

‘What a perfect specimen of woman.’

Despite seeing her in the unmentionable act, I was still nads under knees for the gorgeous girl in light pink. I couldn’t see weakness. I was impervious to sadness, oblivious to anything but pure joy as my heart hammered for the thing that should have only been a fling.

She danced with her entourage, they blocked off all forms of male contact to her, I danced with the hard beats, caressed the soft melodies, and made my way to their circle.

Jack and Ronnie humped the air surrounding any girl who was drunk enough. Eyes in search of vision, moves in search of talent. I did my best to not look like them, as I crouched and lighted my body lightly with my legs, still moving toward the southwest corner of the dance floor.

A spare elbow I threw inadvertently connected with Mary. She waved it off, flexing her cut arms and grinning at me. I picked her up and swung her around while everyone else was lost in the commotion ocean of motion.

For 10 minutes, I was distracted from my goal of reaching Lo. Mary was fun and energetic, so we danced together, her twisting and me crouching to her level. I ejected shotgun shells of sweat on the wood floor, so much I slipped my way to the bar. I ordered a long island iced tea and the barman threw a third of each bottle into a gigantic drink.

I stood at the bartop, staring into flesh flounce left, right, up, down, completely untethered to any support in the featherweight togas. I continued gazing with no discretion, discernment. Joining the madness again I directed the show, with conductor arms waving I willed them all, every act on the dance floor, and the night’s ecstasies congealed into one.

Spinning, now crouching, now pumping, I found myself at Lo's group, no longer an impregnable circle. The girls all accepted men and women as partners, and I saw Lo. Like the first night in Santorini, I waltzed to her, confidence gushed from my choreography, and I slid down her body. She shuddered, her girls saw, and they occluded me from her once again. I didn't comprehend what happened at first. I continued dancing. Then, everything slowed down. Colors crawled as they passed from person to person, and I toddled to the outskirts of the dance floor, over to the bar.

"Give me a long island iced tea!" smiling, but peculiar.

He presented the same drink once again, toppling with liquid. I drank it until I could hear silence.

Attractive features vanished. The beauties moments before now hardly human, ugly in every way. All except Lo.

"Go over to her. Profess your love to her," through the silence I heard the disco ball positioned 10 feet above my head talk to me, as if it were God himself.

"Really? You think that's necessary right now?" I asked.

"It's more than necessary. It's the only way you will get her back."

"What about the other day in the hot tub? She no longer wants me. She's had everyone."

"She will come to her senses. Trust me."

When a disco ball, an altruistic object providing entertainment and enjoyment for all in its presence reaches out in order to aid you, you listen.

Walking without rhythm, seeing no one but light emanating from her glorious eminence, I marched to her, delicately embraced her hand, told her, “follow me,” and she respected my request.

When we escaped the noise, “Lo, I saw what you did in the hot tub.”

She glass-face looked at me.

“I don’t care,” I said.

Angel hairs bladed any attempt of an expression.

“I don’t care if you get with everyone at Ohio State. Once you graduate and I’m out of the Army, I want you.”

To a sober person, I looked the most desperate. To a drunk person, I looked desperate. Based off her countenance, I was the masked serial killer in a horror flick, following her relentlessly, obsessively ready to rape and kill immediately.

I wish she would’ve screamed. It would have hurt less. Instead, she gave me blank eyes.

“I never want to see you again.”

The ferocious storm spit rain in my cheeks and I squinted my eyes as I watched her abrupt calves flex and relax, flex and relax until they vanished. I walked out to the storm, embracing the stinging missiles, and sat down on a slab of concrete bordering dirt and brush.

I stared Poseidon in the iris’. He hurled everything he possessed into the tropical tempest. A hurricane of thick wind and water flooded the island, and I gave everything I possessed to stay afloat, treading sludge, earth, filth. Peering around, I saw only black, unless I looked down.

Light-infused shards floated beneath the salacious surface, curving with the fluid nature of the water.

In the midst of my depression, they seemed the only cure, but I knew I would have to pass through the densest layer of depravity to reach them. I didn't mind. I angled my body vertically, eyes first, and gave a mighty dolphin kick, same time thrusting my arms forward, pulling elbows up and out, throwing my weight into the swift rowing motion of my lats, biceps, triceps, forearms, hands, gaining maximum leverage possible against the strong current of demons inside.

I continued, urging my body and soul through the barrier, like a sperm fertilizing an egg, pushing, forcing, ramming, running, until I could see what the light illuminated. An angel with flourished understanding, a perceptive mind to all the struggles in my life, spread her arms selfsame way as the lady on the island embracing the boy. I kept on my journey to her, presuming a haven of oxygen enveloped her. Out of breath, petrified that I would be stranded out in the darkness, unable to finally reach her and find the solace I desired over anything, I swam.

She saw me, and she smiled, as if she knew I would make it, like she could see my future and she was unafraid. She reached out a fragile arm, grabbed my pinky finger, gave the subtlest tug, and broke me through the barrier to her side.

Immediately upon safety, I forgot the struggle I was in seconds ago. I was safe, and as far as I knew, I never struggled. The song she sang told me so.

“Tell me, what can I do for you?” she asked.

“Nothing. I feel so good right now,” I replied. “Let's watch the storm while we are in the eye and admire our good fortune,” I said pointing past the eaves into the hurricane.

I looked straight up into her beautiful eyes, her porcelain skin surrounding, black ripples of hair, bright red lips. She cradled my head in her lap, and smiled, drunk.

“Okay,” she said wholeheartedly.

We smiled, frozen in the moment.

“You really are an angel, amid all the decadence of the island,” I said.

“Why do you say that,” she asked.

“You’re the only one who knows what love is,” I replied.

“Everyone knows what love is,” she posited. “We just realize it.”

Suddenly.

“What the hell is this?!” a drunk and infuriated husband shouted as he exited the door, laying eyes on our scene of unromantic love.

“Babe! It’s not what you think it is!” she shouted.

“I’m gonna kill him!” he screamed, stepping over to our position, grabbing my sullen face out of her lap.

I didn’t fight, I didn’t say anything. There was nothing to say. I ruined something sacred.

He reached his arm back, elbow first, hand in the shape of a square atomic bomb.

“He was strewn out in the storm!” she started.

I lazily looked at his fist, all zeros, and then I felt a weird sensation in my nose.

“I don’t give a shit! Why the hell would you do this to me? I’ve seen you looking at this stupid brute! Have you always wanted to get with him? Waiting for me to get drunk, then slipping out without a word?”

Her answer didn’t matter. He had already made his mind about her, and about me, in his fit of rage and drink.

“Baby! We didn’t do anything! Don’t you see I was helping him!”

“Oh, I bet you were helping him!”

She now stood up, bent over, down to his level as he straddled my inert body, both hands nuclear reactors. His arms engaged the sequence, and the explosions continued until my head lay engraved in the dirt.