

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### TRANSCENDANCIN

"He was beautiful, an Adonis, thick black curls falling down to his shoulders. He was a protégé, a fantastic violin player. His hands were a wonder. His eyes were sultry, lidded, painfully soulful and dark with the sweet understanding that infused his art. He looked a god. He said he had a crush on me.

"He spotted me in Safeway. He came over to me, towered over me, asked me if I could spare a minute. We talked, exchanged information, jobs, hobbies, interests, the weather and respective phone numbers.

"He called me late that night and, though I was already in bed, we talked for several hours. He told me all about his childhood. He asked me if I was in bed, I was. He wanted to know what I was wearing. I described the long sleeved, high necked, flannel nightgown with pictures of Christmas trees, holly and mistletoe, that my mother had bought for me the previous Christmas. I began a story about my mother. He interrupted me. He had spoken at length about his parents. I had assumed that we were trading confidences. I must have been mistaken.

"He asked me what I was wearing underneath the mistletoe covered nightgown. How would I like kisses under each mistletoe? This disconcerted me. I had assumed that, being a protégé at an excellent music school meant he was a young man of developed sensitivities. I figured I must be tired, jumping to conclusions, I begged off the phone. He asked me to come to hear him play in a small concert two nights hence. I was relieved of my fear of dishonest intentions.

"The morrow and the morrow after came and went without remarkable incidents. In the evening of the second day I went to hear him play. He was glorious, every note sweet as sugar cane. The audience fell for him. He stood out in the quartet because of his height, his eyes, the tones rising from the strings. I was in love in an instant. He was very attentive at cocktails afterward. The purpose for the concert was fundraising for the school. I thought I had found a man I could spend the rest of my life with. In a haze of devotion, I passed from party, to subway, to his small apartment, warm with steam heat and the hope of transcendent physical union.

"One room apartments have a special charm for me. They seashell the individual. You can take the occupant in at a glance. One swift look around completely reveals the crib. Some people like their nests, their cradles, cozy, stuffed full of nurturance. This apartment was stuffed full of emptiness. It had the elegance of a modernist office, a movie set, the staged office of a man of consequence. Nothing personal. My first thought was not so much a thought but a wave of awe. That was how I was meant to feel, the decor was a calculation, Nebuchadnezzar's gates. I would have had the cowering Assyrian peasant role,

but, before I could get to the center of things, peeking over his shoulder from the entry nook, he took my coat off, dropped it on the floor, ran his long hands down the length of my spine, trilling my skeletal tendons. It was a Nichols' movie seduction. I was mesmerized.

"We kissed deep, tongue full, lingering, kisses while his hands smoothly explored territories I had previously presumed were more or less extraneous to sensual excitement. Not so. I discovered that I have nerve endings everywhere. I was played, I felt sweet, tremulous, music in me. It was a scene from a romance novel. He was fantastically manipulative. He knew what he wanted. I felt him being generous. He could see inside me. He knew me. With deep insight and true appreciation, he was bringing forth my spirit to inhabit my flesh. I was alive, and sensible of it. I could hear the sea roaring inside my shell. I let it carry me. He held my firm breasts in his hands, cupping one and then the other. The heat, from the palm of his large, long fingered hand, permeating my shirt, shot through my glands straight, into my blood and sinews.

"I would have had sex with him right then, right there in the entry nook. I wanted to feel this energy inside me. I wanted him to love me. I was prepared to give him my soul, sign on the dotted line. All my grace and understanding were at his disposal.

"He asked me if I wanted something to drink. I was too embarrassed to admit that I would rather lie down on the floor and be ravished, fed, copulating. We retired, demurely, walked three or four giant steps over, to the high stools, I sat perched like a dunce without the hat. My legs aching with desire. He opened a cabinet, then a drawer, producing two glasses and a bottle of chilled white wine. We drank. He told me the who's who of the concert, his disdain for his co-players, his pleasure with the audience's pleasure in him.

"He excused himself, went to the bathroom, a few steps this time to my right and, leaving the door open a large crack, continued his monologue, his urine streaming background chords. The white wine had its effect.

"He re-entered the room. He reached out his right hand and led me, another few steps to the left slightly and behind, to the couch, bed. He lightly stroked my hair, slid his magic hands down over my chest lightly, then lightly over my clitoris, through my pants, then back to my hair, all the while gazing, gazing deeply.

"He wasn't saying much, he was making sighing noises, moaning sounds, light ones, as if my presence was causing him perfect sexual agony. I was floored. I did not see him unzip his pants. I did not see him free his penis. He said, gently, sweetly, "Please." He let his gaze fall slightly. There it was. Erect. Pink. Swollen. The tip damp with anticipation. Risen out from a desert of grey flannel. His long fingers crowning its base. A compelling silence drew my skull down, my mouth

down. His hands lay gently on my head. That didn't last. Everything speeded up. Everything widened. The properties of speed alter as we move toward infinity.

"I was caught. I harbored a hope that this might be a man of delicate perceptions, a man who knew something about my soul, I did not bite him, kick him or scratch his eyes out. I did not scream, "How could you ruin it?" I gave the guy a pretty decent blow job. But I was pissed off.

"I thought about his hands on the violin, the arm that moved the bow back and forth with passion and abandon, then with utter control. *I dedicate this to music.* I let his cum dribble down his dick and pool on his balls. He didn't mind. He didn't notice. He had loosed my head and was laying down. His eyes were closed. He was smiling.

"There was no room for me on the couch. He had gradually moved me off the playing area. I was on the floor, which of course was parquet, bare, empty like the rest of the apartment.

"I sat, looked around. There wasn't much to see. He wasn't asleep. He was humming. Something classical. I waited. He hummed sweetly. Gradually the realization set in that I was cold and bored and he was busy. I stood, kissed him lightly on his third eye, he sloe-ly opened his heavily-lidded eyes and sent me an affectionate, content, gaze. My heart momentarily thrilled. He closed his eyes again, humming. I had a fleeting recognition of the passion required for hitting husbands over the head with cast iron frying pans. I was sure he did not possess weighty kitchen items. I wasn't married to him. I gracefully, quietly, deferentially, a geisha couldn't have done it better, split.

"I went home, I brushed my teeth. I played rock music so loud that the neighbors complained. I didn't turn it down. I took off all my clothes and danced naked through my cluttered warm living room. I drank Perrier from the bottle. The policeman came. He was polite, nice. I put on a robe and turned down the music so I could hear him tell me to turn down the music. He could tell I wasn't drunk or worse, just some woman being emotional. Maybe it was my time of the month, women werewolves once a month turn bestial. He could tell I was upset. I could tell he was married (the ring) and not getting it enough (the pot belly and the slurpy eyes). We had a moment of mutual recognition which, as I closed the door, I acknowledged to myself, was probably more profound than the perfidious illusion of intimacy I had shared with the self-revolving protégé. He had used me. I would run into him in the grocery store, I would be polite, pretend that I don't mind playing the role of designer wastebasket for string player cum.

"He called the next morning. Sweetness and light he was. He didn't say very personal things because he had classes all day or appointments or something.

Would I allow him to escort me, take me, treat me, to the symphony that night? "Sure." I was not enthralled. I was feeling vengeful. He was serious about me. Men don't spend serious money on women they don't take seriously. My blow jobs must be better than I thought, or else my geisha retreat had hit the gong of elegant subservience. He wanted more. I would be reimbursed. This was the business of love. He was exploring our partnership possibilities. *I bet I could turn this into a marriage if I played it right.* I'm enough of a Catholic to believe that love conquers all, that the angels are in heaven watching over us, that they suffer and rejoice with us. I knew that, regardless of what the nuns believed, angels will put up with a little lie, now and then, but they leave hypocrites to their just desserts. I would not manipulate a marriage with a manipulator because, I don't go to church that much anymore, but you know, that saying, once a Catholic always a Catholic, when there are incongruities that have to be reconciled, I look to the soul of my birth religions, ancestors and angels merge into a chorus of wisdom which guides me through some of these more complicated moral dilemmas.

"It helps to remember that angels and ancestors are not confused by sex. They are not strangers to sexual activity. They've been around a long, long time. They have seen it all, and they have a lot of tolerance for sexually derived confusion. People get confused because they equate angels and ancestors with their priests and medicine men but heaven gives you a broad perspective. The ancestors had sex. And angels, well, what do you think happens to cupids when they grow up?

"When in doubt, angels will tell you to side with idealized romantic passion, the fires that purify souls, and ancestors will go for the stable, attainable, sustainable, child protective relationship. Sometimes you get conflicting advice from the disembodied.

"This guy had nothing going for him from three points of view. He was fair game."