

1952

In the summer of 1952 I was painting all day at the Art Student's League in New York. I was reading a 17 volume set of Balzac's Splendours and Miseries Of Parisian Life all night. I believed I disliked painting because there were no paintings in words. I did not realize that I was rigorously struggling to pretend I liked to paint because people gave me enormous approval for doing something I didn't enjoy. My entire sensual life consisted of endlessly washing brushes and see

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ing a very pretty girl with curly black hair darting back and forth side ways to me out of the corner of my eye at odd intervals while I painted. She talked to everyone but me. This was a time of deep love quest, a golden era of young men in frenzy demanding competition for parasitic sites of dubious empathy and potent

ially dull hideous issue. I was easily spotted as, He Who Was Never Going To Support A Wife And Children. I had cheerfully accepted being considered by all women to be a moneyless, dull, friendship, warmth, seduction blind alley, dupe bottom of the bag, marriage cul-de-sac, enslavement useless, dead end. In a great wet steamy New York August heat wave

*skin wet*  
*the pretty girl*  
 me out of the corner  
 me and asked me if I'd like  
 snowy off shoulder blouse  
 skirt and 4th Street leather thong  
 Her shoulders were little pushy breasts.  
 "Let's go for a walk around the Village,"  
 "I'd love to," I said. I was delighted. She was  
 a bus to the Village. "I'm going up to Boston  
 night dark eyes dripped fire. She dripped honey  
 bent razor thin, high elegant aquiline Jewish nose  
 alone in Manhattan. Walking around the Village with  
 nose, and shining night dark hair was beyond my myths. It was an astonishing never dreamt of come true.  
 Of course the great sucker fish of love rushed up out of the sea onto the shore of my being and devoured me.  
 It was one of those just things. We walked and talked and laughed all night from Greenwich Village to the UN  
 on the East River and back down again to the Village up to her room in a Village brownstone and into bed. She  
 was soft as a sun. I was hard as a rock. She stretched out on an ocean of white bathrobe. We no sooner got started  
 at the slippery sloth with four wings, her white robe thrashing, dark feathers beating endless shadow, when a warty  
 voice groaned from the door. "Oooh. Honey. Ooog. You know it's wrong to. Arrgh. Do that. Missssss. Ooooook,"  
 her goat legged landlord orgasmed as he drooled through a crack in the door frame. Her night dark eyes dripped  
 venom. She pushed me off and leaped to the door, opened it, and slugged her landlord screaming, "Cretin! You  
 callow pervert. You should be blinded. Go away you loathsome dwarf!" She slammed the door. I will love her  
 forever if for nothing else than the lovely Artemis class she flung in the face of the hideous. And well I might  
 have yelled out, "I believe in the goddess Artemis of the sweet thousand grape breasts." Running back  
 to bed, her night dark eyes smiled on my erection. "Let's go up to your place," she whispered. She swept  
 all her clothes out of her closet. Rushing down the stairs, each with a mountain of her clothes in our  
 arms, we jumped in a cab, went up to my rooms on 113th and Broadway and fell into love  
 like sex starved 1950's high school hockey players graceful as wet cardboard swans  
 flopping in sweat on heat wave ice for hours and hours. "I think I better call  
 my beau in Boston." she whispered in my ear late the next night.  
 Let him go fuck himself," I shoved. "You are so  
 méchant," she whispered as  
 she disappeared into  
 the dark on her  
 way to the  
 teleph  
 one.

“O!  
He’s  
actually  
cried. He’s  
a splendid beau.  
He’s coming down  
for me tomorrow. I can’t  
break his heart,” she sighed.  
*When you are near to tears  
you are near the truth.* I realized  
“What about my heart?” I asked.  
“You’re Gatsby. He’s Tom,” she whispered.  
*Thank God I’ve read Balzac,* I thought. She  
whispered. “He’s the kind of boy who tries with all  
his might to be what he thinks everyone else thinks he’s  
supposed to be. Yes, he has the imagination of a flea but he  
possesses the heart of a rock. He’s pure as the driven snow. He  
really loves me.” She put on a thick Gypsy act Ipsy Pipsy dress and  
heels. Her fiancé arrived. He had driven all night. He wore a fake wasp  
Boston tennis costume. She sat us down on the bed and told us to discuss who  
was better for her. She looked back and forth at us like a tennis referee. “I will take  
care of her forever,” he whined, like a dog glued to a food provider. I was engulfed in pity  
for his incredible suckerdome for a woman who screwed behind his back. “I’m not arguing about  
owning someone. I don’t want to own anyone. I’m out,” I said as I walked out. “*She didn’t  
try to stop me,*” I thought. I was and am a tough New Jersey Jew but I did not know how tough I  
was. Four months later that winter she broke into my rooms at 7 AM, in a Technicolor Gypsy costume  
including scarlet satin peasant blouse, gold earrings, shiny black nylons, and leather thong sandals.  
She jumped on me and whispered, “I’ve left him! I’m going to live with you!” She tried smothering  
me with kisses exactly like my mother did when she would swoop down on me before I  
was three and I had yet to master the duck and run. I had been up till 5 AM reading, *What  
Love Does To Old Men*. I thought all of this was in a dream of my mother grabbing me to  
engulf me. In those days my dreams were essentially smarter than my intellect. In a  
deep sleep, I threw her off my bed and grumbled sternly, “Why don’t you go home  
and have some kids with your fool.” She walked out. Was I tough? I was tough  
enough. Sure I had it rough. But I had the right stuff. So? So I lost a little  
goddess. So? So What? Was I tough? I was so tough I cried like a  
nightingale for a rose to open for six months but I knew  
from beyond the stars before I was born that:  
*no one ever plucked a rose without  
sensing the stab of a thorn.*  
<sup>102</sup> Hajfic enough is enough!