objections. but don't worry, we're not going to hurt you.

.....we're just going to fuck you. we're not kinky fellows." both of them laugh. as her husband starts to rise she emphatically motions for him to stop. "ok," she says, then leads them to the bedroom which is joined by an adjacent bathroom and rear door leading to the patio. they close and lock the door. "what if he leaves or calls 911," the second man asks. "he can leave if he wants, but he's not going to do anything if he cares about his wife," responds the other. her face remains deadpan except for a slight flicker in her eyes. "besides he'd be in as much trouble as we would be." they survey the bedroom with approval, voyeuristically noting the personal knickknacks, family photos, the bed. "very comfortable," the second man says, admiring its plush size and solid oak frame, "maybe we should include it in the payment." they tell her to sit on the edge, then pull her fluffy skirt up to her waist and s l o w l y pull down her panties, dropping it to the floor. then the first man bends his head down and eats her. "drop your shoes," he says. she does, with a clatter. they yank her skirt off, then pull her to her feet, and carefully pass her back and forth, groping her breasts and rapaciously kissing her mouth. "female animal I adore you," sings the second man. "is this what you `boys' are going to do to taunt me to death," she cries, breathlessly, scared, her face beet red, but not entirely from anger. "no, we're just trying to make you hot. we want you to respond. we want to satisfy you, else there would be no satisfaction for us." "you're raping me." "that's right. your husband should have thought about that before he ripped us off." they take off their clothes. the trim, naked bodies excite her. then they stand, front and back, sandwiching her between them. the one in front tears off her blouse, ripping the fabric and popping the

buttons. "we'll buy you a better one," he jests, unfastening her bra, and ceremoniously dumps it on the floor. he lifts her in his arms, crushing her against him, hotly and fervently, kissing her. they lay her on her back, the full length of the bed, and while one leans over from behind, kissing her lips, the other gently massages her pubic hair and clit, until, yes, she's wet. "now are you ready?" tears in her eyes she nods. "as soon as you get all the satisfaction we can give, we'll stop," he assures her. he fluffs the pillow under her head, raises her legs, and glides in his cock, and in long, even strokes moves in her. keeping in mind his advice, she joins him, and they densely fuck and come almost simultaneously. she stretches out and they lay there on their backs. that was so good he's tempted to let her go with that. but the second man has not had his due. he nods to the second man who sardonically responds, "if you can spare your 'girlfriend' for a moment." the second man pulling her up, turns her over, rolls on a lubed condom, and spreading her buttocks, thrusts into her anus. the first man opens the window, letting in the night air, then turns off the lights. moving quietly the second man fucks her until he comes. he tosses the filled rubber out the window to splash in the bushes. hopefully they'll be done with her, she thinks, as the three of them lay there, listening to the light distant traffic. the second man gets off the bed, and she and the first man kiss and pet. "one thing more we're going to have you do then we'll let you go." "what if I don't want to?" "you have no choice." he props her up to a sitting position, settling her back against the wall, then leans forward, pressing his penis to her lips, and as it rises, she takes it into her mouth, and while the second man caresses her nipples, she blows him fervently, with nuanced

delicacy, until he comes deeply and she swallows. by this time the second man is erect again, and taking the first man's place, he runs the head along the crevice of her lips until her mouth opens involuntarily, slides it fully in and she holds it there, blowing him sesually. but just before he reaches an orgasm he carefully pries open her mouth with his hands, pulls it out, and as it pulsates and lurches, he shoots the filmy substance across her forehead, cheeks, and nose, then spent, leans back with a sigh. she reaches for the tissue box on the night table. "is there anything else we can do for you?," the first man asks. "lay back," she tells him, wiping her face. she squats and straddles him. then, dangerously, given her and her husband's situation, let's go a warm stream, peeing all over him. he starts up, then laughs. "hey, I like your spirit, a bath is just what I needed." they both laugh. "keep it coming." and she does, urinating on his face. the two men then shower, dress, and stealthily slip out the back door.

she unlocks and peeks open the bedroom door and tiptoes into the living room. as soon as she sees him she throws herself into his arms and starts to weep. "I'm going to kill them," he rages, anticlimactically asserting himself. "then it would be all for naught." "how do you know they won't still be after us?" "I don't. but we know what would have happened if I hadn't.. I tried to give them what they wanted. the worst part of it is that I enjoyed it, at least parts, even though they were brutes." "is that really the worst part?" "no," she quickly confesses. "sex, at least if it's not insensitive or violent, and some of it was violent, it was all the result of force, can almost always be pleasure, if you let it – it seemed to be the only recourse. I think one of them had a crush on

me.” “did you have a crush on him?” “definitely not. there are things we allow and want to do, consensually, which can still be a burden because we have to make the decision and then come through, but when you have no choice that burden is removed.” “don’t feel guilty, you’ll be horny again, and you’ll have me, or maybe more to the point, I’ll have you.” “the worst part, I fear, is they may want more, in that way hold us hostage.” he shakes his head “maybe we should report it, come clean, try to make some kind of plea deal.” “not after what I had to do,” she says, looking hard into his eyes. “I wish I had paid more attention to what you were doing.” “it’s my fault for not being more open. the thing that gets me is I was thinking while you were in there, of all those ‘fuck my wife’ porn sites that prey on horny, impotent men.” “then you identified?” “I don’t know. sex in all of its manifestations is seductive.” “well, we have love, and I’m all yours. I would fuck you now. through all this hanky-panky I only had one orgasm. It’s crazy, maybe it’s escape from pain, but I’m horny.” “why don’t we?” “on our bed?” “yes, we’ll open the window change the” she starts to cry again. “what is it?” “nothing,” she says, and kisses him.

“what do you think about having dinner first?” “I haven’t much appetite right now.” “neither do I but I’d rather get dinner out of the way. I haven’t eaten since breakfast. I don’t imagine you have, either.” “I haven’t, but that just makes my senses more acute. it’s usually that way when I’m aroused. sex just takes over to the point of obliterating all other functions. then, afterwards, whatever we do can be more leisurely and enjoyable.” “I’m not sure I want there to be an afterwards.” “he wonders which of them is attempting

to unconsciously trigger an escape mechanism. “are you a vegan?” “no.” “then strawberries and yogurt would do? I’ll fix some garlic bread, too.” “yes, in this weather that would be perfect.” “we’ve just had, and resolved, our first argument,” she beams. she’s definitely worth the wait he thinks. but he’s frustrated to the degree he can’t pleasurably focus on anything else. as dusk approaches it’s still warm enough to sit outside and eat their meal on the patio under the backdrop of the nearby hillside. “were you wearing running shorts or briefs?” “running shorts, but it’s all the same to them.” “what do you do when you’re not showing your skinny legs?” “I write and do visual art.” “what do you write about?” “situations like this.” she laughs. “how about you?” “I write scripts for movies and TV...usually with another writer. my end of it is mostly research and technical. right now, though, I guess you could say I’m taking a hiatus. it’s not something I really want to do.” “what about modeling?” “I doubt very much will come of that. but it does get closer to what my concerns are – the objectification of image. that’s what attracted me to you.” they go back in. the sky as viewed from the windows is still mostly white, but her living room is three quarter dark. they stand at opposite ends, two silhouettes, contemplating sex. she was right. he’s much more relaxed and at the same time more into it. she flips on the radio, then lights several candles. it’s almost 8 and the *axis of justice radio* is on the station she’s arbitrarily tuned to. a *system of a down* track is playing. standing provocatively from across the room, the candle light flickers on the wall and warmly on her clothes and face. a cut later they go to Alice Cooper’s, *school’s out*, definitely not his cup of tea, but with her standing, facing him, candlelight flickering on her cheeks,

the drive of the song becomes his vehicle to drive her.

2 hours later, they sit naked in the kitchen. shivering slightly, she boils up a pot of water for Chai tea. "what are your plans for tomorrow?" "completely open as usual. I'm free." "so am I. like I said before, I'm in-between." "then you can stay with me tonight?" "I've no choice, unless you want to take me back." "it's cooling off, what do you want me to wear?" "just the wrapper you were wearing between shots. my former wife looked good in just a wrapper. I took a photo of her in it, hanging open in the front. a friend, a gay man, when he was over, saw it, and told her, "I'd like to fuck the shit out of you." "a nice time to tell me you were married. you just wear that maroon shirt. if we need to have a quickie later it will be easier.." through all this quotidian nonsense, it's like they've been together forever. the early part of the day seems like years ago, and tomorrow doesn't yet exist. "when you talked about glamour this evening it got to my obsessions as well." "I know that. I felt from the moment I saw you we were soul mates." "I'm conflicted about my reliance on, attraction to, glamour. I keep feeling I need to get beyond that. I watch a lot of videos of young female performers on YouTube, and I've written a short piece about it. I'd like you to read it and tell me what you think." "ok. I have similar conflicts, but you shouldn't let fear drive you away from your instincts, if they're carefully thought out, no matter how weird other people think you are. whatever it is you want from it will stop being relevant when it ceases to be of use. men are attracted to me but I don't know that they see me as beautiful." "beauty is the realization of a set of values each individual holds. my concern is the degree with which I relate

it to youth. was Keats really saying, 'truth is youth'?" "I hope not." "we're here, we're not here, that's all there is. it goes back to my not having had much satisfaction on that level when I was 'dating' age. I've a desire to throw all my books away." "and start over?" "no, I did that once before, for the sake of survival and an inner vision. what I mean now is just give it up and stop trying to 'say' anything." they fall silent and don't talk the rest of the night/morning. then they go to bed, and tucking themselves in together with the spent traces of perfume, cologne, the fishy smell of cunt, musky odor of moldy balls, Hansel and Gretel gratefully slip into slumber.

"would you like to go to my place?" "that was next on my list." "what do you have after that?" "let's see, first." as they walk through the garden she points to the for rent sign in the window of the upper apartment. "I had sex with the former tenant the day he moved. I didn't know his name. just the last name on the mailbox...Bercowitz." "is there any particular reason you're telling me this?" "I don't know," she replies, slipping her arm in his and hugging it tightly 'till they reach the garage. she then turns and faces him. "I'm not a nympho." "I didn't think you were," he says, and kisses her with feeling.

"I'm not horny but I'd like to have sex with you, now, here in your apartment before we leave. just to balance things out. I know we're both satisfied, but I'd like to lay with you on your bed, with you inside me. we don't have to have orgasms," she says, her eyes inexplicably tearing. he responds tenderly, his penis thickening. "I'll feel complete now."

The Tyranny Of Glamour

I was looking at Charlotte Gainsbourg's video, Heaven Can Wait, trying to calculate, what is, and what is the function of, glamour, where she simply appears in an array of different clothes and essentially the same pose, in conjunction with, or in contrast to, the action around her. although, while she can effectively sing in a whisper, in this album, which is mostly Beck's, her voice is little more than a sound source in the mosaic. there is an arresting visual quality – as an actress she's good at doing this – deep brown eyes convey a poignancy that can make you care, along with a cool, but modest, sensuality, that implies she's somewhere else. but is she, really, just fodder for the machine? with the sensitivity to create nuances, it's the tyranny of glamour that draws us to her, glamour as the dictionary defines it - 'the quality of fascinating, alluring or, attracting—esp. by a combination of charm and good looks'. then is Man Ray's photo of surrealist, Max Ernst (hardly a male hunk), whose face literally radiates luminous energy, glamour? or Irving Penn's early photos which turned female models into emotional stone? without going into Gainsbourg's relationship with her father, the sensitivity she projects is more than just sensual, but an illusion of sex is the selling point. can glamour protect or sustain it? I doubt it. I've seen only the trailer to her most recent movie, Anti-Christ (for which she's received awards for best actress), and it's clear as an actress in a demanding role she can go way beyond the pop confection image of this video. and more to the point, what effect does it (and all the other videos) have on the viewer other than to provoke a helpless want that can't be redeemed? add to this mix social adeptness and money (virtue of the listener/viewer having

bestowed fame and celebrity status onto the performer), allowing the performer to become part of a network of an otherwise inaccessible stratified social elite. and what is the viewer/listener getting in return? for most, nothing more than vicarious identification, for some, possibly, inspiration, or at least, motivation, to achieve a similar status and recognition. there's also a second strata to the construct, i.e. second generation celebrity off-springs of producers performers, musicians, even artists (royalty, I've read), whose entire lives have been shaped and informed by both privilege and art, and who, as a result, enjoy, increasingly, social and cultural prominence.

“this is pretty loaded, Jerry. you deliberately confuse glamour with social manipulation.” “well, my definition of glamour is that which is desirable but inaccessible. wants to effect without contact. it's ultimately an oxymoron. you can't deny this is its function. therefore one has to ask, what is it compensating for? do we need icons? do we need to respond to the charisma of others, no matter how much it's determined by our own projections? though to deny it, I admit, can just be sour grapes.” “I think you needlessly burden yourself. it's worked so far with us. if you really think that glamour is an illusion, then why do you pursue it?” “it's elusive.” “do you believe in anything?” “I guess I believe in love.” “I guess that's why I love you.”

as yet, he hasn't expressed to Elena the appreciation he feels for her....sensible, affectionate, smart, open, honest. yes, it reads like a dating questionnaire. but what he most values is her discretion.

"Shara," Elena mouths. "what a beautiful name. what does it mean?" "it means open in Hebrew. what does Elena mean?" "I don't know, torch, bright light, something like that." Elena and Shara are sitting on deck chairs atop a downtown loft, sipping mineral water, talking, and taking in the view.. "you're gorgeous," Elena says, "have you done much modeling?" "none at all before this. we need the money." "who's we?" "my husband and I. we were in a very difficult situation." "in what way?" "I'm not sure I want to talk about it right now," pauses, then says, "so are you." "I am what?" "gorgeous," Shara replies, looking intently at Elena, eliciting a minute, involuntary thrill in her. "it's nice sitting here looking at the other rooftops. when your eye is level with it it's like a parallel universe," Elena says, not sure how to respond. "yes, I like it too. can you stay a while longer?" "it will be a while before I'm to meet my boyfriend." "what does your boyfriend do?" "he's a writer and an artist. he models here, too. he's in this week's L.A. Weekly ad." Shara's face lights up. "I'll have to check that out. how old is he?" "seventy-five....are you sure you wouldn't like to talk about it?" "my husband was involved with some Russian ecstasy traffickers. they got burned and held him responsible. first they threatened to kill the both of us, then offered to let us off the hook if I'd have sex with them. I had no choice. they raped me," she finishes, matter-of-factly. "did your husband burn them?" "I don't know. let's forget that." Elena nods. she's become increasingly fascinated with this woman in the clingy red dress, the perfect set, and the long golden curls, as they relax in the mitigated heat. she's aware that Shara's stares are getting longer and more personal. afternoon is fast becoming evening, and when she gets up to leave, Shara gets

up too, and stands in front of her, blocking her path. a gentle breeze is blowing the strands of their hair. Shara is standing close enough they're almost touching. then she clasps her fingers on Elena's shoulders and draws her to her. Elena's heart beats wildly as Shara kisses her, first mouth to mouth, then pushes her tongue deep inside. they separate with a sigh. "have you ever been kissed by a woman before?" "not with that intent." "come down with me," Shara implores, fondling Elena's breast. "I can't, I have to, want to, meet my boyfriend. we have plans for tonight," she replies, pulling away. "of course," Shara says, then closes the space between them and kisses her again, this time lifting Elena's skirt and running her fingers along Elena's upper thigh, sending a chill through her. "is it so important to be there you won't call him and tell him you can't make the appointment?," she whispers into Elena's ear. they look at each other for what seems an eternity before Elena says, "give me your cell." they descend several flights of stairs, then enter a small flat filled with art objects. Elena's mind is going a mile a minute. why is she so submissive, evidently, with women, when she's generally assertive with men, her boyfriend included? "what if your husband comes?" "he's never been here. we don't live here." "where do you live," Elena asks, breathlessly. "we have a house in an upscale neighborhood, but unless we can dig up some money fast, we won't make the next mortgage payment." "then what do you do here?" "I make a little money. men will do anything when they see a woman's naked legs and a garter. are we going to be grown up about this or should I undress you?" "let's be grown up," beginning to acclimate herself, Elena surprises herself by saying. naked, they embrace, kiss, and suck each other's nipples, then lay

together on pillows, making out, fingering each other, and finally eating each other. this is not that much different than having sex with a man, she thinks, except the aura is different. that something she felt outdoors on the roof has pretty much dissipated, but the erotic need present in any sex is reaching irreversible proportions. if this is going to result in anything satisfying to her, she's going to have to stop vying for control and let Shara loose. she grabs Shara's arm and pulls her up to her. rubbing her breasts against hers, she sticks her tongue in Shara's mouth, then in her ear. "when are you going to fuck me, " she says, her heart pounding. Shara leads, practically drags, Elena to the bedroom, closes the door and gently dumps her on the bed. she goes to the bathroom and returns with a jar of Vaseline, opens it, dips a finger in slightly, then rubs it up and down. she approaches the bed, raises Elena's legs, first massaging her genital orifice, then plunges it into her anus, moving her finger in and out and sideways, as Elena writhes with pleasure. then she gets off the bed, goes to the dresser, and opening a drawer, pulls out a 6 inch strap-on. carefully greasing it, she fastens the straps around her crotch and abdomen, then turns off the lights and moves back to the bed. she slides it into an expecting and waiting Elena's vagina, and sinks into her. in the dark they intensely fuck until Elena comes in deep throes, Shara following with a short, sharp, clitoral orgasm. of course, like many other 'liberated' women she's used sex toys at times, but the onanistic nature of those occasions provided for an intimacy that left her unprepared for the cold and crudely erotic sensations the hard , inanimate object moving inside her had caused. they lay there quietly before getting up and turning on the lights. then they return to the front room and

dress, slowly, before going down to the street where their cars are parked. standing by her car with Shara, she recalls the ritual of standing by her car with Jerry that first afternoon and the strange sensation makes her dizzy. then the 'girl with the strawberry curls' draws her to her and kisses her one final time. they remain silent until Elena gets into her car, feeling like a slut, wanting more, feeling she's been had.

driving back to the Westside, she's too mesmerized to define either her state or her values, and when she gets to West Hollywood, she decides to drive further west to Jerry's apartment in Santa Monica. he's glad to see her. he puts up a pot for tea. they sit in the front room. she tells him everything. "do you think I betrayed you?" "not at all. you haven't deceived me. it would be different if it was a man," he acknowledges. "I would then have expected frankness beforehand. I'm not sure that's more logical, but I guess it defines our unstated commitment." "yes, but what if it happened with a man like it happened with her. totally unexpected or premeditated on my part?" "like I said, I think that would violate our unstated commitment to each other." "I agree. do you still love me.?" "I feel no different toward you than I did before, Elena, but I don't think that's the issue. the issue is not what I do, but what you do. you gave in to an evidently irresistible passion. now, what do you do about it?" "I don't see why I necessarily have to do anything about it." "that's definitely an option. you haven't deceived me, but she evidently deceived her husband. that seems to be the kind of relationship they have, from what you've told me, which is why they're in the trouble they're in." "that's true, but it isn't just the sex part. men are still more attractive to me in that

way. it was the fascination, the disembodied lure. I can't say I fully understand it." "in a way, it's like when we were talking about romance, glamour. it's what's forbidden." "then it isn't what we did, but that it was forbidden." "well, now that it's no longer forbidden you have to face what's there. she seduced you. I know that was part of the thrill. but how much of it was payback for what they did to her?" "I can't say they were related. she kept a dildo in her dresser. I don't suppose this was her first coadunation with a female." "that doesn't change her possible motivation. we all like to talk about pan sexuality, but....." "well, one thing's for certain, I felt I needed to have the experience. I could have stopped her." "I totally agree with that." "can I stay with you tonight?" I don't think that would be a good idea. I think you need to face the void, alone, if that's what you created." she fights back an urge to cry. he walks out with her to her car and kisses her with all the tenderness he can muster and goes back in. then she bursts into tears. but it's very comforting driving east down Santa Monica Blvd., alone, except for a small number of cars, and the aura of her evening with Shara returns. not the hard sex, but her image, flashes of red in her brain. maybe it's just fascination, but it's real. now she's fucked a woman. was it wrong? no. it was sensual, it was pleasure, it was a thrill. and there's still this issue of glamour, even strangeness, she and Jerry still need to explore. the aura matters. it's an integral part of vision. but though Shara's beautiful, and she admires her assertiveness, he's probably right about her deceptiveness and desperation. one would have to have a need equal to hers to go all the way with it, and she doesn't. but she knows the sexual quest for something new, undefined (undefinable?), will continue.

the lure of a moonlit evening, the swooning kisses, the intimate seduction. the ornate description in the pulp romance novel imitations of moments in Flaubert's, *Madame Bovary*, are exaggerations because that context of behavior is no longer forbidden in relationships between men and women, and is, therefore, no longer sufficient in itself, to allow for the rapture that behavior was meant to evoke. as a result, for examples, the song in David Lynch's movie, *Blue Velvet*, *the mystery of love*, the *Doors*, *moonlight drive*, etc., are attempts to sustain the aura of desire by pushing the forbidden to greater extremes.

as he enters he catches out of the corner of his eyes the glances of an unusually attractive woman cast in his direction. he looks around first to determine if they're for someone else, but as he walks by her table she looks up again, and says, "you're Jerry." he stops abruptly, sits down. it's not the first time since the American Apparel ad that young, attractive women have singled him out, but they're mostly very young. he's pretty sure he knows who she is by Elena's description, and having more than one reason for wanting to meet her, he asks if he might join her. when she smiles at him with those disarming brown eyes, it's like when he first saw Elena, he's hooked. "Elena told me about you , Jerry, and the Weekly ad was so sexy." he nods, neither out of vanity nor modesty, but out of a fear he can't back it up. "I was pretty sure I knew who you were, too." it's now Shara's turn, wondering how much did Elena tell him, to draw a blank. "she told me everything." "reddening slightly she nods and sips her mocha. "I'm glad she did." by now the lunch crowd is beginning to filter in and the small space quickly fills up. more than one

man gives her hard stares as if she's sitting alone. he's used to this with Elena. they think he's her father, grandfather, friend, mentor, anything but her lover, and even if it was true, how gross. Shara joyfully takes it all in and they both laugh. after returning with a blended fruit drink from the counter, he asks her over the din, if she's not doing anything at the moment, if she'd like to go somewhere quiet where they could talk. they pick up their drinks and leave. "where's your car?" "home. I didn't feel like driving today." "then why don't we ride up to Griffith Park. there's a blanket in the trunk we can sit on." she's wearing a lime green print summer dress with ruffled collar and open bodice, that clings to her waist and hips, showing plenty of leg, and white heels. but her name, Shara, is the color of her lipstick, red. choosing a spot on the grass near the lip of some trails, they settle, comfortably. "I suppose we should begin with what happened with me and Elena, other than I like her very much, except that we wouldn't be sitting here if it wasn't for that, and, naturally, I think we're both curious about one another." "right." "how did you meet Elena?" "same way you did, at American Apparel." "have you known her for long?" "no, just a few months, but we're very close." "it can happen that way. in fact, it usually does." "what about you and your husband?" "we love each other, but we're both players. I think that's what you're asking." "yes." "it's more compartmentalization than deception. we don't communicate very well verbally, and I have an allure. it's always been that way." "you're one of the most gorgeous women I've ever laid my eyes on," he says, giving her a frank stare. she blushes, obligingly, then says, "Elena's response to my looks was much the same." "what is it like to make love to a woman?" I

should ask you that," she icily replies. "I asked for that." "with Elena, it was both her looks and innocence." "she's lived a relatively sheltered life compared to the life you've lived, I imagine." "I was raised in a foster home. it wasn't a bad place. they treated me well. there was strict adherence to Orthodox Jewish law." "how is it you were orphaned?" my parents were vacationing on the Great Lakes. their rented boat capsized. investigators said there were signs of a scuffle. neither of them were wearing life jackets." "you had no relatives?" "not in this country." "how old were you?" "six." "how long did you live there?" "until I was fourteen." "they didn't put you up for adoption?" "they tried. I ran away, several times. having to make another transition frightened me." "what did you do after that?" "they arranged tuition, including room and board to an all-girls school. I was able to get a high school diploma along with a work permit, early." "did you go to college?" "yes." "would you like some of my drink?" he hands it to her. she swallows, then hands it back to him. there's no getting around it, he wants her. the humanizing element only acts as ballast. from what he can tell she's actually doing pretty well. "I feel like right now I'm out on a very serious date with you." "so do I. I care very much what you think of me." "but you didn't when you came on to Elena," he says, risking the rapport they've established. "that's true, a person has to be there, or I have to at least know them for me to care. I'm Hopi in that way. I'm afraid I don't have the ideals either you or Elena have." "that sounds a little patronizing." "no, I mean it. are you Jewish?" "yes. for all the differences in your physical makeup and personalities, I perceive there's something similar in your sexuality and Elena's. something hidden and

forbidden." "I think you're saying we're both women." but he won't give up the point. "she attended Parochial schools, even boarded there for a while, all the way up to college. so maybe it has something to do with that." "maybe you put too much emphasis on background." "maybe. I was moved by your story." "I know you were. you're very sweet....sexy." "where shall we go?" "why don't I leave it up to you." "I think a hotel would be best. I know one in a hilly spaced out area northeast of downtown, with a cactus garden. the clerk is an artist I'm friendly with." "will you take me home afterwards? I don't think I'll be in the mood to ride the metro rail." "silly question." they get up and together fold the blanket. the look in her brown eyes soaking up the sunlight is one of amusement, and he can't help thinking the reason she's going to allow having sex with him is compensation for her having seduced Elena. at almost every red light and stop sign on the way there they pet and kiss. she slides her hand under his t shirt, resting her palm on his heart, and leaves it there. "maybe I should tell him first," he cautions, as they pull up to a palm lined three story stucco building with a red tile roof, next to acres of sandy lots. "I shouldn't think that would be necessary," she curtly responds. his friend greets them warmly, and as the hotel is almost empty, gives them the suite furthest back which opens to the cactus garden. after they sign the register, before they can pay, he turns and says with a twinkle, "on the house." "you've just earned a free massage," she responds, squeezing his arm as he hands them the key. "this is kind of an amazing place," he says, holding her hand as he opens the door. the room does have a Southwest ambience. the floor is Spanish tile. a large ceramic pot is painted in geometric designs, and his friend's

earth colored abstractions are on the walls. the room floods with light when he opens and lifts the blinds, exposing the garden. "do you think we should leave them open? what if someone goes out there?" "I'll angle them so we can just see out. that way there will still be light coming in. my `friend' was so generous I'm more worried there's a hidden camera." "don't say that" he opens the small refrigerator. there are bottles of water and glasses on the sink. "are you thirsty?" "a little." they both drink. she puts her purse on the dresser, then she sits on the edge of the bed, and leans back, a bit wearily, and a sudden feeling of pathos for her comes over him. her brown eyes raise to his. he walks over to the bed, lifts her in his arms, and kisses her, tenderly. "I don't want this to be a cheap thrill," she whispers, softly. what he may have heard in what movie? is he hallucinating? the feeling quickly dispels itself as they begin to seriously make out. he's bare bottom, she's barefoot, wearing only her dress, heads and necks together, like a prom couple posing for a portrait, smiling, laughing at their reflections in the floor length mirror. she unfastens the beret that was propping up her hair in the back, letting it fall in streams onto her neck, as they fuck while looking at themselves in the mirror, then stop, momentarily, while she reaches in her purse and pulls out a tube of lipstick, and with his palm on her nipples, they resume fucking as she writes on the mirror, then slashes a streak on his face. he takes it from her and slashes hers, then carries her, kicking, to the bed, pulls up her dress to her crotch and eats her `till her face flushes, then grabs hold of her ankles, and bending her legs at the knees, sucks her painted toes, sliding his tongue along the soles of her feet, making her shiver. too hot to stop she shimmies to the

center of the mattress and they, for lack of a better word, screw, until they both quickly and sharply come. "I'm glad we got that out of the way," she says, as they lay back with relief. "let's put on our underwear so we can open up the blinds all the way. in fact we can sit outside in the garden." "shouldn't we dress?" "it would be sexier if we didn't. nobody's going to come out." "I don't know how you know that." sitting side by side they sun themselves. she, hair down, eyes bright, face flushed, in her lace bra that covers only a portion of her breasts and lace panties, is a woodsy nymph. he, in just his shorts is a blemished, hoary Pan like creature, yet magnetic to her, as she wraps an arm around his shoulder and massages his chest.. scent of dry chaparral. warm flesh on stone, like snails in the sun after a rain. shadow forms from a grove of leafy palms splay architecture on their faces. a cool, even light on the pores of their skin heightens a detached presence. no words to describe the aura, a cool, deep breath, all there, all gone. "let's leave the blinds open," he says, when they go back in. "let's close them," she replies, sternly. "you're right." he closes them all the way. they remove their underwear. her nipples are erect. "would you like me to put my dress back on so you can fuck me in it?" "I don't want anything between us." "is there a radio in here?" he points to a tuner on top of a small table. "turn it on to something savage." she settles back on the mattress and he lays on her, soaking in the firm, soft warmth of her body. his penis, because of the way she actively receives it, feels thick and strong. they kiss and fuck until the clothes piled next to them begins to clog, and he has to slide out and lay on his side, while she gets up and places them on a chair. but the pause allows them to refresh, and when she lays back as he sinks

again into her, they fuck this time without obstruction, her fingers in his hair, nipples against his chest, their inner rhythms getting more and more intense, until they finally reach the completeness of orgasm their playful insouciance had precluded. for a short time neither of them speak. then he says, "with this ambience I feel like we should put on our shorts, hats, and sunglasses, and go out and photograph rocks before dinner."

"you're a good lover because you're sensitive. I'm a good lover because I'm sensual. there's a difference," she says, sitting on the border of the bed crossing her legs before pulling on the pair of sheer hose she's taken from her purse, making him, even afterwards, aroused. "I wonder where you think these sensual feelings I'm having now are coming from." "it's your sensitivity to my sensuality." "can't we have both?"

"I love my husband. he's had a hard life too." "was he born here," he thinks to ask. "he was born in Israel." "how did he get involved with the Mafiya?" "he ran a downtown rave in the nineties. it was very successful." "is that how you met him?" "yes." "are you still into that kind of thing?" "definitely not. you and I are more alike. you understand your feminine side and know how to use it. my husband is the opposite. he fights his feminine nature, so we're always in conflict. but I need someone who'll resist." "then that's why you love him?" "it's a bit more complicated than that. Elena is right for you. you and she emotionally meld." he doubts there's really a 'right for'. everything's a matter of context, timing, consciousness, empathy, and will. "was he that way on your night with them?" "they had the power. that's all."

she raises her arms and refastens the beret to her hair. "Elena said you sometimes do it for money." "you mean I'm a sex worker," she laughs. "it isn't the way it sounds. I usually don't fuck them. it's mostly visual. I tease them 'till they come. they have to pay for that. once they've come they're usually satisfied. most of them are impotent – voyeurs and Peeping Toms. I pull my dress up to my crotch. I let them feel my thighs and breasts, tug at my garter. I take great care with my image. I wear a lot of lipstick and stick my tongue in their ears. when they try to kiss me I pull away. at that point they usually ejaculate, making a mess in their pants, and sheepishly leave." "does this little scheme ever backfire?" "I was once beaten pretty badly. I've a therapist friend who sends me his clients. it's all above board. they usually get what they came for. it's more personal and intimate than going to a strip club." "you're shameless," he says. "aggravating their craves is not therapy." "would you like me to blow you?" "I don't want another orgasm." "just enough to make you feel good." "why not."

he's not at all a seducer by nature. the element of con completely turns him off. but he likes the immediacy of the rendezvous, when masked desire is stripped away, with a look and 'where shall we go', when the nuances are there although nothing has been discussed, of naked lust, which is the thrill, the anticipation, the knowledge, the certainty, there will be quick results.

when they reach her Lakewood Estates neighborhood, she has him stop a block before her street. "I want to say goodnight in a proper way, and I don't want to do it in front

of the house.” she turns and links her arms under his, and wraps them around his torso. she brings her lips to his and sucking them hard, inserts her tongue deeply, almost to the throat. then pulls out. “I wasn’t completely honest. I love you, too. and you’re a very good fuck.” when they get to her house, a sprawling single story ranch style house with a circular drive-way in front, as she starts to open the door, he urges, “why don’t you talk to him.” “you don’t understand, Jerry,” she says, and risking being seen, kisses him again, then quickly squirms out the door and walks briskly towards the driveway. after turning the car around he glances her way, and standing on the front doorstep, she waves. *love comes along like a popular song.* you can’t fight it.

driving onto the freeway ramp he thinks, she finally said my name. it’s interesting, in the end, their love making was so conventional, almost classically correct. with men, at least, she’s more vulnerable, not the wild woman she was with Elena. he’s still not sure why he’s so touched by her. part of it may be her willingness to ‘perform’. there’s a generosity in that. the difference between she, he, and Elena, is, while they can all love more than one person, Shara, because of what was lacking in her early life, is plagued with surprisingly monogamous values. his caveat is he can love only one woman at a time. one love, when it’s in focus, obliterates all others. very hard when you’re striving for emotional continuity. Elena, on the other hand, he believes, can love more than one man at once. it corresponds to her recently acquired attitudes of spontaneity and simultaneity. the ride back is predictably dreamlike. but re his advice to Shara, now it’s his turn to talk. he’s glad there’s currently a lull in activity

between he and Elena, partly due, ironically, to her recent liaison with Shara. he needs to absorb his `date' with Shara first, an experience he, admittedly, wants to savor. though it's just a different song in the same playbook.

Elena is surprisingly acquiescent. "who initiated it?," she wants to know. and when he tells her it was mutual, she doesn't seem too interested in the details. he's not sure whether she doesn't think it really matters, or if it's because hearing about it would be too painful. but as their day progresses, it becomes clear she's really hurt. her response is to withdraw into herself, and he decides to leave. "I'll call you later, Elena. you know we have to talk about it." "I don't know if I want to, you have a spiel for everything, Jerry." in the evening he calls her anyway. "why don't we let it go for a while just to see if it works itself out on its own," he half-heartedly suggests. "that's easy for you to say. you got what you wanted." "that's true, but it was spontaneous. when Shara came on to you, you thought about it first, before calling me." "I think we agreed if it had been a man it would have been a different commitment." he knows she's right about that, and with he and Shara it was more deliberate than Elena's responses to Shara's advances were. "yes, I admitted that was my feelings, but I also questioned the logic of it," he says, thinking they've both had affairs with Shara, and it isn't anymore his doing than it is theirs. "she fucked me, then let you fuck her," Elena lashes out. "I've a better idea, Jerry. let's stop seeing each other for a while, and see where that takes, or leaves, us." "ok."

he sees Shara again at American Apparel, and she tells him

she took his advice and talked to her husband, that things have opened up between them, and it would be nice if they could get together with he and Elena. he's elated at what she tells him, but his heart drops when he has to tell her he and Elena are not seeing each other. "does that have to do with us.?" "yes." "maybe I can talk to her. I think we'll both be here tomorrow." this place has certainly lived up to its reputation, he thinks, not without appreciation, though it's been alleged on a number of occasions they're not above sexually exploiting the younger, replaceable, girls. "I think it would be good for her to see you, but I doubt it would do any good." "they look into each other's eyes, then kiss, warmly. he knows if she asked him to go somewhere, anywhere, a motel on the moon, with her, he would. so much for regrets.

that one Weekly ad has opened up a myriad of possibilities. he's single handedly responsible for them reaching a whole new demographic, although he's not been commensurately compensated for it, now has an agent, groupie responses from strange females, although he doesn't have the knack to expedite it, and there's been talk about his scripting and starring in a related film by a famous and edgy Indie directorbut he misses Elena. like matter, love can neither be created nor destroyed. as time passes he's becoming acutely aware Elena is rejecting him. it's a particular blow because through all these years of physical and social denial, he's come to terms with the fact that love is the basis of his vision, the only thing he can fall back on...`the last defense' as Beat poet, John Wieners put it. and so, because of it the little success he's enjoying now, seems hollow. his writing is read by the fewest of people, mostly writers, who are free to

cop what they can, without revealing the source, and he has no real desire to show his art, mostly photos and drawings, without a context that has special meaning to him. one thing he enjoys about his present endeavors is they're social, the one thing that's been totally lacking for 40 years. but his loss is not sufficient for him to change the course which began even before he met her. most likely impossible for him to attain, now – fame, money, marriage, children, a long term relationship, all have fallen by the wayside. what is left? rhymes with the last word. and don't get him wrong, he has great respect for it.

just as his melancholy reaches its max, Elena calls. typically avoiding preliminaries, she asks, "Jerry, do you want to see me?" "of course," he replies, holding his breath. "have you eaten dinner, yet?" "no, I was just about to make dinner." "why don't you come over here. I've still got your sauce-less spaghetti recipe, and I'll make a salad." "when should I come?" "come now." when she opens the door she smiles in that same go for it all the way she did when they first met, and she's never looked more attractive to him, wearing a prickly, violet, pullover sweater. grey skirt, and black heels, a luminous pink delicately painting her lips. he succors her attractive legs and breasts, the flow of her hips. with Elena's legs, her calves, there's a heat that smolders. but there's something else, an unfathomable air, perhaps the result of sensory deprivation. "I'd assumed you'd given up on me." "I had, and I was wrong. every day since I decided not to see you that became more and more apparent." "I suppose you've been seeing other men." "no soul mates. what have you been doing?" "mostly work." "I've read a little about it.

I'm happy you're getting some attention." "did you see Shara? she said she'd talk to you." "she did." both their hearts are beating fast, but finely. they come together and quietly begin to make love. when they finally subside, it's closer to bedtime than dinner. "we can save the spaghetti for breakfast," he says, taking it for granted he's staying over. "we have to have something or we'll get sick." "tea and toast will do."

the issue of beauty is still there, and it has to be there. on the street he's getting glances he wasn't getting. Michael McClure wrote something to the effect that, as we change, our forms have to change. with, Jerry, however, it's the inner process which determines the shape. the last thing he focuses on is the external. but he agrees it's important. Elena is still young, pretty, wears the right clothes, has a consciousness equal to it, and image wise knows how to leave it alone. there's no such thing as ideal beauty. asymmetry is like the hooks in a song. it gives it character and edge. no two people are the same, nor respond exactly with the same standard. poet Alice Notely wrote, *dignify the world by being beautiful or seriously ugly*. on the surface all of this seems unfair. to the enlightened light shines on everything. but to deny beauty, as such, the result of refinement and luck, is also tragic. you don't perceive these things when you're horny. if the issue of 'glamour' still needs to be addressed, perhaps sometime in the future, he'll try again.

Soccer Girl

at Clover Park in Santa Monica where I (and a lot of others) exercise and run in the morning, there's a group of young ladies who play soccer. they appear to be mostly in their 20s and 30s with a few approaching middle age. their tone is one of independence/feminist. one of them, a thin girl with long dark hair and shades, who wears shorts but not the bulky athletic socks most of the others wear, I'm drawn to - soccer girl, sense of otherness I see in her. I think she's aware of my attraction to her - I'm her Krazy Kat, she's my Ignatz Mouse. situations like this leave me with an insatiable itch. she's not short yet petite, with small but distinct breasts and long dark brunette hair, who generally walks to the park from an adjacent street where she evidently lives, wearing a navy warm up jacket over a white t shirt and black shorts. her legs are bare. unlike the other women, also, she eschews back pack or canvas tote bag in favor of an ample size brown purse slung over her shoulder. because her eyes are always shielded behind large cargo sunglasses I've never had a really complete look at her face. and although, perhaps, she's not a beauty by conventional standards, to me she stands out (erotically), and I want to relate to her.

before I go on any further about her, let me relate an incident that occurred one morning just as I finished my run. "you've been running all your life," I heard a woman say, and turned around to see a heavy set Latina who sometimes plays soccer with them, standing a few feet away. "yes," I answered. then she started talking about herself - she doesn't run much anymore because then she can't sleep at night (without the

aid of a glass of wine before bed), always has to keep moving, works with children, and likes to eat too much to lose weight. then, pretty much out of nowhere, she asked me my age. I thought for a moment before telling her. this seemed to satisfy her curiosity. in fact, I had the feeling her whole purpose in striking up a conversation with me was to find that out. and I had the sneaking suspicion (so to speak) she was going to convey this information to the soccer girls, specifically my soccer girl.

also before I go on. adjacent to Clover Park is a business park. the closest building is a four story brick with a permit parking lot. office workers, however, who leave their cars on the street, frequently walk across the grass to get there. the dresses and skirts the female employees sport are short and snug, just a degree less skimpy than a streetwalker's. the perceived intent behind the provocative image is in striking contrast to the casual dress and intent of those who, run, workout, mind small children, etc. (although many of them are, at least technically, as exposed.) a totally different aura (of sexual tension) makes these women appear almost an alien species in the laid back context of the park, whereas they, conversely, appear normal only a hundred feet away. is this compensation for the stress, anxiety, and boredom of work, or is there some verisimilitude to those 'secretary' porn sites? is it life imitating art?

when she comes, which is not every time they play, she sometimes brings a young girl with sweet vibes, and a mature disposition, who appears to be about 10 or 11, whom the ladies allow to play. her response to me, generally, is to tune

me out. even when our paths coincide briefly as I run by, she'll turn her head, sometimes vehemently, aside. although there have been momentary challenges, once she fixed a stare on me from a distance, another when she and her young charge, could she be her daughter (no I see no signs of parental authority), niece, kid sister, neighbor, walked across the full length of the field deliberately right past the bench at the baseball diamond where I generally sit after running, not looking up, cell phone glued to her ear. is she married? her vibes, like the others', seems to preclude that. but what is the basis for making that evaluation? and, I don't figure, in this relatively upscale neighborhood, as a single person, she yet has the means to own the house she most likely lives in. so maybe she's the older adult sister. maybe she's her nanny. something doesn't quite jibe.

anyway, because they've momentarily shifted their game to the lower field which borders the airport runway and is therefore noisier, due to having been uprooted by the crew who lays out the weekend game boundary lines on Fridays, and they come into view only after I round the far turn, her image has begun to recede in my mind a bit. I'm not sure what it is, but I get energized by their proximity.

another day. as always I carefully look to filter her from the rest. then later while sitting on the bench, I see her exiting the lower field and instead of walking towards her street which is north of the fire station and west of the park, she comes up across the grass, evidently to get to a van she infrequently drives, which must be parked in the lot behind me. the angle she's taking is directly in line with where I'm

sitting. and when she's only a few yards from me she abruptly stops, stands, hair, which was tied together during the game, down, cargo glasses on, and stares.

"you're wondering about the attention I pay to you?" "I should report you to the patrol." "there's no law against watching." "there is against harassment." "I have a right to try to elicit a response," I say, deciding to be frank. "not when it's clear your advances are unwanted." "I don't consider just looking at someone from a distance advances." "it is when it's unrelenting and pervasive. it makes me uncomfortable to the extent that it's affecting my game. I can feel your eyes on me when I leave – that's stalking." to be truthful I feared she felt that way, but I know better than to feel shame. "did someone talk to you about me?" "yes." "what did she say?" "she told me your age." "so that's....." "I felt the same before," she interrupts, her voice softening. "haven't you ever seen someone from a distance and were attracted enough, possibly for unknown reasons, that you wanted to have a relationship with that person, someone in school, perhaps, who you didn't know but saw every day?" "of course." "well, that's all I'm trying to do. "I'm not pushing anything. nothing has to happen." all my inhibition gone now I look at her long and hard. "do you ever remove those sunglasses?" she stares back and smiles, facetiously, then removes them. she has a bigger nose than I supposed, slightly hooked. I still can't get a good look at her eyes because of the glare.

another Friday. the men who lay the lines aren't there, but they are still on the lower field. a pony tailed blonde with a

sexy figure, carrying her gear, joins them. she's wearing her uniform, loose white t shirt, shorts and shades. and I have a warm feeling for her today. some people may look and see nothing extraordinary, but in my book she's special. I still sense a connection. I believe it was there in the both of us even before I first saw her. what it needs is a catalyst. but are there too many factors working against it? the distance, however, allows me to appreciate her in a more mellow light.

Monday morning. she raises her head as she passes and surprises me with a quick smile of acknowledgement. open the door just a crack and I'm in.

they don't come on Tuesdays, and Wednesdays they mow the lawn, so I don't see her again until Thursday, when, as fate would have it, we're walking in the same direction almost side by side. she's kicking a ball, and on a whim I signal her to pass it to me, which, smiling devilishly, she does, and as we walk, we pass it back and forth. "I get a kick out of the way you kick a soccer ball." "very funny." "you've got good speed. I've seen you sprint with your little friend. but you tend to run a bit hunched over and take short steps. you should straighten, lengthen out a little, hold on to the ball longer, and see if you can work it around the defense. sometimes you pass too hastily." "I'll keep that in mind. do you play soccer?" "never. I just like to kick the ball.

"what is your attraction to the other girls?" "I like their energy and independence. I've learned a lot from them. soccer is a very good format for women." "I admire you, too, especially because you don't appear to have the proto-feminist

vibes some of the others have. your aura is different. this is not a value statement.” “you’re saying I’m a chicken in a foxes den?” “no, I’m not saying that.” “I know you want to fuck me.” “yes. I like your small breasts, your hair, your bare legs, I don’t see anything unusual in that. but why you? is that you?” “it’s my attitude you want to fuck, my cool you want to screw. there’s a cannibalistic electric charge coming from you.” “I like talking to you. I’m enjoying your company, that’s all. why don’t we let it go at that. as I said before, I’m not pushing my attraction. I’d like to know more about it myself.” “so would I,” she says, breaking into a laugh. “I know what you like. you’d like to see me in an unlaced crisscross boudoir halter, with thongs attached to high hose, like the Berlin cabaret women of the 20s, nothing else on but my hair combed to the light, black heels and shades.” “not really,” I respond, laughing, “but not a bad idea. how do you know about that stuff?” “my grandmother was a dancer. she was kind of the Berlin equivalent of a Ziegfeld Girl. she was in a naked, erotic, review, called the Black Kat Kabaret. she did all the things you read about – cocaine, opium, sex orgies. from the photos, then, she was very pretty and sexy.” “is, or was she, German?” “no, the maternal side of my family is Italian, Tuscan.” “what about your father’s side?” “Jewish – Austrian and Hungarian. I was raised Catholic, mostly, not religious. but I always felt something missing. Israel was one of the countries I visited last summer.” “when you walk the field, wearing your shades, you could be an image from an Israeli movie, or a French /Italian New Wave film of the 60s. do you act or model?” “not at all.”

I’m the winner of a raffle. the proceeds of which will go to

the restoration of the Night of the Radishes Festival in Santa Monica. so it's for a good cause. it's one of those minor rewards, with the intriguing title of Office Sex. and as I'm required to get HIV tested paid by the sponsor, I assume Office Sex is not a board game or video. their address is 2716 Ocean Park Blvd. (same as State Senator Fran Paley's), right next door to where I run. I take the elevator up to suite 311. the receptionist checks my winning ticket and says, "have a seat. it will only be a few minutes." true to her word a few minutes later she buzzes me into the main suite which is plush with potted palms and a large rose tinted window. the man seated at the desk gets up, and smiling, takes my ticket. "Marjorie's in the other office," he says, pointing to an adjacent door. "give her a few minutes to get ready. she'll be glad to take care of you." then he shakes my hand, offers me congratulations, and exits.

a tallish good looking woman with handsomely bland features and a well-proportioned figure enters the room. "hello," she sings, taking my hand and limply squeezing it. she drops two soft pillows on a swivel chair, then seats herself on the glazed desktop, and with long hair slightly mussed and no makeup, first pulls down her white tank top below her breasts, then pushes her white skirt up to her pubic hair, and leaning back against a bulky electronic, while looking me in the eye and smiling provocatively, sensuously strokes her long, white legs, until my hard on is straining against my pants. "don't move," I say, reaching for the pillows, slipping one under her buttocks and the other between the machine and her spine. I undress from the waist down and pounce.. meat into meat, slow and deep. not until we've both finished grunting with

satisfaction do I pull it out. "that was good. how about you?" she shrugs. "it was relief. I was getting desperate. you came at the right time." "how do you mean came?" she laughs. "do you do this often?" "about once every 2 months. we rotate. what I do mostly is clerical. this job makes you horny." "you've got the sexiest legs. I wonder why that should matter?" she pulls up her top and pushes down her skirt, stretching her legs and arching her feet. "do you have a foot fetish?" "I don't need more sex right now, thank you." she nods. "I guess you get paid well for these diversions." "you get a boner I get a bonus. or maybe I should say, I get boned." we both laugh. "well, it's for a good cause." "I can give you my number," she says, giving me a light peck. I write it down. "it was nice meeting you Marjorie." on the way out I wave to the half slumbering receptionist, wondering if she takes her turn in the enterprise. she waves back.

"there's a new club downtown that's been getting a buzz for their kinky performances – an update of the Weimar Berlin Kietz culture your grandmother was a part of. would you like to check it out with me?" Dara gives me a long stare before she answers, "yes." that evening when she opens the door her hair is tied in back the way it sometimes is when she plays soccer. she's wearing a sheer black dress with shoulder straps, black heels, purple nail polish, and no makeup, except for a light coat of mascara on her lashes, accenting extremely translucent brown eyes. around her neck is a thin silver chain with tiny inlaid stones, and her perfume is abstract paradise, though I don't know why, while at the same time, evoking an almost impossible to name, but stirring, nostalgia.....she greets me with a warmth so unexpectedly palpable as to

immediately and wordlessly bind us together.

the converted warehouse is a half block off N. Spring, situated between a Korean food distribution co. and the 'Cornfield' east of Chinatown and Elysian Park. what is usually a dark, deserted street this time of night, is bright with headlights, and 2 valets in front of the entrance are busy parking cars. we turn the corner and find a space a block and a half away. the night air is filled with cigarette smoke, the aroma of pot, perfume, and hard liquor. at the door, after a security guard checks our ID's and we pay the cover, we're requested to sign a waiver before being allowed entrance. a hostess in high hose, thongs, and a bright red halter, leads us to a small table close to the stage. although neither of us are drinkers, Dara orders an absinthe, and I, tequila. I'm surprised that most of the people are dressed up (in a conventional manner). she looks like an angel in the flickering candlelight. the curtain raises and a DJ mixes sounds as a troupe of male and female performers in various costumes begin a burlesque. their object is to , while prancing and dancing around, flout their bare genitals, derrieres, and breasts (female), without otherwise being undressed. the result, just as a visual tableau, for most of the audience, is grossly hilarious. the stage is cleared and the patrons talk and drink while French and German cabaret music plays. the curtain rises again, as a red headed woman wearing a boa hat, a silk wrapper, and stiletto heels, emerges from the left wing and walks over to a plush, burgundy, oval divan situated left-center. she disrobes revealing a voluptuous naked body, sits on the divan, then reclines like the odalisque in Manet's, Olympia. then a thin man with a large mustache, dressed like the butler in a 30s

movie, enters from the right of the stage, carrying a small, hyperactive, black poodle. he moves to the divan and hands the dog over to the woman who receives him with outstretched arms, then turns and quickly exits. the woman lays back pulling the dog on top of her so that his front paws are on her breasts. she caresses and pets his rough, curly hair, showering him with words of endearment – mon amour, ich liebe dich, kuss mich, mon Cherie, jet'aime, jet'adore – and kisses. the dog responds, licking her face, licking her all over. then she spreads her legs, and carefully, firmly, lowers his head between her raised thighs, whereupon the dog commences to lick and lick as the woman makes emotive sounds, then she pulls the dog back up on her stomach, and first, pawing her belly, he raise his haunches as if getting ready to poop, just as the butler returns, and spanking the dog, pulls him off, as the curtain drops. like everyone in the room we're both laughing, though a little disgusted. "we can leave if you want, but I'm curious as to how they're going to follow." "no, let's stick it out." there are a few snickers but nobody moves. the main act is titled, Conception. the lights go off and the MC takes the stage. "it is now our pleasure to present the world premiere of a new performance piece improvisation. its purpose is to publicly explore the private act of sex intended for procreation. tonight we're proud to present Act 1 of the piece, Conception. Act 2 will be presented at a later date." he then exits, and the curtain rises.. a queen mattress with a deep purple coverlet set on an ornate wooden frame, is now in the middle of the stage. to the left of the bed is a night table lit by an almost eerie cold-blue light. on it are various contraception options including condoms, diaphragm, vaginal ring, birth control and morning after pills, and a

mounted cardboard photo of a young, smiling, attractive nurse in white uniform with a blue cross on her cap, holding a spermicide pack in her raised hand. center stage, from the ceiling, hanging red bulbs cast a warm glow. a man and a woman enter from opposite ends. she, as the first woman, is wearing a silk wrapper, he's wearing a terry-cloth robe. they remove and set them aside. she's pretty with hair up, nipples erect. he's darker than she, attractive, trim. they come together and kiss. then they get on the bed and begin to fuck. they're obviously a couple because there's a synergy between them that couldn't be rehearsed, and the room becomes hushed as they build. it takes a long while before they climax intensely. then they sigh, lay back and fondle each other, before getting up. the curtain slowly lowers, and as the lights go on you can hear a pin drop. then the cabaret music once again plays, serving as an unlikely agent for reflection. on cue Dara and I turn our heads towards each other, we'd been holding hands throughout. our hands disengage. "shall we go," she whispers, softly. the room is beginning to fill with chatter. we get up and quickly exit.

the damp night air refreshes us. "you were right about kinky," she laughs, as we walk to the car, and I'm happy she's not upset. in fact all of this seems to have augmented our closeness. "I may have been upset had I been with someone else, but I felt very secure with you. I think it's partly because I see you almost every day in your sweats. I don't see how they can do this without getting busted. both of those acts, done in public, are against the law." "technically it wasn't done in public. their cover is they're a club. that's what the waiver was about." what did he mean by a second act?"

“well, the first act had to do with pregnancy, although who knows if they were really trying to conceive. the second act, I imagine, would have to do with the results of that, not necessarily the same couple.” “you mean the second act would be someone giving birth.” “I imagine.” “that’s been done before, for clinical reasons. I’ve seen it on TV.” “I know. there’s an artist who did it as a performance. it all depends on whether you want it to be art or not. it’s really impossible to make the private, public, in my opinion.” “I was moved. there was no pretense like in porn. it was so clear, like holding up a mirror.” when we reach the car both of us hesitate. neither of us are quite ready to leave. “it’s ironic there was a feminist arts space called the Woman’s Building in the 70s and 80s, just up the street. their founders, Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, would be turning over if they weren’t both still here. I’ve done a lot of photography in the general area.” “is that what you do?” “yes, but I’m mostly writing right now. would you like to take a walk?” “I think it would be too dangerous.” “maybe we could just stand outside by the car while the other cars are still here. that way we can absorb the night air before we leave.” “yes, I’d like that, too.” standing on the sidewalk, I take her hand, and holding it tightly, I turn her towards me. our faces brush lightly, then our mouths rush to kiss. we stand kissing and petting, tenderly and passionately, until we hear voices, and we get in the car. I start the motor. “feel better?” “better than if we’d just driven off.” “we can joke and laugh about other people, but what are we doing to expose ourselves?” “you have an uncanny sense of who people are,” she says, stroking my face and leaning her head on my shoulder.

we stand on her doorstep, 2 blocks from the park where I run in the morning on weekdays and she plays soccer. a crescent moon is overhead. I watch her turn the key. we kiss warmly. then she grasps my arm as I start to leave. "why don't you come in instead." I follow her into the house. standing in the quiet pleasantly empty living room we hotly kiss and heavily pet, then, without hesitation, drop to the sofa. Dara lowers the straps on her shoulders and pulls up her dress. losing ourselves in the darkness, we uninhibitedly fuck and have oral sex. two hours later we go to the bedroom and undress, the long buildup of erotic tension having finally dissipated, the peculiar lack of intimacy between us redressed.

a white day, slightly overcast, but warm. I'm at my station. Dara approaches, wearing her uniform, navy warm up jacket, white t shirt, shades and shorts, stands 2 feet in front of me and stares. then unslings her purse from her shoulder, reaches in and pulls out a sheath and removes a mean looking 6 inch blade. she holds the glittering object, pointed upward and parallel to her torso, and continues to stare at me intently. "you're a sexual predator. instead of reporting you I'm going to take care of you, myself." then her face, pale and menacing, she turns the point outward and thrusts. I manage to dodge just enough that it, grazing my shoulder, plunges full force into empty air. I awake with a shudder, look for blood on my sheet, then fall back to sleep.

now we're in an empty, sterile looking room, with bare white walls and the hospital bed in the center, where she's lying, white t shirt and shorts, spread out on her back, face pale, hair covering the pillow, one moment staring into outer

space, another, intently looking into my eyes, our fingers locked together. “she’ll have to remain here until she recovers. that may take some time,” the voice of the doctor says from somewhere out of sight. the love and fear I feel for her is so strong, I awake in panic. I conclude, my dreams are strong projections of what I really feel about her, but I don’t know what to do about it.

I’ve felt from the beginning there may be a physical handicap behind her perceived frailty, she’s laboring against. all along I’ve viewed her soccer playing as having to do with (besides exercise) something other than just gender issues. I’ve never considered until now the issues may be mental. this quality has aided in giving her an ethereal aura which has been a source of my attraction and love. the flipside is the hostility buried beneath her passivity, which I had chosen to view as suppressed passion with some justification, as I’ve already experienced, but now I also perceive to be dangerously suppressed anger, which, as in the dream, she has the capacity to, in a moment of possession, seriously give vent to. it also occurs to me that although I try to play by the rules, there is a power struggle between us. it’s part of the sexual tension, and while I think the objective between us is love, I don’t think I can reach where her sickness is, and cure her unconscious. I could treat her with all the tenderness at my disposal, but should it touch on her sensitivity to a deep abuse she’s nurturing, she could turn on me. of course, this could also be mostly a projection. but, who is she?

today, she’s wearing an olive green sweater and black shorts. I’ve never seen her looking so sexy. “I’m bored too,” I say,

“why don’t we play with each other. like little children play. first, I’ll play doctor. then you can play nurse.” her face lights up. “yes, shall we make rules?” “no penetration, no orgasms, just play.” “I don’t believe you, but ok.” I ease off her black shorts and stare at her pink panties. “you don’t want me to remove my shades?” “no. just lean back and make yourself comfy. what should I examine first?” “my lips feel chapped.” I run a finger across the warm sensual surface. “let me moisten them.” I lean forward and begin to lick. she giggles. I insert my tongue in her mouth. then we kiss. I pull back and place my palms on her breasts. I squeeze them. feel the hard nipples through the soft olive green material. “better have a look,” I say, sternly. I raise her sweater above her breasts and feel them warm and soft. “do you mind if I taste?” “no,” she laughs. I lick and suck her nipples. then lower her sweater. but my attention has never left the bright pink of her panties. I run my fingers along the length of her crotch, pressing, until it’s wet and silky. “let me have a look,” I say, while pulling them down to her thighs, then lick her pubic hairs like a cat cleaning itself. “no penetration,” she gasps between moans.. I pull up her panties and focus on her legs, the legs I savor when she plays soccer, and her bare feet. I lightly gnaw her thighs, and finish by licking her soles and sucking her toes. I consider inspecting her derriere. “are you regular?,” I ask. “yes.” “then you pass.” “how much do I owe you?” “are you insured?” “not for your services.” “then, nothing.” “ok, now it’s my turn. this is going to be primarily an oral exam. but first let me take your blood pressure.” she rolls up the sleeve of my wine colored t shirt, tightly squeezes my arm, then slowly releases her grasp. “very good. it would be better if

you completely undress.” “here?” “I don’t see that it matters.” I lay back, stark naked, on the grass. she leans forward and inspects all the blemishes on my upper body, busily, one by one, with her tongue, then probes my belly button before taking my soft penis in her hand. she squeezes the head, splitting the opening and touching it with the tip of her finger. “very clean, it’s so small and soft. can you make it rise like when you do me?” she reaches around my butt and gently massages the outside of my crack. “let’s test it.” she lowers her head and licks my limp penis until it swells, slowly at first, then springs erect. resisting the gravitational pull, it sways back and forth. “this is amazing. it’s transformed itself from a fat worm into an eel or snake.” “no orgasms,” I say, gently tugging her hair to pull her away. “ok, I’m satisfied, get dressed. if you’re regular then I don’t need to give you an Enema.” “I’m regular.” we put on our clothes. corny as this is, a momentary happy glow of love encompasses us. but, unfortunately, there’s something unpleasant in store.

as we rise, patting the dirt and grass from our clothes, a man emerges from behind a eucalyptus. it seems he’s probably incensed or aroused by what he’s secretly viewed. ignoring me he walks up to Dara. I tense up not sure what action to take, expecting her to be scared. instead, it surprises me when she starts to play with him, teasing him, and actually trying to make him hot. when he’s standing just inches away, she reaches into her purse, pulls out a 6 inch blade, and, suddenly, plunges it into his heart, pulls out the knife and watches him collapse. then she turns to me, her face flushed with pleasure, and sensuously and affectionately, rubs the front of her body against mine. unable to constrain my desire, I pull

off her shorts, then her pink panties. we fuck wildly on the grass. when we're done she picks up the knife, wipes off the blood with a tissue, and drops it into her purse. she looks long and deeply into my eyes. "don't worry, I won't tell," I say, inserting my tongue into her mouth. that was the best sex ever." looking at me quizzically, she asks, "is that all that matters?" "when you're that horny and there's someone as sexy as you." "but we're not horny now, are we?" "are you beginning to have regrets?" "no, it was self-defense. who knows what he would have done if I hadn't." "do you really believe that? if he hadn't happened along that knife could have been for me. unconsciously, you may have been looking for an excuse to use it." she smiles, wickedly. "I'm famished," she says, "I skipped breakfast this morning. let's go to a vegetarian restaurant. I'm thirsty, too." "you don't think we should report it? as you say, it was self-defense." she shivers slightly, then violently, then starts to cry. at the far end of the field petrified, yet calmly, we watch the park patrol vehicle heading slowly towards us. again, conveniently, I wake up.

when we meet the next day she's wearing the same olive green cashmere she was wearing in my dream, and a black mini skirt, looking lovely. feeling a bit frustrated I tell her of my dream. she listens intently, then reaches into her purse and pulls the exact same 6 inch blade out of its holder. "I keep it for protection. I was once attacked and robbed on the way home from school when I was in my teens, would have been raped, if several bystanders hadn't come by." "that doesn't explain how I knew." "I don't know. it could have been psychic. or maybe you saw it in my purse and it only

registered subliminally.” “every morning when you arrive you’re on your cell phone, and every morning when you leave. who do you talk to?” “mostly my husband.” “with all this and you’re married?” “technically. we no longer live together. it’s our house, but he no longer lives there.” “then you must still be involved.” “yes, there’s a lot of business, a lot of baggage.” “maybe that’s the inexplicable aura I perceive in you, of distraction, like you’re somewhere else.” “no, I’m that way.” then she wraps her arms around me and nestles her perfumed hair against my cheek. “I love you. I’m grateful. you’ve made a big difference.” “who’s the sweet girl? she’s not your daughter?” “no, she’s my niece. when school’s out she sometimes stays with me. you’ll have to meet her.” “I’m very shy around people that young. she seems so pure and unpremeditated” “she’s very unjudgmental. and she’s very good at soccer. she’s already pushing my skills.” “how did you get involved with these women?” “one day I got in a conversation with one of them and she invited me to play. it’s the single most important thing I do.” “did you start playing with them before or after the breakup?” “after.” I nod. “it isn’t just the soccer it’s the attitude. for me it’s been very constructive in helping me define myself.” “as a woman?” “yes, but not ideologically.” “does it have anything to do with sexual attraction?” “Jerry, I think we should leave this discussion for a while. you seem to want to separate me from them.” “a few of them I find attractive myself.” “you’d like to fuck.” “maybe, but their issues seem more externalized, more political. in that way you seem different, more traditionally feminine. so it’s more difficult to assess your role. have you ever been seriously abused?” “I had sex with my father.” “you were raped, seduced?” no,

willingly. I suppose you could say he seduced me but it was almost mutual, and I was old enough to know better.” “how old were you?” “it wasn’t too long ago,” she replies, dropping her eyes. “you were an adult?” I ask, rhetorically. “it was after I split up with my husband.” “did you like it?” “yes, it gave me a sense of power.” I flash on reading Anais Nin’s diaries at night in the Santa Monica library – description of having sex with her father as an adult....description of his semen. for her, like everything else with her, it was a meaningful experience. “I have problems, too. I fear I’m headed for the junk heap. I should have restarted sooner. I fear it’s too late. if there was some resolution, some way to die fulfilled.” our eyes lock. instead of trying to dissuade me with a pep talk her gaze softens and she nods her understanding. “it’s getting late but I’m grateful, too,” I say, turning away.

after several knocks and a wait, she comes to the door, a woman wearing a stylishly short black crepe dress that hangs straight down to her upper thighs, and black fishnets. she’s wearing no shoes. her longish burnt red colored hair is stringy as if just washed, resting on her neck. she has a pretty face with emerald green eyes and a sharp nose. “oh, how did you know I was home?” “I was driving by and saw your car so I thought you might be.” “good. I can’t think of anyone I’d rather kill some time with.” “in between your more serious concerns, right?” “is it any different with you?” no, not exactly, but I just nod. one moment while we’re standing facing each other, after about 10 minutes of fencing, which makes me very nervous, I decide I want her enough to do something about it, and I pull up the hem of her dress, briefly flashing her bare skin and black thongs, before she slaps my

hands off and pulls her dress down. I pull it up again. her flesh is like white ivory in contrast to the black fish net stockings and thongs. she slaps my hand away again. back and forth, we slap each other's hands off. now standing behind her, arm wrapped around her breasts, I pull up her skirt once more. my fingers pry under the thong, rubbing her rump, fingering her crack. "no, Jerry," she cries out laughing, forcing my hand off, pulling her dress down once more. I continue to push her hand away, and pull up her dress. she continues to slap my hand off and pull down her dress, both of us laughing back and forth until there's a moment's hesitation. we kiss, seriously, mutually. I pull up her dress, this time reaching under her thong, and massage her clit. this time there is no resistance. I pull down the shoulder straps of her dress, sliding it below her breasts, as she unzips my pants, and hurriedly shoves pants and shorts down to my knees, showing a lot of white skin and a hard on, which arouses her more. my hand goes again into her fishnets, vigorously rubbing and squeezing her thighs. she props herself on the edge of a deep seated lounge, leans back raises her legs and spreads. I jackknife her legs at the knees, and shove my throbbing dick into her warm meat, leaning into her, my feet still firmly planted on the floor, my hand inside her fishnet, her fingers in my hair, my chest against her nipples, her calves straddling my shoulders, and we fuck, madly, until we, too quickly, come together, my finger in her crack, the needle reaching sharpest on the scale, before we separate with gratified sighs. "that was the best 'dirty' sex I've had in a long while." "do you think dirty sex can equal sex with a less graphic but more involved, deeper intent?" "the ultimate effects may not be as satisfying." "we'll see about that."

she, nevertheless, has to change her plans. "I was almost on the way out when you came by." "you didn't even have your panties on." "I would have put them on before I left. I was just feeling that way." "what did you have in mind?" she smiles. "something along the lines of what we did. only it possibly would have been more anal. he has a fixation on that type of thing." "who's he?" "Dara's husband," she smirks, then looks away. "I mean they're separated. it's permanent. they're moving in entirely different directions. I don't see that as any kind of betrayal. there's nothing serious between us." "like what's just happened with you and me." "yes, pretty much." "but this was betrayal." "then why did you stop by?" "you're right, it was programmed, but I came for another reason." "pray tell," she snickers. "it doesn't matter now." "I tried to fight you off." "you know I didn't try to force you. I've never done that." "no, why don't we stop playing games with this. I'm satisfied." "sometimes I just get horny in a way I want to have sex with someone I have no baggage with. most of the time there's no opportunity for that to happen. I was in luck." "ok. I feel the same way. are you going to tell her?" "I see no reason to either make an issue out of it, or to hide it. I doubt she'd really care. I feel fortunate I've found someone I both desire and care about." "you're lucky." "when you say she and he are moving in opposite directions, do you mean she's moving towards being a lesbian?" "no, I think she's through with the domination of men, that's all. do you play soccer?" "no."

after I leave her, as the satisfaction wanes, I begin to feel depleted, and with it, slightly depressed. that I need to save my desire for Dara, is clear, now. sexual energy, even when not

used sexually, is motivation. the cold winter nights alone, these days, optimizes the feelings of isolation I had as a small boy. especially when my parents fought.

“Dara, I’d like to see you. can I come over tonight?” “I don’t feel like being here now, Jerry. why don’t I come over to your place.” “good, come early and I’ll make us dinner.” “I’ll bring my appetite and who knows what else, so be prepared.” I laugh and hang up.

the sun has set and there’s a delicate sliver of a moon.

when I open the door she’s hunched to the chill factor in a navy camel hair (or facsimile) coat with generic belt and front buttons, her signature cargo sunglasses on. “was the headlight glare too much?” “don’t get sarcastic.” she folds them and slips them into her pocket, then unbuttons her coat. better leave the coat on a while, it’s pretty cold in here.” “I know. don’t you use the heat?” “I had the pilot shut off some time ago and never turned it back on. there are a couple of ceramic heaters if you need them.” “I think it will be ok.” her hair is down and she’s wearing the olive green pullover sweater, pleated black miniskirt, black heels, and, that perfume.

I’ve already shredded the carrots, cut the other vegetables for the salad – radish, apple, cherry tomatoes, and torn the red leaf lettuce. then I dice the red pepper which is usually in the salad except when I make spaghetti. to it I add crushed garlic and cover the container with a paper towel. the seitan is also ready to cut into small pieces, and the whole wheat

spaghetti is almost done cooking. "all that remains is to microwave the red peppers and garlic for 1 minute, drain the spaghetti and mix the ingredients, adding salt, pepper, and olive oil," I tell her. "very simple. are you a vegan?" "no. in fact we should grate a little cheese on top," I reply, opening the refrigerator door. then, staring at a box situated against the breakfast nook wall, I think, this is the time to do it. it's been sealed for 11 years, my mother's delicate china, each piece wrapped in newspaper. we carefully rummage, picking out 2 dinner plates, 2 soup bowls, 2 tea cups, 1 server dish with cover, and 2 finely blown wine glasses. "there's also silverware," I say, pointing to a wooden box with a latch, "but we'd have to polish them before they could be used." "I don't mind doing that." "it wouldn't be worth it. anyway, I generally eat with chopsticks." "when did you start doing that?" "I think it was in the 60s." "more than a decade and a half before I was born," she replies, reflectively, then grabs her purse. "I'm in the middle of my period which can be extreme." she hurries to the bathroom and closes the door. when she reemerges she's dangling a very bloody tampon, which to me always resembles a dead rodent, and dumps it into the plastic garbage bag near the kitchen sink. "I hope this doesn't bother you." "I was married," I shrug. "there are a couple of unopened wine bottles in the fridge. a neighbor brought them down from the grape country where he grew up and I've never had the desire or occasion to open them. I don't have a corkscrew, but the Riesling has no cork." she laughs at my elaborateness. "is that where he is now?" "no, he works 2 months every year, December and January, on the Palms Springs Film Festival." "is he gay?" "how did you know?" "just stereotyping." "why don't we just drink bottled

water?" then she notices what I feared all along. there's nothing to eat our meal on, except for a card table with a lot of stuff on it. "I'm afraid we'll have to sit with our plates on our laps." "I didn't expect anything, Jerry." "you've been here before." "I hope you remember." still something doesn't seem quite right. I feel shame that she deserves more than the neglect I've shown my apartment. now I have to go to the bedroom and carry the only other chair into the front room so we can sit together while we eat. then I go back into the kitchen and mix Annie's lemon & chive dressing (my current favorite) into the salad. the redeeming factor is the meal is a success. "do you ever make a sauce?" "tomato sauce or salsa just zaps me. I sometimes do it with peanut butter and fruit juice, but that's too heavy." "this is good." "would you like dessert?" I go to the kitchen, without waiting for an answer, and take a container of chewy oatmeal-cranberry cookies from the refrigerator. we each take one to finish things off.

after dinner Dara explores the front room looking at the photos on the wall which include some graphic sex, and the art display on top of my boxes of books . it's as if she'd never been here before. "we spent almost all of the last time you were here in the bedroom." "in bed," she corrects. she picks up a small book of mat board pages I put together of Photos ...an almost naked PJ Harvey superimposed on an illustration of the 'human memory systems', Ethiopian Jewish priests in white robes holding a Torah and open prayer book, text... a poem by Michael McClure on 2 separate pages, drawing... a naked self-portrait – rear view, strokes of color from broad tip markers on all the pages. the first page, titled *love me for*

the fool I am (which is the title of the poem) is in black bold face letters on a silver filled background, framed on all sides by the thick lines of a green marker. a tiny silver metal horse is pasted near the right corner on the bottom.

I can't get over the feeling I have as if this was our first time together. "I'd think we'd be past the stage where we have to engage in this kind of foreplay," I say, attempting to address the untypical tension that's plagued us since she arrived. "I agree, I don't know what it is either. I know it has to do with my being in your apartment. but I didn't feel that way when I was here last. I think I'm picking it up mostly from you." "I'm sure of it." "last time, we came here together, not my coming alone like this time." "sometimes I feel like a holed up rat here. shame in having been alone for so long, though there's another side of it." "I'm sure there is. I was moved by the book you showed me. it was very poetic. why don't you send it to her?" "who?" "PJ." "it wasn't done for her or anybody else in particular. besides I can't even get the book I wrote, PJ And I, to her, let alone read." "you wrote a book about her?" "just fiction. everything I do is a meditation, is on an inner plane – running in the morning, making my meals, drawing, etc. that's one reward of being alone. but I've done little to improve the material world I inhabit and depend on, except I take pretty good care of my car, and nothing socially."

"what is it you need to do to get beyond your impasse?" "meeting you has already partially done that." "I know. I don't know how much credit or responsibility I can handle. I'm sure what it is from you I really want began with your

pursuing me in your intently indirect way, and gradually it turned me on. but I have no idea what our common goals would be." "neither do I." "we're both in-between. I see our relationship right now as more of an affair than anything permanent...a passion and love that will burn itself out." I'm hurt but I knew she felt that way. I know deep down I should stop trying to go after women. if there's anything left in what has turned out to be a mostly empty bag, she will have to come to me. but I have to be receptive to it. this is the change that has gradually taken place in me, and despite what she's said, there's a little of that quality in us. I realize I want to pass on my legacy (work), heritage, to a young woman, someone with whom there'd be a bond deep enough it would be a blessing for the both of us.

"I don't want to apologize for my having my period. though I know for some women it wouldn't make any difference." "that's all right, I understand." " her eyes are glowing under the lamplight, a warm and increasingly familiar countenance. I flash on the darker, black clad, barelegged soccer player, wearing shades, which is her other, at this moment almost an alien figure, far away. "if you want to have sex with me now we can give it a try." "no, let's put it on hold. if that's an issue then we're really in trouble." the fact that she's having her period just makes her seem more feminine (and vulnerable), and I'm glad we're close enough she's sharing that with me. "I'm not sure permanence has anything to do with it.... satisfaction, that is," I finally say. "I know that." "I don't want to say anything like 'living in the moment', because that's become such a cliché. but the fact of our age difference..." "a big part of my attraction to you is that you

want every moment to have meaning," she interrupts, "but it's trying." "that's what the psych said to me. she said we 'love' only twenty percent of the time. she said, notebook in hand, she was collecting my gems. that was enough. I was paying her \$150 an hour so she could collect my gems. forget it. I really would have been crazy to go along with that." "why were you seeing her?" "I just saw her once – the only way I could get to see a sex surrogate, who saw I was just on the make. I was that desperate to have someone to fuck." "why didn't you just go to a prostitute?" "pay this to do that? no thanks. when all I really needed was a relationship with someone patient, open, and caring – in short, someone sensitive and compassionate." "that's a tall order." "I second that." "now you have me to fuck." "you have no idea what that means to me, Dara." "I really enjoyed your story, Jerry. are you sure you wouldn't like to fuck, now?," she asks, leaning her bosom against my chest.

"wouldn't you like to know that," she says, furiously chewing a fresh stick of gum as we stand together in her bedroom. "give me a taste." she opens her mouth and with her tongue presses half of it against my lips. I open my mouth and we chew together, savoring the fragrance. then, with the gum still in our mouths we passionately kiss. she kicks off her shoes. I untie my laces, and we hastily undress. we chew and kiss. fucking and chewing the gum is the umbilical between our brains. "you've got so many ideas. before we've finished with one you've got another one in your head. hold it, there, good." "is ecstasy just the absence of deprivation? you've got pretty hair." "I like to play with it," she says, knotting it around her chin like a beard, then loosening it, and grabbing

the ends, swishes it like a horses tail across my face. "would you like me to cut your hair?" "ok. let's not put on our clothes. leave it about the same length. just a trim." "do you suppose we could fuck while we're doing it?" "I don't see how, as you'll be standing behind me." "do you notice how we turn everything into a comedy routine?" "no, I haven't noticed." "there, you look very pretty," she says, as she holds up the mirror. "thank you, very well done." there's something I can't touch. it's not the depth of baring one's soul after some trauma. not something borne of pain. something deeper, purer. I could enjoy looking at her forever. "Jerry, are you going to get serious...now?" "I love to look at the mat of hair above your crotch. I don't understand why some women shave theirs." "you're still not satisfied!" she embraces me, pressed against me, it's not tease, just flesh on flesh. "there let me show you." she takes my hand and places my finger on the bulge that is her clitoris. "I know that." "no, you don't. leave it there. keep rubbing and pressing. it isn't just foreplay." I oblige. "if you're comfortable then so am I." her eyes are dark, beautiful pools.. "you enter much too fast," she says, resting her breasts against my chest, "and you're too passionate," she continues, brushing her lips lightly across mine, sending sparks all through my upper body. our surface is light and electric. "now do you want me to be horny, hot?" I don't answer. "you have to be thoughtful. spontaneity without thought just slips us into patterns. once you've lost the surface, you've lost your options, you're stuck." she breathes warm air onto my face. I move my face to her neck and inhale her perfume. my finger is still massaging her clitoris. "are you hot,?" I inquire, although the answer is obvious. "yes, keep it there." "do you want to be

kissed?" "yes," she says, pulling her head away, "but not by you." we both laugh. "you mean you're fantasizing having sex with someone else?" "no one in particular," she replies, gorgeously blushing, running her fingers through my hair. "let's walk over to the park when we're done." "I'd like that. but we've hardly gotten started." "good." I spot a pile of stickpins and reach for one, and kissing her, while she tries to squirm away, start to lightly prick her skin all over, first her shoulders, then her breasts, then her abdomen, then her thighs, then her buttocks, and finally, right in her crack. "did you like that?" "yes." "are you ready to fuck?" "we fucked while we were chewing gum together. didn't you like that?" "ok, I've a suggestion. it seems as though we're not disposed to achieving the ultimate sexual and spiritual transcendental moment at this time, so why don't I just masturbate you until you come." "YES," she enthuses, squeezing my hand tightly, and looking long and sharply, into my eyes. "shall we continue standing, or would you like to lay on the bed?" "I think it would be more comfortable and gratifying lying down." I raise her legs and rub along her clitoris, and poke deeper into her vagina. I finger and press on the bump, rhythmically and densely, coinciding with her ever excited motions until her spasms carry her over the threshold, and into the river (so to speak), as she feverishly moans. then I lower my naked body and sink into her, pressing until she's still. "let's dress each other," I say. "yes. then go to the park? that felt so good, I feel a little selfish," she replies, kissing me tenderly. "that's all right. maybe next time will be the time." "I want that too, Jerry." "I know you do, Dara."

it's been raining for 2 days, so I haven't run in that time. it's

supposed to rain tomorrow and into the next week. and of course, the `girls' haven't been there to play soccer, either. Dara's game has improved. she's lost some of that indefinable awkwardness. she's becoming increasingly assertive and secure. we give each other power. but sex on a regular basis will deplete you. procreate and then subside. Dara thinks, now that I've gotten back into having sex, I'm addicted to it, and she is, too. I think I see sex more as a means of communication than she does because of my age. she has the suppressed bourgeois desire to be bad resulting from being raised to play it safe. frequently when we make love now she teases me with her body. she's the girl in the dark warm up jacket, shorts, bare legs, and shades. I say, `girl', advisedly. she's older than I first thought. I'm now aware of the streaks of grey and the lines of care. also, her almost compulsive `femininity' has transformed itself, somewhat, into something a bit more `masculine'. with the girls she's taking more command, and her movements are becoming more forceful. I'm beginning to apprehend the dominatrix in the nuances between us, but which haven't yet cropped up in bed.

one night, after an unusually intense display of feminine erotic solipsism (scratching and biting) she suggests we take time off to go (on a spree) to Las Vegas, as I have no money, on her dime. "I can see where you're going, Dara, but that's not where I want to be. you may have to find someone else for that." "I just thought it would be different fun." "I'm not criticizing." "it's amazing, because I know you were thinking, how can I find an attractive young lady to fuck." "and that was right on." "now you want my love. that wasn't part of the deal." "it wasn't precluded, either." "that's true."

there's a whiplash look in her eyes, even if there's no whip. and I've noticed when one of the younger, newer girls takes her turn goalkeeping, her nuances are, she's becoming less the chicken and more the fox. with me, however, she's been assertive neither mentally nor physically, but this was part of that otherworldly aspect of her nature, and it's clear to me now, she's coming out. her initial attraction, but resistance to, the other women, was to some extent a cover for wanting to play the same role. most recently her sexual preference has shifted to sitting on top of me when we fuck, and doing most of the movement, even insisting I be still, which is pleasurable for me, so I have no objections, as it allows her to go deeper into her own erotic center, though, possibly, lessening the mutual communication. she's also become mildly interested in bondage, and on a nonviolent level I don't mind. limiting movement to intensify fucking or erotic foreplay, as it does arouse me sometimes when I'm feeling flat. fortunately for our love making, we both enjoy, and are versatile in, playing roles. but it is still a surprise to me, when Dara erotically consummates her advances with the newest of the soccer girls, a voluptuous baby faced girl with soft skin, after convincing the young lady to return with her to her house, where they, according to Dara, quickly 'lost it'. "she said it was the most thrilling afternoon of her life. I think I love her. she's so free, willing, and mobile. I spanked her and she cried," she exults. "so where does that leave us?" (audience laughter) "I don't know." (more laughter) her face stands out with every detail like on acid. her face is grey and filled with lines. all the tenderness for her I've been suppressing, returns, and I realize I love her, and always have, for who she really is, not who I want her to be. at first I think

I'm going to have to let her go, then quickly, think otherwise. does this renegotiate or negate our relationship? I need to know, first, how she feels about me. "Jerry, I love you. and what's happened with her may quickly fade. however things work out I'll always have a special place in my heart for you." her eyes momentarily fill with tears. "you've given me much more than I could have, at this age, possibly hoped for, Dara." "I'll give her (Annie) up if you want me to." "no, I'm curious as to how this will play out." "we're to meet again, Saturday." "where?" "here." "for sex." "that's what was on our minds." "would you consider a threesome?," I ask, somewhat facetiously. "it's too early to think of that." "of course, an intimacy between you and she has to be established." "yes, isn't it that way with everyone?" we both fall silent. I turn away. "don't go yet. this is only Wednesday. that's a long time from now," she says, closing the door. then as she Frenches my mouth, long, full, and hard, I undress her piece by piece. naked she sits on my lap, tongue in my ear. "I hope you'll save something for the goalkeeper, Dara." "don't worry, Jerry. it's three days from now, a totally different experience. I'll be ready for her. but I'm ready for you, now," she whispers.

her tongue still in my ear, we fall back on the bed. she's wet without any play. I thrust relentlessly, not trying to please her, deriving brutal pleasure from her uncharacteristic submissiveness, then ease up, moving slower, deeper, more deliberate, and we resume the intimate dialogue which has been our forte – except our nuances are balanced somewhat different than usual. our pattern of togetherness, mutuality, is tipped slightly towards dominant-submissive. just as she rises to reach that mutuality I plunder her erotic center and

she willingly submits. on top of her literally and figuratively, pinning her down, I'm playing a game of control I've never played with her, trying to penetrate, and fuck through, a perceived infidelity. she fights back, which gives me an even greater sense of power, and we intensely duel until we both come, almost together, she reaching to join me. when we're finished we're both soaked with sweat. I know I'm going to pay for this. my body betrayed our trust in the way that my mind and emotions had refused to do.

"now I know what it means to be screwed." "was it that way with your father?" "no, totally different." "did it feel good?" "you know it did....erotically," she replies, her voice hardening. "but....?" "I think you showed a bit of the suppressed homosexual in you." "is that bad?" "the suppressed part is. you needed to make me respond. but I was willing to respond, anyway, mutually." "the way our sex has always been." "yes." "but you needed to have that different experiencewith her." "yes." "then maybe you'll forgive me this one time and give me another chance." "I don't see what one has to do with the other. I'd like you to go so I can think about that." "first you want me to stay, then you want me to go. you're calling all the shots, Dara. I think I already know what you'll decide." "at first I felt this had ruined my hopes for Saturday, now I'm not so sure. do you care about that?" as you said, it's still 3 days away, and you'll be wiser than you might have been otherwise," I reply, hopefully picking up the thread, "you'll be able to feel more what you want. I'm sure of it." "will you go now, Jerry!" "I care now only about your happiness. I'm willing to lose you for that. I love you with all my heart." I turn and leave.

ultimately, every social experience, for me, seems to be a humbling one, a blow which tells me to be more compassionate and loving – a fight for love and glory? for what? it's enough a fight to survive. at this moment the emptiness seems unbearable. but I love her, and I know she knows it. I've demonstrated that. I hurt her. what I did was not love, but if she decides to reject me, I'm determined to win her back. it would seem easier to just be more modest and not create these situations, but I've been doing it all my life. it occurs to me, this may not have happened had we been doing things together with other people. if our exclusivity hadn't become delusional.

nighttime. it's pouring. "Jerry, Jerry," she's screaming my name, running back and forth in the street below my window. then there's a thud. and I may as well be dead, too. I wake up in cold sweats. this is one dream I **don't** intend to tell her. now (*too late in the wrong rain*) I realize these are my projections.

new year. cold and bright winter morning. she's wearing a pastel yellow-ochre t shirt and soft textured teal blue-grey shorts – same bare legs, the sun reflecting glints of red in her dark hair, flowing as she runs – still tensing her step when she approaches the ball, glare seeping through the top of my overpriced Oakley sunglasses. she sees me, stops and waves. then blows me a kiss. I blow a kiss back. I'm filled with pride. more power to her.

Hollywood ending (only) for Woody Allen. after the game we instinctively race towards each other's arms, and hug tightly,

knocking the wind out of us. then we walk together in the park, holding hands, sit at a picnic table, and rapturously make out, just as it began.

Irresistibly Sensual

it's a breezy, cooling summer afternoon in Santa Monica. the room is filled with a cool light. the white chiffon curtains from the high open windows fluff, flutter, and occasionally snap. standing next to the sill she surreptitiously raises the hemline of her short, crispy fresh, pale, violet flowered, dress. there's an incalculable erotic surge as my eyes close in on her white/hint of pink, slightly goose bumped upper thigh. "why are there goose bumps? is it the cool air?" "no it's the pleasure I get seeing the helplessness you feel now that you're aroused." "helpless?" "yes, when you're not quite sure how far I'll let you go with it," she replies," her delicate features reflecting the light, the breeze ruffling her fine shoulder length brown hair. she walks over to the bed and sits on the edge. "don't think I'm going to let you go anytime soon." "I don't see what say you have." she gets up, smoothies down her dress, and just to emphasize the point, starts to walk away. it's that simple, I'm thinking, this time I'm not going to let her get away with just a tease. as she reaches the doorway, I grab her arm and pull her back into the room. "let me go," she growls, trying to wrest her arm free. "not until we're through." "do you want me to scream?" "nobody will hear you." she reaches for her cell. I slap it to the floor, and grabbing her waist from behind, I pull her close, one arm wrapped under her armpit, hand squeezing her breast. with the other I swipe her panties to the floor, then turning her, facing, I press her to the wall, rubbing sensuously up against her, my lips seeking hers, as she, elusive as an eel, twists her mouth away. my hungry lips bury into the crook of her neck. "ummm, flavor," I murmur. "I didn't say you could," she half

whispers, half gasps, biting my finger hard enough to draw blood, while attempting to squirm out of my grasp, which excites me to hold her tighter. I then turn her back around, and with my one free hand, yank the hem of her short dress up to her waist. "this is going to be good," I manage to say, relishing her bare, shapely ass, "and I'm going to take my time." she screams, kicking and struggling with all her might to free herself, before I forcefully bend her prostrate across the mattress. "don't, don't, don't." heedless I stroke and massage her face flower from behind, then spit on the fingers of my hand and lubricate my cock. sensuously, I work it, taut, wet, and slippery, into her ass. I hold her affectionately in a bear hug, while pumping, continuing to stroke and massage with my hand. I insouciantly pump, exaggerating each stroke to provoke, and at the same time, solicit her response. as I tighten my grasp and nestle my cheek in hers, she relents. then, reluctantly at first, she answers, with each stroke, throwing her anus back onto my cock, and raunchily we move in unison, the palms of her hands pressed against the mattress, rump raised, leveraging her pelvic action. my fingers caress and stroke her snatch, which is slimy with a thin film similar to my saliva. I continue to finger and stroke, pressing against her clitoris as we furtively fuck, coordinating our movements on the offbeat, while I masturbate her on the beat, until like jazz musicians in syncopated rhythm, we're moving intently, breathlessly, in perfect pitch, the wildly creaking bed as accompaniment. then, one finger pressed hard on her clit, another deeply into her vagina, my cock lurches out of control, like a strangled snake, and she shivers, letting out an eerie, preternatural moan. with the last spurts of gism in her anus, I stay, pushing deeply, my fingers pressed

in place. when she's still, I slowly, and pointedly, withdraw my sated cock, pleased for once I'd followed through in doing what I wanted with her. sitting opposite each other in the front room, I allow that at the very least she'll be hostile, even possibly be wanting to go so far as to accommodate my arrest. but we are not done, and the marathon commences. there's a strange, self-absorbed smile on her face, as if she's silently scheming. my eyes are still on her upper thighs, black heels back on, still framed by her white summer dress. satiated, I'm fixated like a tomcat appraising his turf. I walk over and kiss and munch them. the taste is sweet. if we hadn't done what we did, I would have eaten her up all over, had her for lunch, her cunt, her breasts, her feet, everything – eaten her until she was besides herself and came madly. then I kiss her lips. "sorry, Neola," I say, disingenuously, "I was too horny to wait or stop." "that's ok, I've wanted you to do it to me that way. I knew it was going to happen. I was playing with your horniness, it was part of the plot." "have you been fucked in the ass before?" "yes, of course, but not like that. it's mostly just been foreplay. your fingers made me so hot.." then she raises her face to mine, eyes fixed, and says, "but, now, let's make it your turn! we're just one step away." without waiting for a response she walks back into the bedroom and reemerges with a thick, smooth, pliable, azure blue thing. "now?," I ask, a bit incredulously. "yes." "when I'm just feeling the pleasure of basking in the aftermath of our climaxes?" "this will be different, Jerry, I promise you," she says, intently. "you had multiple orgasms." "I'll be doing you by hand. neither of us have to have more orgasms. it will feel so good. it's probably better to do it this way to begin with." "what do you mean, 'begin with'? I mean it doesn't

have to be anything dramatic or urgent”, Neola replies, evasively, “anything out of extreme horniness. it can just be so matter-of-fact. do you want me to really want you?”, she asks, looking exceedingly lustful. she knows she’s tapped the one fear I have, of her not desiring me enough. and I suppose why all along I’ve been wanting to rape her (and next time it won’t be anal – I’m going to annihilate what’s left of her cherry, once and for all), she has every right to try to square the issue. “ok, but be careful. men have prostates you know.” her face is glowing. her breasts are heaving with excitement. “it will be good for your prostate. I’ll be very careful, gentle, I promise. it’ll be very sexy.” in spite of myself, I’ve once again become aroused. why is it, only now, I feel love for her? “let’s take off our clothes.” “I guess we should go back to the bedroom.” “no, let’s do it in here. it will be more erotic, more social. it would be even better if we did it outside on the patio for the world to see.” her face is beaming with the prospect of innovation. I’ve never seen her with such a healthy look. naked, we sit close together on the couch, facing each other. we kiss. she fills my mouth with her tongue. she licks my nipples. my heart is beating fast. all it took was the feeling of putting my fate in her hands to fall for her. it’s almost a feeling of supplication. but it’s not a feeling of trust...just the opposite. her hands, soft and healing, stroke my body. she plays with and teases my erect penis, and fingers deeply my hole. our faces brush and I inhale the perfumed scent of her hair falling on my neck. still facing each other, as our cheeks intermingle, she rocks me back, her tits drooping onto my lips, and forcefully spreading my thighs, she plunges the head of the dildo into my hole, pushing it in as far as it will go, then, incrementally,

commences to slowly move it up and down, in and out, side to side, deftly simulating the earlier movement of my cock in her anus. oddly(?), as the excitement builds, my sex organ recedes. the dildo feels good in my anus. keenly sensitive to each sensation, with care, but merciless, she pounds, her other hand grasping, and salaciously rubbing my cock and balls, then pushing it in as far as it will go, she angles it, alternating it between my prostate and testes, which is extremely erotic and carnal, until I come sharply as she presses, holding it in place, last of my semen squirting into her hand from a flaccid, limp spigot, her face, beautiful, flushed with pleasure, first wiping her hand on her naked thigh, then slowly, almost reluctantly, she pulls it out, and I lay back with a sigh, lowering my cheek onto her bare thigh. if this is payback for sure, it's still erotic satisfaction, hopefully clearing the air between us. and in experiencing that aspect of her flesh procured by her assertiveness, is something, on my own initiative and pursuit, I heretofore, had not been able to completely reach, but consequently, she's once again become oversexed. the look on her face is the frustration of immense, but unresolved, pleasure from not having achieved the satisfaction that can only come with consummation. "now, what can I do for you?," I ask, quickly seizing the opportunity to turn the tables back on her, in a totally anxiety free, dreamy haze. "the same I did for you," she says, beginning to feel a little let down, "if you can still get it up, fuck me `till you get me going. If you can't, use the thing." we go to the bedroom where the afternoon light is blinding. "I want you, privately, all to myself," I say, as I close the curtains and pull the shade. "but don't hurt me, she faux, pleads, too hot to but give me a hard, hopeful, helpless look.

I lift her and her skirt simultaneously, laying her on her back and I lick, suck, and eat, until my lips are worn and chaffed. her moans plentiful, she orgasms as sharp and intense as before, and mouth to a vibrating female genital in the throes, can be as rewarding a sensation as, I imagine, any cock sucker might know. I open the curtains and pull up the shade. mesmerized, we first lay together, then dress, and she sits on the bed, I in a chair, the room still filled with bright light. ten docile minutes then a half hour goes by as we both recede into a dreamy state. but gazing at her black heels, and her summer dress, set, it seems, deliberately and provocatively, above her white thighs, I'm once again becoming aroused. looking sweet and vulnerable she gives me a shy, flirtatious smile, and watches me remove my pants, shorts, socks, and shoes, then jump her, and as she lays back and spreads, I shove my pulsation into her pudenda in one thrust and we screw, further aroused by the contrast of our clothes separating our upper bodies, while our meat is conjoined, allowing, at the same time, both intimacy and distance. besides ourselves we continue to fuck interminably, inevitably coming together. I momentarily pull out, getting semen on her dress, before reentering her, hard and thick, and we settle into a more necessary dense and intense rhythm, taking our time, plumbing deeper, listening in synch with our more inner neuro probes, before, gratefully, we reach the depths of the most complete, dense, intense, long lasting, and most, satisfying, orgasms, in what has been an unpredictably sustainable erotic afternoon, it took what it took to get there, the room, mostly in shadows now, as the sun sets.

“do you think I raped you?” “by law definition of it,

definitely.” “then you didn’t mind being raped?” “you forced me and I resisted. but in this case it was forbidden just enough to be erotic without being physically or psychologically dangerous, or you most likely would be languishing in jail right now.” “not with a good lawyer.” “good luck.” “then, at least, as it turned out, it wasn’t really rape in your mind” “I didn’t say that. it didn’t exceed the undercurrent of dialogue which generally exists between us. it just became more exposed.” “then the dialogue between us allows for some force, overriding your consent, from me, and some initial resistance, and then submission to it from you?” “yes, evidently, but it went beyond that, and it’s for me to make the call.” “I agree.” “things change quickly. I wouldn’t advise you do it again.”

“do you think Julian Assange raped his accusers?” “I can’t say because I don’t know what the undercurrents of their dialogue with him were, which appears to have been issues of power and control. what jeopardy his refusal, in both instances, to use condoms, placed on them, would depend on their cycles, and whether he was exposing them to any health risks or not, more than whether he should have used them to provide assurances or not – so the accusations seem to mostly be about consent related to power and control. is this a bit a luxury that has mostly to do with ego in the hardball game of privilege? real rape causes real physical and psychic harm.” “then you think the women are crying wolf.” “I don’t know, but it appears the motives were political, sexual politics which became much more, based on their ego needs. we’ve yet to see how this plays out. the sleep part does sound sleazy.”

I peek through the slightly ajar bedroom door. and they're taking turns with her. I turn my head away. she seems to be enjoying it, totally responding and intensely into it. it's an hour later when I return. she's in the bathroom freshening up, applying a thin coat of pink lipstick, combing out her hair. I go back into the front room and sit down. she joins me, looking fresh and cool, barefoot, wearing a plain white cotton dress. she reclines on the love seat and says, "I'm glad you dropped by, Jerry. I hope it's not because you're horny." "why is that, Neola?," I ask, deciding to test her. "because I masturbated a little while ago," she lies, "I had several orgasms. if I'd known I was going to see you..." "that's ok, I masturbated not too long ago myself," I lie. I've a desire to kiss her. I pull her up by the waist. she throws her arms around my neck, and we hotly kiss, the taste of her fresh lipstick in my mouth. then I let her down.

"I came here earlier, Neola. I saw you with them," I say, hoping to take her by surprise. she starts and lightly blushes, but quickly recovers. "that will teach me to leave my doors unlocked," she responds, effectively maintaining her cool. "the circumstance that allowed it was totally fortuitous and unlikely to happen again. on the other hand to have passed would have been a wasted opportunity, something you know I'm not disposed to do." I nod. "what was the circumstance?," I ask, and before she can answer, add, "never mind, you can tell me some other time." "I would be happy to, Jerry," she replies, looking angelic. "then you may as well tell me now."

"they were tossing the football on the lawn next door and an

errant throw landed on my roof. when they came over to ask permission to climb up and retrieve it, as neither I, nor they, had access to a ladder, I let one of them shinny up through my bedroom window, while the other waited. I was just wearing a robe, and he couldn't stop looking at my legs. then, the other one came down, breathing hard, and as the tension built, I, too, was getting aroused, standing in my bedroom with two attractive men, almost naked. it was like the actualization of a sexual fantasy. for moments we just stood, staring, unsure what to do, fixated in erotic tension, until the one who climbed on the roof took 2 steps towards me, pulled at the knotted sash on my robe, causing it to open in the front, then kissed me, and the three of us started touching and rubbing. we quickly got into it. it was totally gratuitous, easy as falling off a log." "how old are they?" "I don't know. they said they were doing some computer repair work that day while visiting from the UK, and were to return shortly. they both had English accents." "very convenient." "how long were they here?" "less than an hour. long enough for all our satisfaction." "you're a real slut , but I adore you." she makes a move to slap my face, but withdraws her hand, the word, adore evidently being a mitigating factor. "what if they had hurt you?" "I had a realistic sense it wasn't that kind of situation. things happen, like lust. it wasn't premeditated. it was totally gratuitous. they were nice, they offered to tune up my computer. I was flattered, but you never can tell for sure about anything. for instance, sometimes I'm afraid of you – that you could get jealous enough to harm me." "I've never laid a hand on a woman. never." "you raped me, sodomized me!" "I thought we got beyond that." "I know," she responds, gently. "did you do that with them?"

“we did everything.”

another even mist of white and grey light, another late summer afternoon of cool, unusually innervating and refreshing breezes. we're sitting on the grass, the after image of a photo, hazy sunshine behind low clouds. the grass darkens. the sky turns to glass. she sits erect, legs bent under at the knees, hair swept up, her face, the smooth surface of a finely textured rice bowl, impassive, calm, even tempered, and bad, the impassivity and badness equally servicing her erotic image. she has delicate, sensual hands, which like a sculptor's, is an extension of mind and imagination. the element of badness is not in what she does, but in the context of what she does it in. she's, while given to be both open hearted and reasonable, her highly developed and refined sexuality can only find expression if there's a forbidden, i.e., hidden aspect to it, i.e., if it involves betrayal. her whole external image is consciously crafted to excite in men (and sometimes women) an unconscious desire to participate in a hidden passion of deception, in a joyously erotic game of betrayal. this must, of course, begin with her first becoming involved in a relationship of trust with one with whom she must sincerely share her deepest and strongest affections. for without trust to violate, there would be no betrayal, and without the prospect of betrayal, there would be no sexual thrill as a defense against falling into the trap of dependency, or even subservience. and while she has little trouble securing such a relationship, predictably with a man who is knowingly equally attracted to her spiritual and erotic nature, she's no arachnid weaving a delicate web to devour, for she's been given the charms of affection and an ability to give and

receive both love and erotic bliss, and would consummate it with her lover if only she could. but that would be a contradiction, as the erotic stimulus is based, at least partly, on the defense of betrayal – defense because the fear caused failure to give herself in a situation of trust, serves to diminish her her libido, making necessary the incident(s) of betrayal to revive it. there is, of course, the `danger' of falling for the person she's in the relationship with, and this day, in the park, her biological imperatives are informing her she's at the crossroads.

"I wish you didn't brood so much, Jerry. it makes me unhappy." "I'm not brooding, Neola, it's just there's a coolness, an almost disassociation you project, which attracts me, and at the same time, makes me feel I can't reach you. it makes me feel distracted and distressed. it may be my own sense of alienation. I guess I want your love." "what if I said I love you?" "it would surprise me if you did." "that I love you, or that I said I love you?" we look intently into one another's eyes. "I do love you," she says, giving me a long, soulful look. "your alienation may have more to do with the work you're not doing. we're both addicted sexually, but you need something meaningful enough to do with your time to counteract it." this is a very generous thing for her to say, considering her solution to a problem is to have more sex. "you're right, but everything is a meditation to me. I try to make it that way." "is it my unfaithfulness that depresses you." "what makes you think I want you to be faithful?" "I don't know. most men are that way. I can't think of one who isn't." "well, I do care, but our `addiction to sex', as you call it, could be our undoing." "poly sexuality is not necessarily addiction,"

she says, shifting her frame of reference. "I didn't say it was. maybe we just need to talk more often.

"what are the qualifications for your job?" "I have an MS in atmospheric research – actually, oceanography. right now I work with data related to climate change. we study features of Santa Monica bay," "you know, I wouldn't have expected that what you do would be so technical or cerebral." "I don't see why not. I've always been interested in the science of this planet. I've always been good in physics and math." "where did you go to school?" "UCLA." "so did I, mostly." "but I moonlight as a sky diving instructor. have you ever done that?" "no, I've a friend who lives in Scotland with whom I've been communicating by email almost on a daily basis, lately. his daughter sky dives, or at least has in the past. she wrote me she did it tandem with her former husband the day they got married as a wedding gift." "it's nice to know you've got friends. I was beginning to wonder. I've been thinking a lot about what a hermit you are, and what I can do to help you change that." she's not the first woman to say that to me, and I decide to just ignore it. "his daughter, Anna, says tandem diving is as easy as solo diving, but I don't see how that's possible." "it is if you're both prepared. only one person wears a chute and does the maneuvering. the other wears a harness attached to that person. it's often used for training beginners." "sounds scary. do you do tandem jumps with beginners?" "sometimes." "what if the person weighs a lot more than you do?" "at the speed you're falling the resistance of air to your body, neutralizes weight." "mmmm.

“some people are afraid of heights. there have been times when I was stuck on a ledge where I was afraid to come down. I’m also claustrophobic.” “sky diving is good because you just let go – that’s what the fear is of. it’s not like rock climbing.” “I know, I’ve dreams where I couldn’t make a turn on a curve, or was on a cliff too close to the edge, and instead of plunging to my death, I just floated, even levitated.” “how are you claustrophobic?” “I don’t know the origin, it could have been in the womb, but when I was a small boy a playmate encouraged me to crawl into an open refrigerator in his back yard, after he did, then closed it on me. I sensed he was going to do it. if his mother hadn’t come home at just that moment, and saw a funny look on his face, I probably wouldn’t be here today. but for a long time, whenever I moved, the place would have to have a walk in closet with a door I could close myself into, so I could sit and meditate in it.” “the flip side of phobia is attraction. we should sky dive together sometime when you’ve had the necessary preparation.” “I just read a veteran sky diver committed suicide by unbuckling his chute in midair.” “I know. I read about it, too. I don’t recall hearing about anyone having done that before.”

“we’ll have to wait a couple of days from now, if you don’t mind. I’ve a free round trip airline ticket and a pass to the PJ Harvey concert at The Warfield in S.F. for tomorrow night.” “how did you manage that?” “a former co-worker at the Research Center where I work at SCMI, is taking me. the prospect, because of his generally solicitous attitude towards me, is, he’ll probably want, and get, something in return.” “I can imagine what that will be.” “we’ll be staying together at a

hotel for the night, and fly back the next day.” she smiles, turns, and walks out of the room. my eyes almost absentmindedly fix on her legs as she disappears, but my heart is beating faster, and I have an erection. she looks back, smiling, twirling her keys. “it will depend on how amorous he wants me to be.” “it’s your life to live, Neola.

“I’ve been trying to understand what it is that makes me attracted to you, aside from, perhaps, your intelligence. it’s not just sex, even though I know your basic attraction to me is lust. you’re not particularly good at either physical or mental activity. you’re not particularly good socially, either. because you’re too shy and resentful, you lack confidence.” “thank you.” “and as far as sex goes, other men are sexier in a more outgoing way, yet still have the ability to be intimate.” “maybe those are just the reasons you’re attracted.” “don’t be silly.” “I think I know the real reason why. I’m the only one you can criticize and allow it, because of a natural closeness between us. if you did with any of your other men, or they with you, that would be the end of it.” this is the only time I’ve ever seen Neola really blush. “other men don’t see me the way you do, as a love goddess. they just see me more as an object, however attractive to them, for sex. they don’t suffer the same pain you do. it doesn’t mean they’re hard, cruel, or insensitive. I suffer too, seeing you do. you need a woman who’s as intellectual as you are, Jerry.” “you have an MS. I don’t even have a degree.” “that doesn’t matter.” “I know it doesn’t. why don’t we let this go.”

the full moon is very large, bright and close. the landscape, which was dry and barren desert when we began, has

gradually become mud, until our feet are sinking, calves deep into it, and as it becomes more and more like quicksand, the suction is making it harder and harder for us to pull our feet out with each step. we stop and wearily look around us, mud in every direction as far as the eye can see. if we sit we'll sink. large, predatory, pre-historic looking, black, birds, are swooping around in the overhead sky, making freakish noises. Neola, her face caked with mud, clutches my arm. "don't worry, Neola honey, this is not real," I say. then, one of the giant birds, with spikes for teeth, swoops towards us. Neola screams, and I wake up, my head in her lap. "you're a party pooper," she says, bending forward and affectionately wrapping her arms around my neck, hugging my face to her breasts. "what party? how did we get here? you're a virgin? how is this possible?" and this time I wake up alone, in my bed, in the middle of another bad night.

"I missed my period. I think I'm pregnant." "I don't see how. we've never." "not by you. it was that one time with the former researcher. will the ironies never stop?" "how was it with him?" "I always enjoy sex. he was a little slow, but I knew how to pull him into it. not everyone is like you, Jerry. some pursue and then get stage fright. I liked being able to help him. it made the trip better for both of us. don't worry, it's early enough I can just take the pills. if it were you, I wouldn't abort." we look at each other for a long time. I just shake my head. but the thought of having a child with her has been planted.. "how was PJ?" "it was a great show." "I know." "if I'd known ahead." "forget it."

"I want a child, and I want him to be by you." "how do you

know it would be a boy?" "that was a slip. I don't. what would you prefer?" "a girl," I suppose. but truthfully, neither." "you don't have to raise him, or her. I know what a burden that would be. I just want it to be your child. I've no intention of settling down with anyone." "I'm not as sexy, normally functional, nor as social, as the other men you sleep with, but you want my child." "you're the only one I love. you shouldn't have a problem with that." "to fuck to aid procreation rather than thwart it would seem obvious. that's an interesting thought. but would the pleasure of that be worth the penury?" "are you joking, Jerry?" "a little, but it's an interesting idea." "you mean to aid rather than thwart." "yes."

driving up Stewart heading north to Colorado, after running, I pass a female with long honey brown hair, loosely tied in back, on either side at the ends, wearing a short, clingy, print dress, riding her bicycle in traffic, her cleavage and crotch exposed, her bare thighs sexually pumping. I slow down, while looking in the rear view mirror, hoping to miss the approaching green light, so she can catch up, and I can have another, better, look. as she pulls alongside of me at the red light, I turn my head and am momentarily startled to see it's Neola, smiling broadly. "where are you going?" "back to my apartment." several blocks later, she padlocks her bike, and rests it against the rail in front of my door. "Neola, the young one." "that's right."

"one morning I got up early after barely being able to get through the night, and while standing, facing the washbasin, I got dizzy, nauseous, and blacked out. next moment I was on

the floor with a broken neck. I didn't know it until the next day when I went to UCLA emergency in Santa Monica." "why did you wait, you must have been in a lot of pain?" "I thought it might've been just a severe strain. I even did the laundry. when I got there I told them I was in extreme pain and could they take me right away. they made me wait my turn for 1 or 2 hours, I don't remember how long. people ahead of me were joking, drinking bottled water, and eating candy. it was absurd. this is how a system can use process to remain detached. after having me stand and painfully stretch my neck over and over, so they could take x-rays for another half hour, they discovered there was a fractured vertebrae. then they switched gears. 'don't move your neck or you'll be paralyzed.' they clapped an aspen collar around my neck and gave me a shot of morphine. first they wheeled me to the space capsule, as I saw it, to do an MRI. then the morphine high really kicked in, and I was in a state of ecstasy, being wheeled about in this surreal and luxurious space filled with strange, weird, apparitions, in the guise of medical equipment.

"after I was examined and tests were taken, and they finally brought me to a bed, a young attractive woman I presumed to be a nurse, who, oddly was wearing a tank top which revealed part of her breasts, a bare midriff, and jeans, greeted me, with what seemed to me, a salacious air. she asked me if I wanted more morphine, and told me to call her if I needed it during the night. — I actually hoped there might be some chance I could clandestinely have sex with her. I did think it strange she should be dressed that way. it wasn't until after I was discharged from the hospital that I realized

this was part of their procedure. they were testing my alertness and response by tempting me with desire. I guess I passed with flying colors, for after that initial contact, she totally disappeared, and from thereon, whoever attended me was predictably inured and generically dressed." "it sounds like, at least, it turned into a good trip." "but it didn't last. the first night was fine. they left me alone and I had an outside view of the plaza. but the next day when they transferred me to the orthopedic section, and until I was released the day after, it became nightmarish, unnecessarily so – that's a whole other story I won't go into now, and because there was no one to pick me up, they wanted to send me to a managed care facility. I was able to get in touch with my next door neighbor and he came right over." with this last I'm surprised to see she has tears in her eyes. "you've always got a story, Jerry."

"I'm not very wise either socially or sexually for a man my age Neola, and it's clear I never will be." "that's apparent, Jerry."

Neola is sitting, legs tucked under, on the bed, summer breeze blowing the curtains, brushing her hair before sweeping it up and fastening silver clasps, wearing the same white dress, light from the window streaming on one side of her face, the other side in shadow – the combination of ethereal, fragile, and sensual, enhanced by the fragrance of her perfume, mingling with the breezy afternoon air, ubiquitous, yet nothing I've ever breathed before, defining euphoria both elusively feminine, and subtly, evocatively, sexual, prompting me to ask, "what is the name of the perfume you're using, "Neola?" "just a popular floral based perfume. nothing you

should write your mom about.” “you mean it’s not a haute brand with a high end price tag?” “jerry, I don’t think you know very much about perfumes.” “well, what are you wearing?” “Givinchy – *irresistibly sensual perfume*.” “I can attest to that.” “I spray on a small amount and it wears quite well. it’s not cheap, \$78, but I paid \$58 for it on Amazon.” “what’s in it?” she gets up, reaches for the top of her dresser bureau, and hands me the card that comes with the cleanly but sensuously designed bottle – cento folia rose, peony rose, fantasia rose, passion rose, emotion rose, verbena leaf, star anise, vanilla, and patchouli – floral fragrance. “I’ve never seen a list like that.” “I’m your eternal flower, Jerry, come and crush me in your arms.” “I don’t want to disturb the euphoria of just looking at you while breathing in your fragrance, Neola. can anything physical reach those heights?” “all right for you,” she says, a devilish look in her eyes. then, unable to constrain myself any longer, I rush to the bed and crush her in my arms, in that moment, surpassing any ethereal expectations. “be quick,” she whispers, “I have to leave in 10 minutes.”

“everyone works but me. oh, I know, I’m an artist.” “you work, you just don’t get paid.” “that’s why I don’t feel self-sufficient.” “that was a very good 10 minutes,” she says, running her hand affectionately along my neck, as we get ready to leave, she to work, me, I’ve been alone so long I’m not sure it could be any other way. yet I feel neither strong nor independent.

“why do we never go to your place, Jerry?” “I like it better at yours.” “let’s go to a club while we think about whose place

to stay, tonight." "you know I don't go to clubs, Neola. my ears ring afterwards and it takes days to absorb." "Jerry, can't you go just once, for me?" "what club?" "a new one just opened in east Hollywood." "a dance club?" "more or less." "who's doing the mixes? never mind I wouldn't know." "then you'll go?" "I guess." "they're getting rave reviews." "for what?" "mostly for partying," she laughs. "I've never been with you in that context." "you said I was socially inept." "that's why you should go, just this once. when we get there some pretty strange things are going on, and in the flux during a set, an attractive woman, flanked by her queen friends in thongs, sucks me off, not enough to make me come.

it's 2 a.m. when we leave. Neola has had more than enough to drink, and we decide to take a walk on Hollywood Blvd. to sober her up, as she's driving, before going back to the car. we take our time, stopping and making out. drunk, Neola's extremely passionate and affectionate, and by the time we get back to the club it's deserted. there's only one other car in the lot, and, unfortunately, Neola backs into it, smashing a taillight. it's only then we realize there're occupants in it, as three burly bikers in leather, resembling the Beagle Boys, minus the convict stripes, from Walt Disney comics, pile out. "I'm sorry," Neola says, contritely, expecting to be chewed out. "let me get the insurance info." as she turns, one burly fellow clamps a hand on her shoulder, and says, "that won't do," confirming what I knew all along was going to happen – they're going to mess with us. they're really looking her over. Neola always looks good, and I fear what may be coming next. while the 3 of them huddle together I think maybe we

should try to run for it, but the street is totally deserted. when they break huddle the same fellow, speaking in a mock formal tone, says to her, "you know what pirates do for punishment?" at this moment I notice all three have Jolly Rogers patches on their jackets. "for major offenses they make you walk the plank. for minor ones they flog. the punishment for disrespecting us and our property," he says, gravely, "is 20 lashes." under the parking lot lights Neola's face is impassive and beautiful as ever. in fact, I half expect her to spit in his face. "but seeing as how you're a woman," he adds, bowing curtly, we're reducing the sentence to 10." the other two grunt their affirmation. "let me take her place," I hear myself say, trembling slightly. "flog me instead." my voice sounds to me like it's yards away from my body. their faces light up instantaneously. they huddle again. then the same fellow says to me, "20 lashes, or until you pass out, whichever comes first." I nod. Neola screams, and one of them clamps his hand over her mouth. they pull out a mean looking whip from the trunk, then push us to a dark space between the club and several large dumpsters. "take off your shirt." I unbutton and remove my shirt, then pull my t shirt over my head. they order me to bend forward with my hands against the wall so the front of my body is exposed as well. the whip cracks. I momentarily lose balance and almost fall. the whip cracks again. the whip cracks a third time, the pain excruciating enough my knees buckle. one of them walks over to examine their handiwork – 2 welts on my back, one on my belly. I'll never survive 20 lashes, I think, and hope I lose consciousness. "lash harder," he says, and walks back. the fourth opens up a gash and it starts to bleed profusely. Neola, whose mouth has been gagged, tries to squirm free.

the fifth lash cracks and I fall to my knees. I dizzily flash that 10 lashes would have disfigured her. but providence intervenes. a police car cruises a block away, it's search beam turning in what appears to be a random manner. one of them clumps a hand over my mouth as the police car slowly passes, it's beam sweeping part of the lot. as soon as they're out of sight, they shove Neola into me. she falls on top of me and they flee. we get up. I don't believe I'm in that bad shape. "why they just didn't take the insurance, or even demand money," she says, holding me tightly in her arms. "they're probably wanted for some shitty thing they've done, or the car was stolen or not registered." "there was a woman in the back seat of their car," Neola says, "all she had on was an unbuttoned shirt." I didn't see anyone." "I was facing their car. you were facing them." we drive to UCLA emergency in Westwood. after the wounds are treated, they opt to keep me overnight. Neola begs them to let her stay with me, but they won't allow it, and she has to sleep in the waiting room. the police take the report and the story makes the next day news, though we decline to let the TV cameras film us, and when the perpetrators are, most likely, caught, we'll have to endure the discomfort of the legal procedure.

she takes a week off from work to attend to me, and I stay with her during that time. the first week I take the prescribed Vicodin for pain, so I can sleep. it gives me a high which makes me contemplative and mellow, and hallucinatory when I sleep. Neola is attentive and loving. we hear from people (on both sides) checking on us. in fact, we've become famous. all the talk shows want us on. I'm the man who took a whipping for love. Neola wows them on Letterman with a

low cut mini dress that looks more like a negligee. she's getting film and TV offers, and calls from agents. and we get offers to film our story. I find it hard to orient myself sexually, but there are rewards, and she's feeling a lot of guilt. she runs her fingers through my hair, not provocatively, but tenderly. "here, come on my dress. just like Clinton did with Lewinsky. I'll treasure it. I won't clean it. I'll leave it in my closet," she jokes. my cock lurches, spurts and dribbles cum, as she kisses me tenderly, whispering, "I love you," in my ear. then wearily, I let my head sink into her lap, as she caresses my cheek. "I'm going to make everything up to you, I promise."

when she has to return to work, I move back to my apartment. the wounds take a while longer to heal. incrementally, our routine gets back to normal i.e., the balancing act between her insouciance and my caustic irony. she's back to having prolific sex with other men, and I'm back to being incognito and defensive.

one night, late, Neola calls. "can you come over right away?" I am mystified by the urgency, but given the hour, I start to get an erection, and say, "ok." her attire, a little girl who wants to fuck look, is modest but inexplicably titillating, wearing a short, beige pima cotton dress, white cotton bobby sox, and thick black platform shoes – an invitation to ravish her. "I'm ovulating, Jerry, and I want your baby." to put it mildly I resist. "are you crazy, Neola?" "there's a pack of condoms in my dresser, or I can use either my diaphragm or vaginal ring," she acquiesces and with a resigned sigh she gets up and moves to the bedroom. "come back here, Neola, you

don't have to use anything." she looks at me, giving me a beguiling smile, regaining her tone. "we've got all the time in the world now. let's go to the front room and dance." she puts on a very hot disco record by someone I've never heard of, and we bump, literally, and grind, to the music, rubbing up against each other, dry fucking more than dancing. it's interesting, now that we're free to let go and do what we want without restraint, we have to search for ways to get it on. whereas if we were trying to hinder, just the temptation to let go, especially the way Neola is dressed, would have been an aphrodisiac. rather than first removing our clothes we decide to fuck for a while, fully dressed on the floor. my semen is getting hotter, there's a titillation in it's going to impregnate her rather than go to waste, and we can be as 'dirty' as we want about it without feeling it's just escape. neither of us have any mystical, or in her case, maternal, feelings about it. it seems to be totally erotic. what can we do we haven't already done as subterfuge? one difference is the feelings are almost entirely genital – a red neon blinking, 'fuck', she hovers over me, then lays on top of me, almost smothering me with her hair splayed against my face, as I inhale her perfume, and bury my mouth in her neck. then she lays back, the motion riding her short dress up to her crotch. raising myself to a sitting position she pushes the tip of her heel into my open mouth, my teeth clenching it and I suck. then I move my head upward between her thighs and eat and gnaw until her bottom is saturated with a silky film. we finally remove our clothes. she gets up and turns on the heat, then stretches back on the bed, and I lay on top of her, my erect penis sliding back and forth on her labia before we rise and she takes it in her mouth.

it occurs to me there haven't been many times we've had sex together completely naked. even the many times we've slept together, we've always had something on – a nightie, a shirt, even socks. “are you both naked when you have sex with other men?” “yes,” she replies, “our naked bodies are part of what turns me on.” there's a rosy color on her cheeks and defiance flashing in her eyes, and at this moment, resentful as I feel, she's as ravishing to me as when I first walked in tonight. at this point we relax, both allowing we're not quite ready to procreate. one thing our sex has always been is affectionate, because it's both our orientations and conforms to our fantasies. maybe it's just ego, but I can't conceive of having sex with a woman without her enjoying it.

just then her cell rings. it's well after midnight and he wants her to sleep with him. she flirts with him quite a bit, obviously turned on by his call before informing him she's unavailable and he, reluctantly, gets off the phone, then turns to me, nipples erect, sweetly blushing. “I'll leave it off.” “Neola, why don't we stop `trying' to make something happen, and just fuck. the baby won't know the difference.” “yes, the baby will.”

“you know we almost never kiss when we make love doesn't that bother you?” “no, Jerry, sentiment just gets in the way.” “love isn't sentiment.” “that's right, and sentiment isn't love.” “then let's watch some porn.” “that would be a mistake. we'd both rush to the bed and have a quickie, and that would be the end of it.” “we could fuck again.” “then what would be the purpose of watching porn?” “for laughs.” we sit side by side naked in front of her laptop, our hands clasping each

other's privates. we watch a video where a faceless male with a half hard cucumber size penis penetrates a petite, by comparison, scantily clad female in an incredibly (for the sake of the viewer) twisted position, his organ bent at an alarmingly castrating angle, until instead of massaging ourselves, as planned, we hold hands and respond with laughter tainted with disgust. "why don't we just go to the bedroom and fuck. if it doesn't turn out the way we want we can make up for it next time." "this time is special, Jerry." but my doubts which were never completely allayed, come back full strength, and I know I can't, and won't, go through with it. Neola doesn't blanch when I tell her. she gets up and silently goes to the bedroom and returns with a pack of condoms.

nothing is ultimately visual. there is only physical action. the visual can only set it up. the more we fuck the more the external falls away, the more we stop trying to have the ultimate erotic experience. following the inner urges and our genitals, we obliterate the horniness (remnants of dirtiness – I'm screwing you, oh, this is wild, etc.) in fact, as we get closer and closer, if there are any thoughts at all, it's a desperation for satisfaction. it occurs to me if Neola had really wanted to get pregnant instead of just using the idea as another erotic escape there would have been much more of a plan. but, as a result of the deceptive foreplay, we are very hot, hotter than we've, possibly, ever been for each other. my semen is very hot (literally), and her vagina receptive and grasping. our lust now freed from the captivity of seeking anything but its own satisfaction, we screw, without the usual attempts at invention, and with heightened affection, partially filling several condoms, until dawn.

Nobody's Fool

on an impulse I ask, "what are you doing after work?" she swipes the code on my last grocery item, and says, "there's a late beach party tonight." then, while I pay, she throws her dark blue eyes (when it absorbs the light is almost black) into mine. "want to go?," she asks, as she hands me the receipt and change. "yes." I nod. "most of the people here are going," she says, wiping the counter of refuse. "it happens once every summer, I was told." it's almost 11 pm before she checks out and we walk to the lot. she's wearing a light suit jacket over an ivory blouse with open collar, blue skirt, and comfortable work shoes. her straight scissor cut blonde hair flairs slightly at the shoulders. "I just have to get a warmer coat. see you in about a half hour." "so do I, I'll just honk."

"most of the people who go will just be looking for an excuse to pair off and have sex," she confesses. "is that an invitation?" "no, not necessarily," she replies, as she snuggles up to me, smiling warmly. "you're married." "yes, I know you know that."

"he and I haven't had sex in a long time. we get along, but there's not much passion between us. passion is very sometimes." "do you think you both made a mistake?" "if that's true then much of what we do in life is a mistake. we have things in common in other ways, but not having sex with someone you're living with can make you very frustrated, more so than if you were just living alone." "I imagine it could be that way." "it's hard for me to see how someone could not desire her, though, because to me, she has just the

right combination of attractiveness and genuineness. I've wanted to have her for so long, and perhaps tonight will be makeup time. "Jerry, you're scheming."

we move as much to the outskirts of the party as we can without dangerously isolating ourselves. at first, it feels awkward, bundled up as we are, on the blanket, covering uneven clumps of sand. "have you decided?" her lips respond hot and generously when we kiss, and I ease onto her. we make out, losing ourselves. I pull her skirt up and slide off her panties, as she simultaneously tugs my pants and shorts to below my knees. I kick them free and we lay there, layers of clothing separating our upper bodies, yet naked waist down, in the cool night breeze, breathing the sea air, listening to the waves crash, and the variable sounds of the people around us, as we settle into fucking. "I like your legs," I whisper, as I push, and they wrap, sensuously, securely, around me.

now reintegrated back with the group, she removes a compact mirror from her purse and applies fresh lipstick. standing by the car the mood between us gets serious. "we're going to have to decide, right now, whether to break it off, or continue. there can be no in-between." I nod in agreement.

"what about you, Nora? then it's to be an illicit affair?" "illicit?, there's no law against it." "maybe we can find a way to get rid of him like in the noir films," I joke. "he doesn't have life insurance, and they always get punished," she laughs. "is adultery really going to be the stimulus?" "no, it's just that there's so little emotion between he and I, I don't feel guilt." "you don't think he cares?" "he would if he knew.

"where is he now?" "home, probably." "was he there when you returned after work?" "no, we live different lives, but if he was, neither of us would have said anything." "what does he do?" "he's an academic. he teaches film history." "where?" "in the film dept. at UCLA." "where did you meet him?" "I was a friend of one of his students, when I was an undergraduate there." "and now you're a cashier in a natural food co-op." "I'm very much into sustainable living and all of that." "so am I. then what do we do now?" "he and I will, no doubt, continue to live separate lives, and, right now, you and I will continue." at these words I feel an explicit thrill. "is it all going to be sex?" "if it is it won't last long." "it's hard for me to imagine you going back home, now." "it's my home as well as it is his." "what will you tell him?" "I don't have to tell him anything." "what if he asks?" "he won't." "why don't you tell him." "I don't mind. I could tell him. I certainly wouldn't lie to him, but I don't tell him anything else." "and he doesn't tell you." "that's right." "does he have sex with other women?" "I doubt it. he doesn't particularly like women, I've discovered. it would be more likely he's made it with one of the male students he has a crush on." "Nora, why don't you leave him." "I may." "we're going around in circles. if you feel you can't go home tonight you can stay over with me. you can have my bed. I'll sleep on the floor." "all of a sudden we have a chaste relationship. don't you have a couch?" "no, it's almost dawn." "take me home, I'll talk to him." "good. am I the first person, while married, other than your husband, you've had sex with?" "yes." "do you still love him?" "I don't know." "can I ask one more question?" "of course." "what are your feelings about us tonight together, on the sand.?" "it was the sexiest, most erotic and sublime,

sexual experience I've ever had. also the dirtiest." before I start the engine, we share a long, warm, emotional kiss. "don't feel bad for me, Jerry. I drew you in. I wanted this to happen."

a day and a half later we meet as planned to spend the day together. our eyes meet and hers searches mine. our bodies come together, magnetized, and we kiss. her gyrating tongue churns deep in my mouth. then she practically wrenches herself away. "it's too soon to have sex again, Jerry." "I hadn't planned on it, Nora." as it's Wednesday, we first walk through the Farmer's Market on Arizona St. hand in hand. "did you talk to him?" "yes, even if I hadn't wanted to it was unavoidable because of the time I got back." she takes a small paper bag and starts to fill it with dates. "this is just like a postman's holiday, isn't it?" she turns her head and laughs. "he was hurt, I knew he would be, but rational. he wanted to know who you were. I told him you're a writer and an artist who shops at the Co-op every week, and that this has been building for a long time, and that I'm glad. I didn't pull any punches." "does he know we're together today?" I don't think that's his concern. and I told him I don't intend to give him a play by play." "are you unhappy he didn't react more?" "Jerry, I think you're subjecting me to the same inquisitorial probing he frequently does. if you're serious about our having a relationship you'll stop that, right now." "you're right, Nora, I've been told. but why don't you leave him?" "why doesn't he leave me," she replies, her voice rising. "it's my house as much as it is his. I've worked just as hard to make it a home as he." "good point. I promise I won't bring it up again." "and because it's my home I'd like you to be

free to be there if you want. he actually said he'd like to meet you." "does he have a name?" "Darren." "ok, first things first." the magnetic attraction returns, full force, and we hungrily kiss as people walk by and stare. "let's go to my place where we can be alone. " "I meant what I said about not having sex too soon." "not to have sex. you can look at some of my work which I think you might enjoy. later, if we're not in the mood to go out, we can fix dinner as we both eat the same food." "and then?" "and then you can spend the night with me, if you really want to." her dark blue eyes (I've never seen eyes that color) are pools. her expression is a perfect balance of intentness and lust. she slips her hand under my shirt and caresses my chest. then fondles the rising bump in my crotch. "it's going to be different than it was the night before last, Jerry." "it's going to be different every time, Nora."

"let's take off our clothes while we fix dinner," I suggest. her face lights up. "oh, yes, good idea." we undress and leave our clothes strewn together on one chair in the front room. "it's hot weather, but the kitchen floor is cold. better leave our shoes on." I can't hide my appreciation seeing her totally naked for the first time, viewing her solid frame, long legs, and substantial breasts, like the trunk of a young and healthy tree in full bloom. the reciprocity is spontaneous and mutual, as she looks over my skinny, naked body with approval.

what follows is an opportunity to assess the images of the male and female human body in motion, at close range, doing it's chores, just as Eadweard Muybridge may have assessed it, only in color, and more fun, though it might get a few laughs

(and erections) in a porn flick. "I think we should put our clothes back on while we eat, as I have no freshly cleaned pillows or upholstery." "if you wish," she replies, dropping a pickled radish onto her tongue, and rubbing her breasts against my chest, she pushes it into my mouth. I eat it. we kiss, then put on our clothes.

"we're able to give-in to our inner lust without caring whether it intrudes on our individual personalities, whereas an attractive couple, say, sitting together in a café or coffee shop, trying to seriously build a relationship, will naturally be sensitive to, and inhibited by, their own issues of power and control, not to transgress each other's separateness." "do you think ours is more a fantasy?" "it probably is, but the pleasure may be worth it, and 'reality' will set in soon enough. it's necessary in the way two bums (or a group of them) may be sitting in the sun, chatting and laughing happily, as for them, happiness is where they find it. and if you think about it, that's the way it should be for all of us. must we be in the shadow of death to not hold back?" "they've earned the right to laugh." "yes."

"I dump the garbage every evening to keep away the insects. but they still come." "what kind?" "silverfish, mostly, and small spiders." "crawling insects," she makes a face. "that's what the mo fo's do, they crawl. let's take a walk." the sun is setting and we're in a mellow zone, often, my favorite time of day. after we climb back up the stairs and are standing in the front room, it's clear to see the conflict taking place in Nora, just by looking at her face. "Jerry, I'd like to go home." "to your husband, I mean, Darren?" "he probably won't be

there. I've got a lot to think about. I'd like to be alone." for the first time that evening I feel the genuine empathy with which we began, and I am secretly relieved she's made that decision, as the night would have most likely degenerated into a seduction neither of us would have been happy with. "I understand, Nora. I'll take you home now. believe it or not I feel the same way." the last bit of light kisses us, and we walk hand in hand to the car. "I'm pretty much out of food. will you be working tomorrow?" "yes."

I'm extremely mellow when I get back. it's a very warm summer night. I leave the front door open, and I sit facing it, in the one chair, where our clothes were earlier strewn, and stare out the open door at the porch light which illuminates a path almost to the chair. it seems love always involves loss – is in fact, the basis of love.

face to face at checkout, she greets me, or should I say, confronts me, with a blank stare, and with silent precision rings up the items, as I flash on the two of us naked in my kitchen, just the night before. "member?," she asks, as I plop down the code on my membership card. "discount?" this is the ongoing joke between us. I give her one of the \$50 bills I withdraw from the bank monthly for groceries and gas. she holds it up to the light to check the watermark. "I print them up myself," I once told her, another ongoing joke. the tension of shopping when I know she'll be there can be stressful, affecting the normal process of shopping – the give and take of short exchanges with the guys who work in produce, flirting with female customers, even the repartee with other cashiers. our procedure is to ignore each other when I pass her

register, or the front desk where she sometimes works in customer service – just the pressure of being arrested by anticipation. but this has always been in the context of something building up between us. she lowers her eyes as she hands me two bills, some coins, and the receipt, then raises them and looks into mine. she clasps my hand and won't let go. at that moment, as it's late in the afternoon and nobody else is in line, she leans over the counter and whispers, "I love you." "I love you, too. what time do you get off?" "six." "can you come by?"

she calls me on her cell and I come down with the parking permit tag – it's the same where she lives. arms around each other we hurry up the stairs. "it's dinner time," I say, just to get the idea of dinner out of the way. "the only dinner I want is you," she responds, as we fall into a kiss. then we undress and fuck right away, the apartment our theater and stage.

at about midnight when we subside, breathless, sweaty and smelly, we sit in the front room and watch several of Stan Brakhage's brilliantly colored, abstract, short films, before, still naked, we go to the kitchen, where I boil up a pot of water, add the corn chowder mix I got from the Co-op that day, and we drink a cup for nourishment, then schmooze in the half-darkness before going to bed.

we both awaken early, refreshed. and lay there for a while, joking, before getting up and dressing. I make us breakfast of brown basmati rice, with peanut butter, and/or cheese on toast. it's still just 7:00 when her cell rings. "I know it's Darren," she says, without looking at the display, and decides

it best to answer. they talk, at least on Nora's end, very quietly. I leave the room so as not to listen in. she flicks it off, and turns to me. "he was worried. I've never not come home before. he wanted to be sure I was all right." "has he not come home?" "a number of times, and he's frequently away on trips related to his work – conferences and lectures, but he's always let me know in advance. don't let his call spoil it for you." "no, but I'm glad he didn't call while we were still in bed," I say, flashing on a short story by J.D. Salinger, "or eating breakfast.. do you want to shower?" "I'll shower when I get back. Darren will be at work. I don't think he's going to be a problem. if there's going to be one it will be between you and I." I'm impressed with both her frankness and insight. "yes, I know." but I'm a bit uneasy with what I perceive to be a lack of empathy on both our parts, for him.

I walk her down to her car. I like to look at women who are a little worn. it's sensual and at the same time makes me want to be gentle, and at the moment she looks really good to me. "what are you going to do today, Jerry?" "I don't know, Nora. go back to facing the void in myself. when I'm not in the mood to create, I don't do much of anything. I run in the morning." "I think we're at the critical point where we have to know whether there's real love and mutual attraction, or if it's just sex." "with the latter, I'm already satisfied, Nora." "so am I, Jerry." I lower my head to her open window and we lightly kiss. we give each other a long, hard, look, and I watch her drive off, evoking a feeling of transition. Virginia Woolf be dammed.

"Jerry, can you come over? today is one of my days off." "I'll be over in about an hour." when she opens the door she greets me wearing a cream colored robe, her figure totally filling it, and black heels. her naturally straight hair is damp and a little stringy at the ends. her scent is fresh from having bathed or showered. her dark blue eyes, striking as ever. is it going to be as simple as her loosening her sash? horny as this picture has made me, I'm hoping against it. a quick visual montage of the living room, puts my apartment to shambles. their land phone rings and I watch her as she talks to a girl-friend, the shapes and contours of her body changing with the movement and shifts of her position, wondering if the moment of spontaneous combustion has passed. "I just have to comb my hair and dress. you can look around or watch me, whichever you prefer. I'm speechless, and swallow my words. instead, I just stare. we look at each other intensely for a long, frozen moment, and then she pulls the cord on her robe, simultaneously revealing sensuous skin and a mat of pubic hair, and sensitized as never before, we come together, kissing ravenously, before I hurriedly tear off my clothes and we fall and fuck on the sofa, the fullness of her body, the after bath fragrance, and the dampness of her hair, like no other recipe for euphoria. "I can see our relationship is still sexually based, Nora," I say, sheepishly, my wits having returned. "I don't think you can blame me for that." "no, I blindsided you looking the way I did when you came to the door. but when you said it would be an hour, I worked up a sweat in the garden, and..." "I'm glad you did," I interrupt.

"I came over, partially, with the intent and need to perceive, assess, and acclimate myself to an unfamiliar surroundings,

which would have required maintaining a necessary tension. dissipating it so soon after arriving, temporarily precluded my ability to do that." "then you regret...." "no, not at all. not with that kind of pleasure, and I'm now just beginning to feel the resonance." "of what?" "of us, in your house." just then the door opens and Darren enters. I've yet to put on my shirt and shoes. his appearance, nothing like the vague, amorphous image I had of him, is strong and youthful, tall and athletic. with a full head of blond hair, he looks like a storybook Nordic hero. just the fact he's entered his house gives his image power. he looks first at Nora, then at me, and says nothing. "Darren, this is Jerry." we move towards each other and shake hands. his grip is noncommittal, neither firm nor soft. although we're all somewhat mesmerized, I think I can see he's thinking of something edgy to say. "I hope I didn't interrupt anything that can't be continued at a later time," he finally says, addressing neither of us in particular. "oh, no," Nora replies, "I was just showing Jerry one of my favorite yoga poses, the Standing Forward Bend." "oh, yes, that's good for erectile stimulation." "it's benefits are broader than that, Darren." it amazes me, the game they're playing, but I do have my shirt and shoes off. "if you don't mind I've got to get ready for a lecture and panel discussion tonight." "where?," Nora asks. "at the Hammer, the one on the influence of the 'slacker generation' on, and by, popular culture." "who's going to be on the panel?," I ask. "Mike Kelley and Ray Pettibon, for sure. do you know them?" "no, but I met both of them a long time ago." "then why don't you," he hesitates a second, "and Nora, come?" "I can't, I have to attend a staff meeting at the store," Nora replies. "then why don't you come by yourself?," Darren asks, turning

to me. "I might." Nora looks at me and says, "I think that's a very good idea, Jerry." "I'm a little confused. I thought you lectured on film." "I do. both Pettibon and Kelley make videos. does that qualify?," he tartly asks. "yes." "Nora said you once made 16mm film." "yes." "are they shown?" "they no longer exist." "how's that?" "I destroyed them." "hmmm." "I suppose 'slacker generation' is a misnomer, at least with them. they always seemed pretty industrious to me." "that's just the point of my presentation. – the irony of that. but it was their rejection of the establishment formula for success that got them started." "but it seems to me the Beats, and the so called underground film culture were doing it long before that." "yes, you should be doing the lecture." we both laugh, mirthlessly. Nora excuses herself, and as soon as we're alone, Darren asks, "do you love Nora?" "I don't know." it's clear I don't want to go to the lecture. I really don't want to talk to Darren. I don't want to engage with him in a game of brinksmanship. nor do I want to get into, what I suspect, and what Nora has indicated, is his bi-sexuality. she and I will just have to make up our minds to do something decisive. Darren, evidently reading my hesitation, says, looking at me hard, "we can meet at my gym sometime for lunch." when Nora reappears, Darren excuses himself again. we shake hands and he leaves the room. she faces me. her look is both bland and filled with consternation. "do you really have a staff meeting at the store?" "yes, it's important. I'm very apprehensive. I think you and he should talk." "we have. you didn't think things would move so quickly, did you?" "no," she says, as we walk out to my car. there's a ticket on the windshield. "I'll pay for it," she says, "it's my fault for forgetting to give you the tag." "no, I'll pay it." we

face each other looking meaningfully into each other's eyes. "I want to kiss you," I say. "I want to kiss you, too," she replies. we passionately kiss. I get into my car.

instead of going to the lecture and panel discussion, I decide to do a little late night shopping for groceries. Nora's a bit flabbergasted to see me, but visibly relieved. "Nora, I think I see things clearly now. we're trying to make too much out of this. you have a dilemma about what to do with your relationship with Darren, but it's obvious you and he will divorce. I don't want to get involved with Darren. we'll have to resolve our relationship without his help or hindrance." she hangs on intently to my words, and then says, "I agree." "I like you very much, and want to continue to have sex with you and because of our common interests we can always be friends, unless, of course, we have a falling out. the way I see it now, we're both just horny, very horny, for different reasons, and the more support we can give each other, the better." her face is beaming with pleasure. and as she turns her dark blue eyes on me, I've already an erection....for next time.

Paid In Full

(after a 20 minute internet porn video, titled, Blonde Housewife Fucks The Repairman To Save Money)

it's a hot, sticky, humid, late August day in L.A. the large sofa is a plush red drone. she stands in front of it, between a polished sienna coffee table, wearing a flimsy, short, white print summer dress, with a hem that curls up the entire length of her soft, sensuously slim thighs. it's held up by long, thin, shoulder straps that leaves her upper body down to her breasts, bare. with her long, straight blonde hair, she incessantly plays, fingering the locks, throwing the strands off her face, over her shoulders, down her back, then throwing it forward again, framing her face, which is aesthetically thin, sensual, with no makeup except for eye shadow and a line of mascara, and mostly (depending on her mobile expression), pretty. she sits momentarily on the sofa, pulls up the hem of her dress slightly, and runs the palms of her hands across her thighs. this seemingly unconscious, restless alertness and exertion, adds to the sensual data. she stands again, and holding her cell phone, starts to call her husband, just as the door chimes ring. she hangs up.

the co-owner of Eco Bike, the one who does the repairs, is standing with her bike on the doorstep. she invites him to wheel it into the house, inspects and is pleased with the new silver wheel set, but is taken aback by the price tag, which turns out to be twice as much as the estimate. she does a little dance to forestall paying the bill, even though she and her husband) are quite well off, and can easily afford it, while

thinking how she can induce him to lower the cost. the repairman, who is medium height, with a very compact build, patiently explains what had to be done to make the price rise. she then calls her husband and puts her cell phone to her ear. she first flirts with him a little, then tells him the price (\$985), and he reluctantly tells her to pay it. he says he'll call her back. "love you," she softly coos. all the while she's on the phone she's absentmindedly playing with her hair and stroking her thighs. the repairman has been reading her body language and listening to her side of the call. although he doesn't know exactly what arrangement she and her husband have made, when she hangs up their eyes impulsively meet, and they both know how she's going to pay for it. "I have one more delivery to make. I'll be back in 20, 30 minutes," he tells her. their eyes meet again, and they stare, frankly looking each over with pleasure.

sitting on the sofa, her hands once again caresses her thighs, her mind preoccupied with the thought of how he will look, naked. she greets him, smiling, when he arrives fashionably a bit late, and they kiss. he appears to have showered as his skin smells fragrant and fresh. he has a dark complexioned, handsome face, and close cropped hair. her heart pounds in spite of herself, while she watches him undress until he's naked, savoring his smooth, solid, fat free body. his cock is totally erect. she has not yet removed her clothes as she expects him to do it for her. then she picks up her cell phone, and holding it to her ear, answers her husband's call. "it's all worked out," she says, sweetly, "he's giving me a discount." "is he still there?" "yes." her husband wants to know why. "I don't know, I guess it's because I'm so friendly," she replies,

with a staccato laugh. hearing this the repairman smiles broadly, and embraces her from behind, gently, but firmly, groping the front of her body as she continues to talk. she finds that being in the preliminary stages of having sex, while talking on the phone, so pleasurable and erotic, she doesn't want to terminate the call. he swings her around, their mouths mash together lustfully, as they kiss, and he feels her breasts, and strokes her wet vagina. when he pushes her head down, she kneels, and in the space between her husband's last sentence and her reply, the repairman stuffs his cock into her mouth, then grasps the back of her head with both hands, and with her holding her phone to her ear, in quick and deliberate motions, pumps his thick cock all the way in and out, several times. she catches the last thrust and deep throats it, sucking deep and hard, before pulling her mouth away, gasping. with the phone still in her ear, the nugget on her left finger the size of a rock, she continues to talk and play with her hair, tossing it away from her face, then tossing it forward, once again framing it. she speaks mostly in clipped, almost erotic, musical ellipses, which, even before they got started, made her seem both vulnerable and desirable, provoking an atmosphere of something suggestive, involuntarily erotic (her tone when she speaks with her husband affectionate and somewhat obedient. with the repairman, slightly apologetic and self-deprecating). she continues to talk on the phone as the repairman lifts her back to a standing position, turning her, back to him, vigorously and vulgarly feeling her up, then, turning her facing him, pulls the straps of her dress down off her shoulders, slips his hands into the open, unzipped slits on either side, and pulls the dress down and off. he turns her again, back to him, and r

rapaciously feels her breasts through her bra, then unfastens it, and fondling her breasts and nipples, lets it drop to the floor, turning her one more time, facing him, he fingers her orifice while squeezing and rubbing her buttocks. he then, tug and pull off her tiny g-string panties, as they hungrily kiss, her free hand sensuously exploring his body and now, as it's become an almost impossible effort to continue the phone conversation, she's barely able to say, "ok, talk to you later," pause, then tenderly, "bye," before tossing the cell on the sofa. he lifts her and deposits her on a clothes draped chair, spreads her thighs, lowers his head and eats her. then, raising her legs, grasps both her ankles, pushing them upwards and backwards. too horny to move any further, they furiously fuck until they have their first orgasms. then they get on the scarlet sofa and fuck luxuriously, densely, her legs strapped firmly around him, coming multiple times, fucking until there's nothing left. they both sit up and lean against the back of the sofa. her eyes remain closed for a long time. hot, sweaty, satisfied, she almost says, "that's as good as it gets," but thinks, no, that's just one kind of sex, horny and porno. she offers him a glass of cold berry fruit juice, and thirsty, they both drink. they dress, quietly, and when she walks him to the door neither of them look at each other. momentarily happy, secure and glad to be alone, she fixes her eyes on the new set of wheels, gleaming from a shaft of late afternoon light coming through the blinds.

postscript: perhaps she should have asked him for a receipt, she thinks, facetiously, as she gets out of the shower. it cost him, but he got a good piece of ass. and he'll probably be bragging about it.

Date With An Escort

he listens to her footsteps on the stairs, then on the walkway to his apartment, as her image appears and she raps on the screen. medium height and slender, with amber, fine textured hair, she's wearing an avocado melt to the touch pull-over sweater and a not excessively short pleated gray skirt that service well her brown eyes and distinct but subtle curves, and generic black heels. his first impression is one of freshness, as if a shard of light had burst into the room. she smiles at him without caution, traces of humor and irony in it, as she drops an outsized handbag onto a table filled with art books. the sensual overload and 'reality' of this total stranger, attractive and so other, standing several feet away from him in his apartment contrasting a background in which everything else is familiar is so strong as to make him high, lightheaded, and a little dizzy. he exhales and rather all he can think of saying, says "you'll do." "you asked me to dress natural, not to look like a sex worker," she replies, pleased he finds her attractive. dressed in a maroon long-sleeve t-shirt, faded 505, and black running shoes, he's slender also, with long grey hair. she seems to be looking at him approvingly and he's glad he's told her, out front, his age and about his problem, over the phone. "let's take care of the financial arrangement," she says, "then we can talk." he's paying for 24 hours, twice as long as for the usual 'date' and it's going to cost. he flashes on what it might be if she were just there, not an escort, on the social-sexual maneuvering it would entail on both their parts, necessary to fulfill one another's expectations, and decides it would be no different, only less assured of the outcome, and he's glad she's not. after

handing her the bills he drew from his checking account, earlier, she deposits them in a carpet bag patterned coin purse which is one of the items in her handbag, then turns and says, "we have the time so don't worry about coming. you can come as many times as you can."

they relax as he shows her some of his work. it's obvious she has an 'eye' just by the way she looks and responds to his photos, without saying anything. and he has the not necessarily troubling feeling she's not an escort – that this is a put on in some way.

"let's go to the bedroom and begin," he suggests. standing by the bed they kiss. raising her skirt to her waist she rubs her groin against his pants. he watches her undress, dropping her clothes on the bed. then he undresses, drops his clothes on the one chair next to the lamp, and thoughtfully replaces hers on top of his. oversexed and fixating on her looks and scent and the warmth of her groin having pressed against his, he's almost ready to come. as she lays back, heels still on, head resting on the pillow, he leans forward, lets himself down, and with one-third erect cock stroking, once, twice, then pressed against the outside of her vagina, with both shame and gratification, he comes. he lays there, still on top of her, for a while, then starts to prop himself up and pull away, but, arms around his neck, she pulls him back down, kissing him, sensuously, cradling his head, as he suppresses the urge to cry. "will you masturbate me?," she asks, when they finally separate, "I'm pretty horny too." he's surprised and somewhat relieved when, she, holding and pressing his fingers in place, comes quickly.

"I think we should take a break, now that we've broken the ice, so we can reorient ourselves." "we can take a walk just to get some air," then changing direction, he says, "why don't we go look at some art. there's a live-action animated video by artist, Laura Parnes, which I'd like to see. would you like to do that?" "yes," she replies, an enigmatic look seems to be masking something, and he once again wonders who she is, and what she knows. but once they're out together in the sunlight, he has a blissful feeling. they seem so compatible together. he doesn't bother to wonder why. and there's a lot of time left he can have her. though he's somewhat critical (does Parnes understand, that just because it serves her art, things don't necessarily have to be that way), they both enjoy the show, which is at LAX gallery in Culver City, and come back, refreshed. a comment, something prescient she said about the video, sticks in his mind: "in the past animation has been the mechanical replication of organic movement, frequently anthropomorphic. with her, and with live-animation, it's just the opposite." "you mean organic movement is made mechanical." "yes, it's as though the mechanical replication, at least to her, even if she's critiquing the human condition which gives rise to it, has become more 'real' than the organic." he nods, impressed.

stereotyping her as an escort just doesn't explain, even if her insight be intuitive, her use of a formal and coded language. but she would have hidden her knowledge had she something to hide.

"I want to emphasize I don't think the problem is biological. my energy level is high. people comment on that. and I

sometimes get hard, when I'm not even thinking about sex. there was not once a problem when I was sexually active. no, I think it's a matter of use it or lose it," he concludes, then shamed, adds, "as I become more sexually aroused, my penis seems to withdraw into itself which seems to facilitate reaching an orgasm which is more inside." she nods.

"the sun has set. outside there is still a rosy glow. the room is mostly darkness. they don't bother to close the vertical blinds. she sits in the chair, legs crossed the hem of her skirt bordering her upper thighs. he stands several feet away from her. "get naked," she says, beckoning him to her. he kneels in front of her. she spreads her thighs, pulling his head down and he eats her becoming much more involved, at one point her legs straddling his shoulders after searching her bag she generously presses a stick of mauve Cover Girl Continuous Color to her lips, then she undresses as he sits, legs spread in the chair. she kneels in front of him lowering her mouth and gives him head. his limp penis steadily thickens until it is painfully hard when she removes her mouth a thick smear of lipstick circling his swaying cock, and holding his hand pulls him to the bed. "fuck me now." they screw, all the variable sexy images of her prior to it swirling in his head, finally pulling out his hard, wet cock, and he can already say, mission accomplished. both still naked, she sits on his lap, irresistible. they go to the front room, listen to some sound (music), then, still naked, watch the late news, inciting their horniness until they're more than ready to fuck some more. prior to their 'date' it was her idea to bring several clothing changes for their sexual enhancement. they return to the bedroom. she removes skimpy black lingerie from her bag and slips into it.

“do you have a jacket, preferably something heavy?” “yes, I do.” he gets up goes to the closet and removes his navy issue pea coat from its hanger. “get back on the bed.” she puts on the coat. she then takes something else out of the bag, a round gull grey colored object, puts it in the coat pocket and hovers over him. she lowers herself onto him, hair cascading, lips moist, (s)mothering his face, running her fingers through his locks, then, sliding forward, presses her breasts against his mouth and nose, and he sucks the hard nipples popped out of the flimsy fabric. she sinks into him, French kissing him, draws the grooved, grey, truncheon thick two-headed object inserts both ends, and in the darkness they move, he, air almost cut off, inundated by the perfumed scent of her negligee, and the rough, musty odor of the navy pea coat, until they come, and gasping like a flopping fish, he comes up for air. “but now what?,” he asks, wondering if submission was really all that he needed. “we’ll see, she replies, pulling the sex toy from their bodies.

they go to the bathroom and they shower, just from the armpits down, so as not to absorb the electrical charge, soap-ing and washing each other. grabbing towels they tiptoe back to the bedroom and dry each other off. to him she looks so pretty, pristine, slight, but curvaceous, with her hair up, loose strands across her face, naked, so that the translucent color of her eyes shine. he kisses her. she responds. it just doesn’t square. if she were really an ‘escort’, there would be a lot more **procedure**, and a lot **less** action. but aside from being curious, why should it matter?

deprivation having become such a pattern, he’d not fully

realized how sorely the estrogen emanating from a sensuous, affectionate, female, had been missed. they are now at a stage which is fully immersed to the extent it is the dominant reality. hair messed, naked, she sits on the edge of the bed, the light falling on her shoulders. it is getting a bit chilly. she slowly pulls up a pair of sheer beige hose, and fastens the darker hued bands to the straps of a cream colored garter belt, before stepping into a full navy dress with long shoulder straps and pinkish-white saffron flowers. her bare breasts only indiscreetly covered. now confronted with a new erotic image, still naked, his previously satiated penis involuntarily again rises and stiffens until it hurts, almost vertical, and completely hard. their eyes simultaneously fix on it, and smiling, she walks over to the chair, and touches it, then caresses it, brushing her lips, first across it, then across his. he lifts her and gently sets her onto the edge of the bed, raises her knees to her chest and fucks her standing. she tugs him to the bed, pulling him on top of her, skirt flared up her thighs above her hose, raises her face and mouth to his, his hands inside the thick bands of hose, clutching soft, warm, welcoming skin, lips and teeth nibbling, biting, the tip of her nose, they fuck intensely, again yielding to the teasing imagery that's so incensed their desire. breathing hard, refusing to let him go, she's surprised by her own insatiability. momentarily satisfied they rest for a long while.

when they once again sexually focus on each other, he sees her coolly, objectively, coveting her raised skirt thighs sheer hose and garters, sensuously reveling in the 'smut' that has already occurred. they exchange a long lustful look, then, saying, "this is what I want," knees on the mattress she raises

her buttocks. cock erect and quivering, he moves to her quickly, pushing it into her anus, and they slowly, quietly, but deliberately lewdly, fuck thrust and reception, then separate with satisfied sighs, she still intemperately indulging in her own fantasy, and responding to his renewed, enabled energy, she slips his hand under the loose, flimsy top of her dress, and he gently pushes her back onto the bed, plows his cock into her slut hole, pressing her calves backwards. with both hands she clutches his head, and they once again fuck hard, his hands once again caressing the skin inside her hose. breathless and sweaty they break. he gets off the bed, moves to the chair, and sits. she leans back, propping her hands on the mattress, her skirt up, and gazes intently into his eyes. he moves to her from across the room, lowers his face between her warm to the touch thighs, and eats her as she holds his head in place until she comes. a half hour passes. looking at her now, reclining, wearing a silk print wrapper, open in the front, subtly Japanese, face glowing, eyes reflected in the lamplight, his penis, once again rises and stiffens. they lay together with renewed amorousness, petting and making out. she gets up, disrobes, and returns to the bed. drawing him to her, she leans back on the pillow and raises her thighs. again he reaches for the lamp switch, and stiff penis impulsively throbbing, sinks into her. locked in an embrace, her heels dug into his back, they fuck, consumed by nothing but the now overwhelming need for a final, durable, release, their bodies in synch, cranking in sweaty desperation, not to miss what is almost beyond their reach, until frantic, ears tuned in rapt silence, they catch it together, he lurching in spurts, she in undulating spasms, then still, hugging each other in the darkness for a long while before separating, they,

like two clam shells fall apart, each turning their faces to opposite sides. when they awaken from short, blissful sleep, it's early morning, still dark. rather than trying to stick it out in bed until dawn they decide to get up. they shower again, this time immersing their whole bodies, then go to the front room.

after a nutritious breakfast they blithely sit together in his front room. she has dressed back into the avocado sweater and modest gray pleated skirt she arrived in. "I've no doubt that will do it as far as sex goes," he says, but by our arrangement we've still got to early afternoon." although rested, they wearily look at each other, both smiling simultaneously. "I think we've done everything." "not by a long-shot," she laughs. "well I mean just graphically anyway everything I wanted to do." "then you're satisfied." "yes." he kisses her. then he hears himself asking, "who are you, really?" he immediately recognizes from whence the phrasing of that question came (performance artist Laurie Anderson's, *O Superman*), and half expects her to answer, *this is the hand, the hand that takes*. but instead she nods and says, "I'm not really an escort, except on this and several other occasions, that is. this is part of an art project sponsored by an alternative arts space, and after you told me your name, and I looked at some of your work, I put two and two together and realized I knew who you were. in fact I'm a fan," she says. "I don't know how. I don't show my work." "I know people who've seen it." "have you read any of my books?" "no, but I've heard a lot about them. they seem to be quite controversial." "you mean the stories." "yes, it's ironic you should be an enabler of my project." "kind of like we both caught

each other in the act.” “exactly.” “I don’t readily see how what we’ve done these past hours will become part of your art project. is it a documentation?” “the concept, right now, is pretty broadfirst to have the experience, then figure out what to do with it.” “your approach was hardly conventional, all the clothes changes, etc., was that part of the plan?” “no, it was completely improvised.” “I would like to continue to get to know you,” he says, a soulful look in his eyes. “as long as you can pay,” then answering his look, “why not, I relate to a lot of people. maybe, now with what you know you won’t have to write anymore stories.” “I’d planned this one to be my last one, but I’ve said that before. what were your other encounters like?” and how is it they came about?” “the idea came to me while discussing art with an equally bored female artist friend. then, my boyfriend, Casio Anartisti, you can guess by his last name he’s also an artist, approved, even encouraged me to go through with it. I had not considered, in advance, however, that I and a ‘client’ could become mutually involved.” “it doesn’t have to change anything, especially being we’re both artists.” “no, it possibly doesn’t.” “so what about the encounters?” “there were three others. the first with a well healed real estate broker, the second with a Pakistani student in his late teens, the third with a tattooed, drugged out, DJ.” “that’s quite a range for such a small number.” “yes, then there was you, or should I say, is you.” “can you tell me about them?” “I was nervous, quite so, with the real estate broker, because it was my first time, and I didn’t know what kind of communication I could have with him. but he was empathetic, I think because my seeming vulnerability, actual, really, appealed to his protective male ego. he paid well and made no excessive demands. the boy, I made sure he was over 18, was a romantic. he took

me boating in MacArthur Park Lake, which is near his neighborhood, then to a candlelit dinner in Los Feliz, before our going to his apartment and having straight sex. the problem was he wanted to continue to date me – take me to the movies, a club, a Dodgers game. he even said I didn't have to have sex with him if I didn't want to. he was very sweet, but what would have been the point?" "what about the drugged out DJ?" "that was more the kind of, I guess you could say, kinky, event, I half feared, but half hoped, would provide me with the material I could use. he was abusive verbally, called me 'cunt' and 'bitch' a number of times, but not physically, though it could have easily gotten to that, so I was always on edge. we didn't fornicate, and fortunately it was a 'short time' date. basically, he just wanted to get off – in a weird way. the evening climaxed, so to speak, with his running the cold barrel of a revolver along my naked shoulder and thigh, as he had me kneel and blow him. then he held the muzzle against my temple and pulled the trigger just as he came and I swallowed." "you weren't terrified?" "I suspected the gun wasn't loaded. it was just a fetish." "did you enjoy it?" "yes. the disassociation was erotic because it was conscious, whereas, with the first man it wasn't." "was there any particular number of 'dates' you settled on in advance?" he asks, making no attempt to hide his admiration. "it was going to be three. three is a magic number for me." "it is for me, too. one is wholeness, two is polarities, and three, 1 + 2, implies infinity." "that, I felt, would pretty much cover everything, but I didn't feel I had enough material, or maybe I should say, enough of an experience. anyway, I was enjoying it, so I decided to try one more." she smiles warmly, but rapaciously. "this has been

the stopper. I've used up more energy with you than with the other three combined, and then some. but I feel guilty. if I had to do it for survival, even under advantageous circumstances, it would devastate me. who can afford to play what games is part of what we're trying to explore." "you mean the art project." "yes. psychological game playing is mostly the province of the privileged, or, at least, the comfortable." "it points to why art today is mostly conceptual. I don't think there's a mystery why – it's a defense, maybe that's not the right word, against isolation, or getting lost in oneself....that would be dangerous, both to one's goals and survival." "your art isn't as much that way." "that's right. for me the sensual, emotional, and conceptual, all have to start in the same place at the same time – are, perhaps, indivisible." "but I saw a similar use of design in your art and hers – with the porno inserts in your photos. they're very sensual, erotic." "there may be an obvious meaning, that's what the hooks are for, but the deeper meaning is hidden. what I'm really looking for are some hooks to continue this story." I know, I'm getting pretty bored too." "we could have more sex." she laughs. "I don't think that would be very imaginative at this point." but the suggestion, however said in jest, excites a latent undisclosed urge, and almost without thinking, she says, "there is, though, one obvious thing we haven't done or at least culminated I would like to do, just for the sake of completeness.. it could also be a test to see if your 'thing' is still working," she replies as an excuse. "I imagine it is," he replies a bit hurt by the callousness of her referring to his penis in such a manner. "well, let's see." "even though I know you're not a prostitute?" "I still am now, this one last time until I leave. you may as well take advantage of it." "I like it that I

know.” “that will make it even better.” she leads him to the bedroom, sharply pulls the shades and shuts the vertical blinds. then she sits him on the edge of the bed and pulls his trousers down below his knees. she unhooks her bra, and removes her panties, fluffs her skirt up above her crotch, and kneels in front of him. his erection is stone, so hard it hurts, quivering with anticipation. with his hands on her thighs, her breasts, fingers in her hair, she blows him, slowly, thoroughly, provocatively, in an engrossed silence, as the force sharply builds to an erotic peak and all-encompassing density, then erupts, as he comes in anguished ecstasy, his hands clutching her thighs as she swallows what’s left of his semen, then lays back, spent. after several precious moments in the darkness, she, a perfumed goddess still kneeling before him, he looks at his deflated penis, delicious mauve smut ringing it. “there wasn’t much left.” “considering how many times you came, not to mention your age, there was a lot. but coming and evidently the intensity of orgasm are not the same.” “did it give you a sense of power?, “ he asks, looking her straight in her brown eyes. “Yes!”

“I guess I played with the erotic so much it became part of my problem – nurtured it to the point that I was always ready to come, which didn’t give potency a chance to catch up with desire.” “raised in a conservative household I had the opposite problem until I broke out from that. I think, semi-consciously, today I was looking for an excuse to have the the most uninhibitedly erotic sex of my life without having to pay for it.” “was it?” “yes.” “part of my attraction to you is you’re the nice girl gone bad, or rather, **wants** to be bad.” “that’s true, and it pretty much defines the younger art world

as a whole. this has a lot to do with informing one's work. how we perceive, no matter how transgressive, which is, I suppose, incredibly naïve." "I agree, if you were really bad, if it was determined by necessity, like having to live on the streets, or having come from a physically abusive family, or extreme poverty, one would have to be more serious to be attracted." "that gets into the effects of privilege. it's true, it allows for, maybe I should say, necessitates, game playing, but that, after the initial euphoria, can be self-destructive. the margin provided by 'privilege' can evaporate over a period of time. this is, in some instances, unfortunately, the route one has to take to 'get real'." "I think I know something about that. and it took me years to undo the attachment and separation – integrate while nurturing vision."

she reaches into her bag, pulls out her cell. "do you mind if I make a call?" "no, of course not." "I've seen no sight nor sound of your cell phone. do you have one?" "yes, but it's only for emergencies and long distance. nobody has my number. I don't receive calls." "why is that?" "you have to pay for incoming calls. I have a pre-paid account with T-Mobile and now have to refill only once a year." "can't you dial long distance on your land phone?" "no, Verizon, all of them, charge an additional monthly fee to maintain it, even if you don't use it, and all calls out of the area are toll. if I want to, say, check on a CD at Amoeba, I use my cell." "then you don't text?" "I do. I mostly text. but I don't have much of a social life. email is good enough." bemused, she shakes her head. "there's 50 years between us, Raquel." "it's interesting, you don't apply the same reasoning to your body, Jerry," she says, pressing the numbers on her phone. he savors her

image as she listens to the voice on the other end, legs crossed at the knees, the hem of her dress resting on her thighs, watching the intently focused expression on her face modulate into a discreet smile, and color come to her cheeks, as she reaches for the lipstick in her purse, and replies, "going very well," listens some more, then says, "you needn't have," then cradling the phone to her ear, and while looking at him expectantly, responds, "a couple more hours"....."well that was the arrangement."..."I will."..."bye." "I don't have to guess who that was." "it's not what you think. when I said boyfriend I didn't mean to convey anything exclusive. our options are pretty broad. pun not intended," she adds. he laughs. "but it sounded like he was jealous." "he left several messages on my voice mail while my phone was off. our relationship is more utilitarian than romantic. we cover for each other a lot. you can listen to his voice if you like." her brown eyes look particularly beautiful in the morning light. he walks over and kisses her. "you can go anytime you want."

he walks her to the door, then down to her car. he kisses her again. "I'll call you when things settle," she says, squeezing his arm. "I'd like to make it clear my interest is you, personally, more than the art project." "you mean you want to continue fucking me." "I didn't say that. I just mean my interest, at least until a creative involvement with it develops on my part, is primarily personal. I don't expect anything more. you've more than fulfilled your end of the bargain. in fact what you've already given can't be quantified, and if I can help you realize whatever purpose you had which brought this about, all to the good, for myself, as well as for you." "we'll see."

having both experienced the clarity of being apart enough for things to gradually sink in, they're anxious to resume and explore their differences, which are considerable.

a check list quickly eliminates the more obvious and tedious approaches. no, it would have to be specific, literal, one of a kind – simply a recapitulation of a real experience. then he comes up with an idea. "I think, first, you have to accept the issue was you were sexually bored and unfulfilled, at least as much as it was creative. the normal conventions of sex, which are really quite permissive, were still not sufficient to correspond to your psychological needs, and there was a thrill in the idea, actuality, stoked by the tension of unknown circumstances, of getting paid by a stranger to get laid." her face flushes, neither from modesty nor embarrassment, but from arousal. "there's a creativity in that. then what is your idea?" "this time maybe we can say beginners luck, but what if the tension had become real danger. how quickly would your pleasure been constricted by fear, terror, even catastrophe?" she slowly nods.

"as this is as much about artists and privilege as it is about sex....." "you just said the opposite a moment ago." "let me finish. allow a group of artists, male and female, to do what you've done, and then combine your stories. there doesn't have to be any other purpose than that, nor conclusion." after thinking about what he's saying for a moment her face brightens. "I like that. I don't think I'd have too much trouble convincing some of my jaded friends to do that, but are you including same sex or transsexual relationships?" "I'm not including nor excluding anyone. they can be bi-sexual,

transsexual, whatever.” thinking of Casio she thinks a bit deeper. “I may have a little trouble convincing Casio.” “I take it he likes women.” “oh, yes, but doesn’t it get down to favors for money? I mean they’re all pretty active, but I don’t think it will be easy for a man to find female customers.” “non-homosexual men advertise their favors for women online. in fact I think that’s a pretty lucrative undertaking there.. to extend the idea a little further, perhaps some of the clients when told about it, might want to contribute their stories to the project. it could develop into something surreal and inconclusive, like In the film, Rashomon.”

“would you like to participate,” she asks, giving him a long meaningful stare. “I’d like to, but I don’t see as how, given my appearance and numbers, I could attract a woman to me to have sex with her.” “you attracted me.” “I paid you. our roles were reversed.” “just be open and out front like you were with me.” he considers her words as one would a possibility for the first time, then returns the look she’d given him the moment before. “I can give it a try.” they look each other over as they would prospective clients, approvingly, smiling. there’s a glow about her, a genuine aura, making it hard for him to control his passion for her.

“your idea got mixed reviews, Jerry. only two people I talked to agreed. three said, never, two, maybe.” “I’ve been mulling it over, myself, and I think we should change the format. instead of propositioning strangers, one could offer the same services to acquaintances, coworkers, art administrators, etc., even friends.” she stares at him incredulously. “for money?” to exhibit one’s art. things like that go down in a more subtle

manner all the time. the possible consequences of that would be far more interesting and far reaching than they would be if one had sex with strangers – closer to the concerns of the project, and, I imagine, though who knows, safer.” she thinks for a moment, then her face this time really lights up. “that’s brilliant, are you thinking about us?” “that’s entirely up to us, Raquel. I was also thinking, at the end, all the particulars might come together, kind of a curtain call.” “that will never happen, let me assure you. it doesn’t seem likely the administrators, donors, whatever, are going to come out.” “ok, scratch that.”

“only one person followed through, Jerry, and you were right, as it turned out, she was having a quid pro quo relationship with an art administrator all along. so it looks like the project is going to end where it began. and you were right, Casio is jealous....to the point he doesn’t want anything to do with the project.” “even though he encouraged you to go through with it.” “yes, he called me a slut.” “you don’t seem too upset.” “I’m not. I suppose a group effort would have had more to say, socially, but now I can focus on whether it’s as you said, or whether there really is some aesthetic value in it I’d like to explore.” “I never denied there was..” “in a way, though, it’s too bad. I was looking forward to the Rashomon aspect of it....

“then you and Casio are finished with each other?” “no, I don’t think so. we’re not physically involved. he’ll get over it and probably want to be helpful.” “your confidence may turn out to be a bit delusory in that area, Raquel. you can’t just assume the way it will work out.” “you’re right,” she sighs,

not particularly taken aback. "I like what you said about the Rashomon effect, I can hypothetically construct how my first three dates may have interpreted the 'events'. I may enjoy doing that. with you it would be more complex and difficult, because at this point it's become shared. still, I suspect our differences in what went down, while more discrete and challenging, might also be more interesting." their gazes involuntarily mate and hold. "yes, I see what you mean," he replies, seized with a desire to fuck her on the spot. "I think while we're exploring those differences, for the sake of objectivity, it would be best to suppress our desire to have sex with each other, Jerry." it occurs to him, that after exceptionally pleasurable and inclusive sex, a period of chasteness almost always seems to follow. maybe just because of satisfaction. maybe because of fear the experience cannot be topped, or at least, equaled. he knows this. he'll never forget nor devalue the transformative experience (his Rashomon perspective) of their shared 24 hours together. it will always be a watermark for him, and is the source of his love for her now.

"let me confess something to you. I have a fetish with women in pajamas – a comely woman wearing soft, flannel, pajamas, say, red and white checkered, standing in a well-lit room, fingernails painted red, her hair, preferably dark, combed to a sheen, and better yet, wearing dark sunglasses, gets me in a frenzy to pull her bottoms off." "I'll try to remember that." then as an afterthought, she says, "Ramona would be perfect for that." "you mean the raven haired beauty with the breathtaking curves?" "yes, in the pajamas they would be hidden, giving you something to lust for."

"esp. in men's pajamas." "yes." "but what do I have materially she would want?" "we may be able to figure something out." "I find you more attractive, Raquel." "this is for art." "that's what Casio thought." "that will work itself out." "I'm all for it." "I'll ask her."

"she's turned on by the idea. she said she has a fetish for old men." "thanks a lot. she could have at least said, older." "that's how she describes the administrator she's having an affair with. he's in his fifties." "is he married." "yes, with teenage daughter and son." "things could go very wrong for her. she could be skating emotionally and psychologically on thin ice." "I agree." at this moment sudden pangs over take him. "I want you to know I'm not playing games with you, Raquel. I care very much for you and our relationship." "I care, too, Jerry," she says, walking over and gently gliding her hand across his cheek, "but there may be more similarity to what Ramona and her lovers are doing, and with us, than we think." then she kisses him sensuously, and an irresistible, ecstatic quiver of something indescribably delicious and noirish, goes through him. "but what is the quid pro quo? what does she want from me besides thrill seeking? if it's money I won't, can't, pay." "no, it's not money. she's willing to do the pajama tableau if you allow it to be filmed for DVD as an arts project." "and shown publicly?" "yes," she'd like it to be on YouTube, but of course they would reject it." "the presence of a crew would inhibit me, not to mention, preclude the pleasure, and I don't think I could do it. what if I had the same problem I had at first with you?" "then that would be part of it. Ramona said if you've desires, fetishes, or sexual hang-ups, you should expose them. she suggested I

assist in the filming.” “what did you say?” “I said I’d consider it. I think it would bother me more if I weren’t there. she also wants to do two scenes instead of one – the first, your fantasy, as you described it, the second, exactly the same setting, only she’s wearing black lace high hose, and a black lace lingerie top.” “seems like she’s quite creative,” he says, sarcastically. “she actually is.” “who else would be there?” “possibly other prospective participants in the project.” she takes a deep breath. “I think you should do it.” “and be viewed by countless strangers on a porn site?” “it would be our own site. it would be presented as is. there would be no crass language, no obscenity.” “what if it goes viral?” “it very well could. I think that would be good.” “maybe David Lynch would like to star me in his latest film.” “maybe he would.” “well, I’ll think about it.”

Ramona’s elongated bedroom is upstairs in a woodsy yard. the thick foliage of the trees nestling her large window precludes viewing from the outside, so the curtains are not drawn. the dry, warm, night wind, which starts up, then dies down, coming in from the raised sash, fresh and sensual, is making a clatter. part of the gleaming tile of the brightly lit bathroom can be seen from the open door, adding to the ambience. a prologue to the scene, of Ramona in the bathroom, in her red and white checkered pajamas, brushing her teeth, has already been shot. the camera is set up at opposite length from the bed. the room is bathed in the strategically placed klieg lights, so that none of it is in shadow, except for the silhouettes on the walls. the first shot is a long shot of Ramona standing, just as described in his fantasy, then zooms in as she stares provocatively at the camera, then pulls

back and follows Jerry wearing a silk robe tied with a cord, walking slowly towards Ramona. the camera pulls back once again, as Jerry stops and stares, cuts to close ups of their faces, then back as Jerry undoes the cord, showing his naked body, and as he again slowly moves towards her, tossing the robe on the bed, Ramona's smile becomes a smirk. the camera moves in as he reaches her, and she shoves both hands against his shoulders, trying to push him off. the camera moves back, as Jerry forcefully pulls Ramona's pajama bottoms off, then moves in as they fuck, first on the bed, then cut to them, still fucking, frenzied, on the floor, until they both appear to have orgasms. there is no soundtrack except the ambient ones, penetrating an otherwise total silence. their moans appear to be authentic. as the second scene is already set, the crew, including Raquel, descend the stairs to the yard, leaving Jerry and Ramona to break, Jerry going to the kitchen while Ramona changes into black lace. neither look nor say a word to each other. both of them, anticipating scene 2, have heroically suppressed orgasms. the crew and few bystander friends of Raquel and Ramona, reenter the room. the potential caveat is, without a striking new hook, what would be the point of repetition, or for that matter, scene 1?" Ramona has that figured out."

while the setting is the same as in scene 1, the ambience is entirely different. while scene 1 was silent, except for ambient sounds, the second scene, which is more graphic, includes sparse dialogue, the camera is closer and more intimate, the lighting softer, somewhat of a continuation of, rather than repetition of, scene 1. the opening shot is the same as scene 1, except black lace high hose, and a skimpy

black negligee with a drooping neck line, replaces the red and white checkered pajamas. like in scene 1 she's wearing dark sunglasses. the camera caresses her body, zooming in on her face, hair, torso, partially exposed pubic hair, and legs, esp. her legs. then cuts to a naked Jerry, standing, then moving towards her as in scene 1. "don't come closer," Ramona warns (at this point the screen goes black). in the next shot Jerry has closed the gap, and with one hand, reaches out to snatch Ramona's sunglasses, while trying to kiss her. she pushes him away. next, is a long shot of them embracing, kissing passionately, her fingers in his hair, the camera moving in, cuts to a shot of Ramona, still wearing black shades, sitting/lying on the floor, legs sensuously extended, upper body propped up by her hands planted on either side on the floor, bottom hem of her negligee crept up to her belly, her breasts poked free. Jerry, totally naked, penis erect, is standing over her. as he hovers, then starts to sink down onto her, Ramona picks up a small, open, penknife, and thrusts it into his abdomen. he lets out a startled cry, Raquel screams, and followed by the crew, rushes up to him. they pull Jerry away from Ramona, who lies there motionless, a cryptic smile on her face, as she points to the gleaming bathroom. there they find sufficient first aid to address the wound. fortunately, the blade only penetrated flesh. they lay him on his back, and Raquel, who is very adept at it, cleans and applies dressing, before solidly packing and taping the wound. the camera, still running, has recorded everything that has transpired. Jerry, heavily bandaged, says he wants to continue. Ramona is more than happy to oblige.

Ramona, lying on her back, head back, is now totally naked,

and submissive, spread eagle, jackknifed, her legs raised expectantly, almost to a 90 degree angle, as Jerry, body raised up from his knees, penis deeply penetrating her, torso hovering over her, straddling her, his arms locked in the inner hinges between her raised calves and thighs, hands grasping her arms just above the elbows on both sides, her lower arm resting on the floor, wrist and thumb extended, fingers in a gentle curl, pressing down with his pelvis, so her thighs are almost parallel with her belly, her knees flush against her breasts, her raised calves against his upper arms on both sides, ankles cradling his upper back just below his shoulders, and they fervently fuck, in real time, the camera swinging momentarily to their rear, focusing on Jerry's legs, butt in motion, and raised back, then back to the side view, he pressing and pinning her against herself, until they come, quietly gasping, each enmeshed in their own substances. to the silence in the room there's involuntary gasps from the crew. when they separate blood is seeping from his abdomen, in real time. Raquel and several crew members apply pressure to the wound to stop the bleeding, once again cleaning packing and taping it, before taking him to emergency. Ramona dresses. but the last shot is of her, standing, dark hair combed, sunglasses back on, naked, one last time staring at the camera.

although they refuse to give all the details, an on duty doctor treats the wound, which requires a number of stitches, and advises jerry to bend his upper body as little as possible until the stitches are removed. "there' may be a scar," he warns. Jerry laughs when he thinks of how the camera at one point, subjectively, hungrily, vicariously, closed in on the varicose

veins of his thigh.

that night when they're finally alone, Raquel, by lamplight, holds him tightly in her arms. "was that the best fuck of your life?" "if I thought fucking could kill, I would have killed her," he replies, and kisses her.

Raquel and Jerry get married, in the office of Jerry's younger brother, Burt, who's a retired judge. among the two dozen or so attendees are Raquel's parents, who come up from Costa Mesa, Jerry's brother Lenny, who comes down from Santa Barbara, and Casio, who films the event. Ramona, dazzling in a form fitting silver dress, is the maid of honor.

Woman In The Periwinkle Dress

she's wearing a long sleeve off white sweater. what's unusual about it is it has a plunging neck line, so that it falls off her bare shoulders like a peasant blouse, with a short hem that only goes to her midriff, cradling her breasts like a bra. a cardigan, it buttons open in the front. her tight fitting mini skirt which stops just below her crotch, is made of dark, shiny, denim. with her full, pouty lips, amber hair, long legs in low cut boots, her air is less intimidating, than irreproachable. she slowly moves through the racks, which are mostly closeouts from high end boutiques, thoughtfully engrossed, but cool, turning her hips, until she stops in front of something she likes, a dress, grey-blue, medium saturation, with a hint of lavender. she takes it from the rack, holds it in front of her. no need to try it on. it's an obvious fit. she thinks of what she might wear with it, but even as a second the price is steep, too steep to even consider. she came there, ostensibly, to look for accessories, but that's the way it always seems to be when one is just looking. something one may really want turns up, when one is neither psychologically prepared to make the commitment, nor may necessarily have the resources. she replaces the hanger, puts it back on the rack, and too depressed to continue, starts to leave – then stops. the dress is lightweight enough that when rolled, it would easily fit into her canvas shopping bag, without crowding or bulging. she carefully scans the floor, and seeing no one, removes the dress from its hanger, cuts away the plastic fastener holding the bar coded tag, with a pair of small cuticle scissors she's pulled from her purse, and drops them on the floor, then carefully looking around again, tightly folds

the dress, places it into the bag, and heart in her stomach, so to speak, turns to leave.

the catch is someone's been watching her. fascinated with her looks, he'd been watching her from the moment she walked in, on a security monitor at the opposite end of the store, and confronts her just as she's about to exit through the glass door. they both just stare. "I saw you take the dress." in total shock she just shakes her head. he grasps her arm and leads her back into the store. the truth is, he not only feels sorry for her, he empathizes with her motives for doing what she just did. "give me the dress." she removes it from her bag and hands it to him. he sees a terrible conflict taking place in her eyes – fear, remorse, humiliation, but even more, a profound feeling of loss. "don't worry, I'm not going to summon security or call the police," he says. "didn't you have the money to pay for it?" fighting back tears all she can do is shake her head. but relieved and grateful of his generosity the color has returned to her cheeks and she's begun to regain her composure....and she's gorgeous, even more gorgeous to him than when she first entered the store. he really intends to just let her go, but before he can do that, a compulsion of his own seizes him. "suppose I let you have the dress." a puzzled look works its way through her self-protective, blank, stare. "would you do something for me, or maybe I should say, with me?" by this time her color has completely returned, and now that he's dragged himself down to her level, a slow smile creeps onto her face. "where do you want to do it?" she asks. his admiration increases with her frank acceptance. "we can do it here. there are futons in the back my coworkers use for their yoga exercises.

"I'm the only one here today. I'll turn off the lights, and lock up." "so from a thief I'm now a prostitute." "I don't see it that way – quid pro, yes. I did something for you, you can do something for me, maybe for the both of us, in return. you don't have to do it." she nods. "who will pay for the dress?" she holds it against her body, almost lovingly. "the owner is very rich. this is just one of his projects, and he doesn't rigorously keep inventory. I wanted to get into your pants from the moment you walked into the store. maybe fate set it up this way for it to happen." "from a moral standpoint that's pretty shoddy reasoning," she says, standing so close to him the front of their bodies are touching, her brown eyes, reflecting a lot of light, lifts to his, set in a poker stare with traces of bemused, ironic humor. their lips impulsively come together and they kiss. maybe you're right about for the both of us," she says, running her fingers through his hair. "I see no reason why you have to enjoy it less than I."

they go to the warehouse back of the store, dimly lit by the fluorescent lights on the ceiling. like in the store proper, it's filled with racks of clothing. a full size blue covered futon mattress, situated in a wooden frame just inches from the concrete floor, is bordered by racks of designer jeans on all sides, making it seem like the center of a boxing or wrestling ring, but more intimate. she gazes up at the skylight ceiling and observes what appears to be mounted klieg lights directly overhead, and low on the poles are 2 digital cameras almost flush with, and on either side, of the bed. she looks at him inquiringly. "we sometimes do photo shoots," he shrugs, but doesn't explain. they stand intently staring at each other. he's tall, thin but muscular, with unruly, longish,

curly, dark brown hair, and sideburns, wearing black t-shirt black pants and shoes. despite her trepidation she wants to have sex with him. he turns to her. "you'll like it," he says. he flicks on the overhead light, flooding the bed, and wasting no time, while standing behind her, unbuttons the front of her sweater, leaving it hanging, and pulling her to him, so that the back of her head is nesting in the crook of his neck, he gropes, kneads, and squeezes her warm, supple, braless, breasts. then he pulls off her skirt, and sensuously fingers the crotch of her g string panties. he pulls off his pants and shorts, and they hungrily kiss while pressing up against each other. in the bright light the white of the sides of their thighs and buttocks are accentuated. her unblemished thighs, her long hair hanging in strands down her cheeks, braless sweater dangling, breasts protruding, nipples popped free, the succulent round of her buttocks, boots, soft to the touch around her ankles, compose the unreachable, unattainable image at the core of all erotic desire. further aroused by the brightly lit white of his equally unattainable massive thigh and buttocks. she lowers her head, her mouth hovering his erect cock and fervently sucks. he removes his shoes, then both of them get on the mattress and blithely, but salaciously, fuck, and for the next two accelerated hours do all the things they know or have heard about to near exhaustion.

while laying together, resting, holding hands, before getting up to dress, the owner of the store enters the room, and like a hound following a scent, uncovers their lair. "get your asses up, and get out of here," he shouts, his face lived with anger. "you have ten minutes before I call the police." as soon as he turns around and storms out, they quickly dress and leave,

she, not forgetting to retrieve her eco-friendly, canvas, shopping bag, he, not before he detaches the 2 cameras and removes the file cards, dumping them into his pants pocket.

their inclination when on the street is to laugh hysterically. then she begins to wonder what's in the flash cards. "I forgot the cameras click in intervals until the cards are full, when the lights are on," he replies, without guilt. "then our little tete a tete was recorded," she says, sarcastically. "look, I don't know what they got, but this could be a bonus for the both of us." "you mean porn?" "I don't know. it doesn't have to be that. we'll have to see what's there. the options are, if we like what's there, we can keep them – I can burn you a disc so we can both have equal access, or if you insist, we can delete the files or just throw the cards away and that will be the end of it. if we keep them we can sign a contract stipulating what can, and cannot, be done." "did you really forget about the cameras?" "yes, I don't think we could have had the sex we had, if I hadn't." she looks long and hard into his noncommittal dark brown eyes. she's just had very good, very erotic, very satisfying, dirty sex, with a handsome man, and she'd rather just let it go at that, and not perpetuate it. "I believe you," she half lies, "but I'd rather we destroy the files," she says, though not completely convinced it's what she wants to do. "we can just throw the files into a trash bin if you like, but I still think we should look at them first.. a photo has meaning in itself, beyond just recording an event." "I know," she replies. for her, it's now very pleasant standing with him on the street in the late afternoon, the sun lending it's last warmth to a refreshing coolness. they touch, then standing, arms around each other, they kiss. he reaches into his

pocket, pulls out the memory cards and says, “here, put them in your bag, look at them when you’re ready to, and you make the decision what to do with them.” they exchange contact information, then kiss again “call me when you’ve checked them out. I’m free now that I have no job,” he shouts, before disappearing into traffic.

when she gets home, before her peaceful, sexual, reveries are allowed to take hold, she reaches into her bag and pulls out the dress, then takes off her clothes. she raises her arms, slips it over her head, and pulls it down, filling her figure perfectly, stands in front of a full length mirror and is pleased how well the color compliments her skin tone. walking barefoot around her living room, she has absolutely no appetite, but knows she better have something, and settles for hot barley-mushroom soup, and crispy whole wheat thins before, too drowsy to undress, she falls asleep on the comforter atop her bed. it’s the middle of the night when she awakens, rested, still in a half dream state. she thinks of looking at the files, but decides it would be better to wait, at least until the next day, when the spell would most likely be dissipated, and she’d be more objective. a warm, sensual wind has started up, making the shutters clatter.

she admits the images are fascinating, though some poor quality, with awkward angles, unclear and overexposed – fascinating to view images of oneself having sex. there’s an odd distance between herself and the, some would say raunchy, graphic images. she sees just a depiction, not their actual bodies, and he’s right, if there’s any real meaning at all, it’s in the photo itself. and the more she looks at them, the

more distant and less erotic they become. she has every intention of deleting the images from her computer, and discarding the chips. she'll call him and let him know her decision, first, but still, it's fascinating to see a recorded partial history of their love-making, of the event of the both of them erotically engaged, in often, contorted positions.

when she calls, a disturbed female voice is on the other end, and tearfully informs her, her brother was killed by a drunk hit and run driver, and that they were preparing for the funeral. "witnesses said he ran into the street without looking. he was very impulsive." "I know." "I think I know who you are," the woman says, "you're the reason he lost his job." "it was his idea," she replies, too numb to feel hurt by his sister's jab. she politely and sincerely, offers her condolences before hanging up in a state of shock.

this may seem perverse, she thinks, but she's no longer as inclined to throw away the files. it's not for sentimental reasons – the only thing between them really, was sex. there wasn't a chance for anything else. she's not sure whether her interest in them is aesthetic, or whether now that he's gone, viewed privately, she's freer to use them as an aphrodisiac to her horny desires. she surmises, if anything at all, it must be the latter. she stores the files, pushing the issue temporarily out of her mind.

the warm wind has started up again, and restless, she puts on a coat and leaves with the intention of taking a long walk. the night is exceptionally clear, with a few stars visible, a resonating stillness, the breeze sensual, fragrant, mild, with

occasional gusts rifling her hair and causing her to tighten her collar. she questions why the writers best known for their cynical portraits of L.A., who have been so rewarded for, if looked at in a certain way, failing to have lived, seem to unanimously find something noirish and ominous about the Santa Anas that come in from the desert. she speculates, given, a tawdry manufactured image of a false paradise does exist, still, their cynicism is based on a puritanical projection that sensuality is sinful, evil. the sensuality of these nights has always aroused in her a profound sense of promise, admittedly only innocence can sustain, momentarily obliterating the banality of the energy sapping ennui. if one could look at her now, flashes of light illuminating the lighter colors in her dark hair, face set against the wind, brown eyes flashing, they would see an unselfconscious, tormented, beauty, scrupulously attempting to maintain herself not through attitude, but through a balance of feeling and comprehension, yet sensing, knowing, the task is futile. she thinks of the death of Daniel, her two hour lover. tears wet her cheeks, not entirely for him.

she walks until she's several miles east of Santa Monica, walking south on Sawtelle. she stops at Asahi Ramen, a ramen noodle house, because it looks inviting, to rest and have tea, before returning home. the wind has died down to a whisper, but the night maintains its fragrance, augmented by the aroma of Japanese cooking on the street. she takes a small side table by the front window and explains to the waitress she just wants tea. she has just enough time to empty the small pot before the restaurant closes at 9 pm. as she's exiting the door, a young Japanese male approaches

her. his face is full, pretty, unshaven. his slightly unkempt shoulder length black hair is shiny under the street lamp. his overcoat is worn, and looks like it's been slept in. if it wasn't for his polished shoes, she'd think he was homeless. "excuse me," he politely asks, "do you have a match?" "I don't smoke." he smiles, knowingly, and she thinks he may be asking for marijuana. a tremor of fear possesses her. they're standing close enough she can smell his cologne, and the liquor on his breath. there are not too many people on the street and her car is beyond reach. she's faced with the delicate task of unobtrusively extricating herself, so she can begin the walk back. he reaches into his coat pocket, pulls out a business card and hands it to her. he's a portrait photographer. he says his work is currently on exhibit at Giant Robot, the Asian-American pop culture store, which is just down the street. "my name is Hiroki, what's yours?" "Alana." "I was walking by and saw you through the window. do you ever model?" she actually has done some fashion modeling, and nods, yes. he brightly smiles. his accent is mildly Japanese, like he may have been born in Japan but lived in the U.S. most of his life. the enunciation of his words are exceedingly clear. "I've been working mostly with Asian girls and would like to do some work with a Caucasian woman. do you think you might be interested?" she might be interested, but why didn't he just introduce himself instead of asking for a match? she's still afraid, and is thinking how she can leave without him following her. he pulls a cigarette from his pocket, waves it in front of her, and says, "see, no match. I have a residency at Giant Robot right now. they're paying for the materials of the show, and are allowing me to sleep in the back, to cut my costs." he laughs,

mirthlessly. "the photos haven't arrived yet from the gallery in Tokyo, where they were previously shown, except for two hanging in the front window. would you like to see them?" "I really have to get back," she replies, hopefully, pulling away. "it will just take a minute," he says, a pleading look in his eyes. they walk the half block to the store. standing together they look at two medium size portraits. the light is dim, but she has to admit they're exquisite, bright light and shadow, ominously playing. the multicolored and jet black fabric of their dresses spaced to draw out every ounce of sexual nuance, seductively exaggerated, without showing more than a hint of anything. she looks into his eyes for the first time, and nods her head approvingly. surprisingly, considering his forwardness, he modestly shies away from her look. "then do you think you'd be interested?" "I don't know. I'm not sure I'd like to be used that way, and right now, I'm very much into solitude." "why don't you think about it, there's no rush. you have my card." she nods. he curtly bows, turns and briskly strides south, towards Olympic. she stands for a moment, starts to walk towards Santa Monica Blvd., stops at the corner of La Grange and Sawtelle, reaches into her purse, pulls out her cell phone, and calls a taxi. she settles, gratefully, into the back seat of the cab, and on the way back takes Hiroki's card from her coat pocket and stares at it. things don't quite add up. for instance, if he was really sleeping at Giant Robot, why did he walk away from her in the opposite direction? she's not aware they have another store, Robot 2, further south and on the opposite side of the street. when they arrive at her place she's vaguely upset, though she's not sure why.

two weeks later, she still can't let the photo shoot idea out of her head. the idea of doing something visually extreme, gorgeous, sexy, transgressive, appeals to her. she goes to the closet, searches the coat pockets before realizing she left his card in the cab, and momentarily, with some relief, thinks, that's that, then remembers she could call Giant Robot.

"hi, Hiroki the photographer, whose portraits you have up, asked me to contact him about doing a photo project. he gave me his number but I misplaced it. my name is Alana." puzzled, the voice on the other end says, "the artist whose portraits we have up is not named Hiroki. her name is Kazue Kaima. we expect her to arrive here from Tokyo in a couple of days, after her show there closes. what is his last name?" "I think his card said, Takeda." the voice at Giant Robot laughs – "oh, him." "he said he was sleeping in your back room." he laughs again. "we let him, sometimes." "his card says he does portrait photography." "he does. he's actually a good artist. his photos are both sensitive and sexy. he drinks a lot." "I'm surprised the photos you have up are by a woman." "some people are." "do they know each other?" "I'm not sure, they might. how did you meet him, or maybe I should say, how did he meet you?" it's her turn to laugh. "yes, I was leaving Asahi Ramen when he approached me. he said he was watching me drinking tea, and liked my looks." "well, if you want my advice, I'd have nothing to do with him." "I'm of the same mind, just the fact that he lied." "did he get your address and number?" "no he didn't ask for it, and if he did, I wouldn't have given it to him." "but you called." "I know. I just needed to check things out." "if the photos interest you, come to the opening, Alana. we'd like to

meet you. my name's Steve. I'll introduce you to Kazue and her crowd. maybe something will develop with your modeling, if you're still interested." "will Hiroki be there?" "he could. he's a womanizer and a pathological liar, but he's harmless." "you may not know that." "come with friends if you like, or if you come alone, we'll see to it he doesn't mess with you." she pauses, then says, "bye."

she goes to the opening of Kazue Kaima's photo exhibit, alone, wearing that dress. there's only elbowroom inside, mostly pop oriented young people spilling out into the street. almost as soon as she enters, a young Japanese-American male instantly spots her, and comes over to where she's standing. "I'm Steve." they shake hands. "you look just as I had imagined," he says, in a friendly, non-hustling way that puts her at ease. but she feels her image with her periwinkle dress and demeanor more suited to a high rise supper club, far above the street culture she's engaged with at the moment. the center of attention, of course, is the artist, who with her India black, man's haircut with an elaborate wave in front, dark eyes, and red lipstick, wearing a long thrift store pink dress with white polka dots and white lace collar and cuffs, cuts a striking figure. Steve introduces her to Kazue, referring to her as an artist's model. the artist looks Alana over too carefully for Alana's comfort, her eyes seeming to linger on the front of Alana's body. "I can't decide which is more attractive, you or your dress." despite the implication, she can't help but feeling flattered. "I'm not really an 'artist's model'. I've done a little modeling in the past. that's all." "what kind?" "just straight fashion." Kazue nods, thoughtfully. "a photographer named Hiroki Takeda was interested

in doing some portraits of me. do you know him?" "I'm not sure I've heard of him," Kazue replies, looking away. "he told me the portraits in the window were his," Alana says, expecting some kind of reaction, but Kazue just laughs to herself. "he's in jail," Steve interjects. "he's serving a ten day sentence after being picked up as a public nuisance. the judge gave him the option of a fine or jail time." Alana can't help but feel a pang of sympathy for him.

as the others who've come up to Kazue briefly, drift away, they momentarily find themselves alone together. "would you like to model for me?," Kazue asks, staring into Alana's eyes. "I can make it worth your while." Alana knows she needs the money, but isn't sure how to answer. "I'm a lesbian," Kazue says, matter-of-factly, sensing that may have something to do with Alana's hesitation. "does that bother you?" "not at all. we're all something, or perhaps I should say, a little of everything." "I just want you to know that out front. I find you very attractive. you're the person I've been imagining for my next project, that's all. I'm very professional." "I appreciate your frankness." "are you familiar with Shunga art?" Alana smiles. I had a Utamaro print, copy of course, of a couple gorgeously rendered in traditional dress, going at it, on my wall for a while. he had the most exquisite line, so minimal, yet so expressive. I'm a fan of the great woodblock artists of that era." "then of course you know how Hentai – Anime and Manga, comes out of that." "I'm aware, but I'm not too much into it." visualizing the wood-block artists' sometimes very exaggerated coupling pictures, she flashes on the photos of her having sex with Daniel. "and you'd like to photograph me having sex with

someone, a man, I presume?" "yes," Kazue responds, smiling. "do you have someone in mind?" "Hiroki Takeda." "even though he tried to take credit for your portraits?" "I know what to expect from him, so it doesn't bother me." "I thought you said you didn't know him." "that doesn't matter." "besides I'm not attracted to him." "you can choose someone if you're not comfortable with him." "so, I don't know what to expect from you. your portraits are brilliant, and I'm sure you'd come up with something rewarding, but being photographed having sex with someone is not what I've a mind to do." "what do you have a mind to do?" "nothing. not with you. I'm sorry, no way." Kazue stands silently, staring. a few people within hearing range are staring, also.

Steve, who'd joined them towards the end of their conversation, takes Alana aside. "if I'd had an inkling something like this would happen, I never would have introduced you to her." "it's not your fault, Steve," she says, squeezing his arm. "we have a very cool scene. the people who make it up are very open and out front. street art, graphic art, animation, and all popular culture in general, are given a boost here. and Kazue's art falls into our sphere of interest. because it's a people scene, we try to connect people to each other." "that's obvious, and if I hadn't initially liked her work, I wouldn't have come to her show." "she doesn't have a very good reputation in her dealings with people. she had a hard and abusive early life, but we've always considered that to be, mostly, the product of homophobia." "I understand. you don't have to explain. I've really nothing against her. but it's mostly a matter of trust, so for that reason, at least, I'm glad I passed. anyway, I'm very confused about sex in my life right

now. theoretically, I'm all for sex as art, and enjoy it when it comes from others."

when she gets home, after a late night supper, she goes to the bedroom, undresses and changes to a comfortable cotton nightgown. then she returns to the front room, boots her computer, and opens her documents file. with the lights off she views each of the images, this time not prompted by aesthetic considerations, but by an unconsummated lust, obliterating the distance between herself and the images. she can see Daniel was a very good lover – sureness in the way he handled her without being rough, allowing her erotic image, as object of his desire, his total lack of sentiment, stoking her submission. she closes the program, shuts down the computer, and rushes to the bedroom, removes a thick, longish, grape colored sex toy from the bottom pile of underwear, and goes back into the front room. lights still out, she raises her gown, and reclining on the sofa, inserts the head into her vagina, pulling it to the surface, slowly pressing the tip against her clitoris, while reaching under the skirt, excitedly rubbing her breasts with her other hand, squirming with pleasure. she pushes it up into her anus, then pulls it out, plunging it back into her vagina with both hands, moving it in and out in slow measured strokes, while pressing the edge against her clit, until she has a huge, long lasting, orgasm. sighing, she pulls out the dildo, stretches, then curls up and falls asleep.

next day she vows, now that she's got the suppressed horniness temporarily out of her system, she'll work with the files objectively, to determine whatever aesthetic value there is in

them for her.

a short time passes, her horniness returns with added interest. her friend, Sophia drops by just as she's about to leave her apartment. "where are you headed for, Alana? are you looking for a job?" "far from it. I'm just going to the Santa Monica Public Library to pick up a couple of books I have on hold. maybe I'll meet someone interesting," she says, laughing. "you mean get picked up." "exactly. pick up, or get picked up, whichever you prefer. at this moment I'm just too bored and horny to get anything done." "you mean anything other than get laid." "yes." "I can fix you up with sure satisfaction for your craves, if you're that horny?" "it never works out that way, Sophia. I want it to be spur of the moment, totally unattached. I'm going to make somebody so hot he'll want to screw me on the spot." "then you should dress for it. are you looking for someone in particular?" "someone who doesn't play around. who's socially hip, but an outsider."

after checking out the books she decides to sit in the courtyard and read a little before returning home. she settles in a sunny seat aside an umbrella shaded metal garden table by a narrow pebble filled pond, and looking around her, is immediately aware of, and drawn to, a thin older man with a full head of long grey hair, wearing maroon t-shirt, jeans, and running shoes, sitting with his back to the table next to hers, intently reading, not in the engrossed or rapt way of someone being swept up by or giving themselves to what they're reading, but in the intensity and attentiveness with which he's contemplating and critically assessing the validity and meaning of the material. in fact, she's so entranced by his aura,

she's caught staring when he turns his head and looks over, sensing he's being observed, and she blushes fully and openly at her faux pas, without trying to disguise her interest. he smiles back, carefully, but with an inner warmth of understanding, not making anything out of it. she picks up her books, walks over, and sits down beside him. "what are you reading?" "just a tell all book by a very well-known gay jazz vibe player, Gary Burton." "are you gay?" "no." "why did you include gay in your depiction?" "because he does. he describes in some detail his own gradual personal evolution in this area. do you know who he is?" "I'm afraid jazz is not my turf," she replies, dropping her eyes. "he includes a moving shot of himself and his young Asian partner at the end of the photo section of the book". he looks her over, frankly and intently, and they sexually click. she's wearing a low cut raggedy tank top, tight jeans that barely reach the ankle, high grey canvas tennis shoes with soles that are day glow blue. "you've got soles at the bottom of your feet. that's what cushions the impact of life on your body/soul," he says, looking at her feet. his whimsical remark, though she thinks a bit fatuous, moves her enough that she asks him if he'd like to see her again, and it goes quickly from there until she's issued an invitation for him to come to her place that very evening. after getting up and sharing another frank but warm look between them, he says, "I hope that I don't fall in love with you," imitating the course voice of Tom Waits. that one she knows. feeling like a sexy pickup, and wanting it that way, she spends the rest of the afternoon preparing for his visit.

when Jerry arrives, door left discreetly open, Alana is sitting

on the sofa sideways, cradling her knees, face turned, with full, delicately formed lips, gazing at him through enigmatic translucent brown eyes, and a bright complexly nuanced smile, wearing a tactile beige/pink V-neck pull-over sweater, as he looks at her, her legs now extended, hips and thighs, no skirt, hem of her short sheer slip casually crossing her upper thighs. "you certainly look tempting, Alana," Jerry says, seating himself beside her, placing his hand under her slip onto her warm thigh, and she, feeling extremely slutty, runs her finger suggestively along the crease between his lips before they ravenously kiss. his pants and shorts quickly downed, she obligingly spreads, her legs jackknifed, knees against her breasts, the soles of her pink slippers pressed against his chest, as they screw, Alana thinking on, and driven by, the first real-time sexual pleasure she had, cuckolding her high school boyfriend as the car radio played smooth vocal jazz, the evening becoming an abstract whirl of indivisible sex with pop up intervals that stand out – coming in her, on her, the hint of cherry scent his head lowered between her thighs to her genitalia, densely stroking her ample, petite shaped cones and nipples inside the hot V neck, the delirious muffled cry when she comes, and when she takes his cock into her mouth with the sureness of a gull snaring a slippery fish, and blows him, to quote the poet, John Wieners, 'like a symphony', sexual gratification all she can think of now, determined to obliterate any false idealism supposed in their first meeting just hours ago and to balance the new found intellectual component that had been missing in her life. this would appear to be erotic to the exclusion of what else, but in actuality, as well as intent, their relationship, if allowed to develop, could be destined to have a very serious and ethereal dimension.

it's a grey drizzly day, and she's feeling pleasantly mellow. with her insipient romance with Jerry, things have started to turn around. a relationship with an older man, she realizes now, is something she's needed. the absence of irrational emotional demands, on the one hand, and pathological detachment on the other, triggered by ego driven insecurities of almost all the younger men she's dated, has allowed her to begin, at least, to blossom, so to speak, into a more serious, fuller, and focused woman. that he does not indulge in irrational demands, yet appreciates and needs her, is really a first in her relationships with men – while in the midst of contemplating these things, her phone rings.

she puts the phone to her ear. "hello?" there's a pause before a male voice says, "hi, Alana, this is Hiroki Takeda." "yes?" "Kazue told me she saw you at her show. I just want to explain why I took credit for the portraits." "I don't really care why, Hiroki, the fact that you lied about it is enough." "they're actually my photos." "you took them?" "yes, she just worked on them." "how can I believe you?" "some people think I'm a liar because of," he thinks for a moment, "my imagination, but I'm both careful and truthful about hard fact." "you weren't about the portraits. you deceived me to get my response." she can hear him sigh. "I know, I'm sorry, that's why I called. I felt helpless because she was getting credit for them, and I needed psychologically to reverse that." she again feels that pang of sympathy for him she felt when Steve told her he was in jail. "Kazue lied too. she said she didn't know you." "we know each other quite well. we roomed together in Tokyo, for a while." "who were the women you photographed?" "former lovers of mine." "they

were both beautiful. it seems to me you have legal recourse regarding the photos." "no, I sold the rights to her when I was desperate for money." "that's too bad," Alana replies, steeling herself for the con she's almost certain is coming. "that's all," he says. "I just wanted you to know I'm not a liar." he pauses, then says, "I'd still like to photograph you." "but you can't pay me anything, obviously." "that's true, we could share equally in what may be done with them." that seems to be what they all say. again, she flashes on the photos of herself and Daniel. "Kazue wanted to photograph me having sex with you." he laughs – once again that mirthless laugh. "that's not what I had in mind. anyway you have my card." "I lost it." he gives her his cell phone number. "I'll think about it," she says. "I just moved to a furnished single apartment several blocks west of Sawtelle. Steve helped get me a job with a graphic artist in that area. here I go again, not being honest. I'd really just like to see you, Alana. can I call you in a couple of days?" "yes," she replies, wondering how he got her number.

the rare secure feeling she was nurturing has completely evaporated. although it wasn't, by any means, delusional, as long as there is desire, nothing can be counted on – she's once again become horny, confused. why doesn't she just say, I have a man, even if neither of them believe the relationship will just go off into the sunset. she's of the mind that horniness, aside from the purely biological, for the most part, comes out of either the trapped feelings caused by ambiguities, or oppression. in this case it's the former, and the only way to be free of the trap is to give in to desire.

when Hiroki calls after 2 days, she decides to beg the question. she carefully makes up, applying an uncharacteristically thick coat of pink to her lips, ties up her hair, and puts on a short, off white/pale yellow, what looks like a little girl summer party dress, which stops halfway up her thighs, then a pair of mauve cotton socks, over which she pulls on black, shin length, soft, faux leather boots. wearing no bra, but scanty salmon colored panties, the naughty girl image is complete. she slips her arms into the warm black coat she was wearing when he first saw her. driving east on Santa Monica Blvd., windshield wipers on slow, she turns south on Butler, and is lucky to find a parking space several doors from his apartment, which is between Missouri and Nebraska. she rides the elevator up to the third floor, suite 308. the heat's on when she arrives, and he takes her coat. they both stare at each other with enigmatic smiles. but he's knocked out by her image. as he succors her voluptuousness, in an instant her image abruptly changes to B & W, a ghost like absence, features bland, devoid of hue or tone, then in an instant shifts back to fullness and color. she turns and takes in his apartment. it has a nice view of trees extending to the corner street. on the walls are some of his framed photos, and what she guesses she could call conceptually updated Shunga art, by Masami Teraoka. nor is she unaware of the comfortable looking bed in the corner, opposite the window. generic romantic-lush washes of sound with a thumping bass play low on his CD player.

Hiroki appears to her, considerably more at ease with himself than previously – laid back, allowing her the space to absorb

the ambience. although his urge is ramped up, looking at Alana, legs crossed, dress well up her thighs, the rich amber of her hair, the translucent brown eyes, her pink lipstick luminous in the soft light from the lamp beside her chair, as he leans forward, sitting on the edge of his bed, scheming to fuck her, at any moment, on this rainy evening, she relaxes, enjoying his suppressed ardor, not teasing, but isn't this why she came, fairly certain he won't pounce on her. "what do you do when you're not making males of the species unbelievably horny?," he asks, wincing at his own corniness. "I freelance as a stylist for fashion magazines, doing layout, though I haven't worked in a while." he nods, thinking to ask her why she hasn't, but knows any attempt at conversing now would be irrelevant, and as she's aroused as he is, though more through her own actions than his, she prepares to make the first move, which she does, unequivocally.

"take off your clothes, now, Hiroki, and you can fuck me. isn't that what you want to do?" he nods. "wouldn't you first like a drink?" "no, have you been drinking?" "no," he replies, "I'm on the wagon." and breathing deeply she becomes aware the room is filled with the reek of whisky. he quickly undresses, as if unsure whether she might change her mind, fast removing his t-shirt, then fumbling with his laces and removing his shoes, and finally pulling off his pants and shorts. she likes what she sees, even his beer belly. her panties are wet. standing with his long hair down, his fairly large uncircumcised dick is already erect. good, that will be a first, and all she wants is to feel it inside her. he slides open the drawer of the night table, pulls out a condom, tears open the wrap, and sets it on top, just in case she insists. "don't

you want to take your clothes off?" "you can undress me while we fuck." he moves to her, lifts her and carries her to the bed. he rips away her panties, and they fuck, her boots adding ballast, her breasts quivering erotically, as he massages her nipples. she's glad, because he's not completely sober, he doesn't come quickly, and when he does, her orgasm is full and complete. it would be futile to describe her satisfaction at this moment though she feels a ting in her anus. they drink fresh orange juice, and seated, naked, at a small table, play chess. neither of them are much more than beginners – nor is it exactly the classic match between a nude Eve Babitz, and a fully clothed Marcel Duchamp, and try as he might to checkmate' her, the game remains a draw. when starting to feel just a little bored, they get up from the table, his penis simultaneously rising with them, the ting in her anus becoming more pronounced. he's completely sober now. holding hands, they guide each other quickly to the bed. she lowers her hungry mouth, savoring the warm, salty, foreskin, and sucks – and when she comes up for air, his penis still pulsing, he pulls her upright to him, and crushes her in a hug, then turning her around, both of them, feet on the floor, her legs pressed against the mattress for balance, buttocks split, he reaches for the condom, slips it on his wet organ, and working it into her anus, fucks her, slowly, grunting like Toshiro Mifune, hands tightly grasping her upper arms, imagining they're doing it, outside, on a busy street corner, to give it more edge. she submits to a not wholly familiar, nor defined, erotic pleasure, that seems to indicate no specific release, until the condom, doing its job, is filled with his hot semen. he pulls out his organ, drops the soggy condom to the floor, and they sit, at opposite ends of the room, he, in a

chair, she, pouting/moping, on the bed. they dress without saying anything, or even looking at each other. she's about to put on her coat and leave, when he asks, "aren't you satisfied?" "I was, after we fucked – that was why I came. I could have left, then." he nods with understanding. "put down your coat, I think I can make you happier." he walks over to her, encircles her in his arms, and kisses her, the first and only time they've kissed, then leads her to the bed, her lipstick smeared all over his mouth, lifts her, lays her lengthwise on her back, and props her head and neck onto a pillow, and kneeling before her, almost as if in prayer, he raises her little girl dress, gently slides off her panties, spreads her thighs, and lowers his face between them. he eats her, softly, gently, in all the most erotically sensitive areas, allowing her all the time necessary for her to build, until she comes with the same fullness, and satisfaction as the first time, her eyes gratefully filling with tears. before she gets up, he leans forward and gently kisses her, for the second time, smearing his mouth and chin with more of her lipstick. she pulls on her panties then puts on her coat. they stand at a distance facing each other, each smiling, before she turns, walks to the door, and exits, without looking behind her, a new cool, but fragrant, breeze caressing her cheeks, as she gets into her car, and drives west, back to Santa Monica.

she knows she has a way of, perhaps masochistically, finishing off relationships, for one reason or another, she doesn't intend to continue, by deliberately not playing for the upper hand. she could see him again, she could not see him again, it doesn't matter. she means she could, as just another person, one whose work she particularly admires, probably

not sexually, nor romantically, because she doesn't believe either of them have the interest in, or commitment to, the other, necessary to really be involved. as for his drinking, there's nothing she can do, nor wants to do, about it, so that's not her concern, and if she's put in jeopardy her nascent romance, and as much as she'd like, she can't totally discount that possibility, though she doesn't think Jerry is really going to care, then what she has, valid as it may be, is also temporal. whatever she feels, there's nothing to confess. she's betrayed nobody. maybe horniness will always be a problem, because it's mostly mental. men will continue to hit on her, and it's no news she's developed a fine art to attract them. the conundrum is, it only increases her need for a 'secure' relationship. just because she doesn't know, or currently know of, anyone with HIV in the broad social scene she inhabits, doesn't mean she's not susceptible to it, and given what has been the transient nature of Hiroki's life, she supposes one would have had to consider him a higher risk in that area. funny, with all the care she takes with how she relates to people, she let that slide by, though she had given it prior thought, nor has she made it an issue with her other lovers. so far, either her instincts have been right, or she's simply lucked out. she does know, someday, she won't have the allure nor the desire she has now. someday there may have to be another way.

Forever Anna

the front door slowly closes and clicks shut. she listens intently to his footsteps on the pavement as if it were words getting fainter and fainter. snuggles up to the man sitting next to her, pulling her dress up to her crotch, as her eyes, furtively gazing into his, implore promiscuity. then shoulder straps pulled down below her bare breasts, they wantonly screw on the sofa, bright light streaming in from the large bay window, shadows of the trees and plants making disembodied, but sensual, patterns on them. she smiles at him..“ is that all there is?” “perhaps in a week or so from now we can see.” she nods her affirmation, gets up, brushes, and pulls down the hem of her dress, to the extent it can be pulled down. “I’ll call you,” she says, looking in her purse to make sure she hasn’t lost her keys.

as the week progresses, predictably, her concupiscence increases exponentially and a scheme comes into her head. if she does have sex with **he no. 2**, and can time it so they climax at the moment when **he no. 1** arrives and enters the room. that would serve to sufficiently jack her jaded libido.

she opens wide the windows in all the rooms, and imagines the birds chirping, to temper her erotic obsession. she’s somewhat shaken, but then elated, with the prospect her still somewhat current lover will catch them in the act. when **he no. 2** arrives she’s wearing a silk, semi see through, tunic, and nothing on underneath, mauve nail polish on her toes and fingernails, a medium coat of nude lipstick brushed on her delicate lips, her thick, but straight, auburn hair framing her

sensuous aesthetically contoured face, neatly combed out. they stand on the carpet in the middle of the living room. she rubs the front of her warm body up against him. they breathlessly kiss. she watches him take off his clothes and hopes to still be hotly engaged when **he no. 1**, arrives, then asks, "would you like me to blow you first?" she gently, gives him head, his penis pulsing. he can apprehend the subtle change in her attitude, incrementally, towards a greater purposefulness, but without comprehending the cause. she casually, but suggestively, removes her wrapper. their bodies once again come together, and first they fuck standing up, moving modestly, almost tenderly. then, her insouciance returning full force, they continue on the bed. after a satisfactory first orgasm they lay there, window open to the afternoon light, resting, then making out. she's biding time that they will still be conjoined when **he no. 1** comes back. to make sure, she nuzzles all the parts of his body, then, seditiously coaxing, allows him to guide his warm cock deep into her anus, receiving it's thrusts with the subtle movement of her buttocks before deliberately falling forward enough his slippery cock slides out. **he no. 1** will be back in ten minutes or less. she kisses **he no. 2** tenderly and sincerely, so as to allow their love making to be unhurried and grounded. when they start to intently fuck, her nipples hard against his chest, she can hear **he no. 1's** car pull into the driveway. the sound of his footsteps, then the sound of the front door opening and closing, prods her into an erotic frenzy, and simultaneously they come with loud moans just a moment after **he no. 1** enters the room.

stunned (as one might imagine) **he no. 1** stands silently and

stares, watching them, strangely, oddly, absorbed. "I hope you won't be cross with me," she says, raising her head, smiling dreamily, rapturously, her hand resting on her partner's chest. gradually his ability to think and speak returns. still feeling a bit awkward, he tries a little humor; "this is not exactly a nativity tableau." she continues to smile dreamily while stroking the hairs on her partner's chest. "hardly," it's nothing personal. I wish you'd cheat. then I could stand here and watch you." "I don't have your attributes." she and both men laugh. "then you'd like us to be swingers?" "no", she makes a face, "that's a shuck." "I agree. what about group sex?" "it doesn't address that the thrill is in what you're doing the other may want but can't have." "but why should one get a thrill out of that?" "just compensation, I suppose." "compensation for what?" "I just told you," she snaps, then demurs, sits up, stretches and yawns, hair falling on her forehead and cheeks, half covering her face. "I think we'd better get dressed," **he no. 2** says, sitting up, also. "unless he wants to take off his clothes. what do you say?," she asks, turning to **he no. 1**. "I can give you a nice licking, swallow your cum." he shakes his head. "watching the two of you makes me want to fuck." "sorry, you missed the first act. I'm more than satisfied." she turns to **he no. 2** and they both smile. "besides, those internet group porn orgies are totally faked." he thinks a moment. "ok, I'm game." he removes his shoes, socks, pants, and shorts, and sits, legs spread, immediately erect. still naked she kneels in front of him, and to make up for any discomfort her indiscretion may have caused him, slowly lowering her mouth onto it, gives him the blowjob of his life, then, her lips moist with cum, kisses him, affectionately. "that's for being so nice."

alone, and in a more serious and reflective mood, a woman can have genital sex with a man regardless of her physical, emotional state while the converse is not true for the man. she empathizes with the male regarding this simple physical fact,. she recalls several years earlier, age just 20, she attended a party at what she supposed one could call a mansion, just north of Sunset, in Beverly Hills, with a man she thought she was seriously committed to, and had become somewhat gratuitously engaged in short conversation and increasingly suggestive eye contact with another man, until they stood, alone, face to face in the long, empty, entrance hall, the man, and the then innocent, pretty, sweet, swept up hair brunette, in flowering pink dress, looking blankly into each other's eyes, while her male escort in the front room, occupied with social talk, was obliged to help serve drinks, her look, acknowledging his with impassive assent. they went to a back bedroom, shut and locked the door. she, thoughtfully unzipped the top back of her dress, unhurriedly lifting it over her head, then, with cool deliberation, removed her see through panties and bra – cut to two naked bodies totally separate from the party, ravenously fucking.

a week later she was thinking humorously this may seem strange, even perverse, but it was then she first realized her calling. sitting, legs crossed above the knees, running her hand along the length of her calf and thigh, with an aroused shiver, as if it were being stroked by a man...or woman. as **he no. 1** does not want to be a participant, and she's found **he no. 2's** blasé attitude to be ultimately unappealing, she's looking in her mind to `open up the field'. and when the opportunity soon presents itself, she more than happily takes it.

Part Two

there's a full moon in a hazy sky over the Blue Whale, the jazz club situated on the third level of a strip mall in downtown L.A.'s Little Tokyo. vocalist Kat Edmonson is almost through her first set. sitting next to her, on one of the padded benches adjacent to the stage, is a much older looking man she'd briefly noticed holding a drink, which appeared to be either vodka or gin, but as she later found out, was just mineral water. he'd thoughtfully traded seats with her, so that the couple seated directly in front of them, would not partially block her view. although Edmonson's minimal songs and arrangements seem to him somewhat conventional, there's an unmistakable freshness and quality to her voice and delivery, as well as a fetching poise, which if one is in the right mood of reflection, can seem poignant. there's been a buzz about the Texas based singer, lately, and, for this occasion, the small club with its spare, industrial ambience, has drawn a sizable crowd. she concludes her first set, with her most acknowledged song to date, Nobody Knows That, riveting everyone in the room. as both of them are staying for the second set, during the break they strike up a conversation. "how did you know about her?," she asks. "I was searching for a song, Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most"... she laughs, interrupting... "and," he continues, "one of the youtube options was a video of her singing it, a cappella, an unusual and arresting way to do it. then I `stalked', as one online comment put it, her other videos." as he talks to this attractive woman with whom he feels very sexual vibes, he's also wondering what she's doing in a jazz club, alone, watching another woman perform material, he senses, she'd only

be peripherally interested in – that she'd, he erroneously thinks, be more at home in a club with a DJ spinning mixes. "I mostly listen to groups," she says, psychically picking up his thoughts. "I go to some of the sessions here because I like the ambience. I don't mind going to clubs, alone. it allows me to tune into that place in myself while still being around people. my father was a jazz musician, and I grew up around that music. he nods, moved by the part about listening and being alone, which is the same with him, except this is the first time he's been in a club in many years. "what do you do?, she asks. "I write and do visual art, mostly photos with the latter. what instrument did your father play?" "piano, but I'm more into horns, especially tenor and alto sax. the youngest man in my father's group was a reed player. he was very good looking, and I had a big crush on him as a girl. even when I didn't know anything about sex the sound of a saxophone turned me on." "it makes you want to have sex?" "yes." "have you actually put that into practice?" "yes." "you mean with saxophone players?" she blushes slightly and looks him in the eyes. "that's another reason I like coming to clubs, alone." "how often do you do that." "I haven't done it in a long while." "what do you do now?" "mostly, I waste my time. I've come to the realization that is the case, and I want to do something about it."

"I'd very much like to see you again, Anna," he says, as they stand together outside the club after the second set concludes with a cover of You Can't Break My Heart, breathing in the damp coolness. "I'd very much like to see you again, Jerry," she says, before they each return to their parked cars.

the next few days she feels happy and creative. she's very attracted to the older man, and her interest in who he is and what he does, has been piqued. considering her recent past it's odd she's once again become interested in the most quotidian aspects of life, the things around her, the food one eats, and the more mundane thoughts one thinks. so when, standing in his bedroom, watching him fold and put away the clothes he's just brought up from the dryer, she notices how most of his Jockey shorts have sizable rips and tears, and when, somewhat astounded, she points that out, he replies, "nobody' sees me in my underwear." she barely suppresses a smile, given her obvious intention of seeing him in just a little bit less. contrasting her more recent affluence (he stacks his foldable clothes on his closet shelf, he has no furniture, really, with the exception of a couple of chairs, the arms of which are worn to the stuffing), still, she discovers, she feels inner-vated by, and prefers, her current perspective to her former, and she's beginning to see, given her propensity for physical-sexual wildness, the ways in which she's still more conservative than he. "I know this may sound like a contradiction, but I would never try to hurt someone who actually could be hurt. you're the first one in a long time I feel that way about," she says, thinking of the men she's been most recently involved with.

"I don't feel I'm in a position to adequately use social media. login to Facebook, it's absurd the way people collect 'friends' like trading cards." "do you have a website?" "yes, and I suppose I should blog, but who would I be reaching, and I'd rather my work speak for itself. I'm confused as to the right way to do it." "you don't need a lot of technical knowledge."

"I know, but then what? even if there's traffic it doesn't necessarily translate into the right kind of recognition. I'm even thinking of posting an entire book, and allowing it to be downloaded for free – that would be foolish wouldn't it?" "if you're interested in making money, yes." "I'm more concerned about plagiarism from people who have greater access than me. in fact I have fears that has already happened. maybe they're just coincidences, but there's been a lot of them, lately. a few of my books are out there, circulating, plus the books I sent to people, but I've also wondered if, in some way, my work has gotten online, I mean elsewhere than my site." "it could just be the zeitgeist." "true, but when the wording is almost the same it makes one wonder. also book formatting is an issue. I don't indent paragraphs, I don't use caps at the beginning of sentences, and I don't separate dialogue from the body of the text. this is the way I naturally write." Anna has no trouble responding aesthetically to what Jerry's saying, but wonders if he's not masochistically putting up roadblocks. "I'd be abusing my own creative process to do it the accepted way just because that's the way it's done," he answers her thoughts. "I used to think if I had the work getting it seen or read would be minor. I didn't realize that just having no outlet could be the source of pain, because it's the work that matters. I didn't realize just being here, maintaining this tension, the anxiety would build. when I'm engaged in my work It's fine, and I get real satisfaction in perceiving what I've done. then I get up in the morning and feel the futility of 'what am I going to do today'. this frustration I experience daily, affects my motivation. but I'd still rather have the goods, even when nobody knows about it, than have the social opportunities gained through self-abuse,

and be in too bad shape to enjoy it's fruits." "it sounds like you know something about that." "yes, I do. I Just couldn't do it anymore. the process of healing took me away from it. what's become more of an issue is the feeling of being deliberately shut out, black listed, actually. though I'm used to being the odd man out. when you create alone you're more apt to tell the truth than if you're involved with, beholden to, groups. this can lead to social ostracism. my process seems to be one of **networking in reverse**. "you'd have to explain why you feel that way, of course."

"it's no secret you're my muse, now Anna," Jerry says , quite aware of the negative connotations presently associated with that word. "I don't know what I can do, Jerry. I have no standing in the world you seek access to." "that's ok, at least now I have someone to talk to about it." Anna, affected by Jerry's malaise, suggests, "I know you don't eat lunch, but let's go out to lunch, anyway." "sounds intriguing, Anna." he then asks her, for no particular reason, "what do you want to do after lunch?" Anna, taken off guard concerning her covert plans, blushes, partially shielding her face with her hand. "I thought we might spend the rest of the afternoon in bed, laying naked together." both of them are now feeling very good. sitting with Anna in the generating hum of a crowded public place allows Jerry to feel uplifted in a way he had not much opportunity to feel of late, a subtly protective shield falling away, their afternoon's peaceful, restful, Idyll, ending at dusk, on a more intensely erotic note, Anna on her back, what she's been craving deep inside her, her mouth locked in Jerry's neck, biting and sucking hard, while they fuck until the day's frustration, mostly obliterated, she sharply comes.

"do you ever watch porn?" "yes, I use some of the photos in my work." "that's right." "quite a bit transformed. I recently watched a video" "was it since we met?" "no, it was just before." "I'm glad it wasn't after." "don't you ever watch porn?" "yes." "a lot?" "I have, but I've been able to act out my fantasies in real time." "I wish I could say that." "I have no desire to watch porn now." "neither do I. that's what I was saying." "you were talking about a video." "it was one of those 'horny wife gets banged hard while her husband watches', videos." "it could very well have been me in my most previous life," she laughs, "go ahead, I'm sorry." "no need to be, I'd like to know more about that, Anna." "I want you to know everything about me, Jerry." she then asks as an afterthought, "would you like to watch that video you mentioned, together?" "if we can find it." it begins with a close up of her 'husband' eating her. then pulls back to a full shot of her sitting on the bed, and he, still kneeling before her, looking up, she voluptuous, wearing a flimsy, clinging, but loosely hanging, red print, summer dress, dropped below her breasts, which are barely covered with a black lace bra with long, thin straps, dress, of course, above her crotch, her shapely long legs in high black hose. of course she's wearing 6 inch black heels. the man is a little shorter than average, with a clean, generic, almost handsome, boyish face. wearing just pants, his bare upper torso is slight, but compact, with no extra body fat. as he gazes up at her, the look on her face, which is framed by long, blonde, wild, naturally curly hair, is one of dissatisfaction, slightly contemptuous, even. they have a brief discussion about his inability to satisfy her, and, finally, he says, he'll be right back and leaves to purchase either a sex toy or get-hard pills. as soon as he's gone, standing, she

flaunts her body, showing off her legs, hips, etc., then picks up her phone and calls someone, her partner in adultery, sex object, servicer, lover, whatever, by her facial expressions, heavily flirting. he arrives shortly, a tall, black, male, with a sensuous face, and after giving each other lustful looks, stand kissing for a while, then the both of them, still standing, she unbuttons his white, summer sport coat, which he removes, then his shirt, which he removes, revealing an athletic, not overly muscular, body. she smiles lustfully up at him, as he unfastens his pants, and pulls out an exceptionally long, possibly surgically elongated, but relatively thin, semi-hard, cock, and she exuberantly sucks, at the same time, stroking it's length with her hand, plunging her mouth deep, sucking the head. at this time her husband returns, who she barely acknowledges, holding a package. she slights him contemptuously, inviting him to "sit in the corner," and she continues performing fellatio, as her husband resignedly sits on the bed, while she and her partner passionately kiss, his arms binding her tightly, squeezing her breasts, which are exceptionally large, indicating hers, too, may have been 'enhanced'. she's now wearing only a skimpy, black lace, bra, with the shoulder straps, down, and a black thong belt from which garters are attached to her hose on either side, and they fuck, sensuously, in that it's not fast, not slow, both of them moving in unison. there's a lot of eye contact between them, which is somewhat unusual in porn videos. the video is trying to make clear that they dig each other, especially, she, him – not quite the more obviously abusive, overtly racially motivated, sado-masochistic display often present in this kind of video. after a while her legs are pretty much up at a 90 degree angle,. her stocking'd toe is resting against his mouth and he

kisses and gnaws it, as they continue fucking, an esoteric, faux ecstatic, look on her face. then he pulls out, and as the camera glorifies her white, black seamed stocking-'d strapped thighs, and rump, her legs raised and spread, showcasing her cunt, he lowers his head, his sensuous facial features in profile, black hand extended, fingers spread, the obvious black on white depictions, clutching her rump/thigh, and eats her, the sound on, amplifying their moans as well as the conversation with she and him, and with she and her husband, who, by this time, is sitting on the bed, back to the wall, a blank, defeated, expression on his face, completely naked. they fuck some more. then he fucks her doggy style, pulling her hair, her rump raised, cheek lowered to the bed cover, both making very loud sounds, until he pulls his cock out, presses it to her mouth, beginning to ejaculate, a little cum on her lips and cheek, as she hurriedly takes it to her mouth, sucking fervently, taking in each spurt. then, her mouth full, she moves to where her anguished husband is lying in a fetal position, his cheek pressed against the sheets. she hovers over him, and, slowly, let's a stream of the other man's cum fall onto his other raised cheek and with an extended finger, rubs it in, slowly massaging it into his skin, like one would a cream. she releases more semen then does it again. is there a symbolic gesture, here? her facial expression appears to be somewhat disdainful, but there's an ambiguity to it, in which one could construe an act of tenderness, as well as just 'rubbing it in'. one could interpret it as transferring one man's potency to the other. at any rate pretty weird. 24 minutes. but who knows in real time. neither Jerry nor Anna look at each other immediately after the video ends. "it is a deliberate propagation of racial and sexual stereotypes,

Anna finally says.” “yes, that’s the most obvious fact, and most of the ‘language’ used to tag these videos is vile, but many people who watch it are too sophisticated to relate to that as anything but being consciously exploitive, repugnant, yes, yet they watch it. despite the crudeness, the graphicness, yes, the themes, are what people who watch identify with – and for all it’s raunchy-ness there is something of the actual in the daily lives and fantasies of people, no matter how grossly depicted, absent in the mainstream media. the performers are paying a price with their bodies to impact that aspect of culture that’s been cynically exploited and sexualized, yet repressed, and they’ve forced mainstream media, even in the higher toned arts, to up the ante – for instance, in Lars van Trier’s most recent movie, *Nymphomaniac*, he now can, or has to, show the male and female protagonists graphically fucking. but, from what I’ve read, the images of body doubles who did the actual fucking, were digitally ‘stitched’ onto the images of the film’s stars, who were simulating actual sex. given the degree of effort taken in the packaging of the sex lives of stars, it’s curious they need help when it comes to sex in film. it’s also interesting that sex in film is viewed as a specialized function in the same way that tennis or boxing is, which requires a ‘professional’ to stand-in. conversely, acting is a skill which I think it’s safe to say, in most cases, porn actors, don’t have,” Jerry adds, drawing a laugh from Anna. not quite ready to let it go they watch a shorter video of sex on a teacher’s desk. the plot – a sadistic gym instructor with a body builder physique, fucks and abuses a fashion model thin, small breasted girl, with a very pretty face, long pretty hair, and a curvy figure who he’s ‘called into his office.’ the imagery and ‘acting’, if mundane,

was believable, both ways. she was very natural, and she really looked like she was in her late teens – she could have been standing with a group at a bus stop outside her school at 3:30 pm. “it makes me wonder where do all these sex performers come from – young, old, and in-between. and the answer is, anywhere. there are thousands of them. it’s a real cultural phenomenon.” Anna, inexplicably, blushes. “when the axe finally falls on porn it will be total, however”, Jerry concludes. Anna is surprisingly affected. she is extremely aroused sexually but emotionally subdued and vulnerable, and scuttles their plans to go out for a while. “why don’t we just go to bed, instead,” she says, face and eyes glowing in the lamplight, arms around Jerry, pressing her breasts and groin against his, kissing him tenderly.

“I’m going to lift the pastel green shirt you’re wearing, above your rump and put this into your raised ass, and move slowly, for a long, long time, until..” “don’t come in my ass.” “not if you don’t want me to, Anna,” he says, rubbing her warm bare breasts under her unbuttoned, green shirt, and they kiss, intimately, tenderly, passionately. when the good natured skirmishing ends, Anna, naked, exchanges the shirt for an avocado grey-green silk blouse, and pulls up thigh high, red, pink, and charcoal, striped cotton stockings, then stops, as Jerry, for the first time, notices two odd looking (odd in the sense of unusual) objects on Anna’s lamp table – an azure latex condom, with mint-green soft rubber spikes, protruding from a sponge-like base, attached at the top, looking, more than anything else, like a small multi-colored, extremely exotic, jellyfish. beside it is a smaller, translucent purple tube-like condom with dark blue rounded nubs on its sides.

already aroused, Jerry looks hard at Anna. "where did you get those?" "a friend gave them to me as a souvenir." "a friend?" "not exactly. I dated someone several nights ago I once had a sometime relationship with. he had a box with an assortment of them. we used one with bright pink feathers, and he gave me these. why don't we try them, Jerry," she asks, before he can raise more questions, looking soulfully into his eyes, ravenous, almost naked, in the silk blouse and stockings." "how did that come about?" he asks, as he removes his pants, shorts, and shoes. "it didn't come about, it was more or less expected," she brusquely replies. "we were going to go someplace first, but listening to Mick Jagger sing *It's not that you give-in willingly/others do it without thrilling me* made us both so horny, we drove straight to the hills right then." "and he just 'happened' to have a box of them with him." "he sells items to sex shops for a living. he keeps the articles in the trunk of his car." Jerry nods with interest. "did it work?" he asks, referring to the use of the pink feathers.. "no more than in having sex without them. you know I don't need those kind of things." "then why do you want to use them now?". "I just thought it might be fun, or maybe I should say, mentally stimulating, being I have them, just to try them." "I've read the tops sometimes break off. in intercourse that could turn into a real problem." "evidently they can when they get old and brittle. he said these are reliable." "I've also read they don't fit well, that they're uncomfortable to wear, and that most women who've tried them, either find them uncomfortable as well, or get no additional satisfaction," Jerry persists, masking the increasingly erotic urge he's feeling to try them. "what have we to lose?" Anna asks, looking sexy, and angelic as a virgin.

“ok, which one do you want to use?” “let’s start with this,” she says, feeling an unpredictably irresistible excitement in her anus, as she slips the thin, dark purple one with the speed bumps onto his painfully erect penis. there’s a moment’s hesitation between them as to what they’ll actually do. they stare forthrightly into each other’s eyes. picking up her suggestive, naughty, vibe, he turns her around, and she bends forward over the bed. he lifts her cheeks and moves his cock under her as she allows the purple condom with the speed bumps entrance. “it was more the thrill of the word, French ticklers, and the illicitness of having sex in a parked car,” she mutters between thrusts, “something I’d hadn’t done in years, and that we might have gotten caught doing.....Oh, Jerry, Fuck me,” she cries out, too excited to play with it any longer. self-absorbed, they silently move together, his fingers reaching down between her thighs, one finger pressing on her clit, while penetrating deeper with his cock, his fingers soaked with a light mucous-like fluid. as he continues pressing his fingers, and they continue to hump, suddenly Anna’s doorbell insistently rings. with the blinds on the front windows raised, and the bedroom door ajar, they realize they can be clearly seen from the street. he pulls out the studded condom. Anna closes the door. horny but laughing, they sit on the bed, Anna, legs straddled, on his lap, facing one another. “did the bumps make a difference?,” Jerry asks. “I was so aroused I almost didn’t feel them. just the suggestion may have helped. sex is so mental.” “I suppose we should put the other one on hold.” “we may not feel this way in a little while,” she says, kissing him.

several hours later, as it turns out, the image of the unused

condom is still tantalizingly lodged in their heads, and they can hardly wait to get back from Samys camera, where Jerry's purchased ink cartridges and paper for his photo printer. as soon as they return and hurriedly close the door, Anna removes her skirt, panties, bra and heels, and Jerry once again strips down below the waist. she pulls off her cotton striped stockings, goes to the bedroom, slips on sheer, seamless, beige, nylon hose for a more indecent boudoir effect and returns with the white, down comforter she's retrieved from the bed. Anna can be very performance oriented during sex changing what she wears in moments that inspire it. "let's do it on the floor where we'll have more room to move and won't fall off anything" they double fold the comforter and lay it out on the floor she rubs up against him, and first giving him head, slides the comically decorative French tickler onto his penis. she languidly falls back onto the comforter, cushiony and soft, thighs spread pulling him to her eagerly accepting his cock, plant like antennae and all. she wraps her legs around him and as they fuck she closes her eyes. a French tickler is in her. she's in horny suspense, moaning for satisfaction. besides herself legs still tightly wound around him their bodies move off the comforter, wriggling, inching, half-way across the room, the tentacles of the condom exciting whatever it touches twisting writhing flailing thrashing, insatiable, she loosens the grasp of her legs and raises them vertically, stocking'd feet crossed hugging his neck, as hands on each side, pressed to the floor, he alternately probes and thrusts, slowly rubbing the top of the condom against her clit, then plunging, pushing against her uterus walls until, with excited cries, she begins the series of orgasms which only finally abate several minutes later.

when, flushed with pleasure, her moans have ceased, he pulls out, and drops the dead jellyfish, saturated with semen, onto the floor.

"I've a secret. I starred in a porn video." he looks at her like he would look at someone in a porn video, and thinks he'd really like to see her in one. "how did that come about?" "I modeled for a while – sometimes dresses, sometimes slips, bras, and other lingerie, and was approached, like most models were, to do one. I, of course, at first, said no, but they kept sweetening the offer until I finally said yes." "was it serious porn?" "it was hardcore. the more you do the more money you get." "can you tell me what it was about?" "there was little plot, just a tag, 'instructor takes college girl to dinner, then beds her'. it was only 18 minutes." "and, of course, it was very explicit." "very, yes. we did the standard repertoire." drawn to the thought of seeing her in a porn video he wonders if it can still be seen. "how were you dressed?" "dressed up, the 'professor' had invited me to dinner," she laughs, "in a deep purple , satin dress, gold satin heels, and, of course, black lace underwear, black hose and garters, for those close ups. my hair was up." "what was the man who was playing the instructor like?" "middle age and generic in appearance, you know, a suit and short hair. he wore a bow tie, a little seedy – the contrast to make me look especially desirable." "can you give me the details?" "there was dinner, drinks at his apartment, making out half undressed, oral sex both ways, then fucking, genital and anal, and, finally, my swallowing his cum. the typical hardcore format." "was it hard to fuck in front of the camera?" "not at all, being I'm not shy about sex – just not authentic." "in what way?"

"there was no intent. it was all out front. there was no feeling either emotional or erotic, no communication. there has to be communication to establish a rhythm. I wasn't hot, though I looked to be, that's the come-on, it's not what you feel, it's how you're seen, and I didn't have any orgasms though I faked one another issue, I have to say, understandably, he couldn't stay hard. in fact, he was never completely hard. they had to obliquely redirect the camera to compensate." "why do you say, understandably." "if I were a man I imagine it would be very difficult to get hard under those circumstances, even though the crew was reasonably sensitive and perceptive, unless I'd taken Viagra or something, or was a phallic narcissist, which some men are. he liked me, that turned me on, and would have liked it if I'd more participated in the fantasy with him. but I wasn't fantasizing." "I can picture you dressed the way you described, and I've got an erection. you must have looked sexy and gorgeous." "they seemed to think so." "did you see it?" "yes, just once." "where, on the internet?" "no, they showed us the video, and they wanted me to do more." "why didn't you?" "I think I was initially mostly curious. but repeated it would have gotten tedious. I knew, eventually, it would have been fucking with both my mind and health." "what was your reaction when you saw it?" "it really turned me on." "really, then what did you do?" "as soon as I was alone, I masturbated." they both laugh. "do you think it's still being shown?" "I don't know. it seems it would be." "does that worry you?" "not at all. it's just play acting. bad art."

"Jerry, can you come over?" "when?" "right now, I have a surprise for you." when he arrives he's never seen her, or

anyone else, for that matter, looking so gorgeous. she's seated, wearing a multi-colored print blouse, hair, full, and combed lightly back, and her tight, very short, cerulean blue skirt is pulled tautly across the upper portion of her thighs. the only catch is, there are two uber masculine, smirking, males, who are standing next to her. "they're going to fuck you. that's the surprise," she responds, to his questioning look, "and I'm going to watch." he gets up and starts for the door, but one of them clicks shut the lock. "just relax and let it happen. if you can be passive when it comes to physical interaction with men, then just let them fuck your passivity. it won't hurt. it will bring closure to your hidden anxiety." she smiles, looking absolutely radiant. he tries to unlock the door before getting shoved away. "get undressed." Jerry shakes his head. "then we'll undress you. don't worry, brutality isn't our thing." he's about to ask what is their 'thing', when the second man adds, "just humiliation." "he looks too much like a man. let's put a skirt on 'her.'" he turns his head to Anna. "do you have anything?" she smiles happily, gets up, goes to the closet and removes a bright red skirt from its hanger, and hands it to them. they fasten the skirt around his waist. "too bad he doesn't have boobs," he says, thoughtfully. "how about lipstick?" she immediately gets up, rummages her purse, pulls out a tube, and while they hold him fast, she deftly applies a carmine coat as he struggles to turn his face away. she goes to the chair, face glowing, legs crossed, skirt now above her crotch, transfixed, as the two men approaching, slip condoms on their erect dicks, shoving Jerry onto his back. Anna gets up from her chair, and seating herself on the bed, cradles his head onto her lap, inserts her tongue into his ear, and whispers, "I forgive you," as he is, raised legs

pushed backwards, forcefully fucked. she returns to her seat and once again, sits as they get up, dress and leave. to them I was a woman and my ass was a cunt, that simple, he thinks – but he doesn't envy them in their one way trip that excludes femininity – an ass is not a cunt and the result was indeterminate. he did not come, and he now looks at her legs with an incredible hunger, and springs an erection. but before he can do anything about it, a wild look in her eyes, she says, "let me fuck you, too!," and pulls a double ended strap-on from her bag, without waiting for an answer, quickly straps it on, inserting one end into her vagina moves to the bed, and firmly pushing his back to the mattress, she mounts him just like the men did, and fucks him furiously, until she comes with razor-edged groans and moans, then pulling it out, loosens the straps, defiantly flips it to the floor, and pushing her skirt down, returns to the chair, and once again sits, sedately.

"I love you, Jerry. anything you want me to do, I'll do it. smother me with a pillow while you fuck me, I'll have multi-orgasms before I expire." "nothing that dramatic," he responds, wearily. "first, I want to rub my cock against, and then come, on your gorgeous thigh, then kiss you. it's love I want. pretty simple. he moves to her chair, and rubbing his erect penis against her warm thigh, hearts beating wildly as they kiss, he ejaculates, moaning loudly. she bends forward, sucks up the semen and with her tongue, licks her thigh clean.

"wake up Jerry, it's almost noon." he opens his eyes, smiles, and slowly nods. "you must have been dreaming a lot. your facial expression kept changing and you were making a lot of sounds. you were sensuously moving, almost as if you were

having sex.” when he pulls back the comforter she sees the soaked spot on the sheets. “you had a wet dream,” she says, smiling tenderly. “was it anything that would make me jealous?” “it was mostly about us, Anna.”

when Jerry arrives at Anna’s, unexpectedly, the next day at about noon, after staying up most of the night, working, she’s wearing a short, tight fitting, multi-hued (op art) dress, which changes colors from luminous red, yellow, orange, or green, to blue, purple, depending on the angle the light hits it, and black high heels. he can’t keep his eyes off of her. “why are you so dressed up , Anna?” “no particular reason; Jerry. I just felt like it.” “are you going somewhere?” “not right now.” “then let’s go out ” “I’m not sure I want to.” “why is that?” “I’m feeling lazy today. I’d prefer to just stay here and lay around for a while.” “you’re behaving in a very mysterious way, Anna.” he follows her to her bedroom and sits on her bed, while she stands by the window, the light directly in her eyes, bringing out their amber, almost saffron, radiance. she sits down next to him. “have you eaten?” he asks. “not yet.” “then what do you want to do,?” “I’d like to swallow your cum.” he breathes in the perfume on her neck and in her hair. she gazes into his green/blue eyes, then looks down, unbuttons and unzips his jeans, yanking them to his knees, followed by his navy briefs. already half hard, she rubs her mouth along the length of it, and it springs erect, almost vertical, and curved, stiff as a rubber truncheon. she begins, slowly, releasing saliva, so as to reduce the friction, then deep throating it as they become more engrossed. he reaches up under her short dress and feels her warm thighs, and tugs at her lace trimmed panties, his hand moving beneath them.

he wants to feel her up, but the top of the dress is fastened high on her neck, mandarin style. it seems to take longer to come when being blown, than when fucking, maybe because he's less active, and the attentiveness is absolute. they build together, as in fucking, but more a linguistic communication. as the air becomes increasingly quiet, the multi-hues of her dress seem to explode from his brain, and as he nears orgasm, he tries to drive the inevitable from his mind, so as to increase the pleasure even more, fixing his eyes on her bare thighs, as her mouth relentlessly plummets, then orgasms fully with cries that sound of both pain and pleasure, as Anna, hungrily, swallows his spurts. neither of them speak for several minutes. "I think I've got my nutrition," she finally says, her dress raised, as Jerry's face burrows in her lap. he lays the length of the bed. "I'm very sleepy, Anna. I don't think I want to go out." "why don't you go to sleep, now. I'll be back later this afternoon." "where are you going?" "I have to meet someone." "so that's why you're all dressed up, stockings and all." "yes." "to have sex?," he asks, completely taken by surprise. "that is the unstated intent. I need something right now with a person in a way I don't need right now with you. I've been turned on by someone who makes me want to be as reprobate as possible and I can't just let it go to waste." Anna's phone rings. she moves to the opposite side of the room as she listens then laughs, responding flirtatiously, speaking low (Jerry can't quite hear her words), listens a short time more, then says, "Fine," a serious edge to her voice. she goes to the bathroom, urinates, gargles with mouthwash, and dabs a tincture of Jasmin eau de parfum to her neck, then returning to the bedroom, combs out her hair and straightens her dress. "I'll see you in several hours," she

says, and exits the room. he listens to the front door shut, and the click of her heels on the stairs, though perplexed, then falls into slumber.

when Anna returns, her dress of many colors, rumpled, but otherwise looking good as ever, it's almost dark, and he's still in bed, the thought of getting up and hanging around while she was out and with someone having been too unappealing. "how did it go?" "very well," she smiles shyly, somewhat evasively, a bit subdued. she takes off all her clothes, lays down beside him, and quickly falls asleep. he loves her. but would he love her if, to him, she weren't beautiful. is her looks, and what she's able to do with it, all that attracts him to her?

they both awake, refreshed, at about midnight. "was there anything you did with him we haven't done, or don't, do?" "no, it was just how we connected initially, and there seemed no good reason to pass." "where was that?" "at CineFile on Santa Monica Blvd." "what were you doing there?" I went to purchase the Jean-Pierre Melville film, *Le Samourai*, as a birthday gift for my friend and co-worker, Ilona, as she is really into 60s French film noir and loves Alain Delon, tripped on something in the entrance and he grabbed me as I started to fall. he held me a bit longer and tighter than was necessary for the alleged purpose. somewhat embarrassed I engaged with him in suggestive chitchat, then he gave me a hard 'I want to screw you' look triggering an unanticipated need I did not want to suppress. we stood outside, the extremely bright light causing us to squint even through our sunglasses. I felt a bit like we were characters in a noir film. somehow the activity and his strapping, dissolute image, along with an

almost tacky sporty dress made me empathetic as well as turned me on. it occurred to me he was dressed like some of the 'boys' in the band when I was a little girl. then it was cool. nothing specific only that I **wanted** to do it with him." "in his hotel room." "yes, pushing me onto the bed, and while looking me in the eyes, he tugged, then tore the fabric of my panties to shreds, then, ripping my hose, ate me out, licking my clit. of course I was hot. he forced my mouth onto his cock and held my head there until I couldn't swallow. but the excitement of the subjugation didn't surprise me.. after releasing his grip and withdrawing his cock from my mouth he held me down pinioning my thighs daring me to struggle, then grasped my ankles, pushing my legs backwards. my knees were flush against my belly. holding me there while working his cock in. we screwed, mindlessly, I experienced almost incalculable flashes of pleasure before he turned me over and fucked me anally – I knew, even before we got there implied homo eroticism would be foremost on his agenda. I fingered my clit, the entire labia, enjoying the pleasure of being ass fucked, and at the same time being the agent of my own gratification. we fucked with our clothes still on, his hands tightly grasping my heels." "the porn sites call it 'fully clothed sex.'" "well, I had several orgasms. I was his 'piece of ass'. I had no say, for my part just satisfying what was provoked to be done by a **rowdy** image. "did he come in your ass?" "no. he could have. I would have liked that. he pulled my dress above my breasts, placed his cock between them and moved it up and down until he was almost ready to come, then lowered it and shot his load on my belly, a lot, enough to fill a condom, all of which I liked very much, then reached for the box of tissues and wiped me clean so his cum

didn't get on my dress." "that was gallant of him." "thoughtful, at least," Anna replies, unfazed by Jerry's sarcasm. "are you hurt Jerry?" "not at all. are you going to see him again?" "I've no reason to. he obviously doesn't live in L.A." "you were gone a long time. did you do anything else besides have sex?" "no, there was no conversation. I don't think we had very much in common. we showered together. then we just sat around drinking tap water. we didn't kiss, let alone make out, the whole time. it was strange. there was no purpose. but it was very pleasant. I was in no rush to leave." Jerry nods with understanding "where is the hotel?" "around the corner from the Nuart theater. kind of insalubrious." "did the fact neither of you came while genitally engaged make you feel incomplete?" "no, it would have been beside the point!" they want to kiss each other, but know it best not be generated by her caprices. before they go to sleep, Anna rubs her groin up against Jerry, and says, "eat me Jerry," lays back on the bed, spreads her legs and raises her thighs, her skin sweet from having bathed and cleaned her genitalia. "he didn't come in me." once again it gets very still. it takes a long time because of the previous ones, but her orgasm is very intense. in the morning they walk to the food Co-op to get takeout for breakfast, Jerry musing on his dependency to Anna's fantasy world. "I know I'm a nympho, and I know the pain it's causing you, Jerry." "some days I feel like I'm doing time, even though I'm free," he finally replies.

Anna and Jerry are standing in Jerry's bedroom. it's almost dark and Jerry reaches up and pulls down the light-block shade behind the vertical blinds. he pulls it too hard, causing it to go below the sill, locking it in with the blinds. while

pulling, he frees it, but it slips from his grasp and snaps up, the bottom of the shade no longer accessible to pull. he takes a long screwdriver from the toolbox in the kitchen, and pries the shade loose, pulls it down to the proper level, then closes the blinds. Anna, standing a few feet away, has watched this whole procedure with fixed fascination, feeling his anger and frustration with a number of issues that have befallen him, his determined matter-of-factness, his image in the dark, the light-weight windbreaker she particularly likes to see him wear, at that moment, in love with him. he turns and catches her in her quiet speculation, walks over and intensely kisses her, and she kisses him back. then they're kissing each other all over, faces and necks, before leaving for dinner.

"you want to know everything about me, Jerry. like when I 'lost my virginity'?" he perks up. "of course." "when I was fourteen, visiting my maternal grandmother, going through some of her old keepsakes – a hard bound book that still had its faded dust jacket illustration of a ravishing looking woman, her full bodice mostly bare within a low cut satiny gown, and a romance novel-type-handsome looking man dressed in the country style elegance of that period, standing possessively behind her, came up, and she stopped the flow of nostalgic humor, fixing on it. I asked her what the book was about and she said it was the first time she had read about sex. that it was about the affairs of a social climbing woman named Amber St Clare which was somewhat lauded for its portrayal of 17th Century English society, but was banned in a number of states for its deemed pornographic content, and I, of course, conspired I would read it, which I did, shortly after."

"Forever Amber." "yes, did you read it?" "just three lines when I was twelve, while sitting on the back patio at my best friend's house.....how did that relate to your loss of virginity?" "the story, for the most part, seemed too complicated and arcane for me to get into. it was just the sex sequences of which there were quite a few, esp the first one, of a 16 year old Amber leading the 'handsome' and 'virile' nobleman she was wildly passionate about and to who's love she continued to yearn for the entire book, into the woods, deliberately setting it up for him to seduce her there. for the next two years, when horny, I never stopped thinking about that – how as he overpowered her, she first struggled then relaxed, I even masturbated, thinking of it, and I believe it conditioned my mind as to how the situation that finally, and inevitably, occurred, turned out when I was sixteen." "where was that?" "at an after school art class. on the evening of the final meeting we had a kind of going away party at the studio as the instructor was moving to N. Y. we were smoking pot, drinking a lot, and when the party finally ran down, myself and the instructor, who was twenty something, I guess, and very good looking, were the only ones left." "I can imagine what happened next," Jerry says, just a trifle facetiously. "that's right. we had been flirting a lot, and then making out, but I had no intention of going further, and when he started seriously feeling me all over, I didn't think I could do anything about it. it was late, on a commercial street, no one within hearing distance, even the traffic had ceased. he forced me down onto a pile of cushions, pulled off my undies, then undid his pants, and, with what seemed to me a huge erection, grasping my calves with both hands, pushed my legs backwards and entered me, surprisingly, given the situation,

without any discomfort on my part, and started moving inside me. I struggled as best I could, twisting, squirming, and flailing my arms, trying to get him off me, then, exhausted, abruptly stopped. but the pressure of his body on me felt good, encompassing, he was moving in me very organically, not harshly or fast, and at the moment the image of Amber St Clare submitting to Lord Bruce Carlton, came into my head, I relaxed, and submitted. then, aroused, I started to move with him until I had orgasm." "did he have an orgasm?" "yes." "inside you?" "of course." "what did you do afterwards?" "I had to decide whether to report him, he raped me, or go home, shower, clean myself, and forget it. the first option would have been too much trouble. I think it was that simple." "but it was true...you liked it'." "yes, and it was something to build from. at a later age I read more of the book and I think I had, unconsciously, a strong identification with Amber." "sex with her was negotiable." "I'm not sure that isn't, at least sometimes, the case with everyone." "so you think the image actually empowered you to handle the situation?" "you were saying?" "it was these lines: *first she struggled. then she relaxed. she liked it.* no words could have aroused me more. it was my earliest adolescent erotic image, at least from words, and the object of one of my first masturbations along with an image of actress Jean Peters in a low cut peasant blouse from the movie, Captain From Castile, when I was twelve. the motivating factor of first struggling then relaxing is an interesting coincidence as well as a sexist cliché. this was a long time before you experienced it. however, I've never been able to relocate that phrase, neither Googling it nor scrolling through the novel. so it must have come from some other source I had confused it with?"

"it's time not to go yet." "no, I have a while longer." Amber dropped onto her knees in the grass, her mouth pouting, eyes rebellious – and after a moment he sat down beside her. for several seconds she continued staring sulkily, mulling over her dismal future, and then swiftly her eyes went to his. he was watching her, steadily, carefully. she stared back at him, her heart pounding, and there began to steal over her a slow weakness and languor, so consuming that even her eyes felt heavy. every part of her was tormented with longing for him, and yet she was half scared, uncertain, and reticent, filled with a sense of dread almost greater than her desire. at last his arm reached out went around her waist and drew her slowly towards him; Amber, moving her head to meet his mouth and both her arms about him. the restraint he had shown thus far now vanished swiftly, giving way to a passion that was savage, violent, ruthlessly selfish. Amber, inexperienced but not innocent, returned his kisses eagerly spurred by the caressing of his mouth and hands, her desire mounted a pace with his and though at first she had heard, somewhere far back in her mind, Sarah calling out to her, warning her, the sound and the image grew fainter, dissolved and was gone. but when he forced her back onto the earth she gave a quick movement of protest and a little cry – this was as far as her knowledge went. something mysterious, almost terrible, must be beyond. her hand pushed at his chest and she gave a frightened little sob, twisting her face away from his. her fear now was irrational, intense, almost hysterical. "no!," she cried, "let me go!" she saw his face above her, and his eyes had become pure glittering green. Amber, half crying, half-mad with passion and terror, suddenly let herself relax. with slow reluctance Amber again became conscious of the

surrounding world, and both of them as separate individuals. she drew a deep luxurious sigh, her eyes still closed – she felt that she could not have moved as much as a finger. after a long while he drew away from her and sat up, forearms resting on his knees, a long blade of grass between his teeth, staring ahead. his tanned face was wet with sweat and he mopped across it with the black velvet sleeve of his doublet. Amber lay perfectly still beside him, eyes closed and one arm flung over her forehead. she was warm and drowsy, marvelously content, and glad with every fiber of her being that it had happened. it seemed until this moment she had been half-alive. aware his eyes were on her she turned slightly and gave him a lazy smile. she wanted to say she loved him but did not quite dare, even now. she wished he would say he loved her, but he only bent and kissed her, very gently. “I’m sorry, he said. softly, “I didn’t expect to find you a virgin.” “I’m glad I was.” Forever Amber - Kathleen Winsor – 1944

now our love memories present no exception to the general rules of memory, which in turn are governed by the still more general rules of Habit, and as Habit weakens every impression what a person recalls to us most vividly is precisely what we had forgotten, because it was of no importance, and had therefore left in full possession of its strength, that’s why the better part of our memory exists outside of ourselves, in a patter of rain, in the smell of an unaired room or of the first crackling of a brushwood fire in a cold grate: wherever, in short, we happen upon what our mind having no use for it, had rejected, the last treasure that the past has in store, the richest, that which when all our flow of tears seemed to have dried at the source can make us weep again. Within A Budding Grove – Marcel Proust – 1918

there's a moment's silence as they sit opposite each other, from across the room, Anna's legs crossed above the knees, skirt unintentionally crept up her thighs. they inadvertently stare at one another, and unconsciously smile. then continuing to stare, amused at catching themselves unconsciously fixated and shy, they break out smiling happily, faces shining. he walks over as she rises and they meet, standing in the center of the room. they salaciously kiss. he slips his hand into the open top of her dress and feels her up. then, quickly dropping their obstructions to the floor, embracing, they fuck, standing up, for a long time, until they both come with intense satisfaction. "that was very good," Anna says, pulling her underwear back on.

Jerry is sitting in his front room, plate in his lap, counting each bite so as to not fantasize or eat too fast. in 15 minutes he'll watch the UCLA – Nebraska football game. but he's miscalculated the game time and when he turns on the TV there's 8 minutes left in the first quarter – UCLA behind 7-0. he watches agile UCLA quarterback Brett Hundley evade several rushers before finally getting sacked. he has to take a shit – and reads a few paragraphs from his short story, The Tyranny of Benevolence, while on the toilet. then, in his bedroom, writes down what here has just been described. when he gets back to the TV there's less than 3 minutes left in the first quarter. the score is now 7-3 – UCLA must have kicked a field goal. at this point he quits recording the moments of his day. Nebraska builds a 21-3 lead, and it seems as though it's going to be a blowout. but by late second quarter the momentum has begun to shift. at half-time the score is 21-10, and in the second half UCLA scores 4 unanswered TD's and a field goal,

completely dominating the game. Hundley finishes with over 350 yards, passing and rushing. the final score is UCLA 41, Nebraska, 21, though his only real satisfaction was when UCLA began to close the gap, inducing hope, where, at the onset, it appeared to be a lost cause.

watching the game has made Jerry lazy. but before putting on his sweats to go for a short run the phone rings

he answers his land phone, a surge of joy wiping out his anxiety and mild malaise. Anna wants to know the size of the shorts he wears. "medium, Anna, can you come over and keep me company?" "I'll come over, but then we have to go out." "ok," he replies, reassured, "where do you want to go?" "to buy you some briefs." he decides not to object. seeing her smiling face when she enters is so obviously the lift he's needed. "where's a good place to buy them?" "being we're in Santa Monica, Sears is good enough. they have a big parking lot. that's where I buy my 505s. it's a few dollars cheaper there. I hate to hassle." "if they have what you want." they pick out a dozen solid colored briefs to replace the holey one's, then go to the natural food co-op he belongs to, to shop for dinner. "did my torn shorts turn you off?" "they were sexy, they turned me on, but I also felt sad that it was a reflection of the hopelessness in your general attitude, rather than a fetish." the word fetish prompts him to look at her hard. she's dressed modestly this time, wearing a knee length, cotton print dress with folds, and off white, low heel shoes, but the two rows at the top of her dress, unbuttoned, and the delicate silver chain around her neck, connote sex. it doesn't matter what time of day or night he first sees her, his

initial impulse, other than the joy he feels, is sexual desire.

they enjoy the stimulation and rapport of, together, mixing in the ingredients to a large salad, consisting of shredded carrot, diced radish, red bell pepper, and Fuji apple, tiny grape tomatoes, torn green leaf lettuce and pea sprouts, mixed with a lemon-chive dressing. getting the proportions exact tunes them in, a little like constructing a collage. the protein is garbanzo beans, pressure cooked, with fresh seitan (weekly delivered from a kitchen in North Hollywood), crushed garlic and olive oil, added. they enjoy their dinner. Jerry is not a very talkative person, she's discovered, unless he's dealing with ideas, or has something on his mind he wants to talk about. if she were doing the same thing with someone else, there'd probably be a lot more horsing around. but that's part of the reason she loves him. "you don't ever eat out?" there are several reasons but one is I don't particularly like being waited on." she feels, but doesn't understand, his pain, other than everyone suffers, but thinks it's not purely existential – that the lack of fulfillment in his past has caught up with his age, and that the closer they get, the more he seems to feel it, perhaps, because the price he'd have to pay if he lost her would be greater. but she's really just getting to know him, and, as yet, he doesn't know her, what she can do, as anything more than as an object of love, and, of course, sex – he's ceased to make a separation. this is disconcerting to her, also, as she knows from hard experience, however desirable, the two are not the same.

"why don't we listen to some jazz, being it's both our backgrounds." "our backgrounds are different, though, Jerry. you

got into jazz because something in your makeup was drawn to it – that’s the best way. I was simply around it, so we may understand it in a different way.” “then you don’t want to listen to jazz?” “you were equating our backgrounds. our backgrounds regarding jazz were different.” “I’ve been fantasizing for a long time about doing an album of songs with Charlie Haden. I didn’t know about his illness until recently, however. so I suppose that’s the end of it.” “of your fantasy.” “yes. he still plays with his musician friends, one to one, I hear, whenever they come to town.” “what made you think of Haden?” “his approach is emotionally deep, non-linear. I like to go into a song so I think we’d be compatible. I was a regular at a club on Washington Blvd. when I was still going to school, where he played in Paul Bley’s group, which was kind of the house band, and then Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry also started playing there.” “what would have been in the album?” “I would have picked songs with lyrics I really felt, like Jimmy van Heusen’s, But Beautiful, Oscar Levant’s, Blame It On My Youth, and Rodgers and Hart’s, It Never Entered My Mind. mostly ballads. maybe an upbeat treatment of Irving Berlin’s, The Best Thing For You.” she nods, warmly, thinking she’d really like for that to happen, that nobody would benefit more with that kind of exposure than Jerry. he puts on an album Lee Konitz did with the Netherlands Metropole Orchestra in 1990, when he was, Jerry imagines, in his sixties, Saxophone Dreams. “do you know who Lee Konitz is?” “yes, my father used to play his records all the time – the stuff with Tristano, who was an influence on my father’s playing, and Gerry Mulligan.” it’s Jerry’s turn to nod. they listen to several cuts before he asks her what she thinks. “beautiful and sad, nostalgic.” “not the

neurotic energy of his early years but just as flawless.” “yes.” he plays more of the older stuff, music of the fifties and sixties, when he was coming up – hard-driving jazz; Coltrane from his *Traneing In* album, *Monk Live at the Five Spot* with Johnny Griffin, and Mingus’ *Ah Um*, as well as some quiet music from Bill Evans. it seems to be getting her on, sexually, which is not his intent. in fact he’s never particularly associated sex with jazz. he’s impressed she knows all of it. “did you see any of them live?” “yes, all of them. Coltrane many times. we saw him and his quartet the night of the day we got married, at the Workshop in S.F.” “I didn’t know you were married.” “it was a long time ago. my former brother-in-law was a jazz musician. he later played with Charles Lloyd, and, I heard, Miles.” “what instrument did he play?” “piano. he was part of the free jazz, loft jazz, scene in NYC. he cut a couple of albums with ESP.” “when was that?” “in the late sixties.” “does he still play jazz?” “no, he’s a civil rights lawyer, now.” “do you play an instrument?” “just by ear.” “what instrument?” “I have a keyboard. I took violin lessons as a boy. I imagine you play a musical instrument being the daughter of a musician.” “I was never inclined to,” “do you have siblings?” “I’m an only child.” he reminds her of what she said at the Blue Whale, about the sound of the saxophone making her want sex. she laughs. “only with the sax player.” undeterred, he puts on the Stan Getz 1957 version of *It Never Entered My Mind*. they dance, arms tightly around each other, then go to the bedroom and fuck. it’s very late when they’ve finished. they almost forget to move her car to avoid a street cleaning ticket in the morning. it’s been a good night for the both of them.

Jerry is busy writing and working on his photos. Anna recently was hired as a design consultant at the Pacific Design Center (the other Blue Whale, on Melrose). through her contacts there, she and Jerry are invited to the opening dinner preview of a new blue chip gallery (actually a transplant from New York) in the area. the dinner is buffet, outdoors, with, of course, valets serving drinks and parking cars. there's nothing Jerry feels he can safely eat, or drink, for that matter, but Anna finds it's easy to revert to old habits. a few of the older art stars are in attendance, and instead of the usual DJ's, several groups entertain. the gallerist has taken a shine to Anna, and spiritedly engages with her whenever possible, significantly ignoring Jerry, and it would be a total bust for Jerry except that he runs into an old artist friend, George Herms, from his Topanga Canyon years, who's glad to see him, as he is to see George, despite the fact he considers George to be a part of the reason Jerry was not included in an important museum show he should have been in, and introduces him to Anna. "what are you doing here?," Jerry asks. "looking for scrap material, like lost or damaged Rolexes for my sculpture. that would make them worth considerably more, wouldn't it, Jerry?" Anna laughs.

a quick look over her shoulder, not unnoticed by Jerry, confirms the gallerist is carefully watching them as they leave, and she knows with the certainty of experience, he'll find a way to get her number and call, sooner or later – sooner, as it turns out. "what did you think of the art," she asks. "very correct minimalist/conceptual art. too pat to be interesting." she nods, "I didn't care much for it, either. what about him?" "he seemed to me someone who's totally power

driven – as a gallerist, kind of a young Larry Gagosian, if you know who he is.” “he has a gallery on Camden in Beverly Hills.” “that’s right. did you find him attractive?” she thinks for a moment just to make sure. “not particularly,” she replies, although she’s still not sure. “you’ll probably hear from him.” “I know.” “what will you do?” not wanting to feel trapped by committing herself either way, she says, “Jerry, I can’t tell you that. I can tell you I love you, but you should know I’m open minded enough in most cases to want to know a little more.” sex is her stock and trade (literally), and he knows she’ll continue to ply it, regardless of the way things go with them.

Michael (Michael Meghan gallery) is a protégé of former Ferus gallery owner, Irving Blum. its artists include those whose works are in the permanent holdings of LACMA, and MOCA. but his forte is connections with some of the wealthiest private collectors. as a new arrival, he’s renting a moderate sized, fifties mod house in the Bel Air hills. when he calls Anna, he’s glad she answers, and he doesn’t have to leave a message, to which she might not respond. her tone is bright and friendly, and she accepts his invitation for her to visit him at “the mansion”, as he self-deprecatingly calls it, and then “take it from there,” as to what they might do, or where they might go. ‘the mansion’ is situated in a woodsy alcove, with a spectacular view in back. she parks her car, a 2008 Camry, in the driveway next to a late model, metallic grey Jaguar XF. she knows his whole procedure is something Jerry despises, as he exhibited at the opening, but nonetheless, her heart skips a beat as she rings the bell. the door opens and they stand facing one another with manufactured

smiles. cleanly shaven, with close cropped hair and a trim, athletic body, he looks even younger than he did at the opening, wearing an open at the collar dress shirt, light weight, light colored, sport coat, and chinos. she sees he's very good looking, like Jerry said, 'a young Larry Gagosian'. Anna, as always, is gorgeous. her decision was to dress up, rather than come casual, for reasons she hasn't quite defined. the dress is black, short, made of exceptionally clingy material, tiny cut crystal in her pierced ears, the delicate silver chain she wore at Jerry's the night they made dinner, around her neck, and, not too high, black heels. she drops her purse on a gull grey sofa so minimal it seems naked, as he leads her back through the glass panel doors, out to the pool, but keeps on the teal blue cardigan she had the foresight to wear. "can I take your sweater?" "no, it's fine for now. it's just a little breezy up here." "yes, refreshing, a far cry from the east coast weather this time of year." "yes, I know." as soon as she arrived, she was struck by the quiet, as she always is when she's up in the hills above the city. a totally different universe than the one below, even on an upscale residential street on the west side – but at the same time, she experiences this disembodied aspect of it, not quite the noirish quality Thom Andersen conveys, and seeks to debunk, in his film, Los Angeles Plays Itself, but a separation, an estrangement, nonetheless. is this just the manifestation of the guilt of privilege, and the corruption required to obtain it? Michael leans back in his deck chair, takes a deep breath, and breathes out. "you know, you're beautiful." he wishes he hadn't said the same thing to other women, because he feels he really means it, this time. she sits on the edge of her deck chair, legs crossed at the knees, thinking why does he think he deserves (her)

more than anyone else (does), then considers how also vain a thought it is on her part. "let's go back into the house. I'll show you some of the things I've collected." "good," she says, primly uncrossing her legs, and rises. "where was your gallery located In N.Y.?", she asks, as they reenter the house. "Chelsea, are you familiar with New York?" "I grew up there." "where?," he wants to know, his face brightening. "in the West Village. my parents were both bohemians. my father was a jazz musician. where did you grow up?" "in Queens – Jamaica. we were poor." "but now you have a house in the Hampton's, no doubt." "in Nantucket," he corrects. "I'm not as rich as you might suspect. what does your boyfriend do?" "he's a writer and an artist." "I gather he shows at some funky gallery." "he doesn't show anywhere." "does he earn money through his art?" "no, after his parents died, he and his brothers sold their family home." "how did he survive before that?" "hand to mouth like all his artist friends." "he's lucky he doesn't have to work." "the money won't last indefinitely." after looking at his collection of ancient African tribal weaponry, which is impressive, but to her, extremely phallic, kind of self-assertive, she's beginning to feel a little overheated, and seeing her discomfort, he once again offers to take her sweater. this time she accepts. he goes to a small guest closet, which is empty except for a net filled with several soccer balls on the floor, and gently places her sweater on a hanger. sweater-less, her desirability to him ratchets up a notch, if that's possible, and he takes in her image with undisguised ardor.. "we can go somewhere if you like. anywhere you'd like to go?" she contemplates riding in his Jag but then they'd just come back. he wants her. he wanted her from the first time her saw her. what other

purpose did she accept his invitation to come over for, than to play her role in a seduction, and she's not sure she doesn't want him for the same reasons he wants her. it appeals to her, she suddenly realizes, that a seduction is extremely formal, as it goes by a set of rules. formal without necessarily being predictable. "no, let's stay here," she finally, frankly, replies. he smiles. now that he's sure, his cool aura returns. "would you like a drink? I make a very good apple martini." "yes." it amuses her to think of the superficial similarities between this and the porn video she did. they sip their drinks, very slowly, feeling good. she sits back on the sofa, crosses her legs, her dress up on her thighs, waiting for him to walk over and kiss her. then, without prompting, she undoes his pants and lustfully blows him.

they don't bother to undress for the first round of sex on the sofa. it takes him a reasonably long time to come, and she has a very complete orgasm. "would you like another drink?" "yes." "the same?" "yes." "good, so would I." half naked, or half dressed, whichever you like, they once again slowly drink, relishing it's sweet flavor. they remove the rest of their clothes. that she hasn't shaved her amber pubic hair turns him on even more. kissing her, then sucking her nipples, he lowers his head and starts to go down on her. she pushes his head aside. "I'd rather just fuck," she says, feeling, all of a sudden, her own power. they fuck for a very long time, neither of them having orgasms, until he finally pulls out. fucking for a long time without coming was very satisfying for her, including her satisfaction that he's getting a little more than he bargained for. his sex organ has shrunk to 'normal', and they both lean back on the sofa and rest their sweaty

bodies. then, he looks her in the eyes, and says, "you're even more beautiful naked than you were dressed. clothes is implication, but nakedness is actuality," he says, brushing a strand of her honey colored hair away from her eyes. she believes he means the tenderness he's showing, though she thinks his aphorism a little corny, that, in fact, he tried to be poetic. but what does she mean. she's enjoying herself and is not looking forward to its end, that's all. finally he gets up, walks to a small table that holds a chalk white hexagonal lamp, opens a drawer, the kind that might have hidden a revolver in a thirties or forties Hollywood movie, and removes a packet of white powder. she gives him a look of recognition, having done it, for a time, during her late school years. "a little of this will energize us so we can keep going without feeling depleted," he says. she hesitates. "you don't have to if you don't want. that's up to you, but I'd like to do a little." he sits very close to her, lays a small line on her thigh and snorts it. then, turning her over, lays a little more in her crack, and she giggles while he licks it. totally erect, already experiencing a surge, he hands the packet to her. at first, not wanting to mess up her sinuses, she sprinkles a small amount of cocaine on the head of his penis and sucks, immediately comprehending why this is called 'giving head'. then she lays a small line on the hairs of his chest and carefully sniffs. she pulls back and looks at him, his face, all of a sudden, soft, compassionate, and handsome. they leisurely and effortlessly fuck, almost in a state of timelessness, impossible to delineate in conventional terms, rhythmically in sync, until both have orgasms (at separate times) of indeterminate duration. when he pulls out, spent, she's totally satisfied, but knows it won't last long and she determines not to start up using

cocaine again, she's witnessed a few casualties in that area. it happened, like most truly satisfying experiences, without aforethought, and couldn't have been a more fitting and pleasurable way to end it. he's wrong about depletion. she's already beginning to feel depleted. but not for long. can one just eat garden salads and pressure cooked brown rice or beans, and have the same experience. organically she and Jerry, no doubt, would be capable of having a similar experience, Jerry is actually a very good lover, if it weren't for the fact that it wouldn't be spurred by adultery, which was the signifier – or the cocaine which propelled the transformation. she's empowered by the feeling Michael will want her more than she'll want him. she doesn't need or want his riches, status, power (limited definition), while he needs it.. he'll be thinking about his afternoon with her, and will call and pursue her. but she's satisfied with what she got, and won't respond. she's thinking, who is a man who can enjoy the adulterous aspect of seduction (is there any other aspect?), sexually aroused by power over others (and she enjoyed it too!), or is it the downside of power necessitates a sexual response to compensate? whereas, Jerry is just the opposite. his demise is any breach of his inner world, which she sometimes feels shuts her out. the irony is, it's Michael who, in order to succeed, has to compare himself to others. despite her resolve, she momentarily reconsiders continuing with him, if, and when, he calls. aside from the fact that he was attractive, that she could have found an absoluteness, a sublimity in sex, with a man she didn't particularly care about, or, possibly, not respect (was it just the coke?), is curious. her sex with Jerry, while erotic, is either more filial, or more pornographic. did the 'seduction', then, have less to do with

sex than it had to do with love? part of the appeal in continuing, is in the formality, literally the structure, the form, which is the opposite of her free form, free improv, relationship with Jerry. for the first time she thinks, wonders, approaches an epiphany, as to what, or how, this relates to jazz! is this really just a manifestation of her fear of the unknown? are her adulterous urges actually triggered by a need for stability? she decides, no. even if our craves are delusional, the one thing we can do is make them clear.

she flashes on her telling Jerry she'd never intentionally hurt someone she knew could be hurt – the word, intentionally, just implied. it's certainly not been her intention to hurt him. and she knows what he'd probably say – “you've a right to spend your looks and charm anyway you see fit, Anna.”

spending the day together, Jerry and Anna are riding on a eucalyptus lined street in Santa Monica. both are in a quiet mood. it strikes her that both Jerry and Michael are quiet. but with Michael it's pent up emotion, which if it doesn't get the better of him, he uses. Jerry is just quiet. his movements are quiet. his body is quiet. Jerry keeps looking over at Anna who is sitting in the passenger seat, wearing a full, almost matronly, ice yellow dress, pink jade earrings, dark Polo Ralph Lauren sunglasses to block out the white glare, and a pensive, somber, expression. taking in her vibe, although not ascertaining it's cause, he feels unusually empathetic towards her today, as they drive, arbitrarily, north towards the mountains. she reaches across the seat separation, and lays her hand in his lap, as if to protect his genitals from misuse and abuse. he wishes he could tell her he loves her, but

because he's chosen mostly humorous quips over sentiment as a means of showing his affection, he fears it would seem out of character, as they continue on Sunset to Will Rogers State Park in the Santa Monica Mountains. they park, and while standing next to the car, wrapping her arms around his neck, they hug tightly. then they spontaneously kiss, a long, soulful, drink, before letting go of one another. inexplicably, he has a (visible) hard-on. "I'm not in the mood for sex right now, Jerry. can't just love suffice for now?" "I had no intention of having sex with you, either, Anna. it just did it on its own." they look at each other with blank expressions, before both breaking out laughing, and warmly hugging. after letting Anna off at her place, he wonders, are they too familiar with each other to keep alive the spark of their romance? fatigued without being sleepy when he goes to bed, his old, pre-Anna, inability to sleep well returns, the only remedy being to go to bed late, and get up early, which is just as well, as Anna, unable to sleep well, either, calls him first thing. instead of eating alone, then going on his morning run, they have breakfast together, and she tells him about her visit-affair with Michael Meghan. she says she doesn't mean it to be a confessional, but only to let him know – she reminds him of what she said to him about wanting him to know everything about her. he tells her he thinks what she says is reasonable, but can't help thinking (like he did the night before) what is it that's missing between them? why doesn't he want other women? why does he tend to hook up with women who are the opposite regarding that issue? psychically on the same plane, Anna says, "it would do you good if you had other relationships, Jerry." "I'm not monogamous, but I'm not psychologically geared to pursue. we

met, and it was mutual. we both had mutual needs. it was the timing. the timing was right.” she listens intently. “I think something still needs to happen between us, Anna, a catalyst, not so much to prove our worth to each other, which we have, but to validate a more sustainable intent.” she nods. “yes, I understand.”

“it was just the situation, mostly the cocaine. it was just the same old horny, erotic sex before that....” “like with us,” he interrupts. “that’s right. it transformed the way I looked at things, including Michael – he became beautiful, the light, the warmth, the ease, with no baggage – no commitment, no attachment.” it was also the house, the freshness of the hills – being above it all, the sleek Jag, the clothes, and, yes, the stability of her relationship with Jerry, which allowed her to be cool, she acknowledges, but doesn’t say. instead, she adds, “it could just as well have happened with us, but it would have had to be triggered by a need.” “I don’t think so. we’re too familiar with each other for that. we’re too much alike. there’s no mystery, formality (she starts at that word), no inviolable sense of privacy, no borders we can’t cross. the creative detachment isn’t there. besides I no longer use drugs.” “what drugs did you use?” “the psychedelics, mostly pot.” “did they trip on MDMA then?” “not to my knowledge. at least not in that form. I’ve never had a truly transcendent moment having sex. transcendence was what I experienced alone, every single night for seven years – but not in the context of having sex. I don’t think it could have been shared.” “did your wife use drugs?” “mostly, no. do you use drugs, Anna?” she thinks it a silly question for him, at this stage, to ask, but answers, “no.” a depth of genuine feeling arises in

her for him she's never quite had, for him, or anyone else. she thinks for a moment before realizing he just isn't right, esp. about the privacy, and the creative detachment. and most else of what he's said, she sees as positive. she doesn't see those as being the constraints. those are nothing a little consciousness and love can't fix. she has no reply to his remark about drugs, however. do people who regularly use drugs, and people who don't, live in parallel universes? for the first time she sees through the barriers which she knew were superficial all along. what she knows most, is that a transcendent experience, sexual or otherwise, can be had in any given situation, any context – it can happen with she and Jerry, if the egotistical, critical, mind let's go. but just as it happened with Michael (and she's not sure just what his experience was), it can't be planned.

and Jerry was right about needing a catalyst to prove their worth to each other. perhaps it's their karma, but only because it's in the mind to think that way. what she's been least tolerant of, Jerry's incessant critical sense ("you discourage people from appreciating you," she's told him), she now sees with admiration and gratitude. she thinks he's very brave in never relinquishing the burden of consciousness and its consequences. it's been enormously important in helping her to restructure from the life she was living before she met him. he's been, in fact, her hero. she's had a care-fully hidden, almost school girl infatuation for him. as for Jerry's looks. the focus has been entirely on her. they wouldn't be together if she didn't feel a strong physical attraction to him. she thinks he's good looking given his age, and she's observed, quite often, young women take notice of him when

he's with her.

"then what's authentic?" "stare hard at the bed, it's shape, the sheet, the pillow case, the comforter, the folded, small blue plaid blanket. that's authentic." "what about books?" "posts, photos unless doctored, anecdotal stories, are authentic. in Tao Lin's book, Tai Pei, with their Macbooks and iPhones as tools, the fuel that makes them run is drugs; they just hangout, copiously eat, drink smoke, snort, ingest pills, excrete, have sex, drive, ride the subway, walk, and talk – that's the plot. it portrays a young, somewhat apathetic, computer savvy, possibly counter-culture generation, swallowed up in commerce, without being about anything. I'm not recommending it. I'm not even saying it's interesting. I'm just saying it's authentic as to what some people who obsessively text, write and post on the internet, are really doing, if not who they really are. it's interesting, 2 tokes, with an occasional booster, and I was high all night, into the next day. it wasn't social. mine was a totally different experience.

"doing everything stone sober can be stressful. can one be too clear?" "too clear ,no. you do have to let go and enjoy."

at the time Michael calls her again she's just gotten home from her job at the Design Center, and wants to rest before making her dinner. he asks her if, after she's rested, he might take her out to dinner. as it would save her the work of having to make her own dinner, and also when face to face with the opportunity, she admits she wants to see him again, breaking her resolve , she spontaneously accepts the invitation, fully understanding, for the both of them, this will be a

test; for her, whether she's had enough, or not, for him, just how far she will go in responding to him. after they get off the phone, the phrase, 'take you out to dinner', grates in her ears. here we go again, but if it were Jerry at the other end, or just about anyone else she knows, it would be, more likely, 'have dinner together'. it's that man takes the woman out, buys, etc., role, the thought of which makes her feel vulnerable. she rests just enough to absorb her mild fatigue and allow the energy to flow. then carefully prepares. trying to turn him off by being blasé would not correspond to her needs, nor is she in the somewhat apprehensive and demur mood she was in when she first visited him. she also feels simplicity. she doesn't want to dress up, no matter where he's decided to 'take her'. but she does want to feel, and look, sexy. she puts on a very tight, very short, grape hued skirt, that fairly screams sex, and a plain taupe silk blouse, even just in case, sexy black lace underwear, no makeup, except for a light coat of pink on her lips. when she greets him at the door the charge between them is palpable. she likes that he's dressed almost as before, no pretense, rather than trying to impress her with the wardrobe she's sure he has, he's just dressed like he usually dresses. he pulls out a small gift wrapped package from his coat pocket and hands it to her. she takes it, smiling, and opens it. they walk around Anna's front room, and he looks at the art work and photos on the wall, including a number of Jerry's photos, finally zeroing in on one of Jerry's erotic photo collages, which he admits is exquisite. it surprises her when he asks, "do you have any place in mind where you'd like to eat?" she most certainly assumed he'd had that planned in advance. "there's a Native Agent Foods on Ocean Park Blvd," she replies, just

mentioning the first thing that comes into her head. "I'm a vegetarian, their soup de jour is always good, and I'm in the mood for something hot." "do they serve drinks?" "wine and beer." her suggestion opens up enough of a category for him to come up with a better alternative (in fact, this is how he functions as a gallerist). "why don't we go to Osteria Mozza on Melrose, instead. they have very good vegetarian dishes. I can attest to that." "isn't the attire dressy?" "don't worry about that, Anna. am I dressed up?" "I think that's a very good idea, Michael. I'd offer you a drink but I don't keep liquor," she says, making a face.. "we can drink there." as they talk, they've, somewhat involuntarily, drawn closer to one another, until they're almost touching, and Anna, impulsively, provocatively, rubs the front of her body up against his – if anything is going to happen with them, this time she wants to make the first move. at first he doesn't know how to react. in his mind she's still the reticent, demur, lovely, woman, of their previous rendezvous, although her looks and vibe has had him aroused since he first got there. then he holds her, and they deep throat, French kiss. she goes to her bedroom, takes a lightweight cool grey coat from the closet and her purse from the dresser. on the street his silver Jaguar XJ is nowhere in sight. instead, a shiny black, BMW compact is parked directly in front – of course he'd have more than one car. he electronically unlocks the doors, and they both get in. she likes it that he doesn't hold open the door for her. she's glad, on a week night, they're heading north, towards Hollywood, rather than south, towards the Santa Monica airport. she smiles to herself, thinking he may not have been happy squeezed together on bench like tables, with long haired, pierced and tattooed, 'environmentalists'.

Michael flicks the radio on to an FM music station. her view is it's a bit tacky to play music while driving in a car for the sole purpose of creating an atmosphere, especially if one doesn't know the musical tastes of the passenger. she also doesn't believe anything spontaneous can be orchestrated, and music, to her, has to be really listened to. she's becoming aware that there's a reverse snobbery in her attitude towards Michael that's coming out all over the place. but her parents scraped through, being true to their art and vision, and paid the price for it. she respects that Michael is very unpretentious, even self-effacing, towards his wealth, and what it can buy, but the old moonlight drive, even the Doors version, she can do without. he sees her enigmatic smile, and asks her what she's thinking about. she turns her face to his, upgrading her smile 100 watts, and says, "I'm thinking about all the pixies and elves in Ireland." Michael, who is Irish, smiles, unsure what she means by that. the valet takes the keys to the car and as they enter the restaurant, he asks Anna if she knows who Nancy Silverton is. "yes she's a chef and co-founder of the Mozza restaurants. I've read about her. do you know her?" "we, a girlfriend and I, when we were in town, used to frequently eat at Campanile on LaBrea." "she's still your girlfriend?" Anna asks, knowing she's not. "no."

Michael was right about where to go. the other Blue Whale, where she works, is also on Melrose, so it makes her day feel more complete. they sit at a small, private table, the ambience is almost intimate, the wine (expensive) is very good. as she's not, generally, a big eater, the Burricota, with braised artichokes, pine nuts, and mint pesto, is just right. she doesn't know why, but when he pays the bill and leaves the

tip for the waiter, she has a sharp pang of sympathy, almost pity, for him.

gradually, she's begun to see he's not the person of his image – that he's a decent, if conservative, she thinks caring, person. she's probably just projecting, and imposing, her own set of more bohemian values onto him. it's ironic, because to most people, her looks and the way she dresses, would possibly cause them to believe her world was rather upscale.

they decide to take a walk, as people often do after dinner. at Michael's suggestion, they park just west of Beverly Drive, and walk by the high end, larger, clothing stores on Wilshire Blvd. they stop and gaze at the jewelry in the Tiffany window, their eyes simultaneously fixing on the same stunning diamond jeweled necklace, then, spontaneously turn their heads towards each other. he looks into her eyes and says, "I'd like to buy you that." buy, buy, buy, give, give, give. he doesn't need to do that for me to love him, she thinks, as they walk back to the BMW. his arm around her shoulder, he says, "why don't we go back to my place, Anna?" "why don't we just go back to mine?," she replies. "we were at your place, last time." meaning, frankly, they did it at his place, last time, this time they can do it at hers, which she can see by his smile, but also by a less perceptible hurt, that's just the way he's taking it. driving back to Santa Monica on Olympic, past Century City, where Jerry's brother and sister-in-law have a condo, in the light industry section around Barrington, the night air through her open window, spaced out and inattentive to human suffering, refreshes, and comforts her. she puts a hand on Michael's cheek and tenderly caresses it.

he gratefully smiles, and she moves as close to the driver's seat separation as she possibly can. in the old days, Jerry remembers, before the seat dividers, the driver could put his arm around his date, her head nestled against his shoulder, and still keep both hands on the wheel. if it was a stick shift, he'd put down his foot on the clutch pedal, as she shifted gears.

at her place, she thinks, he won't have his coke, or whatever else he uses. and she expects he's not a tripper. there won't be any alcohol, either. she opens the door to a lighted front room. it's as if it had been waiting for their return. when she goes out, unless she's feeling particularly paranoid, she generally leaves it dark. she takes his coat, folds it, and lays it on the arm of a chair. they both remove their shoes, and he his socks. they stand together, as they stood before, when she rubbed the front of her body up against him, in the center of the room. he feels her up through her silk blouse, his hand caressing the warm skin up under her short skirt. "undress me slowly, but first turn out the light." *when the music's over turn out the light, turn out the light.* they pet and make out. he unbuttons her blouse and she slips out of it. she unbuttons his shirt, and he removes it, flinging it onto the chair. as he undoes her skirt she kisses the hairs on his chest. he squeezes her breasts, and fingers her under her lace underwear. she undoes his pants, and he pulls his pants and shorts off and tosses them onto the same chair his shirt and coat are laid on. she pulls off her panties and unfastens her bra, dropping them to the floor. he lifts her in his arms and they hungrily kiss as he eases her onto his erection. her hand caressing the back of his head and neck, they fuck, slowly,

grounding themselves. he carries her to the sofa, and still inside her, lays her down and settles on her. they fuck, unlike in the porn videos, his cock staying inside, but both of them, extremely active, sensuously moving their pelvis' and but-tocks. they don't talk while resting, becoming very quiet when she lets him eat her. time passes and they both have only two, very intense, at least for her, orgasms. just before he has his second orgasm, he asks her if he could pull out. she takes it, pulsating, into her mouth and swallows his cum. and that's the end of it. they go to the bathroom. she cleans him, and washes her face and mouth. from the hall they can see through the open door into her bedroom, her bed, neatly made, looking very chaste. it was clear from the beginning to her, he wasn't going to, nor did she want him to, spend the night with her. sex isn't power, it isn't love, it's just sex. they dress. she offers him juice. he drinks some bottled water. she walks him to the door. they look into each other's eyes and affectionately kiss. she decides not to walk with him down to his car. they both have to work in the morning. she knows he won't call her again. she knows the role she played in deliberately setting it up that way. but the aftermath, it's a fact she can't deny, of the pleasure of sex, if it's genuine and good, is love.

