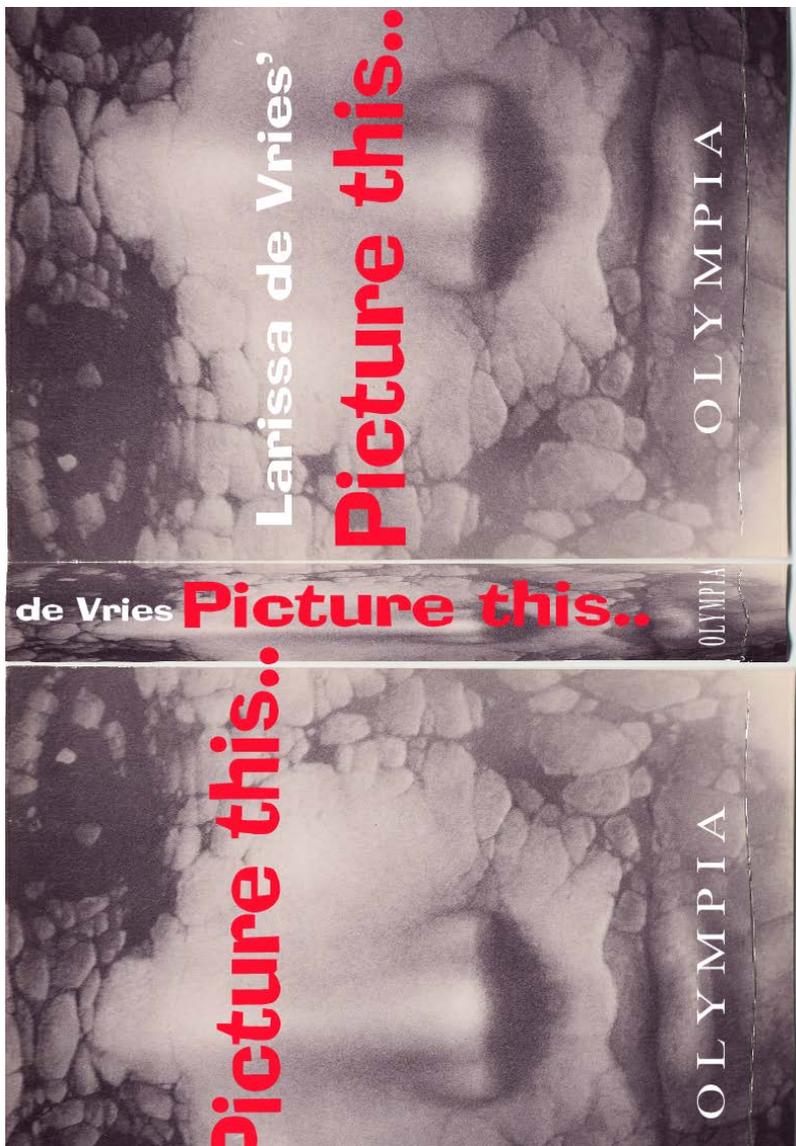


Picture this ...



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***Picture
this...***

Larissa de Vries

OLYMPIA PRESS

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Chapter 2

City Bluff

It's already history that's happen-

ing, except that I don't know it. Now, in another time ten thousand miles away and I'm working in a city office in the centre of London.

They've finished the 'Shard' off and the city is shedding stone for steel and glass and

turning into something elegant, powerful and ruthless, burning people as fuel.

Today I'm a secretary, yes I'm fuel too, watching all this happening around me as I walk to work, a secretary. *Secret* - is a good name for it though, for that was what you could imagine I was at the time if you'd known me, up until that moment a pusher of paper, a *secretary* keeping her company's *secrets* and her nose clean. But deep down under the skin I was beginning the process of change which I expect that we all do at some time - if we're real - the pupa into a chrysalis... etcetera, etcetera... Just like the city itself where no-one sees that the conservatively styled skirt, the high-cut business jacket and the Fuck-Me shoes is just the mask of this woman in the *other* life she lives, one she can cut-off just like that when she undresses before a job, gets into her car or a taxi naked under her coat or dress, so that she can arrive at the shoot with virgin, unmarked skin - just so that that she can be defiled again. Is that me, that woman? I like all that. That separation, that control, is now part of me. *Secret*. Just that - *Secret* is what; women live on *secrets*,

real secrets don't exist for them because their bodies are part of public property.

Why? Because I've, *she's*, become a loner, that's our bluff. In the final analysis every woman is alone, there's no-one she can share her thoughts and experiences with is why: because she lives this dangerous other life, this other way; this dangerous person is the other her, someone whom nobody knows the name of, someone who takes risks and gets what she would call *orgasmic satisfaction* out of it. Because the others have never done it, been out on the ice cold concrete jetty of *The Edge*. It's an addiction to her. She's a junkie for it. Why?

Well, the secret is me, the other one – let's face it, the one who lives that separate way. The only time those office bods ever will ever get to see all of me, to experience me, begin to understand me, is at that sort of time, a time when they won't recognize either me or what I am because the time's theirs only at a furtive moment in a secluded room on a wet afternoon when their wife's away; the other me on a screen, wearing a wig, doing things in ways they'd rather everyone else would never find

out that they knew about. They live their secret lives that way - because life any other way would overwhelm them and become unliveable; they're so used to the tedium of living in a library of untalented, greedy people, of doing what you have to do each day to get through, of eating tasteless food and wishing you were where the television takes you - before the adverts cut-in and ruin the fantasy once again, that they think that this is normal.

Those moments of forgetfulness are the only things those bods will ever remember to keep them a just a fraction less insane. Those moments of me being fucked by their alter egos, taking it in every hole to make their controlled claustrophobic world a little lighter for a moment between commercial breaks, a little less brain-destroying. What more can I say? Anyway it's even more exciting for me to imagine those thousands of eyes exploring my pinkness, my vagina, than here in the office sitting on it and ...

Yeah, that's me sitting quiet, demure and cool, all clean knickers and nicely pressed and suited behind the screen in the boss's outer

office, clicking away. Remember me, next time you're here. Yes, that's me there.

Anyway, that's a joke isn't it - and not only in *this business*: why would they have an interest in looking at your face when they can get to know you much better just about everywhere else - in just a glance! And oh, they don't know that I like it too; which is why I got to do so much work like that: I couldn't get enough of it, I was, and sometimes still am, insatiable - and they couldn't get enough of me as I was poured into the camera.

Picture this, then. Thursday teatime, there, at this week's office. I'm sitting licking my fingers after a coffee and a dough-nut, thinking, with my crotch and my arse hot and just a little seamed, or maybe *reamed*, as if I hadn't been fucked all-ways of course, oh, and had fucked too, over the last weekend to satisfy the average housewife for a year, no, a lifetime. I was thinking about the goodies to come.

Then the winter afternoon surrounding this grimy bullet-proof green gherkin, loaded with thoughtless slaves that I'm staring out of,

is suddenly shot-through with golden sunlit colour, glassy, crystal clear, and brilliant, oddly still for a stop-frame moment and as peaceful and loaded as the opening sequence of a horror movie. That's how I see it. Its Thursday you see, and the fun begins tomorrow after work - when *I* start working and have *real fun*.

This is how it usually goes. Monday Katie phones me on my mobile when I'm busy typing. Lucky no-one's in the room.

"Like to do some work?"

"Of course - posing?"

A long pondering silence on the line, requiring me to ask more. An unaccountable *Ping!* On the line, as well. My stomach takes on a tense *twang!* It's all sound. Then:

"Fucking!.." She says.

"Fucking what?" I look around, making sure everyone's either busy or else out of ear-shot; you see people doing it all the time.

"I've got some - one - or two - nice, you'll like them."

"Yeah, two - or more even!"

“Maybe another woman” Snigger.
“Maybe me... you dig? Friday after work suit you?”

“Friday, looks like that’s a kinda date!”

“Maybe... we could carried away if you like...extreme too, anyway-”

“Nice! You arranging?” We’ve fallen in-
to the slang of the fixer.

“I’ll be there.”

“We, you and me, could do a turn.”

“You’d like that?”

“With you? Makes my pants all *hot*
thinking about it!”

We both trill noisy loud silly laughter,
thinking about getting fucked solid, screwing
until we’re in somewhere else in our minds. It
makes you moist thinking about it. Wet, wet,
wet. Well, it could turn out a new experience,
couldn’t it? And that’s what I’m into, new ex-
periences.

University was already history, a long
away-day away, with Miss Apple performing
on a tennis court, for pennies, or Sybilla strip-
ping and fucking for a few hand-picked dicks.
That was in another life, on another continent

at another time, a long holiday away. It's another of those women's secrets I was telling you about. Well, that was my take on it.

The point is, Katie knows I'm half serious, and winding her up, too. She'll probably be the other camera-person, but I know her well enough to know that she'll join in when she gets turned on. I've noticed that she always watches me in action. Who knows what pleasure the weekend will bring!

I'm nervous though, because I fancy doing something wild with her, just for the buzz. It's a bit like a first date, except you know you'll score... you never know, do you, with girls? I like girls when they're horny, they satisfy you and don't drop off to sleep, no, but then they want a second helping when the cameras are off. Part of the buzz, squeaking and breathing a slow final orgasm, holding you tight as if you're a man, in a shady room, when the show is over.

"Sure."

"I know you're at the gherkin all day - so I'll schedule it for seven o'clock - Okay?"

"What is it?"

“Told you. You and another girl and a man, like I said, maybe two - something’ll happen - but you told me last time that you’d like that, anyway.”

“Course!”

“Okay?”

“Okay!”

“The usual money, Okay?”

Actually I don’t care, I do it for the kicks and I’m sure she knows that because like I said before, I reckon she gets lubricated while the camera’s running on auto - but I keep-up the pretence, anyway. I mean I’ll blow the wad on a pretty dress or some Manolo Blahnik’s *shoes* in about ten minutes.

“Alright.”

Katie gives me the address: she tells me it’s a borrowed semi-detached house in an up-market fringe, a fashionable part of Epping, where all the retired blaggers live.

“Oh, you need to shave as usual, and bring your spare things and your favourite toys.”

“Well of course – what do you think?”

As this finishes I smile and laugh as if it's something to do with the office, because a bod has entered the room. "Right, I'll get that done," I lie. She's chuckling as she puts the phone down. I click off.

Thursday evening then. I get home, eat something, then strip naked, and minutely shave my body, crotch, arse, legs, tits and all the rest while I'm in the bath. It takes about forty minutes to shave it, cream it, and another twenty for the skin to get back to normal. Then I wax, especially between my legs, until the skin is smooth. Then I walk around naked and try to invent new poses for a very old reason.

There was a time when I was at college when I used to model nude, and that made me secretly very, very wet. Gave me the idea. Wet, wet, wet, they say: maybe I'll do that some time again soon. For fun. That was in the world I lived in once-upon-a-time. Tomorrow's going to be even more fun though.

I slip a tube of K-Y into my case for tomorrow, together with some life size rubber

dollies, a handful of my tiny undersized silk-look G-strings in different colours and textures and a choice of fabrics (I like to have a choice at hand), some high shoes and a couple of whatever articles turn me on, at the time. Oh, and a couple of wigs, one dark, one blonde in case we do more than one shoot.

Then, upon reflection, some alternative bra's, including a cut away and a couple of platforms as well as the usual Wonderbra, and whatever else I think are required, like makeup and skin cream and baby oil. When I'm doing modelling like this could turn out to be, they usually have something unexpected in leather or rubber or metal to wear which they think will suit whatever passes as the plot.

Anyway. Then I put the lot together in a rather stylish sort of bag. The dildos bulk out of the fashionable shape like I'm carrying a mobile hard-on. Which, in a way I am.

I push them back; good thing they're rubber those items, or they'd break or something. They'd cause a riot on the tube. Amazing how small, size-wise, this collection of things is;

it looks like a dirty-weekend bag. Good. Could say that.

Friday morning. I'm rested having got to bed early - need the energy for tonight. Get on the underground rather earlier than usual with my bag of tricks over one shoulder as the wind whistles over my newly depilated legs and arms. It's like running ice down your limbs when you're hot. Anyway, I'm tingling with nerves and expectation when I leave the flat because I know that when I get back I'll be naked and sore and stretched and breathless in my mind.

I arrive at the office ten minutes early and a couple of the office bods give me admiring glances: actually they are looking at my crotch and my arse and my tits. Funny how the subconscious shows and how I see it, too. Unconsciously their eyes must detect how much more naked I am than the other women in the office. Right down to the skin and especially where I crease. Maybe it's the way I move unconsciously. Anyway, I push my stylish stash under my work desk where it's unseen and safe, because I can locate it quickly with the toes of

my FM's and no-one can run away with my bag of secrets...

I feel hot, maybe it's the heating: then I'm sweating all day, but no-body notices. Maybe they're being polite. The hair on my body and around my sex is just telling me it would like to start back growing but hasn't yet got going. Maybe the sweat running down my belly into my crotch will act like rain and water it.

I'm clammy, sitting on a wet patch *before* I'm turned on. The lining of my skirt catches the shaven hair minutely as if to tell me it's almost *time*. This means that I feel very naked under my office uniform, my lips moist and a bit sticky, both those I'm sitting on and those which you can see as you enter the office. I paint those ones Kissprufe red every time I go to the toilet, which is often, today; because I'm pre-shoot stressed and they are quite swollen.

Half an hour before going-home-time I beat the rush and nip out of the office and into the empty toilets again and change my sensible pants for a tiny undersized leather-look G-string, which grips the swollen lips tight and

reminds me what it's all going to be about every time I think of sitting or bending. That's nice! Anyway, this only serves to excite me still further. I leave my reject pants balanced on the edge of the open window. Someone will find them in the street later when they've blown down and wonder where they came from.

As I said, my tool bag is nicely stashed under the table, unnoticed, while everyone else is thinking about what they'll do at the weekend, so they hardly notice me getting breathless around the panty-line when I ease into the office chair rather stiffly. I reach under my belt with my fingers and just ease the fabric so that it doesn't split me clean down the crack, and at that moment the office flirt flies in through the other outer door and tries to chat me up; maybe he's got no-one to fuck this weekend. Probably.

I have to make an evasive move with my hands in all the wrong places and don't have time to wipe my fingers (*too bad, I think, this weekend I just could end up with a queue of men and women fucking me, if my guess turns out right*) so that my painted nails and sticky

digits, so casual and long and elegantly shaped to his eyes, are actually spilling tiny grey smears of gluey cunt-juice onto the wp keys and spraying it into the air every time I gesture.

I leave the office at the usual time, but instead of getting the train to my usual destination, I'm getting one going in almost the opposite direction. I circle round a bit to make sure no-one from the office has clocked me or anything and starts at me: *"But I thought you lived in West London!"*

I'm nervous too, because I reckon that this will be the first time I've modelled like this, it's by way of an experiment, I just have that feeling, and I'm getting little rivulets of panic from my belly, I'm wet, but not with excitement, this time, almost like with fear. This work's like that, the tension, I mean. Like waiting to come but never knowing just how. Not knowing. You never know who'll be doing what to you next. That's exciting and frightening, but the main kick is being pictured doing it, so's you can play it back later. That and a million oriental eyes up my vagina every day for years to come...

After forty minutes or so packed-in like a sardine with the other punters, I'm standing at the station cab rank calling Katie to tell her I'm there and the wind is cold. I fumble for the address and find it. And now I'm catching a cab to where the fun will start.

Picture this... its half-past six on Friday evening... I should be sitting in front of the TV or getting chatted-up in that bar in the Sky in The City...

The taxi leaves the road behind and turns on towards this end of the greenery just before dusk, as the wind sends bright shimmers of cold across the empty building site next to the semi. Actually the lights are on inside, though the opaque shutters make it impossible to see what's going down there. Katie said she'd hired the place. Probably from the builders, for the weekend. The taxi driver starts to come on to me and chat but I cut him short. "It's my boyfriend's place."

He drives off after I give him a note for more than the fare, meaning he's well tipped, and turn away to get him out of my hair.

I take two steps on the path and then Katie's at the door, bright light streaming out into the damp dark, isolated street. The interior of the house is empty except for the floodlights which are half on, some props and a couple of video cameras and some gear. The props are the usual bed, a table, a desk and a couple of nondescript chairs. Upstairs there's a shower, she tells me. Katie makes me feel as if I have some involvement in this. Maybe I will.

"We'll use that" she says.

I'm showering and shaving again and then this guy comes in. The usual type, you know, muscular, strong, shaved too, and thick as a plank. That would account for the numblebum expression on his tosh... He's well-armed, which makes him useful. This must be one of my beaus. He struts around playing with his toy the way they do. He gets it hard, with a grunt and jigs around a bit more.

"Do you want me to shake hands with it?"

"Not big enough for you then?"

"We'll see your speed, baby!"

"Tough one eh?"

The water drips off the curve of my breast and he makes as if to lick it up. I jig away; I need to get hot before I let a lout like this near any of my treasures for no good reason: in the end you only get to spend it once, after all, and I know time in this business is more precious and short than any time which you could call *my time*.

I'm being nasty.

"You'll see later, darling"

Katie's calling up the stairs.

"You ready?"

"I'm ready!" he says and the captain looks at his hook with a grin. "Got the gunk handy? - she looks kind of tight arsed!"

So Katie picks up the toy camera and we do the usual storybook stuff, only his acting ability is pretty near nil, not that he needs it with nine inches as thick as he's got. I'm fantasizing about how it would be to find someone as loaded as he with a genuine brain in his skull, as he trips off my skirt and throws me headlong onto the carpet. He pushes my legs

open and forces me into a sort of crabbed kneeling position, and as he pushes into my lips Katie tells us she's stopped shooting.

"Fire's gone out." Sure enough the damn room fire has gone out.

No pretty background, no pretty pictures – no fucking!

The hunk is perturbed, with his only brain cell working flat out on the problem.

Katie is on hands and knees trying to light the gas under the pretend coals, which is what this form of art is all about, and showing us her beautiful arse, naked as her dress rolls forward.

I reckon she's about ready to join in the action. Well, I shall see, later. It takes her a few minutes, and I've got a cold patch where my wet patch used to be. At last, the hunk gets between my legs and pushes his rod in: the exchange between tension and pain and pleasure brings me near to coming, and he's thrusting away like a fireman stoking a steam-engine. I admire the way he's working, and I admire his brainless, bunched, body as he fills in all my little foibles.

Bang! Bang! Bang! I don't even know it but after just a few minutes I'm coming, bigger and bigger: this way I'm starting a long upslope to some kind of secret heaven, known only to me and about a million excited watchers, though they're tomorrow's meat.

I know I'm moaning but I'm almost blacked out by the mix of pleasure, lust, pain and downright exhibition that I'm in. And then he comes, all over and into my mouth. I'm deflated by the suspense, wanting another mountain to crest.

He leaves the room and I'm lying there with my legs open, savouring the end of the beginning of all these orgasms. Katie is looking at me, the camera still turning. Then she's suddenly with her head between my legs, her fingers pursing my clit, giving me the sweetest, tidiest, blowjob in the world. She's so good at it; Tipping the Velvet; my clitoris has been waiting for her to visit for days, I know it. Now I'm up there on the ceiling, clutching the ceiling rose and screaming in joy. Only I'm not and Katie is standing next to me, then kneeling over me, pinching my lips with two fingers, again,

then compressing my clit and stooping over my face with her vulva and I'm reciprocating her caresses until she comes too and drowns me in cream.

She smiles all of a sudden:

“Nice sample--- more to come!”

“You bet”, I'm all go now.

It takes only a short time: she comes once more, buries her nose in my crease and breathes my cream for a moment, then straightens up, suddenly ordered again, like a randy housewife hearing the old man at the door.

“I can hear a car in the drive.”

Picture this ...

Chapter 3

Larissa Bling

How did all this start? You could just ask and I could just give you a pack of lies, couldn't I? But here it is.

There was a moment in time a long while ago when the person whom I am now was just a figment of my imagination. Just think – a needy student in battered jeans trailing up a

flight of stairs to the couple of rooms she shared with her student friend, Trixie.

Boy, was that a long time ago!

Well, like every other student I was living just this side of the breadline, freezing in the winter in a bug infested hole near Shepherd's Bush, a place where the cockroaches came out so thick at night that I would crunch them under my feet as I moved between the door of my room and the bed. I was dumb enough to ignore them at the time, oh boy, did I have a lot to learn!

That, and survival.

Hunger gets to you.

I had a boyfriend who was none too thoughtful, an art student. He slapped me around and he drew me nude when we were together, usually before I'd fully awoken in the morning. One day he said,

"You know you could get paid for this..." That put an idea in my head. I looked in the small ads and I asked around the art school.

In a week I was naked on the plinth two or three afternoons a week. They paid me

enough to make it just worthwhile, and dear reader, that was before the buzz got to me. You suddenly realize that being naked in front of strangers is a whole other thing, that's where the buzz comes from.

Part two.

After a couple of months of being the teacher's favourite model, one night I bumped into the drawing lecturer in a pub. Let's face it, either I'd be embarrassed that he'd seen my slit naked or else he'd be embarrassed to see me wearing clothes. Amazing that he recognized my face, don't you think? That was a Friday. By Sunday he'd fucked me several times at his place, one much nicer than mine. Suddenly I'd made progress, even if I was horizontally opposed at the time, and that meant ditching the boyfriend. I now had a whole new set of ideas. I stayed with him for a while, but my flatmate Trixie was up to a whole raft of new tricks - they were all about money.

Friday lunchtimes we'd find ourselves in The Duke of York, a pub a decent way from our flat, where it was easy to attract punters, (yes, now they were *punters*) who were just en-

joying the fruits of their labours. Payday. Know what I mean? For them and for us too. Better paid than Art modelling.

Hotel rooms can be nice places to be fucked in, after all these guys would often order a drink or something to refresh the parts they hadn't got to yet, maybe hoping I wouldn't slip away, though I did when they least expected it. Funny how time suddenly becomes expensive when you're fucking someone you've never even met. Just the money, snuck out of his wallet while he was in the shower, snuck into my jeans pocket. Goodbye! No, that's not the word I would use. Think of another. Two others.

But, like most things, this way of operating had its hazards. One day Trixie and I were asked by a couple of bruisers to do a double act for them, we did the usual, drank a lot of vodka, and that seemed to be fine until they let the rest of their team into the room. We didn't know that they were on some sort of a weekend jaunt, and we were their first hit - that time I got fucked so many times by so many men in all my holes that I lost my memory of it. We were lucky to be able to walk after all that, a

cross between a gang bang and a drunken party. Still the money was what I got for two weeks University grant, despite the indigestion and the stomach cramps.

And that was the how as well as the why - I got into my next secret life.

Next. I was walking through Soho one Saturday, looking at the shops, searching for... well something. I saw a shelf of magazines and opened one. My goodness! I'd discovered some sort of S&M. Naked girls being shaved, whipped. Well, you know.

Of course I called round at the editorial office, whatever you call it on the QT the idea excited me, I was turned on by it, was all. Anyway it was close, within walking distance and run by what looked like very average people, boring, almost. I asked did they want models. She said - did I like that kind of thing. She showed me through a door into an empty studio, told me to take my clothes off, took a couple of pictures of me bending over, holding a dildo near my slit, playing with my clitoris, with my legs apart, with an imaginary howl of pain, that sort of thing. She said nothing more,

took my mobile number. Two days later she called. Suddenly I was going to be one of the chicks in her mag! How life had changed. Weird.

I enjoyed being the object of lust then and I still do even today, somewhere in my mind. Nothing changes what you are in your deepest being, somewhere in your most essential body. And being controlled by lust, or being a controller of lust, enters you into a certain special level of control, makes you powerful, makes you look strong to the person who lusts after you while at the same time you lose control somewhere in your mind. So lust is dangerous. Tell me about it!

So I started modelling for Mrs S&M the next Sunday. In no time at all I was being shaved, oiled, lubricated, tied in ropes, suspended above the floor without any control, gagged, fucked and sucked in all my holes and fellated with my hands tied behind my back without being able to resist or protest. This weird oriental kink, Shibari, being bound in ropes, makes you sweat and terrifies you be-

cause of the pure captivity and helplessness. But the orgasms you get after the captivity are seriously unreal, the feeling of release is weird and spending hours naked, controlled and not responsible for your body is curiously releasing. Afterwards I would always be sore and exhausted, but strangely liberated and content. You work that out, I can't.

But of course there is a moment in time when any circus becomes stale. I'm jumping forward here a bit, but bear with me. You'd expect it really. I got older, wiser and a lot more selective about my beaus. After a couple of years the whole performance had lost its wild edge, the sensations were no longer new and orgasmic, my performances seemed to be becoming repetitive, even boring. I even began to like the idea of sex with the same man time after time. Dangerous, huh! To put it another way, like everything else one day you just lose it, and I lost it big time, even real hot horny sex had lost its edge for me, not that I had a man or

anything, just a succession of Friday night pickups with inadequate programming.

So, when I answered an ad for '*Something on the Edge*' and Katie began to call with weekend shoots, I began to turn the old work, and the old habits with Trixie down. But even that had its limits. One day I told her that I was getting out of our business.

Well, she'd probably sussed that already and we stayed friends for a while, but that vital dangerous link, our secret about secrets, our secret lives together, became a stress. It was more that we shared the experience - part of some kind of bizarre team, and now that was over we'd finally begun to lose that thing. No more beaus, no-more orgasms *Al Fresco*. We dropped our habits, meetings and drinks in the bars and the smiles, the exchange of weird experiences. Evenings followed where I found myself alone with only the TV and a toy for company. I even took up smoking to cover those times when I had nothing to do after work. Life slowed, changed imperceptibly. Where would *you* go?

And now picture this: a zillion years later and I'm getting old in the subway having just left my new huge empty apartment near Holland Park in London. Not a bug in sight and yet I'm only a chickensquawk from Shepherds Bush. Anyway, I'm in a hurry, due for a shoot at a studio, and they are paying *La Mushe* (that's me in case you don't read the mags!) telephone numbers for each day I'm working. It's all contracted of course, the cash just hits my company account invisibly. Invisible like I am, eh?

Nobody has even looked at my face and that's good, because though I'm dressed down in a pair of mangled jeans and an old sweat-shirt, I'm always concerned that suddenly I'll have a chorus of teenagers clocking me or some pervert suddenly on my case because they've seen my pix somewhere. Well, horn-rimmed glasses work wonders that way too.

And that reminds me, you see because...

I'm standing there in a bit of a haze, looking through the 'Metro' and then memory zips me back and suddenly, years ago I remember something half a world away in all my lies and my multiple lives.

Another day year's back; it was dry in-between showers, and a bit parky, I was doing the same stuff like I usually did, daydreaming about my next fuck and just idly reading the 'Metro' in the subway station when this girl starts to talk to me.

She smiled, made eye contact; I stopped, expecting some sort of consumer survey dialogue, but no:

"Have you ever tried modelling?" I was going to say something rude when I saw she looked, well, not what I'd thought. "Have you ever thought about modeling?" she said again, I gave her the weary eye and was about to tell her that I'd just stopped that sort of thing when I saw the header on the board she was holding and that she was clutching what looked like a portfolio. Of course this was what you call a 'book' nowadays. I realized that she was for real, not trying to get me embroiled in some oth-

er deal like the one I'd been modelling for at weekends. "No," I said. I'd meant 'No, not at all, not today, not again' but I sort of got it twisted up, then she smiled again and offered me a card with the address of what I saw was a real model Agency on it. We started to talk.

I guess I was surprised. I called in at the Agency later clutching the card and told them this and that and after the gentlest third-degree I'd ever had, and lots of surgical glances by the bookers, they gave me a couple of starter photographers to visit for pix.

History starts now.

The pictures were good. Soon I was out walking, visiting, getting my face known, showing my book to interested parties, doing 'Go-Sees'. Then they gave me small try-outs, walking shows; in a couple of months I'd got busy and was developing an income, and hey, with my clothes on and nothing unusual between my legs! It felt positive, new and strange and refreshing, though sometimes I got the itch for a bit of *extreme*. That was missing. Sometimes I felt tempted, but I had to be a good girl, now.

No, my life had changed. I changed my sex partners for fresh new underperforming city types and photographers - and it changed my mind in a way I hadn't thought of. It felt good. The people in the Business were playful (to the point of disposability) but I could handle that, I'd grown up on the tough side of life, that was the fact. Well, and the rest is almost another history. But maybe not just yet.

So, my profession changed, I changed and dropped the temping - too busy Brazilian waxing, drinking only champagne or water, to work for a faceless twat somewhere in an office block. I became a professional, eating all the right stuff, getting at least eight hours sleep each night - being *beautiful* was all, was enough, and I was being paid more and more as the days wore on.

And somehow this wound up with me being a fix at the Agency, even if I'd made the procedural error on the way of giving the photographer whatever he wanted instead of actu-

ally paying him for his model-book shots. No-one said a word.

Well, that's one way of getting started, isn't it? I'd never thought that I could model, well, like the way you see in the magazines; and no-one at that time had ever watched any porn around the Agency; most of my stuff had gone to the Japanese market, so I was told, until I saw some of it on pornhub one day, when I was getting my fix.

Anyway, up to then I knew that I'd got lucky and hadn't yet known it. And well, luck seemed to be going my way more and more. Fashion is the business of change, and of course things suddenly changed again. Go-sees were the basic item on my agenda those days, which I fitted-in when I was doing what came naturally or I was not at the office: that didn't last long, as demand increased.

You can see that this new career of mine was real refreshment after the drudge of the Central Line on foggy mornings, can't you.

It had seemed to develop in a few weeks, though now I can see it had been a long time coming. My earlier modelling work, which I

omitted to inform them about, my lack of nerves in front of a camera, made my new model's life a real breeze, after what I'd been doing. I laughed to myself standing there with clothes on, after all I'd spent days being naked when I did straight nudes, and weeks with just a few things on being fucked. Not that I told them or hated the way that it had been at all, you understand. Anyway, no more exchanges of body fluids for a start, though sometimes I actually missed the soreness, the lack of restraint, the orgasmic imagination of it all. Then I realized I'd developed a new got a reputation, for fucking photographers, but that was in the business, so it was Kosher.

The point is that I was busy; I was getting paid for what came easy to me. Suddenly I was working all over London - and a couple of months later flying to New York where I did more go-see's and some shoots. My reputation had preceded me, I was easy about it and so were they: soon I was getting shoots all over the place.

In a few months I had gone from a few weary go-see's with a gang of other girls, to be-

ing one of the new featured names in magazine modelling; from then on I began to go to places that you only imagine you'd see maybe once in a lifetime, South America, the Caribbean, you know.

It took a little more time for things to really gel, but a model's life is either really fast developing or else wanes into nothing, and all in a few months. Instant gratification, like the glossies. Of course it helps to sleep with the right photographer too and I had a certain charm, they knew, though they'd have to make quite a guess to figure-out how. Not a problem, as I said and I'd taught them a few new tricks along the way too. No-body ever said a word, it was good for business.

A year on I'd forgotten about the office, the S&M shoots, the three men into me at one time: whatever had excited my body previously. The ugly duckling, so to say, had turned imperceptibly into a Swan. I hardly knew it.

And now she began to live like the Swan she really was. Well, not virtually. I maybe should tell you that the life of a model is actually a cloistered and controlled one; you drink

almost no alcohol, eat a diet mainly of fruit and lean fish and meat and are allowed only a couple of coffees a day. You make up for the dietary misery with endless water, ciggies, vitamin pills and working out at the most exclusive gym in town so that ordinary punters won't see your body and you actually sweating.

On the upside, you have a mountain of free, beautiful clothes to wear and an absurd imaginary status around the business which you could never actually earn in a lifetime, or for that matter, in real time. It's all make-believe, and all in fifteen minutes, all massaged by the Agency and a little bit by my bad behaviour, but that's what *Celebrity* in the 21st Century is all about, isn't it?

So, *ha ha!* Now I lived in an equally imaginary ivory tower, well, for as long as I was a big earner for my Agency - who by then had given me over to a couple of their best handlers who looked after my business more or less 24/7. This continued for a couple of years until I got to the point when I needed management.

I was beginning to have to have financial advisers, minders and gofers and accountants

and all that stuff. All that management paraphernalia, because I was getting to be just... well, rich.

Some of the people in the business were in awe of me. No more cheap tricks! I even stopped my habit of screwing photographers, because it wasn't diplomatic any more. I went skiing in Switzerland once, before a shoot, for the PR and the *Paparazzi*. And then: *I was with one of those photographers the next day. I must have been ovulating, because I had only one idea - I had to screw, I knew it, and I liked him a lot, though it could have been helped along by the coke.*

The stereo was going hell for leather, too loud really, when he started to speak to me. I was snowed-out, in some kind of dream, because then he opened his mouth and I saw, rather than heard him say something: You know how they say, all profound and meaningful ...*'there is no such thing as a coincidence'* - *Well, what would you call a million-to-one chance like this, then? This could only happen in the communication age. This is a moment I think I have waited for, for far too long, a bril-*

liant and sensitive woman who thinks the way that I think, who would be perfect!"

That was already enough... he had me there, he thought, trapped by ideas, his cocaine and my body, like a fly, fixed on his single idea, so to speak. In his vanity he never thought that this was fulfilling my requirement - that he was playing sucker to my desire. I wasn't about to tell him, either, I was swollen and tight and needed orgasm and buzz and release. I came really fast that day, then left quietly as he slept.

Later he'd say: "I'll telephone you and we can speak-*at last!* It will be like being drowned in pleasure and bubbles, what a *whoosh!*" I bought it because I needed what I needed, of course, at the time - you dig?

Why? I can't help being cynical. The business of selling bodies, whether they're naked and full of cock or splatted on your local fashion rag is a cynical one. But, well, one reason for the artifice is that women are dreamers, who in the end cannot break away from the enslavement of their bodies in concrete reality - this becomes a sort of waking dream, the people whom they aren't but which they wish they

were; they can take on all the baggage and trammels of some emotionally unstable philosophy - like that old saw, Feminism, today reduced to reading the numbers, the symbols, the Horoscope - employing someone to unscramble their emotion wrangles, the shrink - they can profess their individuality too and pretend independence - but in the final analysis they cannot avoid the fact that they have the burden of being dreamers, dictated to be who they are, where they are, by a combination of fate, geography, habit, biology and damnation.

Nothing in a woman's world would ever work if women could not dream their way past the sheer brutality of their physical bodies, which is why they are scared of any other show of violence, violence they cannot explain or contain in themselves or in emotional terms. So now you see, for a few moments I dreamt of being carried away in his arms, on the hypnotic, extended bright billows of some almost silent, clear, clean, paradisiacal welcoming, warm, navy blue sea. The only viable path to sanity is on the same page as insanity. Picture *that!*

We screwed again that evening. Well, what else was there to do? In the catalogue of my fears and lives there always seemed to be only one easy way out. Let me tell you about him anyway - he was Christened by a Franciscan Friar who named him 'Francisco' (that's Spanish) remember Picasso came from Spain! His father was a German, and his mother was Afrikaans. So you see he was a Spanish-looking German, who spoke German French Italian and Spanish – simple really!

One day he sent me an email, he wrote: *"It's wild it's mad - and for that, and with your words (I can imagine your mouth forming them) I think it really must be real. It's astonishing! The next time we're apart let's plan to meet. You say where: it could be – I don't care - in Malaga or London (or Moscow) – or wherever. It doesn't matter where – this is one of our lives' sweetest emergencies. You will probably love to get into the sun for a while out of the dark midwinter: why not come to Malaga – or we could meet in Sofia or Bourgas), though that will have to be in*

late February or March, the winter is severe there... I could show you my house and I have a favourite hotel where we could stay... I'm really excited. I want to look at you... stay warm, for me."

You could say that was all about love, but if you know about these things you'd know that love never existed. It flows away from you like a stream. I **don't** remember any more anyway; that was a world away, a lost fantasy ago, or so it seems now, and I knew at that moment that I had to get back to the *real*. I hate passion, it means so little; so I cancelled his email address switched the messages to 'Spam' and forgot, it seemed a good time to forget.

Money? What's that? Romance begins to pale when you look at all the things it seems to be but really isn't, when in a moment of crystal clarity you examine the subtext, the hidden agendas, the downright lies, the deceit, the physical reality, yes, lust is what it's at. Money is the lust of the frightened mind become physical. Just like Freud said that there was no such thing as a joke, meaning something else entire-

ly, I can tell you that there's no such thing as love - which is a tricky transposing of a whole lot of other things, and that money is actually a symbol for a whole bunch of things which are much more nasty, like violence and ultimately murder. This is what motivates you most of the time: fear. Fear of failing, fear of not getting laid, fear of going hungry, of being insecure, of having nowhere to live, of not getting to know people and realizing once you do get to know them that everybody's dangerous.

The fact was anyway, I had to work, keep my mind off all the things that were crowding into it like a series of viperous chemical dreams. It was and is, the violence of money that kept me going, the dream, *'The Fear'* too, as Lily Allen sang it all. Sometimes I think that girl has something there, even if it means that you'll turn into a pumpkin at midnight, Lily...

And then the Agency, for all its feverish impersonality, was the place for me those days. When I wasn't working I would be there anyway, in the later morning, grabbing

a cup of something warmish, sinking into the battered leather of the couch and closing my eyes, imagining that my world really wasn't as nasty as I knew it really was, had been, still could be - imagining that all these people liked me for whom I was and not for the money they were making from me.

Fantasy? Fantasy from a licensed dream merchant!

Remember, you only ever buy the dream. The rest could be any one of a variety of things, most of them more and more dangerous, the closer they get to you. I wish I could believe in love and romance any more, but as with Francisco, the love only lasted the short time while I was transfixed by my dreams of stars and comets and... well, love, that firefly of the imagination which we all so fervently wish could really exist in the cruel physics of our realities'.

But something always survives, even if it's only the DNA. I was prepared for that, you see because friends of mine that I got to know in the business had been caught in the tidal backwash of their success, seen their friendships and the 'team' closeness disappear as

Picture this ...

their working lives and thus cash value, ebbed away for one reason or another; I saw it in all its dread detail: that's the business, and you have to know that the lingering, razor sharp scent of sudden boutique death is always waiting ready for you just around the corner, just as sure as your Jimmy Choo's are fated soon to be bling.

Chapter 4

Want more stuff?

I *still had some private life*

though, even if I had to get to bed alone at nine pm, for tomorrow's shoot.

One thing. My life had become skewed and needed correction. I'd been moving fast, too fast to register things, which is how I knew. Did I give a fuck! Was it to be an emotional re-

flex that would keep things together, save me? Just who is that *me!* Just as they tell us that the plates of the continents shift themselves in a very deliberate, powerful way, so the sections of this life of mine seemed to be committed to a set of deliberate, powerful movements which ultimately would ensure that what I wanted and what I imagined that required would be bottlenecked, sandwiched - so that any outcome would suit the ergonomics and utility of fate and not my feelings. Thus is the transcendence of physics over the individual in our tiny, compartmentalized, shuttered lives. At least some of my University life had rubbed-off on me.

I was trapped, of course I knew that I had always been trapped - exquisitely, like a fly in amber, my body, my nature, nature itself, physics. What could I say...?

Picture this ...

Book 2

The Beginning b4 the End

Picture this ...

Chapter 5

Jack's Bluff

A *At six the morning light had begun to filter through the slats and around the dusty, dry, worn out wind-textured blinds; even if he was situated so high in the sky, the secrets of this place could not be risked to even the most casual glance of a distant pair of eyes, however disin-*

terested. As if they would be, word would get around and then... as a condo which was part of a whole flight of other condos this should anyway be blank enough not to excite any kind of attention.

Jack checked the silent hall shone the fake brass furniture on the door and then clicked the apartment door shut, finding his way through into the inner quad of spaces. The sitting room, the kitchen, the 'Studio' shooting space, the tattered couch, the pretend, put-me-up office with the cardboard flats as false walls, the tacky pictures in their Chinese plastic-gilt frames found in a street market, the antique burn marks of hot photo-lamps striped across the sticky, deteriorating, rubber-backed, coloured carpet stripe. He smiled to think how much pussy had sashayed down the grungy carpet of the hallway into his sitting room and done him some tricks on this very strip, on camera. Ha, Ha! He laughed out loud and it sounded eerie in a silence broken only by the distant, restless clanking of the stays on the masts of the boats moored by the old wharf outside as they moved in a sudden updraft of wind and tide.

But now time was come, another moment among many other such moments, seeming not to move and yet plummeting continuously onward in the mad panic of time, another day for business.

He turned the key to the cardboard door and entered the office, checked it was empty and that the window was locked and then moved to the kitchen, loaded the coffee machine, pulled out one of the assorted blends in their cases and received a freshly generated cup of sharp full-flavour coffee. At length he sat back in the leather office chair at one side of the warped boards of the office space, put his feet up on the coffee table and sank into a half doze, while he thought.

He'd spent another night in that tacky casino - a night wasted; there was no gain in it, which meant that he was broke again, which meant in its stead, more tacky days making these super-tacky movies.

The scent of female pheromones had become an allergy to him; it was now become part of the weave in the drapes, the carpet and the fabric of the chairs, despite his efforts to air the

place. It was no good, the furniture would never give up all the hormonal memories it had absorbed. He was down in the valley was the problem, air moved only slowly by the water in the natural harbour, which was why the harbour here had once upon-a-time been so busy, so profitable. But now, not only was the commerce gone, but also the thrill for him of creation, of discovery, after so many lousy movies. He should throw the business up, except that there was no way he could turn over that much cash anymore any other way. Oh, shit, and what with that and free porn on the internet the market was shrinking, after all, once you'd seen dozens of women being fucked in their every orifice there was nothing more to discover. Yup, the market was down and the gain was down and there was nothing but a dribble of cash in it now until someone thought of a new gimmick.

How to turn-over cash!

Well, due to this damn stress, due to this pressure, he had not been able to stop thinking, inventing, for many hours since yesterday and still he had nothing in the pipeline, nothing which would give him the volume that he could

see as real cash. No point thinking it, he'd have to find a forgotten asset from somewhere and milk it.

Times had changed, nothing existed in that way anymore, nothing was easy, available anymore, like it was in the past - aside from his luck of course, a storage box packed with old DVDs and some stills hidden away in the filing cabinet, that he'd found behind some old background rolls. Mind you, that'd rung a bell in his mind - a shoot a long time ago, a tennis court, a young good-looking chick on her first gig. He remembered her cry-out as he pushed up her the first time, the gravelly green, broken surface of the court, the Sun beginning to set. Was the movie there in that piled-up box of corrupting aluminium?

He had to check what could be done, was all. He broke out some disks from one of his cardboard boxes. They mostly contained the usual stuff, he read the notes, looked at the women on the covers, didn't see a thing that was commercial enough to free-up some cash. Anyway, he was weary; he'd seen it all so many times before in this business and for that reason

he'd never checked the faces of the heroines. But then somebody'd said one time, that they'd seen a face they recognized from a glossy magazine - maybe a face that had made it good in a different way - that the face of the girl on the court in that old movie would be familiar. Where'd he remembered that from? Candy something... what was her name. Impossible.

Spurred by this he lifted the disks out onto the carpet, to separate them, so to sort them, continued to search, now increasingly feverishly, through the grimy, sticky, battered piles of DVDs. The trick must be there somewhere; all he needed was just a hint, just the slightest clue. But the disks seemed to give him back just their blank aluminium stare, so many blank stares staring back at him from the gluey dark tramlines of tacky sticky carpet, blank mirrors mirroring so many forgotten heavens'.

He struggled on; the disks around him now treacherous, crackling and slipping, like vicious, peeling razors of spent time, forgotten fragments of dangerous memory.

Like, she was famous now, like, what did that mean in his world of porn queens? That

face familiar? Maybe In a way it was, but how? He was struggling to remember stuff. And he'd paid cash for it too. Maybe he'd remember who it was after his next line of coke, though he'd run out - he even needed some money for that - what had his world come to?

Outside, the early light of the developing day began to cast muted duck-egg blue accents upon the creeping greys of the city.

Picture this ...

Chapter 6

The Plot?

The Plot starts from this point in time.

It was another humdrum morning, and I was aware - as the morning came up suddenly, uncomfortably, stomach-churningly - aware

that I could no longer ignore the fact that that someone had known, perhaps even knew me now, but not as a secretary, or as my new persona, *La Mushe*, but as that indeterminate, intermediate, earlier person who was always so sure that her wig had not slipped during a shoot that Mr (or Mrs) Punter-in-the-Street would ever recognize her dressed, let alone naked.

So this unknown, the *Ghost* - (which is what I called him) - this item who still haunted my memories and whom I did not know as a person as far as I was aware, had not told anyone else (I mean the Press) anything, yet – well that's what I thought, there would be no point phoning me once the news was out. This was an upcoming one-way street of dread, I could see the negative energy streaming at me from every direction. He (am I being sexist? – well, time would tell) - had not yet made another move – but something happened yesterday, related to something else which seemed to be a coincidence at the time which happened last week: the chain of coincidence made me sure that something out of my control had hap-

pened. I mean, *should I give in to whatever he wants, or else... well, what – how am I to make a move?*

Then the disaster, the nightmare - call it what you will - began, like this. I was at the Agency on a Monday a couple of weeks later after a weekend spent partying and generally having fun. I was sitting on the usual couch nursing a coffee, leafing through the magazines, reviewing my past bookings and waiting for one of the bookers to find my diary so that I could check-out the bookings which had come up - they hold day diaries for this kind of thing, it's not a quick phone thing. So, when one of the bookers brought the cordless phone to me of course I didn't expect what happened next in the impersonal hurly-burly of the Agency, I was thinking *business*. The booker thrust the handset at me.

“What?”

“Someone asking for you.”

“How did they know I was here?”

I was reacting more to a sudden threatening puzzle than anything else. The booker had ignored me anyway, forgotten me and was gone.

The voice on the phone was somehow more mechanical than female, more slurred than male.

“Hullo Candy”, it said. I stopped thinking for a moment. Ancient history hit me in the chest knocking the breath out of me.

“What?” I held the handset up in the air and looked at it as if it had suddenly gone critical, as if it were suddenly radioactive. Then I heard an hysterical laugh on the line, then silence, whoever it was, was obviously waiting, gauging the effect they’d had.

The past crashed back at me, like a tsunami from nowhere rocketing into friendly, domestic, happy Brighton Beach on a crowded sunny Sunday afternoon. I clamped my eyes shut as if to deaden the impact of the sound in some way.

“Hi Candy!” the voice said again, this time metallic, brightly - and then the line clicked off. I was dazed for a moment, denying

everything, *anything!* Who was this and how did they know me – and besides - ‘*Candy*’ - that was a long time ago in this world, a million years ago - why, I was already pushing thirty something and had forgotten *Candy* was me when I was twenty - half a world and another life away.

The line had gone down: the call had come through the switchboard: I could maybe have traced it, but what would I give as a reason to the booker, and what would be the result if I did? The rumour mill lives on things like that. I didn’t want to try a trace on it from here that could wake all kinds of ghosts.

Bad medicine, bad business. I glued a non-committal smile on my face and felt suddenly very, very, like puking. Whatever I would say could cause problems – it was better to stay calm and not react.

I did, almost – but time moved huge and invisible - and then came the second call a few days later. This time, in all my nightmares, I was expecting it. It came through on my mobile that Friday afternoon as I left a studio after a shoot. The handset rang and I pushed the lit-

tle green lighted telephone. A group of school-girls walking down Long Acre gawped at me, obviously recognizing me. I cut off down an alley towards a pub I knew and stopped by the side door where it was quiet, in the shadow of the bridge over the top. I could hear music, muffled sounds, clapping. Then: this time the voice sounded artificially wooden yet sudden, *now*, youthful to the point of being indecently chirpy -

“Hey Candy, its Jack” said the voice, all at once friendly and almost *intimate*. I almost took him for a friend, for a millisecond – you know – then: “*Hey Candy, I’ve got a few little something’s to show yer!*”

The invitation was almost friendly. The voice, after all, kicked-off in a bland tone. At first I was taken in by it. And then the tone changed:

“You’d be excited to see some of the things Candy... eh... *Banana, Cherry, Apple – that’s it!*... got up to in them days, wouldn’t y’all, now?” *Ha, ha!*

“Which days?”

“Oh, come on, Candy, you know exactly what days I’m talking to you about, girl!”

I pushed the red telephone and the call stopped. Just for now. I chose to forget the whole thing. But the thing wouldn’t forget Candy Apple.

Picture this ...

Chapter 7

Pics & Pix.

‘Word *on the street says’*

Christiana is talking to herself with her rich darkening blue eyes no longer understanding the message scrawled across the paper. A month has passed since she had a call at her agency; her speech falters and then picks up as she tosses the

sheet of paper to the desktop in her hired apartment on Cableway.

Now I scanned the address again. This far from London on a shoot, and maybe real close to the voice on the phone.

She has begun to react as she says this, but her eyes betray nothing except blank; remaining blank and dark as she reaches across the desk and touches the paper again as if to gauge its weight or significance. It's an expensive parchment paper, with a fine glaze, but no watermarks of any sort (she checks that against the light) - she's seen the detective stories on the TV. Then she takes the paper again and throws it across the room with a gesture of helplessness. Helpless? . . . She is, in a way. Just what do you do when someone threatens your existence?

The room remains silent for a time, something's beginning to gel in her mind. She's not used to this kind of implied violence, but the experience of a cruel lifetime has demonstrated to her that she must adapt - and whether that means positively or negatively, is just another matter of fate.

I had a gun, almost by default, something I'd bought on the street, because someone once warned me; *"You don't ever want to be caught defenceless if a crazy comes into your house, now do you – and you're a prime target here in America, 'cos everyone and his dog's got a shooter."* And I'd known of crazies before who'd murdered other girls because they knew their face, because they were 'Famous', maybe while they were fucking them on the street, down a dark alley, on the floor of a derelict building, in the back of a car... remember what happened a million years ago to John Lennon. A famous face can be a minefield.

My gun. Now that shaped knuckle of age-tarnished chromed steel lived in a plastic bag at the back of my cupboard, and I completed the artifice by telling myself that I'd found it somewhere or other years ago and always kept it by me. That's my story and you'd never know otherwise. I'd never polished or attempted to clean it, dreading that I might ever use it. Oh no, this could be that time! Shit!

My hands seemed to bob and itch, perfect as they were in their perfection and appar-

ent innocence, but what they'd seen, where they'd been under these eyes was only a lost memory of pain now.

What could I do? I took the gun out of hiding and cradled it in my hands like a powerful, deadly infant. It sat there with its dull silvery stainless gleam, numbers studded almost as a forethought on the slide and over the handle, which incidentally was a homey sort of mock-tortoiseshell. A woman's gun, if such a thing ever existed. I put it back in the plastic bag.

In another life.

Sybilla Strips again? It's a fucking nightmare. Larissa or Sybilla (or is that, Candy) picks up the DVD and the fold of paper and scans them with rich, round, navy-blue eyes, defensive, duplicitous, in the close, faux rich, mock-mahogany striped wilderness of the Crazy Horse Saloon. Sybilla hardly understands the message scrawled across it.

Another note, it was left together with a package downstairs with the concierge this time, a note detailing the 'storyline' of another of my epics. The only thing is it's lacking a

storyline not that that would matter too much – the story behind the story is life as it hits you in your crippled imagination, hard in the face like a traffic accident, ugly, hard and sharp. You taste the blood in your mouth, grin because your face is broken and you can't do anything else. It is anyway a combine of received truth and the fantasy of a disjointed set of egos, something which exists only in this metallic vacuum...

And who is she? The subject of this hymn to no-one? Sybilla is me, yes, she is that me, in a wig as usual, her legs spread and her breasts artfully hard after the skilful application of oil and ice - there upon the ragged pages, commas, semi-colons, speech marks, full stops - but mostly question marks and quotation marks. This she is waiting for me as if she too is feral, waiting to spring out into my own space at the precise moment when I am somehow un-concentrated and become unaware of her presence. It's a trick.

I'm frightened by the package, more unpleasantly surprised than frightened and horrified somewhere secret in my body, more stressed by any implied threat than by whatever I can

see. I drop it as I leave the conciergerie and make for the elevator, as if I expect it to be full of vicious little worms or perhaps molten steel. Of course it's full of both. The thing is that it's more a question than a fact - and I'm at first surprised by the storyline that the script is supposed to occupy, even without remembering what is on the DVD.

I look at the disk and it comes back at me with the appalling force of a hurricane in total darkness. Once back in the apartment I turn into a wreck, I sit on my bed and can't breathe any more. Oh yes, now I remember that afternoon, I remember the setup and the coke and the vodka we used to turn us on those times. And the rest of my memory - was it in L.A.? God! I remember it in pieces now and anyway, well, the lost pieces are facing me on the screen as the disk winds out my imagination.

The music continues to drone as later I perch on the edge of the toilet seat in the bathroom at the agency, unscrambling the sequence of events over those past days, in my cluttered life, in my cluttered mind.

The caustic result of a sudden meltdown of enjoyment is emptiness. That's why and for how you puke. It's a martini gone sour, rancid because you've forgotten it, dropped a butt in it then picked it up in error. Eeek! Nasty. Lesson 1, you have to get-on with real life. Porn movies? I must be crazy, but I thought that that version of me had been forgotten; in the skein of life this thread had dwindled so far that it hardly existed any more - until suddenly the cruel logic of numbers threw it up again. Inevitable? Or damn chance? Statistically rational? I feel seriously empty at that moment.

Then come the jarred gears of realization. The memory grinds, just like those gear trains, and tocks over, metallic, into mesh. My mind's gone blank, then.... that was yesterday, wasn't it? Years ago.

Something has constricted my chest, I can't bloody breath. I'm hot, I'm irritated...

No, what I am now is angry. I'm sitting in the dark and pushing my fingernails into my palms. One nail breaks and there's blood on the coverlet, but I don't feel a fucking thing, the only

thing that stops me is the fact that I'll have to fix it, just trouble, that's all.

Now I'm clearing my anger, I see the picture and the picture is this. That brain-dead motherfucker is trying to... fuck up my life, the fabric of which looks strong but is really only group neurosis, imagination, the insubstantiality of nothing based on imagination - fantasy, the fantasy of the market which has raised me high, like that man Max Whatshisname a few years ago, only then to try to smash him/me down and destroy everything I've tried to do. You've seen it, remember? This one's one grade worse than the tabloids, they want blood, he wants my money and my life.

So what would you do, and damn how? Put it this way - why? Will it make a good earner for someone, a few more pages to show my secret mind, my other lives to a gawping public and having rendered me to nothing, then move on to the next victim of their own body? Fuck him. At this damn end of the world, women like me have to work for who they are, for what they can get for whatever they put-out. We may have started in a variety of ways, but the link is that

all of them were painful, dangerous and often humiliating ways too. Nobody knows that better than we do, we're real, every day.

The absurdity of a woman's life is such that her drives, desires and predilections follow one path whilst society controls her through products and hopes, social and legal rules and brutalism, then to follow her so far before they deny her herself by denying her the things she needs to be herself. At the end of the day women are removed as real players – you see the whole basis of our society is a sick one – control. Be controlled or perish, disappear, be forgotten, end up poor, live like a tub of lard and watch the adverts or be a whore - there are no deals. That is where it is all going from the start and every one of us gets to know the truth of that sooner or later. A man once wrote a book about this enslavement of our bodies and called it 'Beyond Freedom and Dignity' and at that moment that was where I was, inside the book somewhere, I was a slave caught in a bangle and unable to react because reaction would reveal what I was in my other life, and when you are a woman that other life always haunts you until you die, you

carry it with you and you experience the lost things of yourself with pain and the good things only with the greatest peril. No, our controlled lives are the true whores, always promising, posing, gesturing, acting out the Holy Grail of the Orgasm, but never real, never delivering, never actually there. These things run away and you are always hungry for more and when you need them most, they will surely run away from you, like your blood.

And I, now I'm boiling up, now I am really angry, nuts, the carefully massaged persona, the careful hours of posing, posturing, making faces in front of a mirror, touching-up my makeup, have suddenly disappeared inside of me and the anger has leapt out, wanting blood, wanting that beautiful final fatal word - vengeance.

I think a moment: what shall I do to murder the bastard, knife him, smash him with a chair, push him out of a window, stick something sharp into his guts? At the end of it all ... well, he should be dead, the blackmailing bastard, splatted all over the concrete of the sidewalk somewhere. I'm bleeding and he shall bleed

as I have bled in my mind many times, almost expecting this nightmare to begin - and this time is closure, the last time - I see flies buzzing around his blackening, coagulating blood, late, too late, as it runs away from him. He's a fucking dead man in my mind.

Then I forget, because I'm rushed again, time too short and my life not half long enough; I'm running out of time, I'm always running out of the time that runs away from me like blood; and I told you already, blood will only ever desert you, like a river which one day will, all of it, the flotsam and the cells, return, turn back into my nightmares and drown me, a deep black sea of all the hell of it, murder me. I'm running and this all is chasing me into another bad dream.

Picture this ...

Chapter 8

Sleeping or drowning?

I've been sleeping, one of those Summer afternoon comas when you wake with a premature hangover, stagger from the bed as if mugged and regret the moment that you let it all go. I'm also lathered in fear, anger and sweat. Terrified of my short time left, terrified

that this idyll ends prematurely, here, scared of where it's all leading me, aware that it runs away endlessly anyway without my bidding or knowledge and will ignore my lack of understanding.

I'm ageing, is the fact, the most frightening, inescapable, wicked, killing fact of this business. I came into the business late anyway, and the eyes that look out at me from the mirror knew far too much for their own good before I ever got started, It's my own damnation.

And men? One day soon those eyes won't lust after me anymore, won't follow my behind any more, won't question the width of my hips, lust for the shape of my sex, the weight of my breasts. Sometimes I think being female is just another purgatory, another cruel moment before nowhere claims me, makes me forgotten again, despite those moments of joy, ecstasy, *nirvana*, that all women seek and are ultimately humiliated by. We know what really unsticks the world, we are real and primitive about our inability to survive, we are cruel, direct about being real, about simple survival *now*. It's as if what makes you who you are not

is constantly being used as a carrot while reality is the stick, never ending until your time is lost and you're pushed aside for the *New You*...

I'm back at the Agency, fucking paranoid now at what's going on in my life, hidden in the hydrangeas, sitting there on my favourite brown leather couch thinking about desolation.

Just a while ago I walked in without a word, after the door clicked open and I've been given the look - as I came in as they signalled to each other '*just leave her alone!*' - I'm convinced that they can see it - it's as if this maniac who's riding my back is making me sad, making me lose my motivation, my strength and drive, each of which anyway is always simply perched on a ludicrous, brittle pinnacle of ego, fantasy which leads all of us to nothing; well, profit and expensive hour rates anyway. Absurd. Just what is there left after you've scaled the mountain? Nothing but another damn beginning - forever.

Then suddenly it's all back to instant real life. From comfortable still-frame, over-there,

distant monochrome, noise zooms in on you, cuts-in like the silent movies just turned into loud discordant talkies. Activity, phones ringing and bookers dragging down diaries and talking at the same time, chaos, bookers doing *Pretty Please* to, money on the phone. Noise, more layers of talk. Back to the chase. How can something on *pornhub* spoil it all for me – as someone said to me once, ‘*They never look at the faces in these movies ... I mean, can you remember anyone you’ve seen in a porn movie – unless they’re very unusual.*’

I’m striking, I’m unusual, that *unusual*, the damn face now, is the thing, the problem. Pretty would be forgettable, would do it, but memorable is much worse – it comes back to you as poisonous and real, remember that.

Memory. Otherwise why would *La Mushe* be plastered all over magazines and billboards wherever you go? How can you be damned for being lucky? Looks like I will be.

At this moment me, the Titanic, suddenly remembers the approaching iceberg. My brain shifts a gear, goes blank, and then I’m finally resolved to get *him*, kill *him* whoever he

is, spoil the person who wants to ruin the already damaged *me*. For long minutes I am wrapped in conjecture, measuring the tiny this-way-and-that's of whatever it is I have to do to get that fool off my case.... I'm looking at the package that's going to be part of the whole mad thing here. The thing it lacks is a storyline, not that that matters too much. This story anyway will be a construct of truth and fantasy, something which does not exist anymore in the vacuum which I now inhabit - and if I get it right there won't be a trace of me in it. What if I have him killed, or if I kill him myself? I need some sort of a 'Surgical' job, something to be best done by a pro, perhaps. But how, he's not here and I need *speed*?

I'm tempted over the edge, to look again into my mind - who is *she*? Sybilla is me, yes she is *me*, in a wig as usual, her legs spread and her breasts artfully hard after the skilful application of oil and ice - there upon the pages, commas, semi-colons, speech marks, full stops, but mostly question marks and quotation marks. She and he are both waiting for *me* as if they too are feral, waiting to spring out into my

space at the precise moment when I become unaware of their presence. Kill. Am I the mad dog in all this, or these two maniacs mad enough for me to kill them, one by forgetting and the other with a..

An ice pick in the back of the neck perhaps, like Robert Parker, or in a stream of bullets from a Tommy Gun... or in a sudden powerful explosion – I could bomb his damn car! Once again, like a veil being drawn back, I'm frightened by the package, but more unpleasantly surprised than horrified, more stressed by any implied threat than by whatever I can see. I'm feeling turgid, sick, sad, pissed-off, frightened by the fact that I really could just do it. I could just achieve that, killing him. The worst thing that it's here in the mind, you see - the thing is that it's more a question than a fact - and I'm at first surprised by the storyline that the script is supposed to occupy, even without remembering what is on that blasted DVD as it copies out all over the planet and gives ghastly birth to all it's million clones.

Like a hangover visiting you for the second time, oh yes, now I remember that after-

noon with tight, sharp, High-Definition clarity, I remember the setup and the coke and the vodka. And the rest of my memory – well, the lost parts are facing me on the screen of my imagination.

The music of hell continues to drone as I perch on the edge of the seat in the agency's toilet, unscrambling the sequence of events those past days. The result of the sudden meltdown of last week's enjoyment is emptiness. I feel empty at that moment. Then come the jarred gears of realization. The memory grinds, just like those gear trains, and tocks over into mesh. My mind's gone blank, then....

I am *angry*.

What that motherfucker is trying to do is... fuck up my life, the fabric of which looks so strong but is really only group neurosis, imagination, the insubstantiality of nothing based on imagination - fantasy, the fantasy of the market which has raised me high, like that man Max Mosley, only then to try to smash me down and destroy everything I've tried to do.

Why? Will it make a good earner for someone, a few more pages to show my secret mind, my other lives, to a gawping public, and having rendered me to nothing then move on to the next victim of her own body?

At this end of the world, women like me have to work for who they are. Here are no easy deals, even if you ever thought they were. We may have started in a variety of ways, but all of them were painful, dangerous and often humiliating too. Nobody knows that better than we do. The absurdity of a woman's life is such that her drives, desires and predilections follow one path whilst society controls her through products and hopes and brutalism, only then to follow her so far, before they deny her herself – you see the whole basis of our society is a sick one – control. Be controlled, or perish, disappear, be forgotten, end up poor, live like a tub of lard or be a whore. That is where it is all going from the start and every one of us gets to know that sooner or later. A man wrote a book about the enslavement of your body once and called it *'Beyond Freedom and Dignity'* and at that moment that was where I was. I was a slave

caught in a bangle and unable to react, because reaction would reveal what I was in my other life, and when you are a woman that other life is always with you until you die, you carry it with you and you experience the real things of yourself only with the greatest peril.

No, life is the whore, always promising, posturing, gesturing but never delivering, and now I know that *I really* am *angry*, it seems to burn like a permanent painful brazier in my belly and the carefully massaged persona, the hours of posing, pouting, making faces, touching-up my makeup, have suddenly disappeared inside of me, whilst anger has leapt out, wanting blood, wanting that fucking beautiful word - *vengeance*.

I think a moment: what shall I do to murder the bastard, knife him, smash him with a chair, push him out of a window? He should be dead, the blackmailing bastard, splatted all over the concrete of the sidewalk somewhere, bleeding as I have bled in my mind many times before this nightmare began. But this will be the last time, the *last* time, flies buzzing around his discolouring, blackening, late, too late, co-

agulating blood, because time is too short and my life not half long enough; I'm running out of time, it runs away from me like a river and one day it will all return, turn into my nightmares and drown me, a deep black sea of it, murder me. And then.

Larissa : *The Face arranged to work in California, her agency finding demand there; that fitted-in nicely with her bad dreams - and in the meantime? - In the streets the word was out and now Larissa, or whatever her name was, was out there in a rented apartment doing a job in the States, with a snug little baby .32 Colt Auto snuck down in her bag.*

I hardly knew a darn thing, but one thing I did know was that I must end it here, right here, before my life was destroyed by my past elicit pleasures. It was like a failed take in a bad movie. I was wet through and snot dribbled at intervals from my nose, the rain pelted down whenever it felt so inclined- it felt as if I hadn't changed my clothes for a couple of days and I itched all over; shaving becomes an addiction after a while.

Add to that, I was angry, hungry, tired. I reeked of body, like a lost sheep and I was crazy with fear. After all this time, everything which I thought was mine was about to be snatched away from me. *That wouldn't happen, not if I still had some lead in the heater in my bag.*

Later, Larissa was me and I was now feral, out looking for this lousy blackmailing mother-fucker, so close to destroying my life. It was a humid, rather cold day. Perfect for a death, perfect for a murder, I told myself as I walked towards the address he'd given me, snuck away by the water. I was sweating all over, I swear I smelt like a polecat and made noises like an animal with bad digestion. This thing, as far as I was concerned, had come further than full circle, and maybe this was the only way anyone was ever going to end it.

How this had happened to me I hardly knew, but I did know that it must end here, here, before my life was destroyed by my past elicit pleasures. It was like a failed take in a bad movie. I was wet through and snot dribbled at intervals from my nose, the rain pelted down at

intervals, whenever it felt so inclined - it felt as if I hadn't changed my clothes for a couple of days and I itched all over, especially in my guilty crotch...

I'd woken up lathered in fear, anger and sweat. Terrified of my short time remaining, scared of where this would lead me and aware that my time was set to run away anyway without my bidding or knowledge. The fucking set of life is upon me, I'm ageing. One day those eyes that I spend so much time pretending to ignore won't lust after me, won't follow my behind any more, won't question the fit of my hips, the shape of my sex, the girth of my breasts.

Sometimes I think being female is just another purgatory, another cruel moment before nowhere claims me, makes me forgotten again, despite those moments of joy, ecstasy, *nirvana*, that all women seek and are ultimately humiliated by. It's as if what makes you who you are is constantly being used as a carrot while reality is the stick, never ending until your time is gone bye.

And I'm drowning *now*. This hood, this maniac is making me sad, driving me to lose my motivation, my strength and drive and then my life, the fact made worse because I know that each of them anyway is always simply perched on the fantasy of this our time, which leads all of us to nothing – only to another beginning. Forever. Groundhog Day. *And whatever it takes to do to get the fool off my case....*

Picture this ...

Picture this ...

Book 3

The World before the Bang

Chapter 9

Bang!

*'You must remember this
A kiss is just a kiss,
A sigh is just a sigh,
The fundamental things apply
As time goes bye...'*

'Ring, ring!'

Picture this ...

“Hullo.”

“Hullo, nice to catch you in at last, it’s Penny... look, we’ve got a little problem, and as you’re one of us, I thought you’d like the thought of a couple of grand a day, cash!”

This could turn out to be a bad habit...

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