

dumb NOR- wegian

& THE ASIAN PERSUASION

thor svenson

ILLUSTRATIONS by thomas bjelland

"Happy Ending?"

Put two *Dumb Norwegians* together and see what they come up with...Svenson and Bjelland present an original format and take on: *Dating After Fifty*—sometimes humorous, sometimes painful, but most often a combination of confounding blunder and bewildering discontent.

Unique illustration compliments the insightful text throughout to make this a must read for singles in pursuit of coupling or happily coupled folks who might enjoy a bit of *freudenschade*.

Cultural observations provide engaging dissertation and if there're any ladies out there who might be wondering: Just what's up with the male libido—here is your guide. (*Good Luck!*)

dumb norwegian

ILLUSTRATIONS by thomas bjelland

thor svenson



dumb NOR- wegian

& THE ASIAN PERSUASION



thor svenson

ILLUSTRATIONS by thomas bjelland

BJELLANDESIGN
NEWPORT BEACH, CA

contents

INTRO / PREFACE

1. She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not!

Mariko / Love! Hate? Divorce.

Kiyoko / Kinda-Rich Bitch

Jun / Just Friends

Yang / Genital Man

2. Notes from the Field

Jisun / Little by Little

Keiko / Game Face

Eunjoo / Bulgogi and Pickled Eggs

Shaula / Your Turn to Pay

Grace / Won't Come Out to Play

3. Vows Kept, Love Lost

Vanna D / Bird in Hand

Marcia / Catch and Release

Sanae / Flown from Bush

4. North Shore

Yukimi / Closer, No Cigar

Mai / Hookipa Blues

Maki / No Means Yes

5. Illustrated Poems

Bitter Letter Never Sent / Irashai Imasen

Still Pretty

Closing Time (Big-hearted Lad)

6. Sidenotes and Fun Stuff

Perfect (Bird) Ten

Actively Seeking

Tramp **art t/k**

Down, Down, Down **art t/k**

Creep

7. Dreams

5/19/07 4:30 a.m. Nightmare

6/5/99 Awakening Dream

6/8/08 Flown from Bush

8/27/08 Same Last Dream

6/11/13 *Shoganai* (Nothing Can Be Done)

11/5/16 Pupukea Hieghts

9/1/17 Denial

9/2/17 Almost Wet Dream

10/23/17 Denial Again

11/2/17 Can't Hurry Love

11/3/17 New Girl!

5/5/18 Up the Ante

3/4/19 Another Girl

7/15/23 Happy Ending

dumb
NOR-
wegian
& THE ASIAN PERSUASION

thor svenson

Illustrated, Designed & Produced in California, USA by Thomas Bjelland
P.O. BOX 1482, NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92659 • www.thomasbjelland.com
©BJELLAND DESIGN 2023 • DRAFT 10/21/24

intro

It would be nice to presume that the anecdotal evidence of mishap and escapade presented here is purely a work of fiction! Undoubtedly the reader will find it likely that such trials and tribulations as related herein by *yours truly* would be hard to make up all-together; self-flagellation being one modus operandi employed in the newly discovered ball-busting exploits encountered and assembled here by a middle-age new-bachelor endeavoring to find suitable companionship in the post-Divorce (the BIG D!) dating-game.

Some things have become clear in the end however, and damn-it if we can do anything about it: Everyone over fifty is a rebound of some sort (except for those whom never coupled—they can only find another of their kind and best wishes to them). Wish I wasn't so picky. And as it turns out at this critical juncture where security trumps character—had a bit more coin!

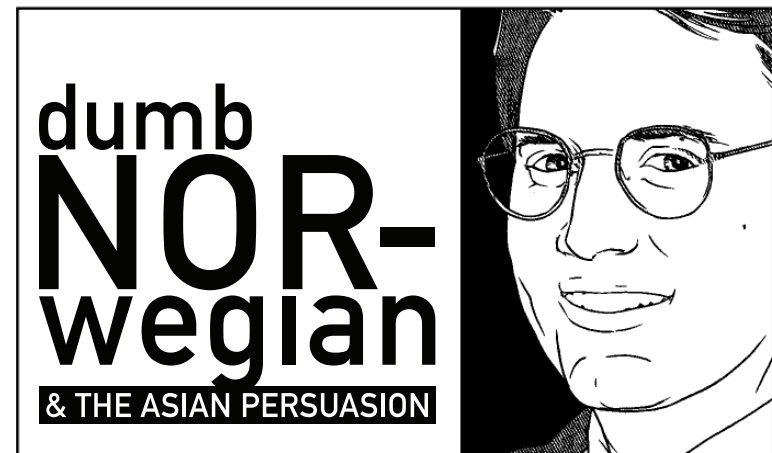
Nevertheless, the misadventures and/or achievements elicited herein might shed some light for others; should fellow “singles” need encouragement or solace, or relatively happy folks enjoy a bit of *freudenschade*. In an effort to protect the innocents involved (and *all* are—'tis I who am guilty!); first name only and or pseudonyms will be employed—lest erroneous intentions be conveyed.

Events *most likely* did take place in the general context presented (of course from one perspective only), and were noted originally as a means of: “getting it out of the system” and (hopefully) moving on. When a ridiculous amount of “material” piled-up, the artistic impulse that is no small part of my driving force since boyhood welled-up, and force-of-nature compelled the compilation.

Illustrations adorning the text are a visual semblance of overall sentiment and not devoted entirely to individual yarns, but generally in the ballpark regarding aesthetic accompaniment and presented for your viewing pleasure.

Your humble (and a little pissed!) protagonist,
thor svenson

p.s. And while of American nationality and Scandinavian descent, the creative “team” urges that should one be unfamiliar with the moniker: “Dumb Norwegian”—just ask a Swede—*they'll tell ya!*



dumb norwegian

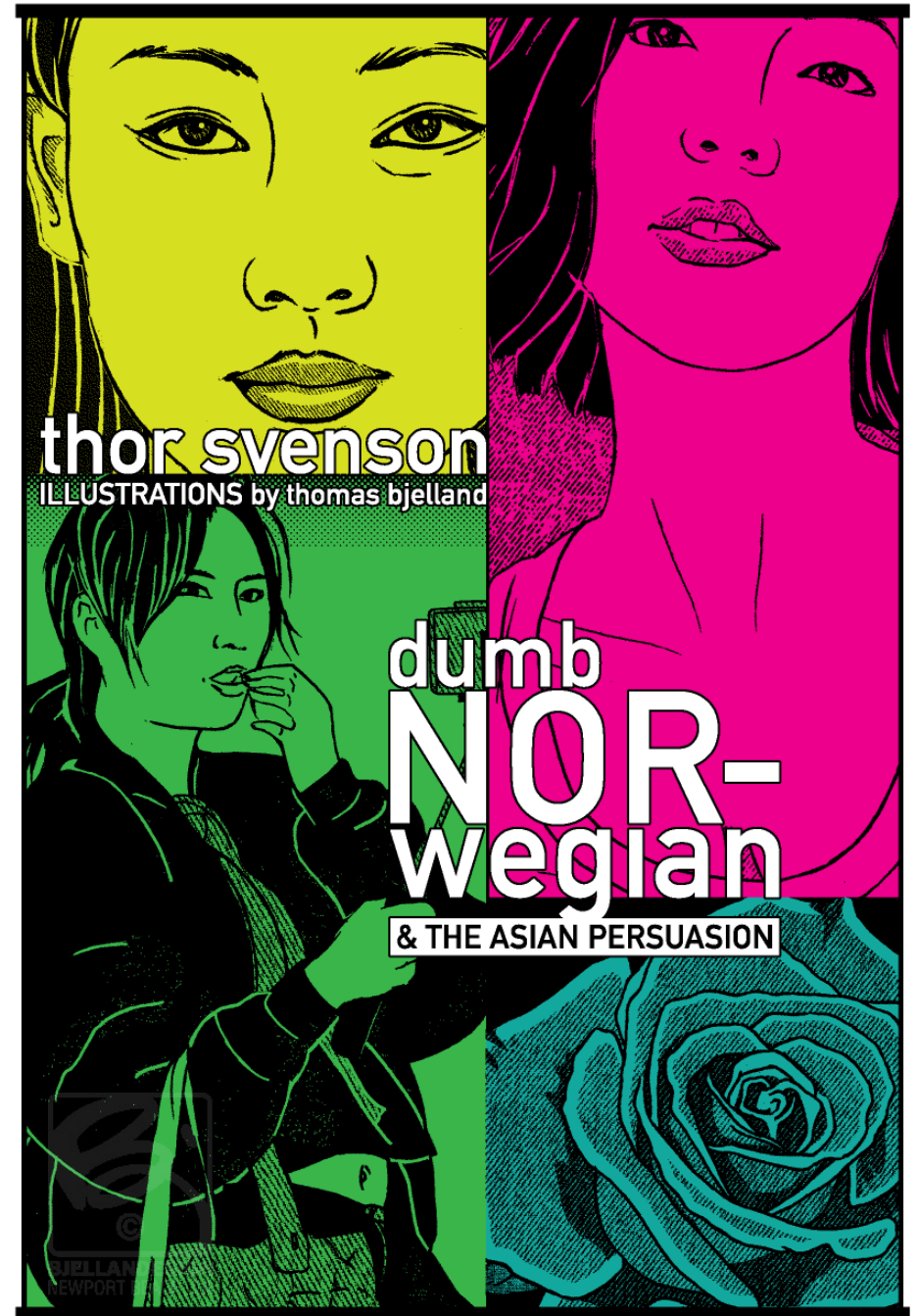
preface

Kiss-and-tell? Not me—not my style.

Look, so what if the dude likes Asian chicks (mostly)? We like what we like—we want what we want—pain doesn't discriminate. Herein speculation and/or narrative will be put forth for uncovering something—but just what? A ruminative attempt for solace and understanding? Expulsion regurgitation towards moving forward or perhaps regarding the "past"—*even* healing? A dating(?) compilation with anecdotal and/or subjective example—including a few juicy-bits here-and-there? (not-too-juicy though). Maybe could be amusing—if wrangled non-vindictive and embracing self-deprecation? What is this endeavor and why the hell am I having to purge?

One penultimate conclusion is all that one can be sure of: that should any venom espoused on any feline or situation appear particularly rough in the following text, rest assured—I'd (kiss) any one of them again.

Fool that be me...



1.
she
loves me,
she loves me not!



love, hate, divorce Mariko

Love! Spring semester-off from Orange Coast College, I, your intrepid author-protagonist-stooge am on the south shore of Oahu for surf, Surf, SURF! and *whatever else* might be an adventure. We met on the beach in Waikiki, she with her friends, me with mine. Blonde California boy. *What is a Japanese girl?* Looks Cute! We paired off; talented Aussie (surfboard) shaper and new friend Alby and feisty-babe Aiya, me and Mariko, almost Sticks and Milky. Introductions went well. After a few dates, an older acquaintance of theirs originally from Tokyo who was watching over the girls while in Hawaii pressed me of my intentions for her. "What's this *gaijin* (foreign) boy up to?" When she saw the hand-made airbrush and calligraphy birthday card I had made for our dinner celebration—her stern demeanor melted. We got to know each other. Nice! One pleasant evening I stayed over at the vacation apartment that the girls shared in Town; in the middle of the night, she woke me up. We may have made love on the floor while the gals slept in the beds a few feet away—but as mentioned—I'll never tell!

That spring, Human League's *Don't You Want Me Baby* pulsed on the airwaves and in nightclubs, Bob Marley and the Wailer's *Rastaman Vibrations* was on turntable repeat in our downstairs apartment back of Waikiki. My folks and younger brother E came to Hawaii and I joined them for a pleasant outer islands tour. Mariko's return date to Chiyoda-ku was approaching and I convinced me mum Joy Emma and step-dad Mink that I needed to fly back early to Honolulu and say goodbye. On our last meeting before both returning to our respective homes—and a world away from each other—I took da Bus from the apartment on Launui Street near the Ala Wai Canal that

Sticks, Hal and I shared (they slept in the two single-beds and raided my poorly hidden pakalolo watching MASH reruns on the tube every arvo if I'd gone out to see Mariko, and I crashed on the floor between the beds until Sticks went off to Nagoya for new adventure and I got his) to meet her. I got off da Bus and saw her across the street. It could be the last time I ever see her again! The traffic light turned green—*Walk*—and from opposite sides of the street, we both ran to meet in the middle, embraced in a hug. Still the most romantic moment of my life.

So now I gotta let this girl know I really like her. I traveled to Tokyo that summer and got to experience a new culture; great food, sight seeing, the then still rural beaches, trips to the *Onsen* (hot springs resort), how fun it is to have a pretty girl show you the ropes! Older brother Haruki welcomed me with open-arms (to my great relief!) on my first visit to the house. Oldskool father Toshiro corrected my too-casual request to speak with her on the phone demanding proper etiquette with a subtle-yet-stern tone invoking me to be sure to keep it on the up-and-up. I even took the next semester off and spent three months in Nagoya after Sticks had done his tour airbrushing surfboards to absorb it all and the opportunity of seeing her again. Then Mariko visited me here. Wonderful, naked lunch at Tosh's borrowed rental in Balboa Heights. *Please come to California!* (I can't move there—thanks). Marriage, Green Card, Driver's License, Work Permit and good Employ, Nissan Sentra, Apartment, Home Purchase, Diligence rewarded. Optimism! Two years in, let's have a child—be a family! It was kinda funny later during the turmoil of the big-split (the BIG D!) when she said that "She only came to California to study English at college in the first place" (and not to be with me necessarily—ha). We all need rationalization to survive...but come-on!

Awesome son Ian is conceived on the *first* try. Bing-bang-boom—preggers! And don't ask me why, but I am positive he would have had only brothers if siblings would have come (one of my brothers has three boys, the other three girls). Cesarean

birth, we have a healthy baby—thank heavens! We had checked into Hoag in Newport Beach in the afternoon and I'm still wondering if the doctor was not looking forward to be on-call late into the night for delivery, and made his incision-decision shortly after dinnertime. It might have been a hindrance in the demise of our intimacy, and with hindsight I'll even go so far as to put forth this now unpopular suggestion that there is NO NEED for the husband to be *in* the room and perfectly fine to be in the hall just outside as in days of yore in assiduous anticipation; and when all is said and done—how could I know as I found out the hard way that it's not uncommon for Asians to not talk about sex? (It's all fun and games—until it's not). Look, I'm as reticent as they come with my Norwegian/German heritage male tendencies—but I'm *not* a priest and very unwelcoming to the new Sperm Retention Program I've unwittingly been enrolled in. I'm a loving father, busy starting my own studio after a decade of experience elsewhere (trying to honor my artistic talent and not wish I never tried—Damn the Torpedoes!). Mariko is working hard; a great mother, becoming fluent, did move away from family and friends for *us*, even commuting to LAX to work the ANA counter, but also meeting new friends and becoming a Californian. (She'll never *not* be Japanese—*nor* shouldn't she). I'll give her time, she'll come around.

Hate? I'll keep it short here for everyone's sake. We had waited the nine months and a couple more for good measure and New Year's Eve was the glorious date for splendor to return. Regrettably, for whatever reasons there was limited foreplay as counter to the norm; some difficulty and (was it?) dry-condom-pain resulting in *Coitus Interruptus*. I couldn't believe it after waiting for so long and withdrew to (yet another!) desultory whack in my room. So that's it for me. For good? What? Wait?...DAMN!

Five years in, she still won't be intimate—and won't tell me why she won't even try. Every effort ends in denial and then anger—so finally I give up. What fun would it be anyways if I

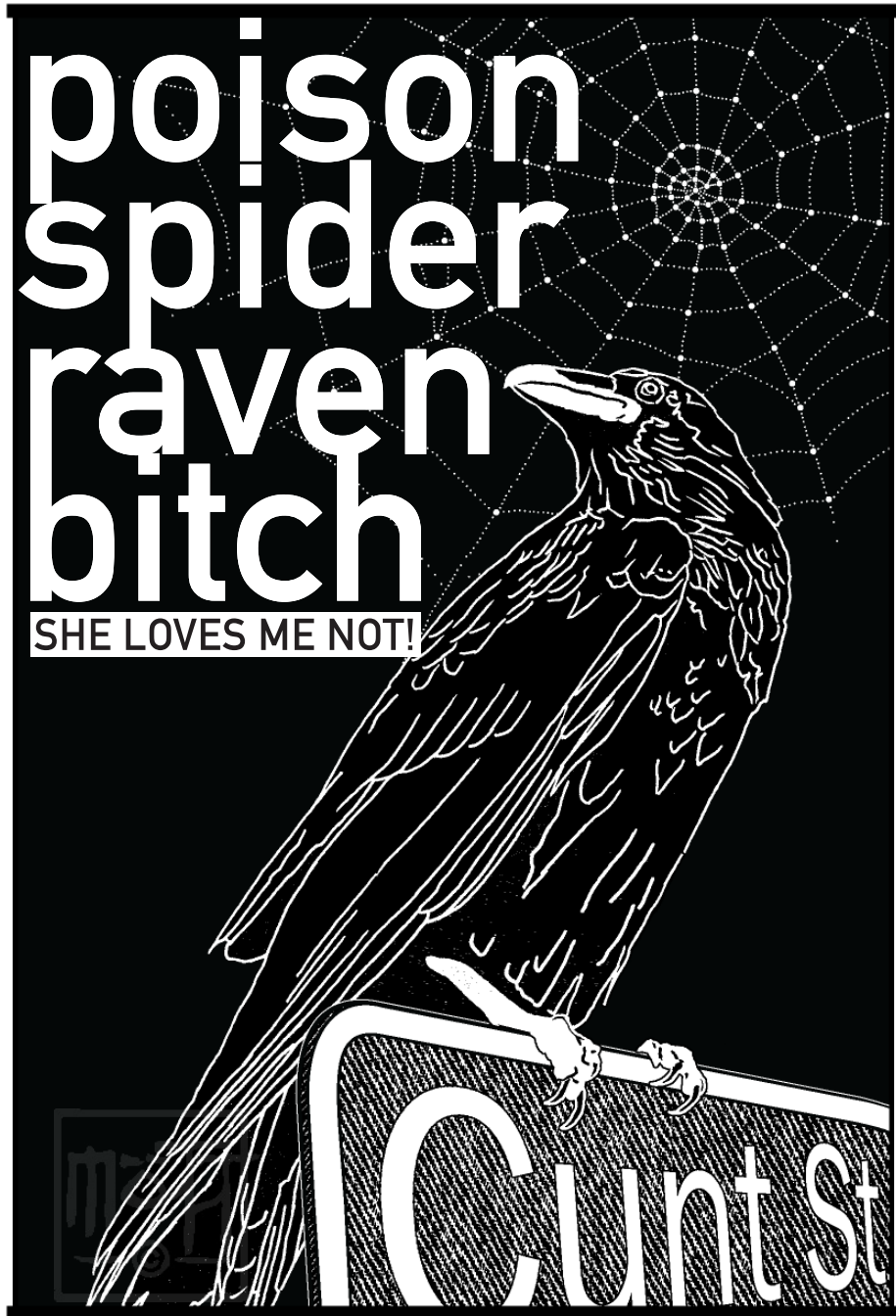
tried to force the issue? There's no reward for *any* endeavor of fortitude or kindness beyond congenial courtesy.

Ten years in, I don't feel like a man. Please, give me *any* release! Poison—not blood—flows through my veins. Besides the male physical drive that is being ignored, I need to give love and get it in return. Enjoy simple companionship. Even just talk. But there is nothing much left to say. Incredibly, one time I drove to LAX to pick her up from Tom Bradley after a trip home to Japan and we didn't say a single word to each other upon meeting (so tough to see other couples reunited with flowers and jubilation), or for the entire drive home, albeit Mariko was tired and sort of dozed off after the long flight—but still—not a *word*. Then it wasn't even any fun to visit Japan anymore not enjoying any type of couple togetherness stuff as before; there's jet lag and meeting friends, and whoop-de-do. For most of the duration and home life we never fought except for a few minor instances of later child rearing discrepancy—we were just roomies who got along. I did have to put the nix on her starting to call me Daddy everyday instead of referring to me by name: Thor—as some hint to my displeasure of her seeming "neglect;" my viewpoint as being one entity—not what I signed up for. For Mariko, it's just Mom; apparently enough for her—I've got no say in the matter and now what?

Divorce. We were blessed with the healthy child that I had prayed for; so I was raising him as best I could on my end, and that by the way was a lot of fun beyond the "unconnected" aspect otherwise, shooting for eighteen. Couldn't quite make it and it was tough all around. I don't know if Mariko had ever even contemplated that at some point I would ever file for divorce being herself seemingly not frustrated at all with the "living" situation, or if even cognizant at the time of the fact that she and Ian unwittingly teamed-up against me on *any* and *all* subjects as time went on; which ultimately was my tipping point beyond the non-coupling issue; and the three

worst words I have ever read came back on the first page of the court's filing when I just couldn't stand it anymore: SVENSON vs SVENSON. And while there is the question of possible cultural differences of relationship perception, there is still personal-differences regardless, and why does it work for some and not others? Just ain't fair.

You can't hate if you don't love first, and truth be told—hate was only a vehicle for getting to the point of the judge signing-off for any possible chance of my hope for ever enjoying relationship/feeling a "complete" man once again—I'd have been happy to still be a couple if she hadn't quit caring. In the end, it's my least favorite word in the Japanese language that sums up going from delight to debacle—*Shoganai* (nothing can be done).



kinda-rich bitch! kiyoko

Ridiculous! I'm here to report that G. Orwell in *Down and Out in Paris and London* has hit the nail on the head in general, at least for the male of our species deprived—to paraphrase: "That the sexual impulse being fundamental, starvation being near as demoralizing as physical hunger." Let me state it bluntly so that one can at least perceive some semblance of my condition and then view my actions in this current state of mind: I haven't known the splendor of warm, cuddly, hot, juicy, luxurious-wet-pussy for so long I'm sick. Physically *and* emotionally. Both married brothers (with three great kids each!) got snipped so they could partake without caution, I'm about to off-myself the next time I have to buy another large bottle of Jergens. It's disheartening to the soul, I try to hide the bottle in my Target basket lest any fornicators see the evidence. One time I got in line in front of a girl buying a box of ribbed XL Trojans just to rub it in. (She's having fun!) And although the dinner/dating routine extols its own fees, I'm not about to pay for trim specifically; even being shy as a young man I could get a piece somehow or another and never worried about it.

Also, I'm friggin' pissed-off! *Every* morning I wake up angry. The Divorce. The house's eminent loss (I filed in July of 2008, a month before the "Big Recession" hit; my eggs-in-mostly-one-basket design business fell off a cliff and no way I'm getting any loan now to buy her out, and honestly hadn't quite gotten that far ahead in the sorting of all things out with first things being first and all). I would have to conclude in hindsight that perhaps, naively—*neither* of us thought we would be leaving it after

sixteen years of don't-know-what-you-got-till-its-gone comfort, and now both paying three times the mortgage amount we shared in SoCal rent—and with no end in sight! (30 years hence the combination of un-beatable climate and the unmitigated greed of real estate investors snapping-up everything in sight and kindly renting it back at exorbitant rate to folks who may have slipped on a banana peel and become renters or never had the chance to own have driven the SoCal market off-the-charts—the vast majority of kids now-a-days will never be able to afford the home they grew up in). But back to the decision and even living together a couple more years after finalizing paperwork to mitigate the dreadful realization of both having to leave the house we both loved *for good*—just about every modicum of "ideal" life as I believed in up until now is shot full of holes. Crap!

But who's this new chick on the arm of a certain Japanese business-dude in town to spend some money? Well, not actually on his arm, both being married they are hiding the affair (wink-wink!); but it was a tell when she paid for lunch at the Chart House and he gently placed his overturned palm on the table next to and brushing her hand as she dropped the Franklin in it. Too intimate. They both had ordered the same glass of white as well—yuck! I ordered the halibut as usual and enjoyed a house scotch-rocks. Also, she jokingly complained in front of others about his always getting lost driving. Couple stuff.

But wait, is another Japanese woman what I want? Well—hell *yes*! Everyone has their type, maybe I was just unlucky that first twenty-five year stretch (twenty to the *exact* date married by strange filing timing coincidence, five in long distance dating/fiancé mode). How's that for rationalization? I'm super horny but I gave up porn as more intense action is needed the more one watches becoming desensitized, and also then seeing the whole picture. Artists have visual acuity to varying degrees, and I can't stand to see one more creepy ole/young (Japanese) dude banging some hot babe that he would never have a

chance with without her being paid to be on camera for. Gross! Girl on girl is nice of course—but I'm done.

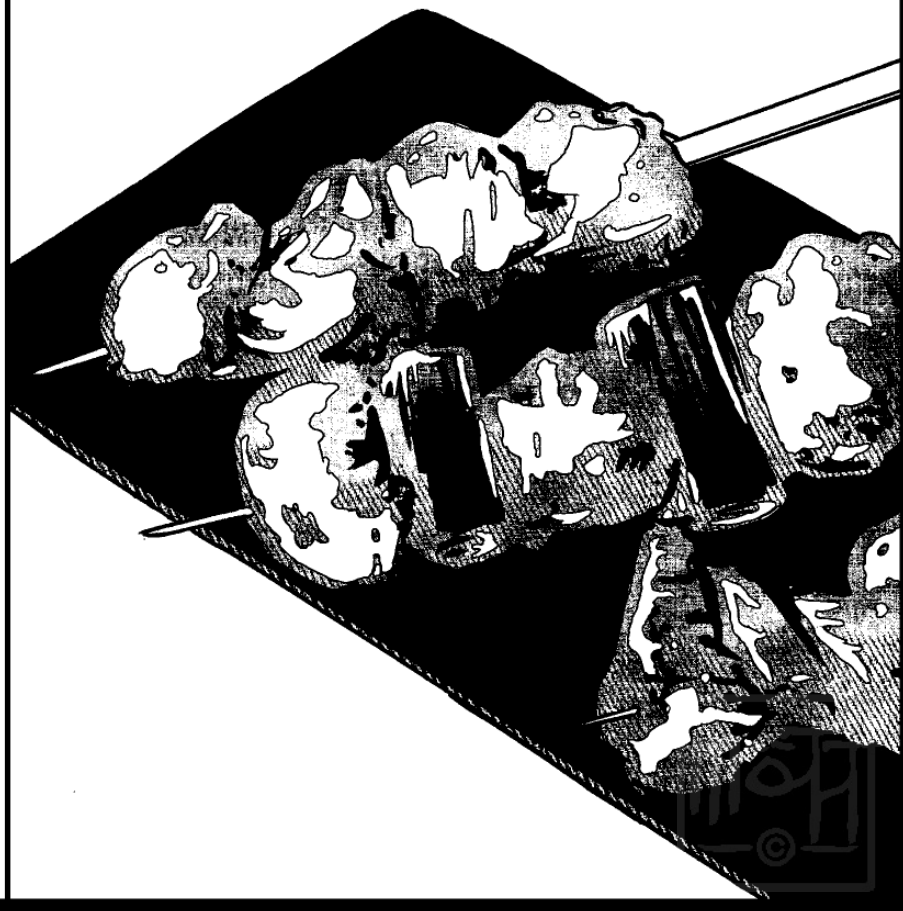
Kiyoko spoke good English, was pretty cute from the right angle and maybe had ten years on me. She had a slight gunt under her khakis, fine for her age and otherwise svelte—definitely in my wheelhouse for wanting to have a roll on the futon. Asian women age well—her skin was still nice. We went to Laguna for some quick site-seeing after lunch and I put my arm around her for a short stroll when we got away from the group. Then I got a few laughs out of her with my by-now intonation perfect—but vocabulary limited Japanese at the *Koohii* (coffee) shop. I'd gather she rather enjoyed the attention as she had a permanent smile the whole ride back to Newport and seemed pretty juiced-up by the end of the afternoon. I'm pretty sure she took it out on business-dude when they eventually got back to the hotel in LA that night—lucky bastard.

When Kiyoko returned to New Zealand where her family had just built a custom vacation-investment second home she mailed me an oversize (Valentine) greeting card with some photos of us all from her trip, including one other photo of her in a short skirt sitting on the couch—presumably in the living room of the new place—with arms gesturing to the empty space beside her. Her best bar-hostess-come-hither pose which she apparently perfected (and did look good—if I do say so!) before she met her successful businessman husband. (Allegedly:) The card was an invitation to visit her there in New Zealand and said, "My family welcomes and waiting to see you," then "I MISS YOU" written in large pink marker script—all caps. Some additional photos of the newly built castle looked nice, and although it was not near a beach with good surf; I kicked around a first trip to Kiwi Land. I told 'ya—I'm friggin' horny—and up for some fun!

We talked about doing some projects together and she innocently but swiftly hijacked my idea for creating picture books after I had shown her my mock-ups of *Shibadude/A Tail from*

[continued in full book]

jun “just friends”



Pretty cute! I had seen her every week at Mitsuwa.

She worked the Shiseido make-up counter and I always smiled at her if she looked my way. (Attention!) One-time frowning when she saw me look at a younger girl walking by in front of her. Mitsuwa is just around the corner from the house, which is a little strange—but convenient, that it moved right in where we live considering when Mariko and I got together there were barely even

Sushi shops in California.



My good friend Hiroyuki, who I met decades ago in Chiba, even scored a Green Card back then as a chef so that he could move to California and surf. After securing status and settling in with his wife for many years, the opportunity arose to purchase a retiring *Nisei's* (second-generation Japanese abroad) gardening route; so he bailed on the grueling sushi-chef schedule of lunch shift, a couple hours break, then the dinner shift until closing; and in a positive and fun twist of racial stereotyping—appeared *Sensei* (master) to all the lawn customers from day one. His at-first-pretty-rough English may have even helped the cause: *Ah-so! Japanese-make-good-garden!* He did quickly learn the ropes and indeed became *Matsu Sensei* (Japanese Black Pine pruning expert). Now a-days you'll be lucky to be served *maguro* or *hamachi* by a Japanese person, or let alone Asian even—might be a Spanish fellow.

So Jun is half-Japanese, half-Korean and petite but not too small. She's divorced and has two kids in their twenties. She won't give me her number, but I can always see her there. Behind the Shiseido counter. So she is hiding something. But I don't care for now; she does want to have a beer (I had conservatively offered Coffee—she thought better) and some ramen.

We meet at the restaurant, I order my usual—*Miso* ramen with *niniku* (fresh garlic), we share some *gyoza* (pot stickers/dumplings). I share a little too much for a first meeting when I reveal my domestic situation; fifteen years still(!) of a celibate stretch almost over with the lawyers saddled-up. She laughed, even handsome-enough appearing fellows—or perhaps projecting an aura of having it all together—have problems—just like everyone. She lied she was single and lived alone, just dating since her own split. Still don't know why I offered my details candidly right-off-the-bat, perhaps some misguided notion that integrity would have a loosening or attractive effect towards dropping panty; but turns out you have to know someone first for even venturing such a wild swing—goose egg coming my way more likely. After dinner I gave her a prolonged hug good-

bye in the parking lot next to her Infiniti sportster and at first she stiffened-up, rigidly not expecting the advance—then loosened her shoulders in resignation—feels good. She can't help it. Big smile—I sensed she liked the fit. And of course the attention having not expected pursuit—but appreciative she was desired.

Next time I saw her at the counter, we chatted and I went on to collect my *edamame*, *miso* paste, mild-*kimchee* (no fish-sauce please!) and Kirin Ichiban twelve-pack on sale. When I came back around I spied her looking in the back mirror of her station and adjusting her bangs; weighing her attractiveness for gaining attention ratio. She's got me on notice—still got it.

We meet at Bandera for our second “date,” and she buys dinner(!) When the waiter brings the check, instead of the occasional feigned offer from the girl to pay half; she pulls the wallet out of her purse, fishes out her credit card and lays it on the tray. I enjoy her brazen karate-chop at forgoing all dating protocol for the moment; but then later wonder if it was a subliminal gesture which meant that this was “friends,” her turn—and not technically a date. We order sandwiches with fries, chat about past successes and losses, optimistic hopes for the future. I rest my hand on her knee under the table and whisper in her ear that I don't want to be friends—but lovers. (Her Great White Lover! as I had mistakenly assumed she had only been with Asian fellows including her Ex; plus *House of Cards* on the Radiohead CD *In Rainbows* was not collecting any dust on the shelf back in the house 'round that time).

I leave a twenty tip since we had sat through a couple serving times with our waiter—at least we were outside on the uncrowded patio—not in the prime bar/dining seating indoors; would have been fun for once to be completely treated, but some nagging male accountability proportioning paying and getting trim wouldn't let me waver. On the way out, I hold her hand and walk her to the car. She had forgotten to “pee-pee” though, and I want her to go back inside—we're in no hurry—but

she says it's OK. I place her arms up around my shoulders and lean in for an exploratory (closed-mouth) first kiss. Her tongue responds—a French kiss! Well now. Breaking embrace, I open my eyes a fraction early and since I am a fair-bit taller glimpse an aerial view of her surprisingly small tongue kind of slither back in her mouth. A sensuous baby snake back down its hole. I didn't think we would be good lovers—not a good fit. But hey, any lovin's good lovin' and who'd complain. Course we ain't there yet—not even close—but hell yes! I'd (try to) do her.

Third date rolls around, Jun had arrived at Shin-Sen-Gumi *Yakitori* (all types of chicken skewers individually grilled to order by the chef behind the bar—one of my favorite dinners out) before me and got our name in, so was waiting near the front door and pulled away as I tried to kiss her cheek hello. Someone might see her. We drank a beer each, I had *shochu* (not a *sake* lover—generally too sweet the labels most common) and even ventured a skewer of cartilage when she had ordered one to be amenable and confirmed I wouldn't like the odd-for-western-tastes—too-crunchy texture. I pressed her about letting me take her home (it's the third “date” and all—at least I need to get on base—if not score!) since my place is still out, but now she's saying she has a roommate. To save rent on. Just eight-hundred a month each that way in Tustin. Besides the apartment is messy and let's wait to be alone. (I *am* a neat freak—but c'mon. What dude would ever care about stepping over some dirty britches on his way to a roll-in-the-hay?) Pretty sure she wasn't of the heat required to “be alone” just yet even if I had offered hotel accomodation—*attention* sufficient for her—we did have a pleasant enough evening; but for my part I had seen one really cute more traditional looking Japanese girl in a larger party that was spot-on more my type and registered that small grievance—so who knows who was better off regarding intentions.

After dinner, another French kiss in the parking lot, this time I tilted my head for a proper fit. Not bad. I put my arms around her waist and pulled us together in embrace. As my

erection brushed her hip she was slightly caught off-guard, “Oh, so that's what's up.” As mentioned, or assumed from previous chapter, my dick gets hard if the wind blows in a new direction having not been “blown” for such an interminable drought. “Not yet—give me time,” she lied.

I had let Jun lead me on for a month-or-so, including employing such covert tactic in the meantime such as stopping into her counter one time and not even shopping, “I came to see you.” Ha. Heard that one on some women's talk show and got a big smile, but I'm swinging for the fences even at wild pitches—*whatever*. But now she's saying she needs a couple weeks “break” as her folks are visiting from Seoul, needing her full attention of time not spent at work. As difficult as my situation is—and not that there is anything else going on at the moment—I'm not a complete loser and am calling her out. Still won't give me her number—reckon I'm done playing her game.

I'm trying to shop at Mitsuwa on the days I think she mentioned she was off if possible. (It's so close by and maybe I'll chance seeing some other hottie. And why is that Mexican security guard sometimes following me around the store and waiting with his arms clasped behind his back at the check-out? Racial profiling on a different slant? Of course there's not much action in an all-day-shift, but Señor—I'm not going to steal a bag of *senbei* [rice crackers] at fifty-years-old and a neighborhood home owner. Maybe I look a little suspicious because I'm eyeing a cute girl now and then—might even switch aisles abruptly upon babe-sighting? But not trying to evade security—give me a break. I was about to confront the dude next time, pull the manager over and speak *Nihongo* [Japanese] about how I “belong” here and set him straight. Then there was a foxy Thai-looking babe with huge fakies and a tight skirt, and a huge rock by the way—she wants everyone to look? in the line next to me and he veered course and followed her away to the food court. Guys—we like chicks!). I'll just jump-in and get my stuff, but oops—there's Jun. So instead of chatting her up at the count-

er, I wave to her and go about my shopping. I'll show her! After all, her parents are here, "we're on a break."

A week-or-so later, I'm back for Mitsuwa goodies and do approach her counter to investigate. How dare me ignore her last time! It's over! And by the way, her roommate is really her boyfriend—and he's a white dude—and he's back in town from "business trips." We could still be "friends" though. **Dropping the F-bomb for an extra dig!** (There's no coming back from "Friends" by the way—once in this category her message to you is: You'll NEVER see me naked!).

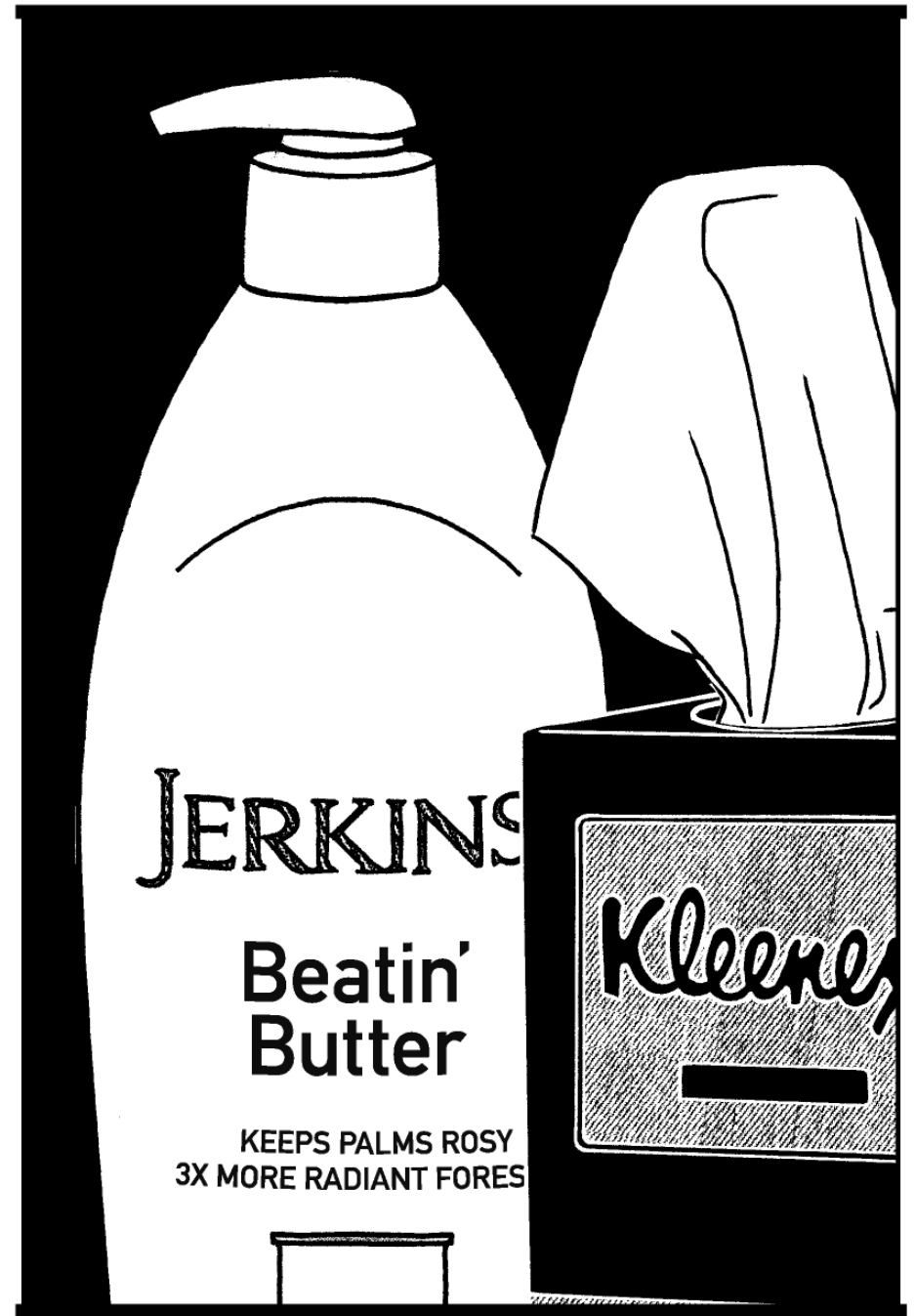
Although I knew the jig-was-up, I couldn't sleep that night. It struck me that I couldn't recall her ever *once* saying my name—Thor. Could she have subliminally not said it as a way of disassociating that I was a real person, with real feelings, so it would be easier to carry on her endless fib? (Since we were now "friends," I did give her a little jab the next time I saw her asking if she knew what it was. She did, with an incriminating chuckle bleated it out, T-h-o-r).

So, these are my nights; tossing and turning, endless rumination about seemingly *everything* going wrong. Why am I having to deal with this crap in the first place? My tough luck. How is this so hard? It was so easy being young. Go figure what Jun's motivation was; swinging to another vine before letting go of the one she hung on? Perhaps she just wanted some attention and I was willing to oblige? In the best case scenerio, and I hope something of this nature did occur; there is the possibility Jun needed strengthening of her true feelings and the minor escapade (for her anyways) was a barometer setting her back on track with boyfriend. On the other hand, it could be tough-luck for him as well (that is, if he isn't dipping his noodle in any other girl's sauce as well), perhaps he doesn't know that they are not really in love—but they *are* saving on rent!

Beatin'-the-bishop, spankin'-the-monkey,
choking-the-chicken, floggin'-the-dolphin,
beatin'-off, whackin'-off, jerkin'-off.

Hand-lotion and tissues again, and again,
and repeat. (did I say again-and-again?
and-repeat?)

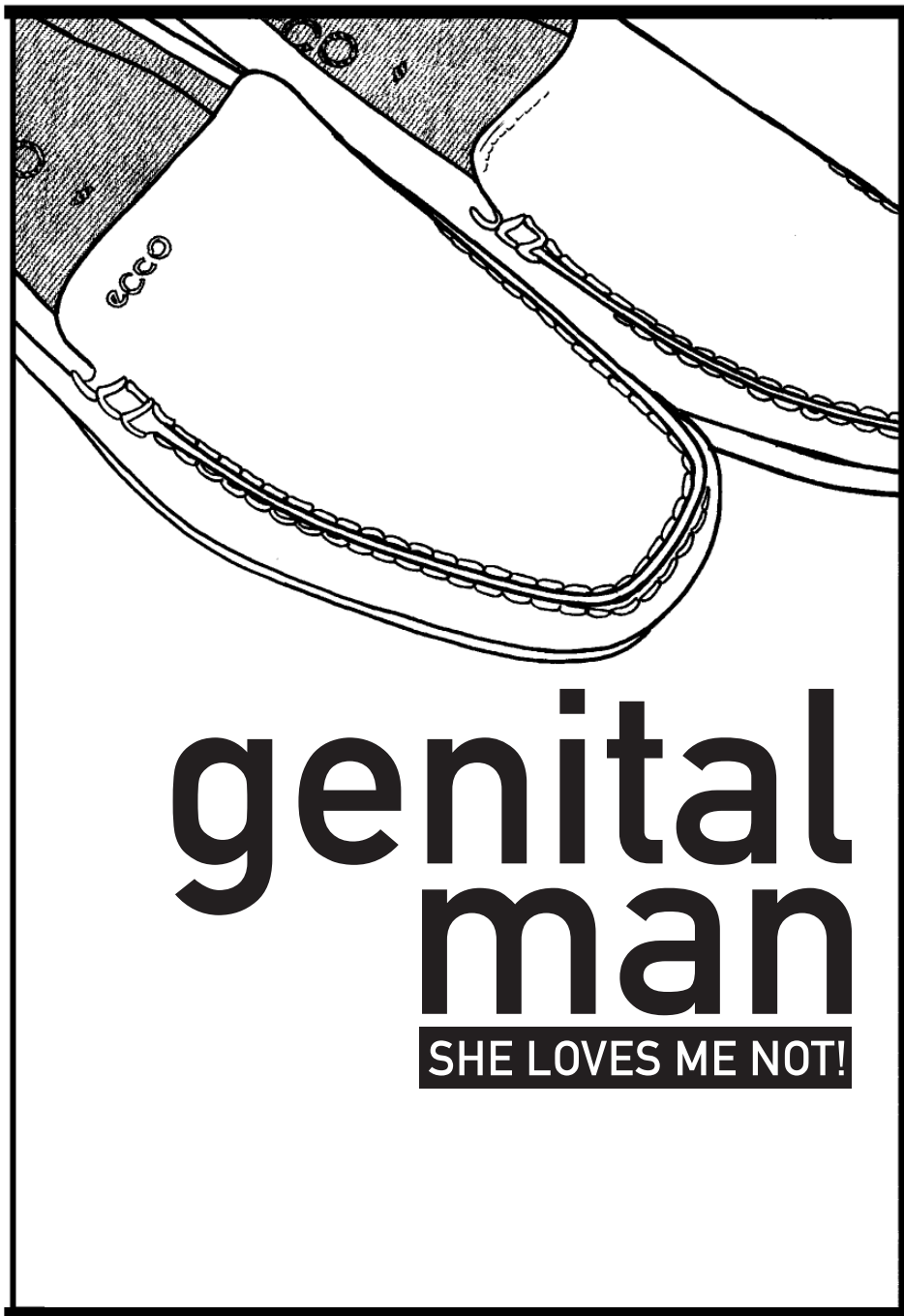
In what world does a man's sex drive not
define him? At least on the inside? Chin-up
(chin-chin-up!) – It ain't over...(at least it
has never left!) Thank Goodness...
thor-the-wanker!





NOTES from the FIELD





(still-pretty) ying

Gorgeous! She had about the nicest hi-lights coloring combined with the softest hair on most any Asian girl I have ever seen. It looked like it was a naturally sun-bleached vertical band, golden in the middle fading to brown then brownish-tint-black on the sides and flowing from just below the crown to her few inches below the shoulder-length-cut edge. (Mariko, who is still good looking, used to get a hair-conditioning job sometimes when she went home to Tokyo that was just as silky but without the hi-lights, even though I loved that pitch-black raven color). Smart too! She was divorced (of-course!), lived in the South Bay with her college-age daughter; they rented some bedrooms from an older Chinese man who owned a town-house, spoke Japanese from living there for a few years, worked as an accountant in a Chinese insurance company (of course for Chinese only), was our neighbor Kim's friend even though they had the China/Taiwan difference (this is America after all and!), and was looking for a man who owned his own house so she could quit work and *move-on-in*.

The fact that I was an American boy (and surfer) like Kim's husband Brett whom she liked so much had her interested. One late afternoon I was out front mowing the lawn and they were leaving to go shopping somewhere and I got her number. Later when she gave me a nice designer tie for Christmas (that I suspect was re-gifted as it was totally off my coloring preferences), it seemed a subliminal gesture: "Get to Work!" and "Can you make some more money?" She first complimented me as a gentleman to aspire to for her type of gal (Wuhan-girl come

Californian)–“Works in the office during the week, the garden on the weekend.” Then later hinted a complaint that I finished work early every day like when she met me. Never mind that I wake up at four or five a.m. and start work usually around six, more often seven days a week unless the surf is really good (I like to work!), it’s Miller Time around four p.m. for this dog (or 4:20 for some Ganja!). Hell, I would never have met her had I not been around that day and by the way–the yard does look professionally gardened; I worked at Lakewood Nursery for seven years during college and with my artistic pruning sensibilities, I dare say it was the nicest on the block. People would sometimes even stop in the car and say how much they liked it. Whatever, it was fun while it lasted. I sure could have saved myself some grief had I intuited correctly her very first words ever to me after hello that afternoon, **“Is this your house?”**

Well, it’s half-mine for a little while longer, it only has 90K left on the mortgage and we’ll be paid-off in a half-dozen years. That is, had we still been a couple (and not roommates of fifteen years), had we not been still living there with the divorce papers finalized; were the naivety that we both were guilty of that we wouldn’t be splitting it and both having to move out not hit us in the face. At least we kept it for seventeen years and it’s doubled value in SoCal. But hey, how about a date?

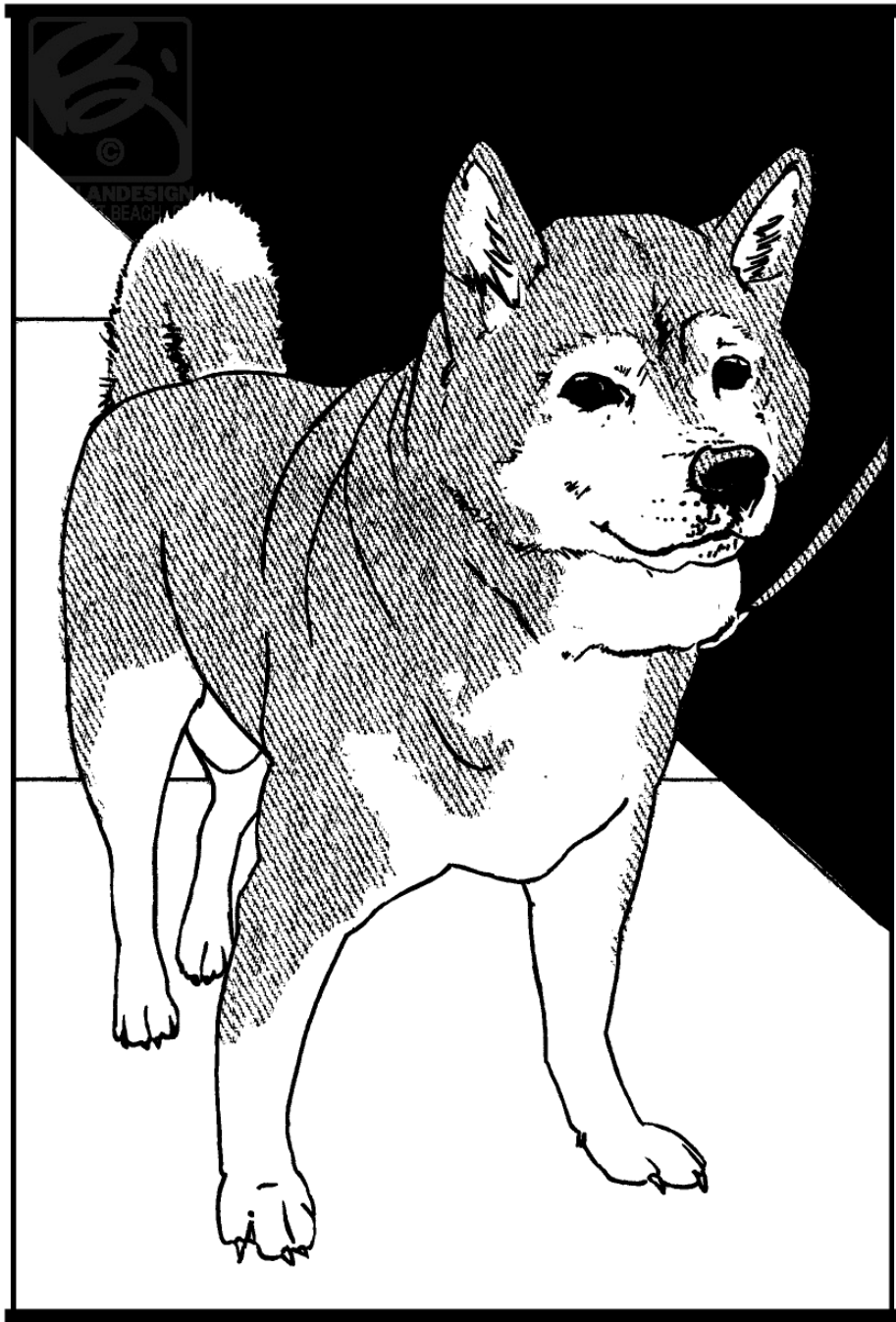
We arranged for dinner Friday night, I drove the Pathfinder (“It’s strong–like you,” she noted) up to Redondo Beach to meet her at the South Bay Galleria despite being completely fried having woken-up even earlier all week. When I saw her walking up to me I couldn’t tell that she was actually quite nervous. A first date with an American boy and all. She was just as cute though, and I was astonished when we sat down at California Pizza Kitchen and ordered a couple glasses of red (nice, she prefers red too!), she removed her coat and displayed quite a bulge up-top under her thin sweater. Wow! Cute and a couple of nice boobs to boot! Later when we hugged and I kissed her after a couple more drinks at a beach-side bar, the bulge sort of

caved-in being a cardboard insert and all. Funny! It’s OK with me though, and no–you are not too-short either.

Before we left the mall, she had scrutinized my jacket and jeans combo as being good, but she might be able to help me kick-it-up a notch. I had mentioned I might pick-up a new pair of shoes since we were there, and being a fashionable city-gal of course she wouldn’t mind a little shopping. I selected a nice pair of brown Ecco loafers in Nordstrom and she gave me the thumbs-up. Then she helped pick-out a pair of slacks that went better with the jacket and matched the new shoes, so I wore ‘em both out the door. “See!” she proudly declared, “A new man.” It was really cute when she was considering a different jacket for me as well, she held it up to me and the natural frown her mouth made in a decision making posture (fashion–it’s important!), righted itself into a pleasant smile when she determined it was good on me. Pretty! And when we were having drinks at the beach bar we played footsies like teenagers (which was kinda funny because we are around fifty). Then in her Lexus on the ride back to the mall to drop me at my car, she played a Chinese “love song” on the stereo and sang along. Cute again. I like her!

She needn’t have worried that she was a couple of years older than me either. (Why did she keep up the fib of her being younger until after she gave me the boot, and then tell me as if it was a defensible reason as to why I shouldn’t be with her–too old?). Her skin was still smooth, a few crow-lines around the eyes and some tight sinew on the back of her legs behind her knees were the only hint that she was not a spring chicken. Her nostrils were just a little bit flared and the asymmetry of her other facial features all worked together nicely. I liked how she answered the call of a friend on her cell: *Ni-how, ni-how, ni-how*–soft and sweet–and I really enjoy the custom of Chinese girlfriends of holding hands or locking arms when together out shopping or in public like she did with her cute

[continued in full book]



little-by-little jisun

I'd met her three times walking our Shibaken Genichi. The first time I introduced myself we were on the sidewalk in front of Patricia's house just as she pulled in the driveway in the silver Mercedes with dirty rims. We had a brief but pleasant conversation, my few phrases of Korean breaking the ice since spoken with correct intonation. She complimented Gen telling me of the similar breed—Jindoken in Korea. Jisun told me she was attending nearby OCC Interior Design classes and she agreed that *Fung-shei* and *Form-follows-function* are solid ideas. She asked me for any advice towards successful Interior Design and the idea immediately came to my mind that the large composition of elements should be considered first for overall congruency and flow, and the details and finishing touch reflect the personality of the designer with consideration of client. I'd never broken down the idea in my years of bedroom and home-owner decoration; but the fundamental was embedded in my right-brain from the parallel principals I had long adhered to in design and artwork, and fortunately it rolled right off my tongue. She smiled and accepted it with relish. She's a total fox(!) and I wish there were other things I could try with my tongue on her.

She seemed a little older than an average Community College student, and when I learned later from Patricia her last name and that the Maserati that had pulled away from the house the other day was her (rich?) Ex delivering divorce papers; her age added up a bit more, but now my prospects of entertaining her on my artist—*let's split the budget—you enjoy*

your own career –are a figment of the imagination. I’ve got a decade-and-a-half on her age-wise, if I was rollin’–maybe I could pull it off. We all know there are plenty of young(er) ladies who can close their eyes and let some fat bastard roll all over them (maybe they are on top?) as long as when they open they see a nice-house with a big-closet, and a nice-car out front. The more dough the dude has is in direct correlation with the hotness of the chick he can snag once adolescence has passed. Still, I wouldn’t say I’m not attractive to a degree, I can be infatuated, it’s better than nothing to at least try? Well, at least with hubby exiting stage left, maybe she’ll need to pay her own bills for a while or in the long-run, hence the Interior Design energy? Maybe she has talent to boot?

“Are there any good Korean BBQ’s in Orange County?” I ask. I had a friend in Graphic Design School (in downtown LA near Little Tokyo) originally from Seoul who introduced me to them around there back before they became popular all-over; including food trucks and packaged delights & sauces etc., and hats-off for grilling with charcoal right on the table! Jisun pulls out her cell phone and googles the shop she knows of for location info, and writes the number on a scrap of paper in the same feminine writing style of English characters in the Asian hand that I have read numerous times from letters, notes, and other scraps of paper with Japanese girl’s names and fake or direct to robo-voicemail numbers on them. I ask if she might like to go with me to try the restaurant, she politely declines, “Next time.”

“Next time” means *never*. But I do see her again when I’m having a glass of red with Patricia in her kitchen. It’s around eleven p.m. (way late for my normal eight p.m. to-bed, up-at four-thirty/five a.m. sleep schedule), I’ve given Patricia some attention as she’s nice looking and single; but getting nowhere with her except to the other end of a restaurant check here and there or holding hands on a walk. Whoopee! Friends. Whatever. A bit more junk-in-the-trunk anyways for me if I can get all sour-grapy about it. Maybe I’ll get to see Jisun more and don’t

look now, here she comes home wearing a tank top, light cotton shorts, and I wonder if she’s wearing panties or a g-string underneath. A smile and wave as she goes down the hall, I glimpse her almond-bum and shapely thighs, she enters and closes the door to her rental bedroom. It’s a late Spring/early-Summer evening, warm, she’s otherwise slender from neck to ankles and the sheerest of fabric is all that separates her splendor from the night, from the universe–and forever from me. So, she is thirty. And not closer to twenty like her other two Japanese roommates that Patricia rents to; she has a foreign student hosting set-up to help with the mortgage. I did notice Jisun’s calves were slightly squarer and the nape of her leg directly behind her knee was slightly more concave and showed the side tendon ridges with more definition than a younger girls. That’s it though–she is plenty fresh!

The second time I saw Jisun walking Gen (who is indeed a chick magnet and even has his own art and photo book by yours truly–*Shibadude*) was very brief, but pleasant. She was pulling out of the driveway with Patricia’s nice Jamaican-born black friend, who despite being unemployed at the moment also drove a Mercedes, whom I had just recently spent a pleasant evening of a Jazz concert with a group of her female friends and conversation over hot tea back at the house. The friend (with whom I got the inkling that perhaps I might be able to wrangle into bed or otherwise–why do the few girls I meet that are interested in me, are not my type?) called me over and gave me a hug through the passenger door window. Jisun smiled the whole time, I wished to grab HER hand and kiss it/her. I’m sure the friend said a nice word or two about me as they drove up the street.

Finally the third time I saw Jisun walking Gen, she had a plumber over fixing the bathroom toilet that she had plugged-up (I would deduce from flushing tampons, since she was paying for it? A no-no by the way as we found out at the house one time), getting ready to move out of Patricia’s house and

[continued in full book]



eunjoo

bulgogi and pickled eggs

“A fine lady” are a few of the words that I wrote on my match.com profile in a description of what I think I am looking for in a new relationship, a first attempt at online “dating.” Relationship at best, or at least what I’m hoping for is what every fellow ALWAYS wants regardless: S-E-X. My search lists preference for Asian (what else could it possibly be?) and I send Eunjoo an exploratory hello and she contacts me straight away with a message, her number, and a request for me to call her. I buy a disposable cell phone in case things get wacky in the wild-blue-yonder of mystery “dating” and call her. We meet at Mother’s near her place for lunch, then after go to a nearby bar that is open in the afternoon for a drink. She’s got a couple years on me, cute—but I’m surprised by how old I am in relationship to how mature she looks. She teaches yoga, likes Bruce Lee, Henry Rollins, the Beatles, has kids, one grandkid and is super-cool. I like her, she likes me. I kiss her in the car, she actually starts trembling inside (somethings brewing!). We both want to go back to her apartment, but she upholds proper protocol and invites me back the day after next.

Two days later, I drive to her place with a bottle of Cab S. She buzzes me in and I climb the stairs to her floor and great! it’s home-made bulgogi for lunch—perfect pairing for my red of choice. Eunjoo is gluten intolerant, so she drinks a non-wheat alcohol cider. Halfway through the meal, she puts down her chopsticks and makes the first move (she says a line that I’ll not repeat here which is sweet-music to my ears—very similar to Julie Christie in *Shampoo* for reference), and goodness gracious I find out that she EVEN LIKES SEX! She may even have taught me (finally!) how to give a girl “the Big O,” but that’s a secret and maybe I will field test it out again later—God willing.

I like Eunjoo's personality very much and for quite a few months (she says YES a lot!), but unfortunately don't fall head-over-heels, and things wind down eventually. Although she *does* want to be coupled with me, it's my first foray after the Big "D" and I find that I'm not ready for anything serious unless I'm all in. We are monogamous, but when she makes me bulgogi again and a big jar of pickled eggs in expectation of a nice weekend, I don't call her that Friday and she sulks in her apartment over a desultory solo plate; and almost throws out the rest out of spite for my ignoring "Us." When I do call on Monday, she's bummed-out, but I try to make amends. When I go to her place a few days later (she had saved me a plate!), and she gives me the big jar of eggs to take home—with beets so it's purplish—I can see the claw marks where the shells didn't peel off easily, and see how much time she spent thinking about me. They tasted great, but were a one-by-one reminder of the situation—and what to do?

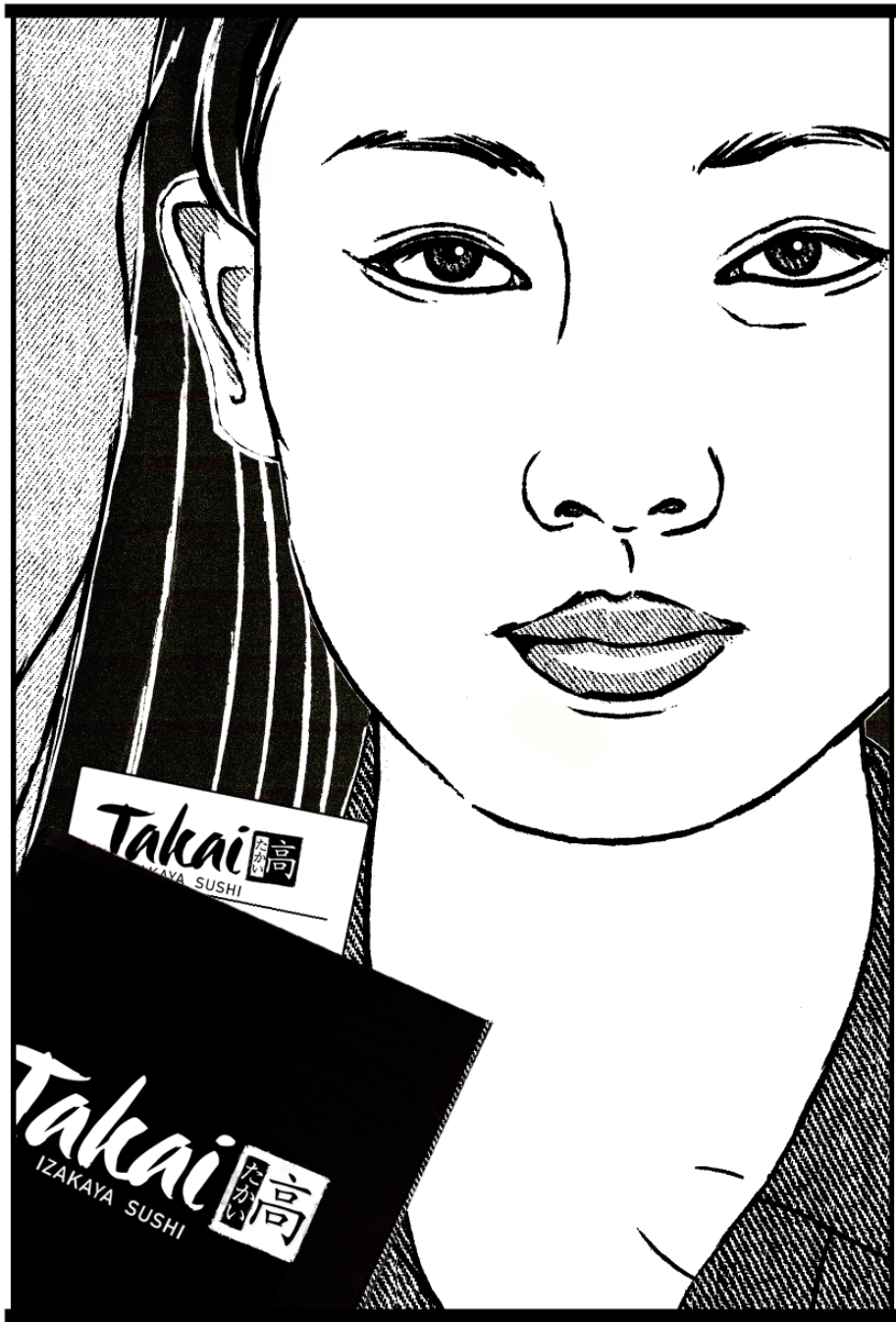
The hardest part was attending her yoga class. Since she's a yogi, I want to at least show consideration for her work and interests (other than sex, which we have every time we see each other—thanks!) and agree to visit her next session. One afternoon previously, she had driven to my place in Laguna; up the hill to the studio rental I had for awhile with the awesome view at my friend Bryant's place, and suggests we do *other* activities today. OK. I'm easy, we have date shakes and stroll some along PCH window shopping, then head back-up and watch a little tube and have a beverage on the couch. I don't know if she is enjoying this as much as she thought she might, but when she goes to the bathroom and comes out in just her panties and bra, I stand to attention! Now we're talking! So at the morning class (being my first time and all, I find yoga is much harder than one would think; and even though I'm strong and in good shape for my age being a lifelong surfer and mostly healthy eater, this is different kind of strength and I'm not very flexible), its just about to start, and low and behold, a nice

looking babe (of course she's Asian—duh) lines up her mat right next to mine and a foot or two forward, so I get a forty-five-degree angle view of her black, skin-tight yoga get-up the entire session. Nice! I think I might like yoga after-all! She is a similar age, and a bit more like what I think I want in the realm of "A Fine Lady." She is lithe and looks very feminine, but effortlessly eases in and holds every position, and it starts me wondering about how fun a futon-wrestling-match might be with her, but also that we might be compatible to boot. Even Eunjoo brings up the point to me after her continued efforts for domesticity together haven't come to fruition; she being very modern, having grown-up in South Korea but moving here since her teens and become very free thinking—especially what I like about her, but some part is missing. "Maybe what you *really* want is a Fine Lady," she accuses me, quoting my profile and that she may not have that exact image of herself—and to her credit. Perhaps she likes too many things that I do, and I want a more feminine Yin instead of two Yangs? She is the instructor after all and every bit as good—but just not what? After class, Fine Lady gives me a friendly smile and gestures to me where to put the visitor mats back after using. She seemed interested, I get the sense that she appreciates my openness to try Yoga being a masculine "sports guy" and all. I want to ask her to the juice bar and meet her. Really, what I want is to go home with *her*, but have a great afternoon with Eunjoo all the same.

But not for long after. The long phone conversations with me trying to explain over-and-over how things just aren't synching, have me feeling guilty for her sake, what she wants I'm unfortunately not feeling; and I like her enough not to want to lead her on further if I can't deliver, she deserves someone else if it can't be me, so eventually stop calling back.

Eunjoo texted me about six months later, I did not respond and deleted her contact info in some noble gesture to stay-the-course of finding that Fine Lady, and not muck-around. Of course I am sorry just before every time I whack-off, knowing

[continued in full book]



Shaula Your Turn to Pay!

notes from the field

I saw her in another line at the Huntington Beach Target, mine was shorter so I smiled and waved her over. She smiled, came over, and I let her put her make-up item on the counter ahead of me. The clerk rang it up, Shaula put her card in the reader, and I motioned for her to wait for me—*just a second*, I only have a couple items, and want to say Hello. She waited. We said Hello. I asked for her number, and tapped in the numerals on my iPhone 5; which I got for free for signing up for two years of cell service (back when you could do that), it's already outdated (as is everything that is digital the minute you unwrap it and turn it on), and the key-pad is tiny for my fingers—even having my svelte artist digits—but I eventually get it in, and then S-h-a-u-l-a. I don't need to test it right there, she *wants* me to have it. I guess it's her American name, and not her real Vietnamese name, having grown-up there and moved here as a teen. She is good-looking though! And I've wanted to but never as yet tried Pho or Bahn Mi, (*or Vietnamese trim!*) this could be fun! Her "Uncle," who accompanied her here and is waiting for her near the door, is really a bit-older-family-friend, and I can see he is disappointed as he watches me make a move on his intended catch. Shaula seems a little embarrassed doing it right in front of him, but maybe now he gets the hint, and after all—LOVE *hurts*.

Shaula lives in Garden Grove (as one might expect) and only came to the H.B. Target because they carry a specific beauty item, as if she is embarrassed to be seen there. I'm in Huntington having just returned from a guest artist month-and-a-half excursion Down Under on the Gold Coast at a shop I do freelance design work with; staying at a friend's place until I can find a new apartment, and having made the trip work successfully, am riding a wave of confidence that has me picking-up girls in the Target check-out line! It didn't last too long however, I couldn't plan far enough ahead—and staying at the friend's place overstepped our friendship parameters and that's my-bad—another kick-in-the-nuts from the “Big D” fallout.

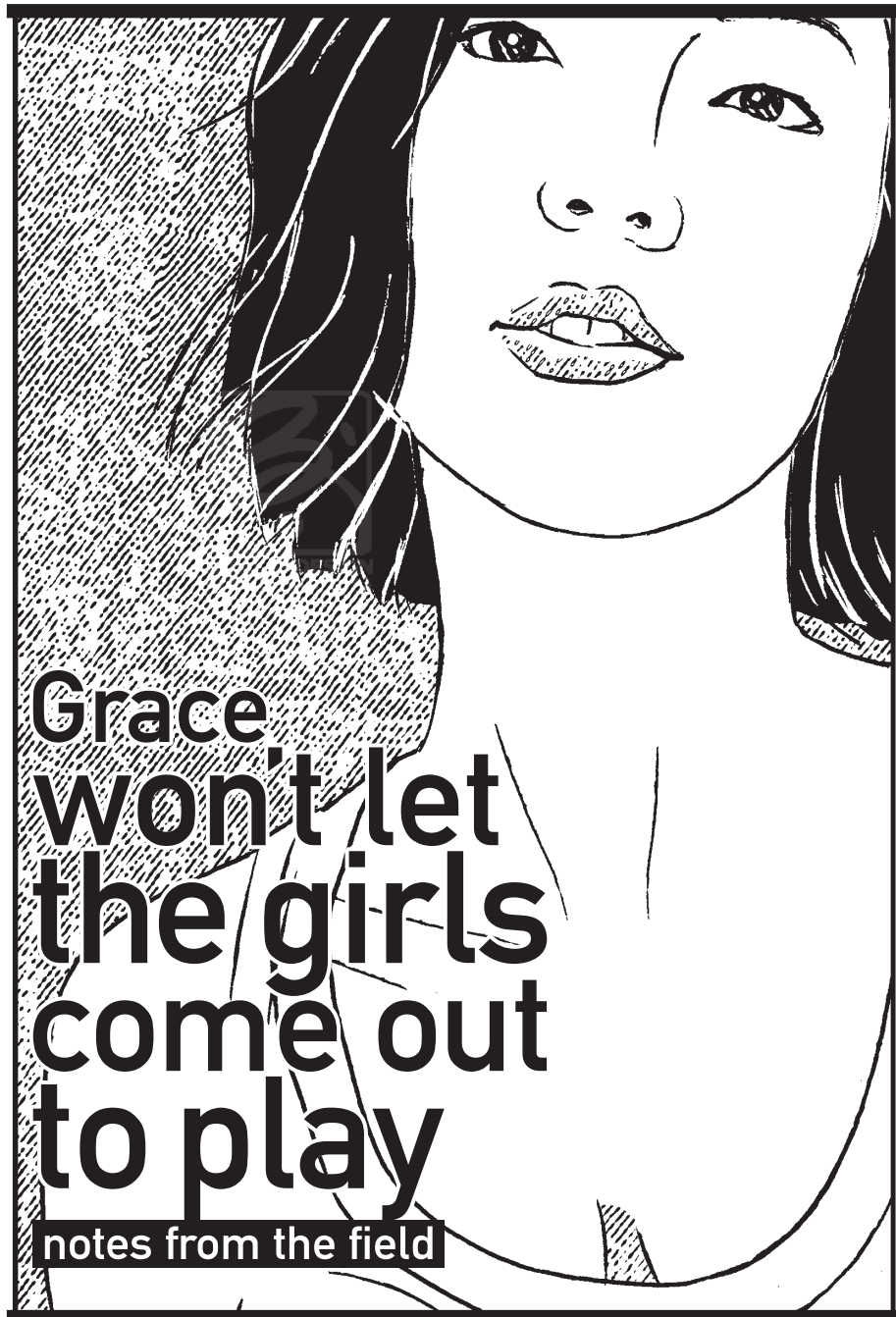
I'm still on the high for now, and text Shaula that afternoon. She is glad to meet me too, has a teenage son from her divorce to be thankful for (and she will put that relationship ahead of *any* potential romantic one; until the son himself couples and moves out, and guess who it's going to be too-late for by the time that all happens? Unless she can keep her looks until then—she might, she's hot—or find someone she can settle for in the meantime depending if his wallet can take care of them all) from another Vietnamese-come-American fellow who she now despises. Apparently, he always put her down verbally and maybe they were married too young. Whatever. I'll fix that. I will give her love and attention, would be happy to meet her son being a decent Dad myself, and I've got a rock-hard-boner to tickle her with after seeing those legs in the short skirt at lunch the next day. Her boobs aren't-too-big which is fine, she said she always won at the school track events growing up, and with those long sturdy legs she walks around on, I can easily believe her. She graciously offers me some of her fish-sauce-heavy dish at Phuket, the nice neighborhood mini-mall Thai restaurant were at—it's so fishy you've got to be Asian and have grown-up eating similar dishes to enjoy such a thing—but I try it to be amenable and manage one bite, then later wonder that she thought a good-ole-California-boy would naturally put

that top-of-the-list of tasty dining selections (maybe she hasn't dated many Caucasians or mostly has Vietnamese friends? And even though I'm of Norse heritage and my go-to sandwich is tuna-chunk white with Best Foods mayo and dill relish on wheat, thank you—I'm not a salmon-unless wood-smoked—or herring enthusiast, and *lutefisk* was my folk's or their folk's generation snack-too fishy!). We enjoy some nice conversation and when the check comes, she asks me if I would like to split it, (is this a date or not?—*really, it's a test*) and I sense (correctly) that if I even hesitate picking it up, it will be a faux pas on the manner of possibly not being suitable material for relationship right-off-the-bat. Of course, I rub-one-out that night thinking of her naked and start the courting ritual in earnest.

Dinner next is at Gytaku, an upscale Japanese/Korean BBQ-style restaurant and Shaula sits right next to me in the booth, in another sexy dress under a long-sleeve top, and we order too much to eat. She's directing the grilling on the hibachi built into the table, serving me portions, the conversation is flowing and she's projecting some intimacy; the food is great, we could be a couple. She likes the attention I'm showering on her, I can put my arm around her, but when I move her long-black-hair to one side and proffer a peck on her long-slender-neck, she pulls back—we're not there yet, buddy. Eventually I notice the waitress being anxious for us to finally wrap it up, as it's busy and our leisurely get-to-know-you date is maybe cutting in on her tips, and when she brings the bill, I don't need to say who picks it up—I've passed the “splitting-the-check” test and never looking back. We go outside and with a quick hug, Shaula splits immediately for her car to get back home “to her son.” She texts me an hour later that she “got home safe,” and hopes that I did as well. Of course I'm home. Had a nice dinner and all, but where's that second-date kiss?

I call Shaula instead of texting next, she says she likes that better as well, I'm over hearing the “ping” that announces the next incoming message and deciphering whether our progress

[continued in full book]



Grace
won't let
the girls
come out
to play

notes from the field

She had what appeared to be twins.

Two pert & prim, palm-sized ripe-plum breasts, and damn if I was ever going to nuzzle-up to those tender looking nuggets.

I plied her with chardonnay, a super-stacked club sandwich (she loved the sauce and would replicate it at home the next day) at Nick's, and each time I would get her loosened-up with a massage on the shoulder or arm around the waist, she reached back to both sides and readjusted the bra that I could see through her shirt that made an elastic pattern indentation in her back it was so tight, a booby-chastity-belt.

Never mind she had a little junk in the trunk, she was fine enough for me! In my current state I ain't bein' picky and would not let a little extra cushion bother any pushin' should I be so lucky. Perhaps a couple years older than me, the first impression she gave me was that she had never and would never enjoy sex. As a man—as every man afflicted with testosterone blindness—don't think I didn't at least consider some angle of attack, perhaps I could allow myself to play the fool (yet again!) and rationalize that maybe just what she needed was some sexual healing and I would fit the bill. (Yeah right!)

She had married a fellow South Korean for diaspora reducing security and Green Card and it sounds like he was a very bad drunk. Bad enough that she didn't want to order any alcohol at dinner. And when she did submit to my urging, did infact enjoy the nine-dollar glass of white (Cabernet Sauvignon for this boy—I chose the two second cheapest offerings of each on the menu as per my modus operandi). They had had a daughter and a divorce and now she was a mega-church member and what the heck did she text me for? (Attention and curiosity?)

Right off the bat Grace didn't seem like my kind of gal for the long-term and for once I sagaciously determined it would be another wild-goose-chase of buying dinners and suffering blue-balls, so I refrained from the chase. But she was conservatively pretty after all, smart, owned the house she got in her split, and *she was the one pursuing me* for a change. Maybe we could meet in the middle, I could move in with her (if my first gut feelings weren't off—they never are!), take over the grilling, gardening and save some major long-term rent? It was fun when we discovered we both spoke conversational Japanese when she came to my recently departed Mum's townhouse estate sale and took home her china cabinet, along with most of the crystal, glassware and assorted china set-ware within.

I helped her wrap-up the individual pieces and she complained I was a bit imperfect about it (red flag!), even though I had wrapped nearly every other of the million knickknacks Mum had acquired in fifty years of collecting for the other folks and the sales agent Ally who admired my attentiveness when they had bought some of Mom's "stuff." She mentioned it was her birthday that day and she was off to a Sushi dinner with a friend that night. I jokingly inquired if I could join them for some fun and she chirped, "OK, but you have to pay!" Ouch! Wasn't even serious but I'm already paying! Whatever. Her sense of humor was a little stark, but she wasn't bad overall so we exchanged numbers.

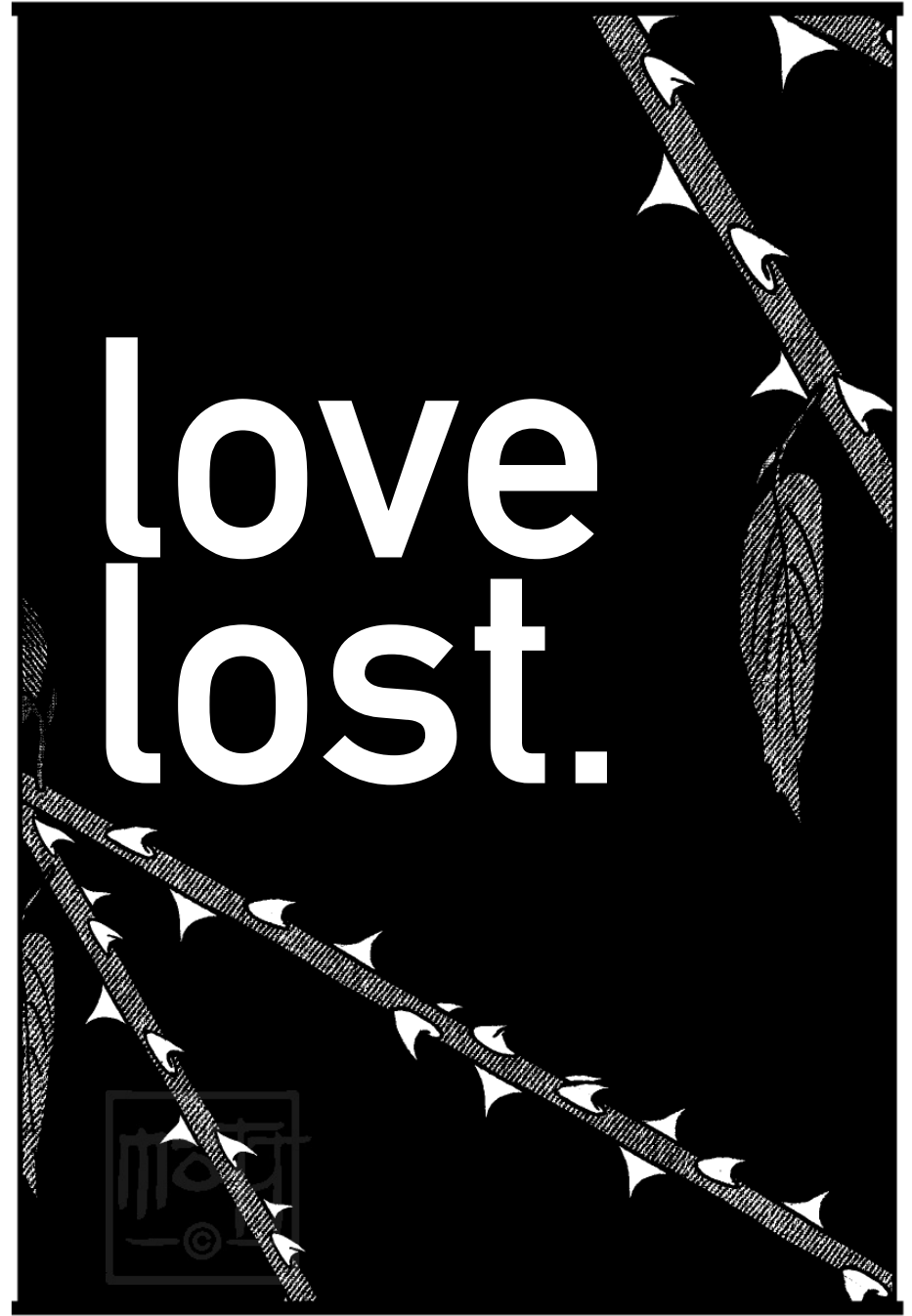
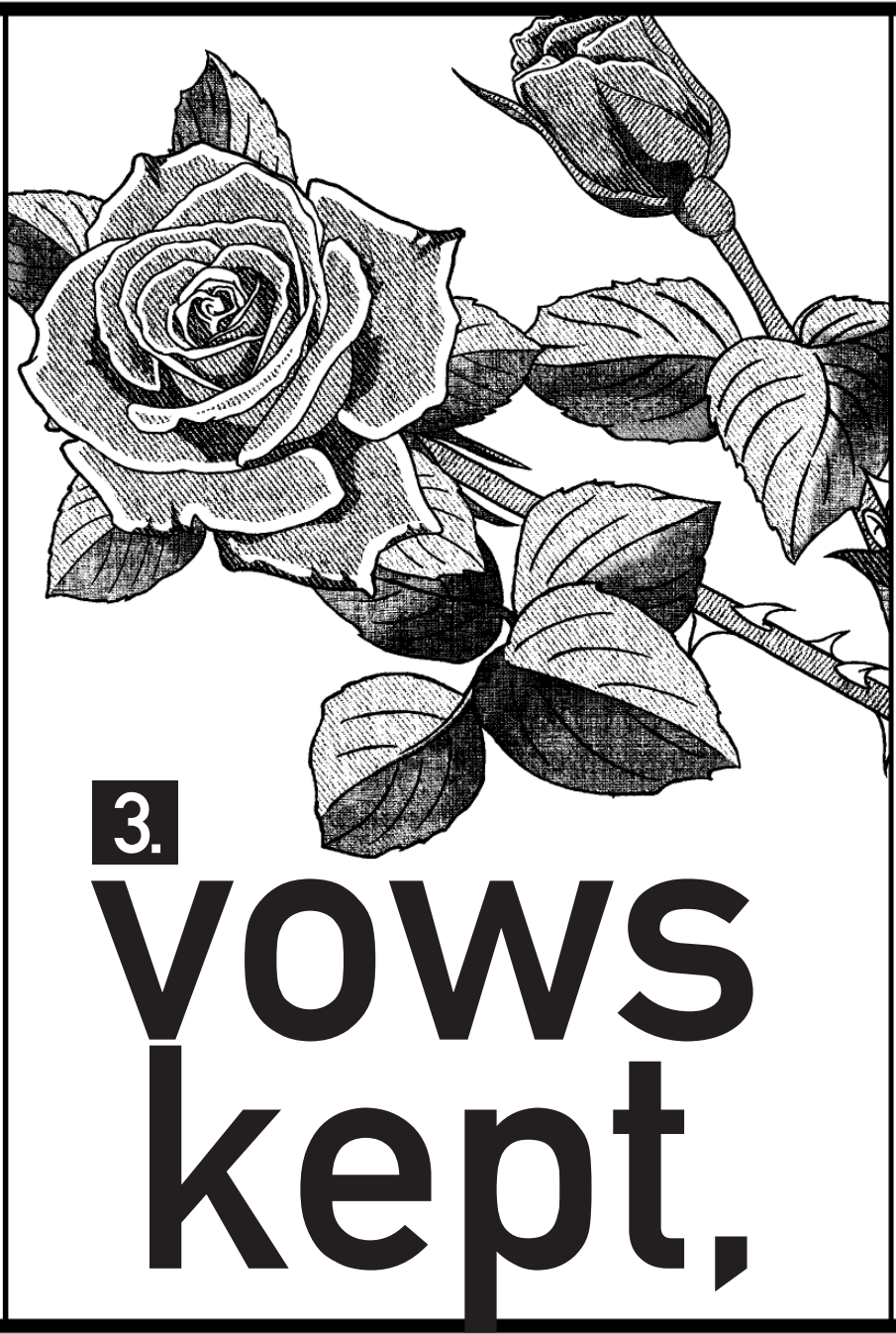
The next afternoon she sent me a text with emojis and a couple photos of the china cabinet and contents newly installed in her living room. She had gotten a false cancer diagnosis and had sold-off her entire home furnishings in preparation for an end; then having survived was now restocking the house. It could be a very Asian thing she displayed from some of the things I've heard and experienced; when she got the initial doctor's mistaken bad news she bullied-up and didn't even mention it to her daughter for the entire ordeal! Tough customer! Grace's next text the day after had a few more emojis (thumbs-

up, happy-face, etc.) and a couple tranquil sunset images that seemed an attempt to convey some satisfaction or expectation of good things to come. Did she want me in the picture? Would I be able to fend off any impulse of possibly getting to see her naked with my so-far-correct courtesy engagement only policy? Of course not! I took the bait and asked her out.

The first confirmation that I had blown it again was the next Saturday when we had set the date and she texted to let me know she was running late. She had stopped on the way to get her SUV washed and they were pretty backed-up. What the heck? Does she worry I'll think her car care is negligent if it's a little dirty? I don't care and I'm driving us to nearby downtown Long Beach anyways. Besides, if we get together, I'm the new car-wash-and-waxer. If she really wants to see me and it's a first date, she's not going to be an hour late for car cleaning. Well crap, maybe she needs it to look good for her church friends Sunday morning? Perhaps tonight is some much needed male attention to gossip about as a side note with her single church girlfriends at cooking class get-togethers? Of course I didn't surmise that possible scenerio till after the date when I found out about her involvement in the ten-thousand-member(!) Korean/Christian congregation she was a member of. I enquired if the services were in English as I would have gone with her, but they weren't, and it was her thing anyways.

She looked suprisingly good when she finally did show up, a little less conservative than I had imagined with fashionable ripped-knee-hole jeans and comfortable pumps. She sported a light-blue thin denim shirt with the long-sleeves rolled up, a tight white V-neck tee underneath and a nice bit of cleavage up-top. The cleavage certainly perked my interest! The valley between her not-too-big-or-small breasts looked soft and still fresh like Asian girls skin have all-over from youthful flowering. At her/our age still. Nice! We went to the Aquarium of the Pacific with some complimentary tickets she had received at a

[continued in full book]





Vanna D Bird in Hand

When I released the envelope from my grip down the curbside mailbox slot—beyond retrieval—regret instantly flooded over me. Crap! It was a Holiday card with a bit larger than wallet-size print, a business mug-shot (young professional on the rise!) taken with new glasses, tie and blazer. Haunted with remorse the next few days; when we finally spoke, she told me it was very nice photo, but a bit embarrassing opening it in front of her sales-staff co-workers. Duh. Perhaps such blunder could have been subconscious motivation at work? Some kind of last ill-fated grasp at the notion of freedom's imminent demise upon discovering the mutually-planned conception (successful on the first try!) of my first (and only) child was now entering me into crossing a serious threshold into family, which I pursued wholeheartedly—but was accompanied by some unnerving notion of everlasting responsibility.

As a life-long artist and young designer, having recently blasted out of the two-year Los Angeles Trade Technical College Graphic Design Program (having driven daily from Long Beach to downtown LA and back in my '68 Vdub Squareback!) with optimism and a building confidence of finding my place in the world; fit and I dare say handsome to a degree, here I might go so far as to say I *had it all going on*. The X-factor that hovers about a confident man of action (and with the ladies) was not inaccessible. At least then, and in my book of wants—a decent start of *getting on with things*. A pretty, clever, and diligent wife, a career ahead that might promise security; I'm surfing good, feeling good, working hard, attractive assets well within reach.

We had flirted for quite a while. Innocently enough, just some fun to help get through the workweek. She was a client of the first studio I had hired into in the OC, a former model and stone-cold fox! Blonde, lithe equestrian with what looked like a perfect handful of boobs if you could ever lick your way up those long slender legs. N-I-C-E! Similar in age, sharp, bitterly-divorced, now in sales to support her current single lifestyle. I had a few-years-old print of me surfing a good-sized Pipeline, Hawaii wave on my office wall, and I appreciated the fact that her being a (horse) sportswoman, she recognized the peril/reward involved in my other passion besides art of surfing (sometimes big) waves, "You could die doing that!" She also mentioned during conversation that, "You're definitely a behind-the-scenes-kind-of-guy," which addressed my outward personality—the opposite of salesman—and while it of course was not any kind of criticism as she acknowledged my design and creative skills by enthusiastically bringing new projects; it felt some ring of future challenge should I possibly step forward to maning my own studio—which has come to pass—and is pretty darn true, I'd be more successful if I was more hustle and less art-muscle. But who can change personality, even if they try? I did enjoy the endeavor of creating first-rate work due to the energy I felt from her; looked forward to and took extra care to dress nicely on meeting days, enjoying her company and often wondered how nice it would be to see her naked! I was completely oblivious to what would be a decade-and-a-half of my own coming misery—newly and blissfully wed and all. It was fun when I created a watercolor, pen & ink caricature illustration of Vanna for the cover of a sales brochure (I never mentioned it and don't know if she caught-on, my little-inside-fun to keep me going) we produced, I'd like to think it was subliminal as well, but let's be honest—it skewed intentional.

Nearing the end of our couple of years working together, I had moved on to a new studio after seven years of service, we arranged to have breakfast for a new business meeting

between the two of us at Kaplan's, conveniently just off the 405 Freeway, but within my neighborhood turf. Vanna ordered french toast and fruit, the scrambled eggs I ate she said sometimes gave her a queasy feeling. I wondered if we were not both imagining what it would be like to couple—quirks and peculiarities looked doable so far. I certainly wouldn't object to seeing her with slightly tousled hair for breakfast anytime! Was that cigarette smoke I caught a whiff of that one time near her Volvo ("They're boxy—but they're good!") Wagon? So-what, I might sneak a few hits of weed out in the garage myself now and then.

But I did both take and make vows. And I'm truly happy, if only I were single too. She picked-up the check (business expense deduction) and then in the parking lot, opened the hatch door of her car to return some stock-photo books I had loaned her. When we said our Thank You's and as I made a motion to depart, I thought I detected a brief flash of disappointment on

“you get what's yours.” her face. I would like to believe—and it did seem so?—as she was closing the hatch, she was also closing the

opportunity for me to take her back to the empty house for a late-morning interlude—an early-Afternoon Delight! A chance to give her love and everything that I already had going on. A beautiful, smart woman, there's no way she'll be single for long. (And happy!) As for this boy, infatuation rumbles along and that X-factor works on its own schedule—you get what's yours. It's being able to see it when it's there that could be challenging. It would have been difficult back then to project to recent offerings—where it's so hard to get what one wants—and things you don't get handed to you on a silver platter. Dang! And I'll agree with E M Forster in *A Passage to India* to paraphrase—that with age it is true to sagaciously gather that in life, “Things rarely happen at the time that you wish for them to.”



Catch and Release

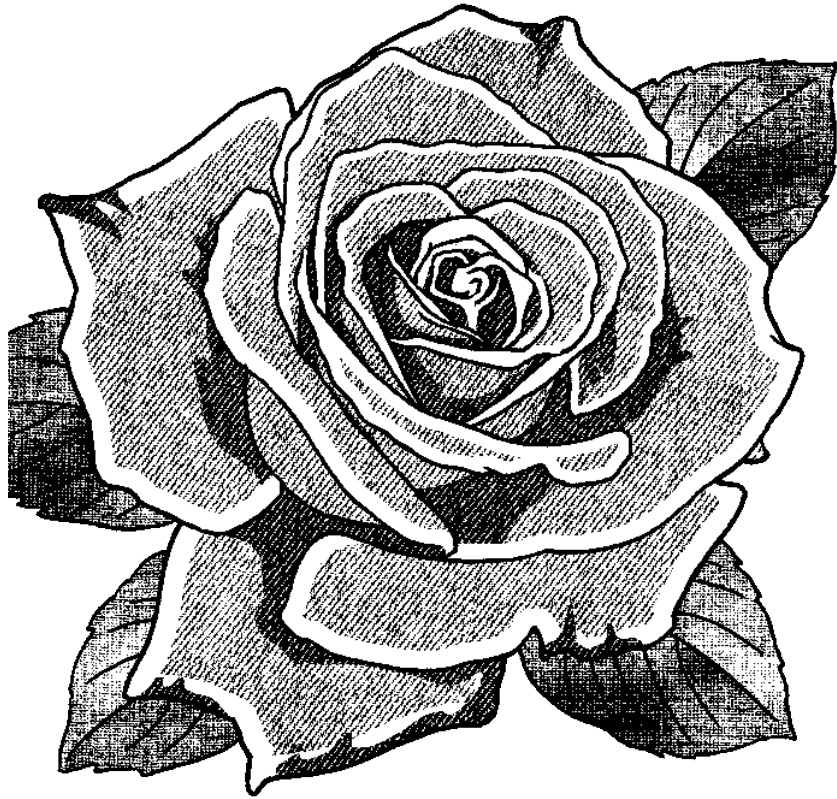
Marcia Patricia Castillion de Guanacaste

Pretty face! A smile that lights-up the night in a (still affordable) Tamarindo beach bar. *Lovely señorita!* Shell necklace white against her bronze skin and kinky-long-brown hair. Not-too-big or small perky breasts! Perfect height, good English, I would like to know her (in biblical proportion!).

Outdoors on the patio I smoke a cigar, el Gringo in paradise. Sticks and Tosh smoke cigarettes. The dense ocean-front air buzzes a cacophony of insect song under the Centro-America starlight. Marcia serves us cheap, delicious, fresh seafood. Inside the bar a ranchero-boogie-woogie-reverb twangs from the jukebox. The beer flows freely.

Flirtation ensues! I feign interest in the other two—not nearly as cute and a bit gorda (for this boy) waitresses—*baile señoras!* catching her attention. Besting my two good friends and surf travel mates, both formidable cocksman, albiet both very happily married, in an unintentional catch and release tournament. I unwittingly reel her in, mutual attraction.

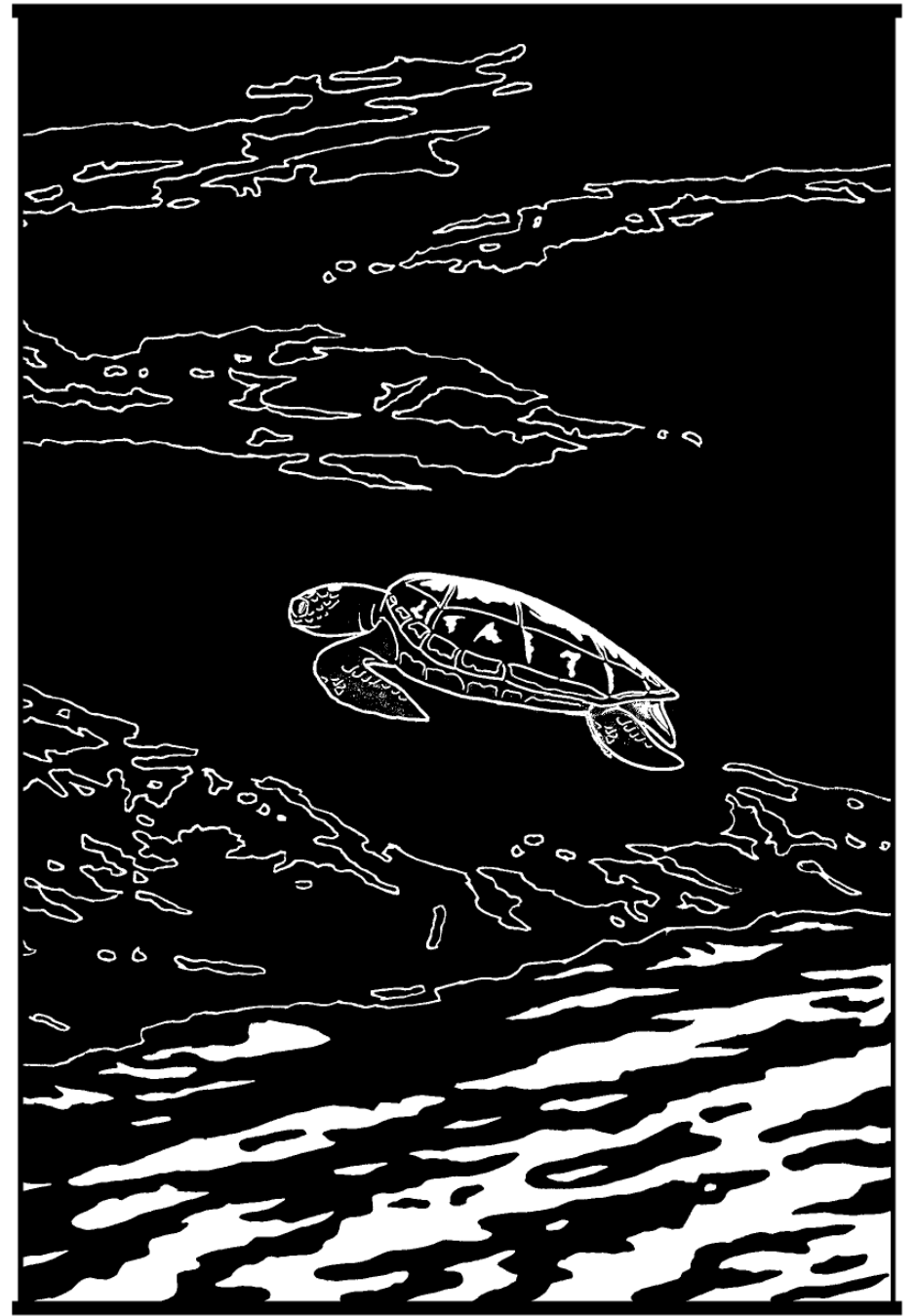
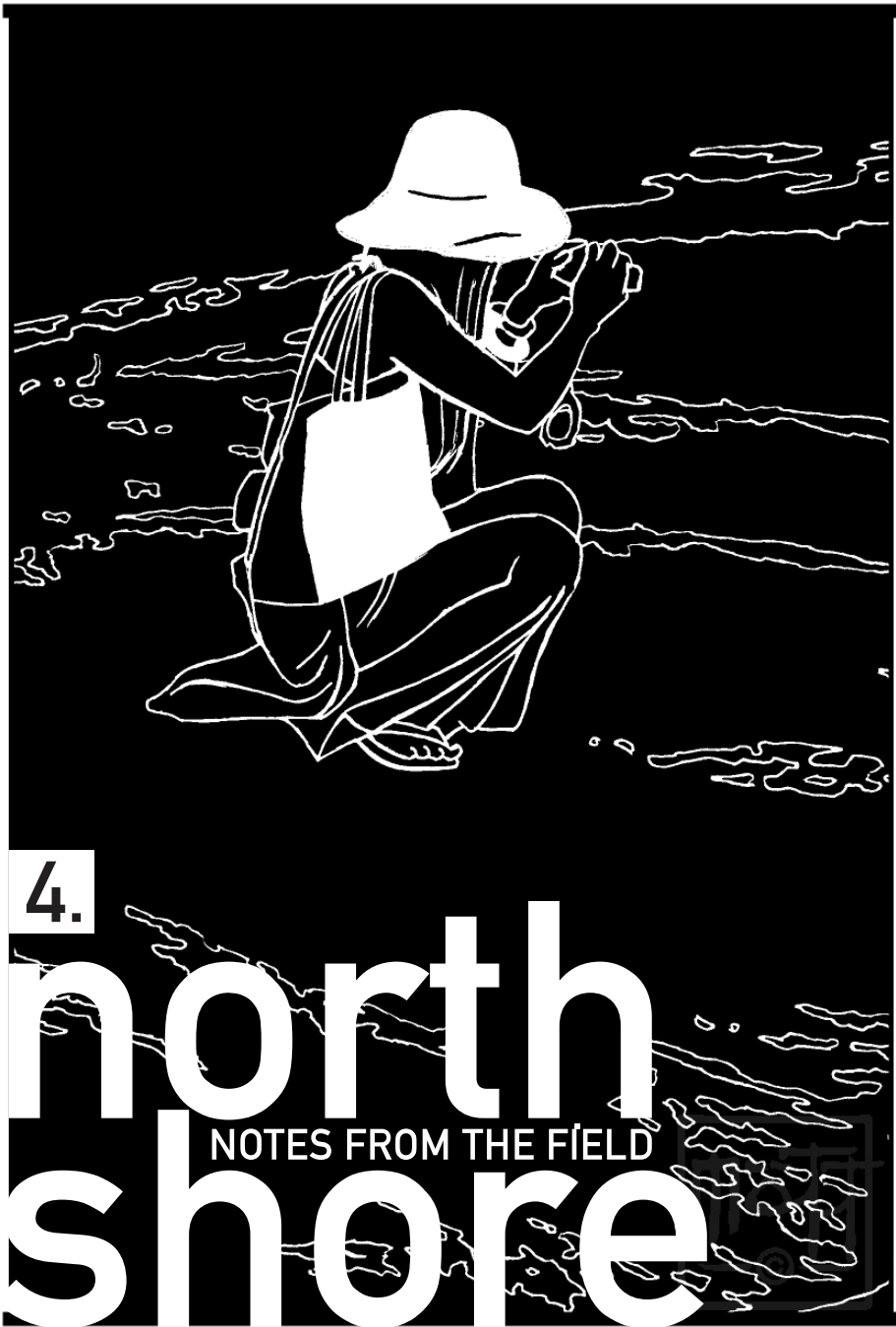
My intentions will not betray my character; I swore my oaths in church (Mom told me I stood back-straight and serious) and meant them wholeheartedly. I did not cross the line of leading her on. Because I rather fancied her! I offered not my address or phone number in the States. Her a young single mother, I think? Maybe I am still in love back home, betrothed, a family man. (And jeez, what if she showed up out of the blue?) The souvenir photo I chose of her, a Mona Lisa portrait, the oth

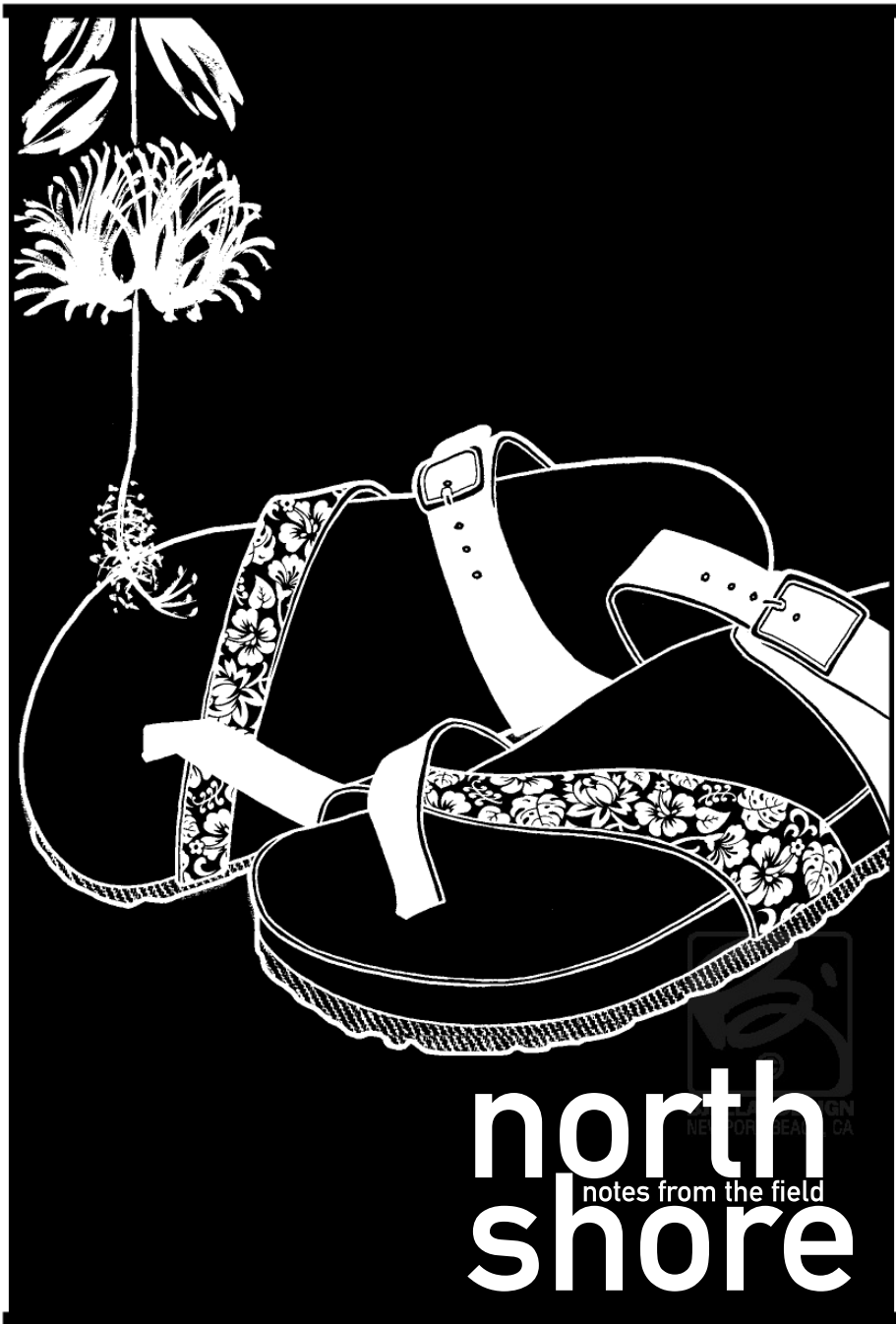


er ones showing her brilliant-white smile—too much for me to bear, knowing I cannot have her heart and all that goes with it.

**Now, time gone by,
forever too late...marcia mi amor**

My cup half-empty, I would not hesitate to indulge in your feminine treasure.





closer, no-cigar yukimi

I see her in the Haleiwa Wyland Gallery and follow her out the front door and onto the street. She is alone, as opposed to the many groups of two and three youngish Japanese girls lunching and spending the afternoon “In the Country” having driven-out from the South Shore late-morning.

There are lots of tourist families about as well, but no single “women” unless within a group, unloading from the tour guided-bus and taking in sea turtle and big surf from the safety of shore. So many cute-fresh-girls-too young and uncatchable—but they return a friendly greeting before one of them makes sure they veer-off as soon as possible. I’d discreetly pursued the only other single gal I’d seen across the Haleiwa bridge the day after lunch at Kua Aina, but didn’t muster a hello. Not bad looking, but not worth the effort upon closer inspection—type-wise. Yukimi, however, is a bit older, she looks thirty-ish and is very cute. Still probably too-big a gap to be bridged with my having just turned forty-nine on Halloween the previous week, but she’s friendly so far. I ask her if I can accompany her on a walk of the main street taking in the quaint classic Hawaiian beach town, a combo-plate of historical and modern shops and restaurants. She is glad for the company.

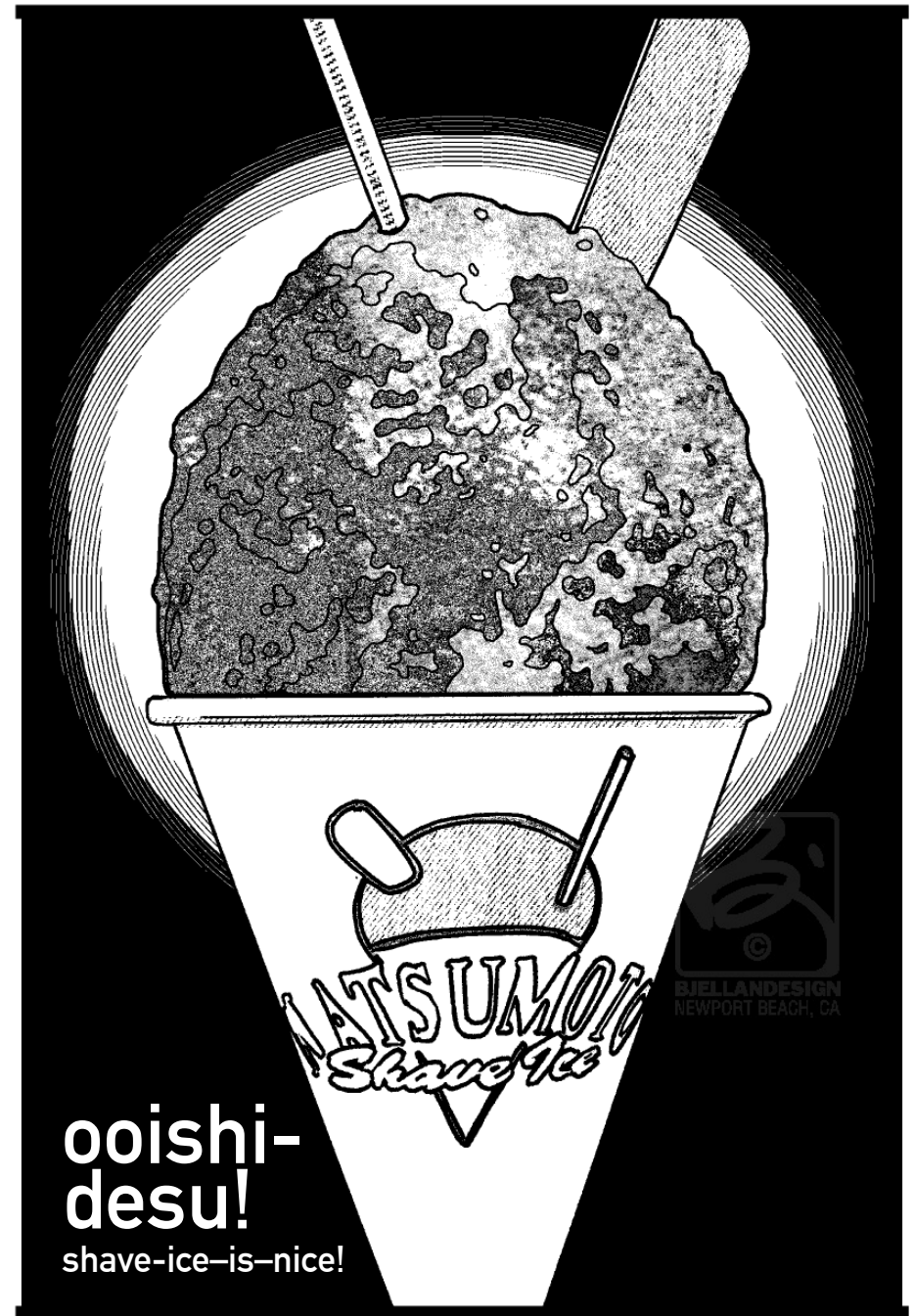
For starters, I like her style. She sports dark blue jeans, Birkenstock sandals and an Asian-design Sari top that is round in back and cut just above the bra line revealing a soft black peach fuzz that spirals between her shoulder blades. Smallish breasts, straight black shoulder length hair parted in the middle. She’s slim but not delicate—a size I can devour with relish! I

fantasize about pulling down her jeans and having a look at her panties to see the whole picture, and imagine all the attention I would give her that she could never dream of, myself having endured nearly fifteen years of ceaseless yearning.

I take her to Matsumoto's, she orders a small pineapple/ lime shave ice, I finish off the latte I'd bought earlier from the coffee shop near the gallery. At least they weren't spinning hometown hero Jack Johnson this time, who I am a big fan of; his being a soulful, singer/songwriter in an age when we need it most, but hearing his tunes each winter in succession at the same shop reminded me of the talent, luck and timing that all need to come together for big success and good on 'im-it's been a few good years for the brother-while I'm enjoying my creative work but mostly scraping by. We walk a few stores down to find an available/secluded bench away from the bustling line and crowd around the door outside. She offers me a taste, I chip out a tiny hunk of mostly unflavored ice from the top with her wooden spoon. We speak of our work and her five years of college education in America, her first in Maryland, then four in Manhattan, taking the subway in from The Bronx and New Jersey. She is currently stationed in Melanesia six months into a two-year stint working for the U.N. and Japanese Embassy. I do not ask her age but it did seem to all add-up a bit on the other side of thirty. *Obachan* (Old Lady) she self-deprecatingly jokes about herself-acknowledging her age, but with a deft touch that hints that she knows she is still fresh-enough and completely desirable.

I show Yukimi a cell phone photo of our Shiba Inu back home and tell her his Japanese name-Genichi. She asks who takes care of him while I am on vacation, I teeter between making something up to seem more single, but I like her and why not be truthful, I say my son. She doesn't ask any further relationship questions, nor do I offer, but she surely has deducted a previous Japanese girl relationship from our conversation. She mentions a trip home to Japan and New York to see friends

[continued in full book]





north
notes from the field
shore

no means yes maki

Two winters ago, driving the rental Subaru Outback through “downtown” Haleiwa for lunch, I told myself: “This is the last time I’ll be on the look-out for stray Japanese girls in Hawaii.” I’m fifty for chrissake! Unfortunately there are not an abundance of single women close to my age to be found most anywhere. (*Our Time-for-getta’bout-it*). Also I can’t trust the male-directive, logic-stumping stupidity of still



being able to rationalize hitting on a-bit-younger ladies, seemingly just because you were once the same age and somehow that means it's still in the wheelhouse. Testosterone gauze effect, ape-man still lurking below calm exterior.

So here I am again, piloting the "mid-size SUV" at the last minute special price of \$155 per week plus daily at \$31 and ten bucks per hour or portion there-of (funny how I always book Alamo for no particular reason other than out of familiarity habit—it kind of sounds like Ala Moana) to prove to myself I can still surf on a high level (the North Shore surf demands reverence, respect and sufficient training); and take a healthful break since the big-split, and the year-and-a-half of new bachelordom. I had finally broken the long streak of marital "Alienation of Affection"—the lawyer-speak for spousal cutting off of ALL intimacy—with the Ex last fall having met Eunjoo—the nice Korean-come-American Girl on *Match.com*. Her dukook was good, as was her bulgogi (just a little salty), and she may have talked dirty in the sack now and then which was helpful for a sex-starved man like me! Allegedly. Unfortunately, for her, if you'll recall, I couldn't fall head-over-heels. Tough the other way around for once. Dang! Thank You Eunjoo!

I stop in to Kua Aina, which is now a tourist destination (American Burger!) and was the only burger easily available in town way back in the college-days-off when you could drive the then sleepy road, and the car would seem to automatically veer over to the curb following the heavenly smoky-scent of grilling cow-flesh. Drifting over to the small shop on a fluffy-beef-cloud like in a cartoon. I'm pretty sure the quality of meat was a bit better then; probably the quantities demanded at today's cash register allow a little lower grade. Perhaps the foreign folks won't know the difference anyhow. It's still good though. There's no Mahi today, so I settle for the sure-thing Teriyaki Chicken sandwich and find a table in the shade under the awning next to a picnic table that is occupied by a Japanese family of four: mom, grandma, young boy and slightly older

sister. Dad (the salary-man most likely?) was absent, either working or otherwise engaged, not sure if grandpa is still around. The grandma *Obachan* ate purposely and finished first, then sat back and picked her teeth with a toothpick, covering her mouth with her hand held sideways in the practiced manner of *Nihonjin* ladies. She sat back and enjoyed the family time; the togetherness, the energy of the two kids who intermittently ate a few bites and then got up-and-down from the table. She occasionally threw in some parental table talk with mom, who was busily engaged in trying to get the kids to sit still and finish a few more bites. *Tabai Nasai!* The long-for-the-kids drive over from Waikiki must have built-up a lot of frenetic energy, especially for the boy who was having a good time. I wanted to chime in—*Isogashi ne-kodomo!* (busy little dude, aren't we?) gently chiding the youth; it brought back fond memories of how fun my now college-age son was at that age. But I kept my normally reticent personality and intonation-perfect-but-vocabulary-limited Japanese to myself, finished-up and dutifully threw my paper wrapping and drink cup in the trash, the custom drilled opening in the top of the waste basket designed to ensure the plastic serving basket not to fit down the hole.

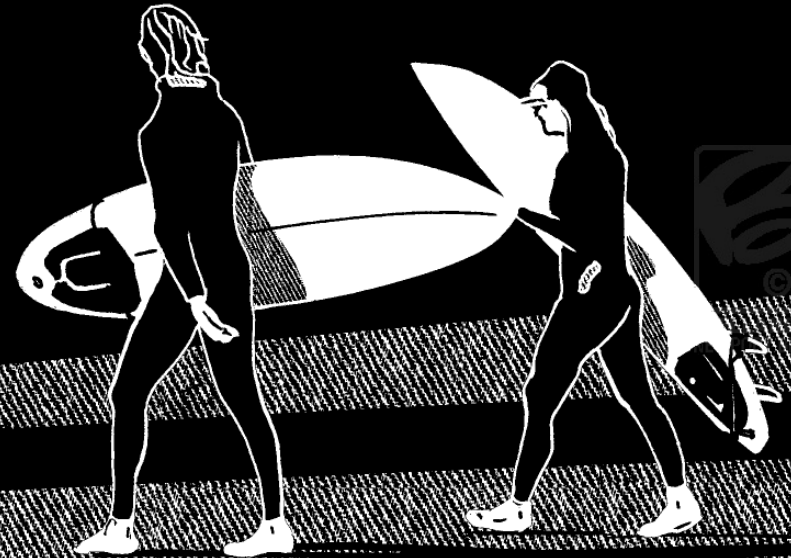
Good friend and photographer/colleague Chris and his family were at their house this visit along with some folks who flew in from Holland and we became friends. One day the surf was a bit too-big and consistent for us occasional visitors there on the North Shore. Black Diamond only, a perfect day for locals who have put in the time to fully enjoy the conditions, making me lament not having grown up or moved here...but I'm a California Son thru-and-thru—which ain't bad either. So the idea came up to drive over to the West-side, to Makaha, and hopefully catch the wrap around the island of the large North swell with more manage-ably sized waves. I had never visited that side of the island, the reputation back in the day that it was not so welcoming to blonde-headed *haole* visitors like I was then, with sun-bleached blond hair and all. Let's check it out! I was

[continued in full book]

Creep

Jeez! Did it AGAIN! A friendly chat on the walk down the long blacktop trail to surf Trestles in San Clemente with super-cute Filipino/American girl Angela. It turns out we both are from North OC, and frequent Newport Beach part of the year, this being summer the ideal place for surfing the Southern Hemisphere swells is over the cobblestone reefs here in SC that (magically!) shape the long swell walls into perfectly peeling waves.

We get to the beach, some nice-looking waves are indeed on offer, and the palpable anticipation of ensuing fun about to begin that is such a great part of surfing flickered with us both. I stop a few yards away from Angela to do the wetsuit changing ritual (under towels wrapped around the waist for guys, shawl-like changers for gals) so that I wouldn't be intrusive to her privacy, but within earshot so we could continue our nattering of the nice conditions. I did notice her cute figure in the full wetsuit once we were ready however.



I smiled at her a couple times out surfing, she smiled back, but I kept to the task at hand; selecting and catching good waves, which is another aspect of being competent in a sport that takes years to be good at, a lifetime to master. It is one of the most difficult "sports" to learn, contrary to the moniker that was put forth and adopted by the masses (and with the lamest application ever mumbled) "Surfing the Internet" as if it's easy and anyone can just hop-to-it. Most beginners are shocked at how difficult it is; they assume they could take a lesson or two and be hanging with the Beach Boys. Not so, most anyone can turn on a computer, if you want to become a surfer, get ready for a lot of work and wipeouts, and be ready to take on a lifestyle, because once bitten-addiction is not far away.

So, after a couple hours, it ended up Angela came in to the beach just after I had, and as I had already slipped out of my wetsuit back into tee shirt and shorts, meandered a little so she could catch-up, hopefully for a stroll back to the cars in her company. I must have been too obvious though, and what was a friendly conversation on the stroll down, she let me know (that being twice her age) was not in-line with making a date out of the day with her stilted response to my inquiry of her luck in the session. What the hell was I thinking? Desperation lends itself to crazy aspirations. Whatever.



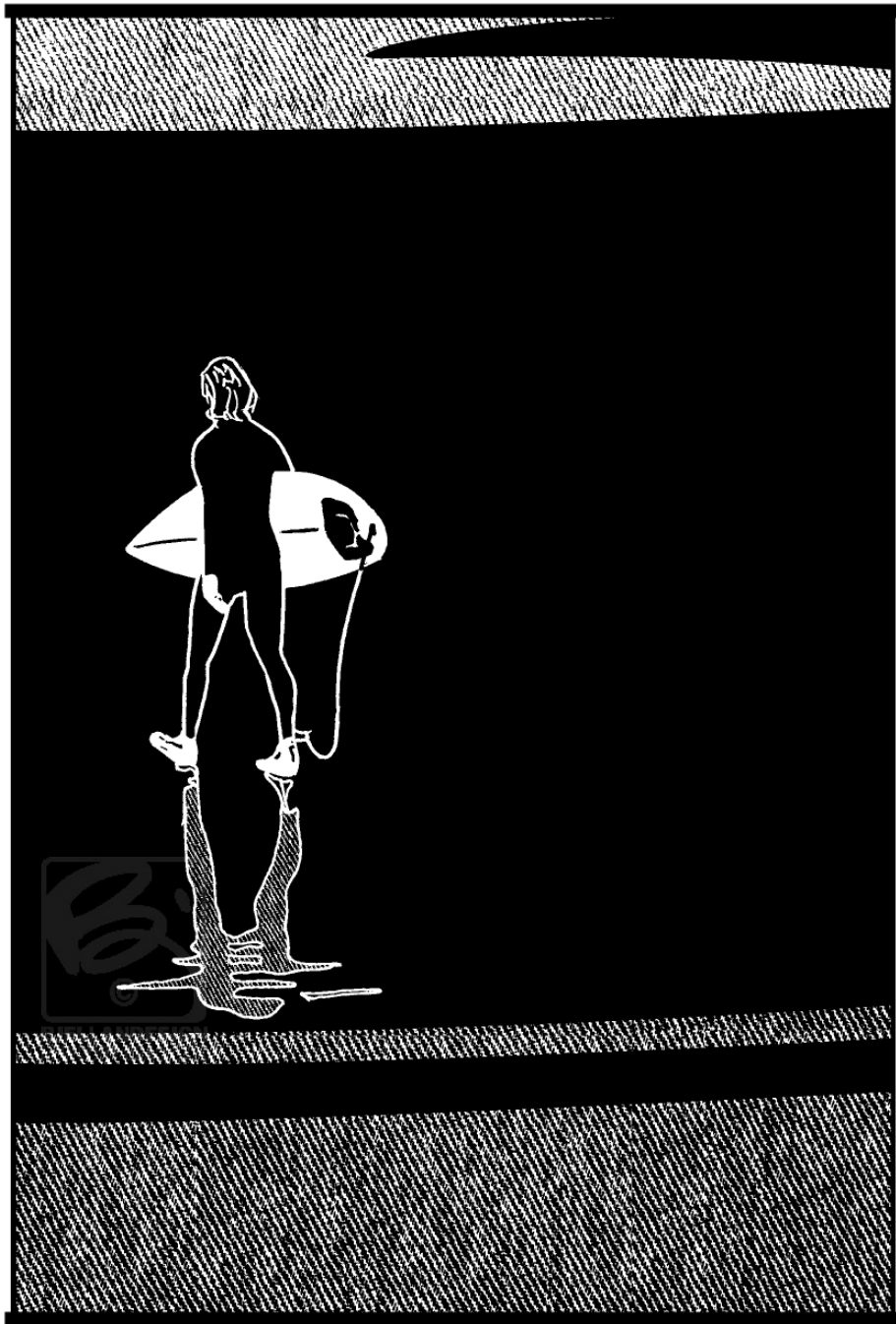
I trudged up the trail back to the Pathfinder which was parked far back on Cristianitos Road since I wasn't lucky to find a spot closer today; wasn't really disappointed when I had a chance to think about it, but heck—she is cute and she surfs! (never mind there is a same age surfer-boy somewhere that she would be *happy* to couple with, and how crazy is my idea?) I had a hankering for a combo burrito—carne asada, guacamole and



refried beans stuffed into an outside flour tortilla—at Pedro's; which is a favorite surfer's drive-through near the parking lot, and when I pulled around to the pick-up window, who was in the walk-up line but Angela herself! She said only two words but her countenance shot daggers, "*You again?*"

Yes. It's me. CREEPO incorporated!





Postscript

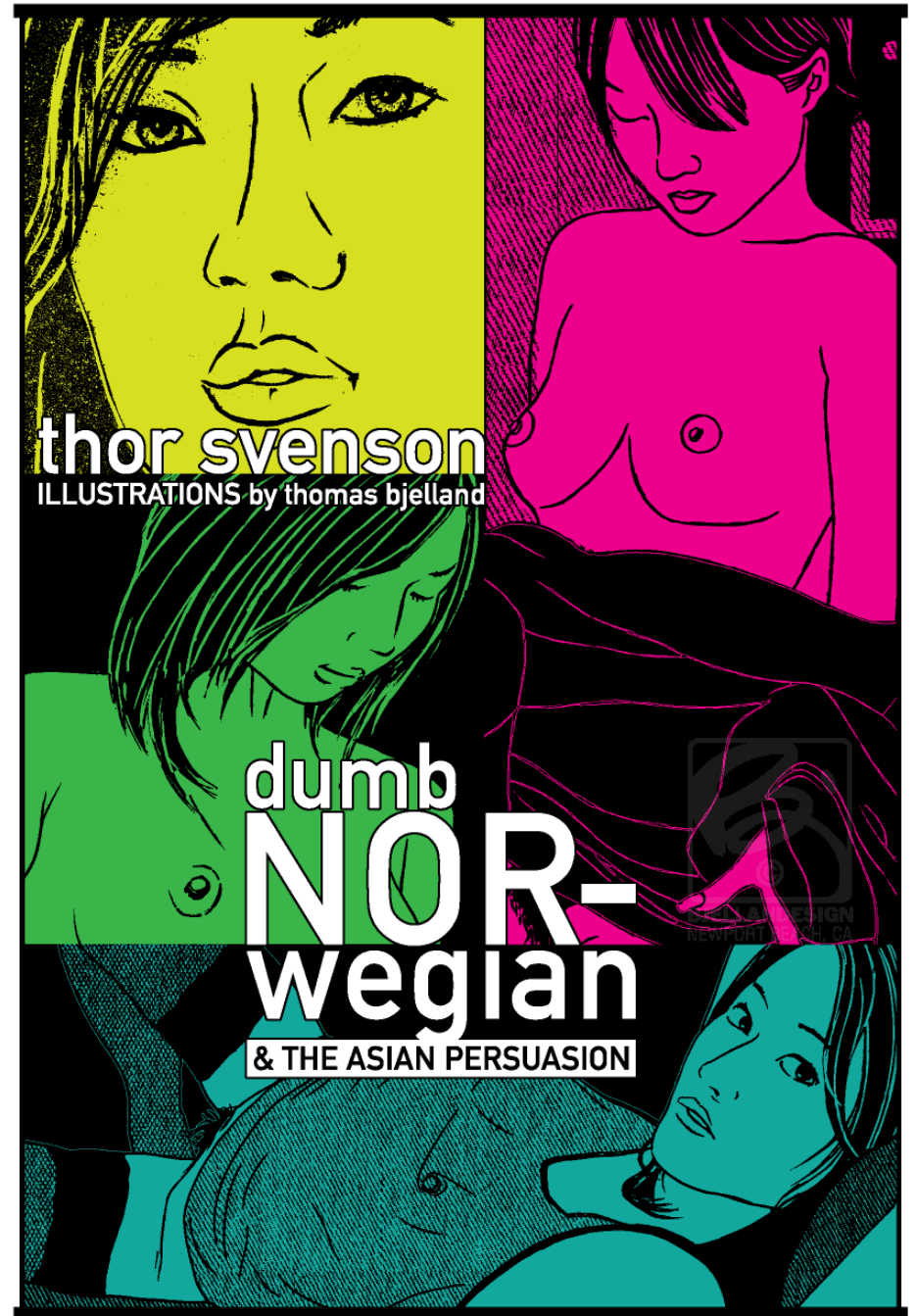
I saw Angela around the parking lot and surfing closer to home that Fall in Newport, but made sure to keep a good distance so as to avoid embarrassment. She did surf pretty good. Then, about a year later in Trader Joe's where she had said she worked (but not which location), having not seen recently and forgotten about her, got in her checkout line out of curiosity. Thank goodness she didn't recognize me! But did give me a friendly compliment on my hoodie. Hopefully she's found a dude her age—God willing I'll find a woman mine.



[intermission]

(not to worry!)

-far-too-late for nocturnal emission.



dumb
NOR-
wegian
& THE ASIAN PERSUASION

dreams





Dreams

6/5/99 Awakening Dream

Another's wife, known to everyone—but none object.
We connect. She leads me to the bedroom.
Embrace.
I feel between her legs, it has been so long.
What is it like?
Body-heat, warm and wet. Yes!
In the center—a pulse.
Heart-beat, blood-pumping-in-veins below skin.
Touching her, a kiss.
Awaken.

5/19/07 4:30 a.m. Nightmare

Outside on the front lawn of my childhood home—my parents
old home—now a neighborhood of mansions?
She is out-front across the street. I cross to talk.
Tall, pretty, young!
Unsure, but she draws me close in embrace.
Spooning briefly, I lift the top of her panties and see black Asian
hair, mons.
A small laugh from her (in English?).
We leave the front-room of the guesthouse where she
homestays, the lady owner throws me an insult.
Whatever.
We cross the street back to my mansion.
Anticipation soars!
It's two a.m., we should be alone.
Ascending the stairs to the second story, shock! My (wife) is
home, not on a trip.
They speak, acquaintances.



6/8/08 Flown from Bush

She wears an ice-blue-face, has crystal eyes, sports white glowing hair.

Intimidating—a different life form/state?

Fortitude, I lean in...

KISS.

Color fills her face. Skin warmth to my touch, blonde flowing hair.

“Is that You?”

Kiss again, my arm around her waist.

“Yes, these are my three sons.”

“And this is my (only) son.”

8/27/09 Same Last Dream

Somnambulatory Curse I

Tender foreplay.

Bear finding honey, I taste her nectar.

My tongue deeper and mouth fit her lips. Sweetness.

She interrupts me, “It’s that time of the month.”

“Look,” she says as proof.

I draw back. Small menstrual jet-streams pulse-out.

Soft-wet-black-hair-pussy I can’t have!

I leave the greying dream, spin-up and away...

Awaken.

Hard-rock boner in the empty darkness.

Wanting. Waiting. Hurting.

6/11/13 Shoganai Dream

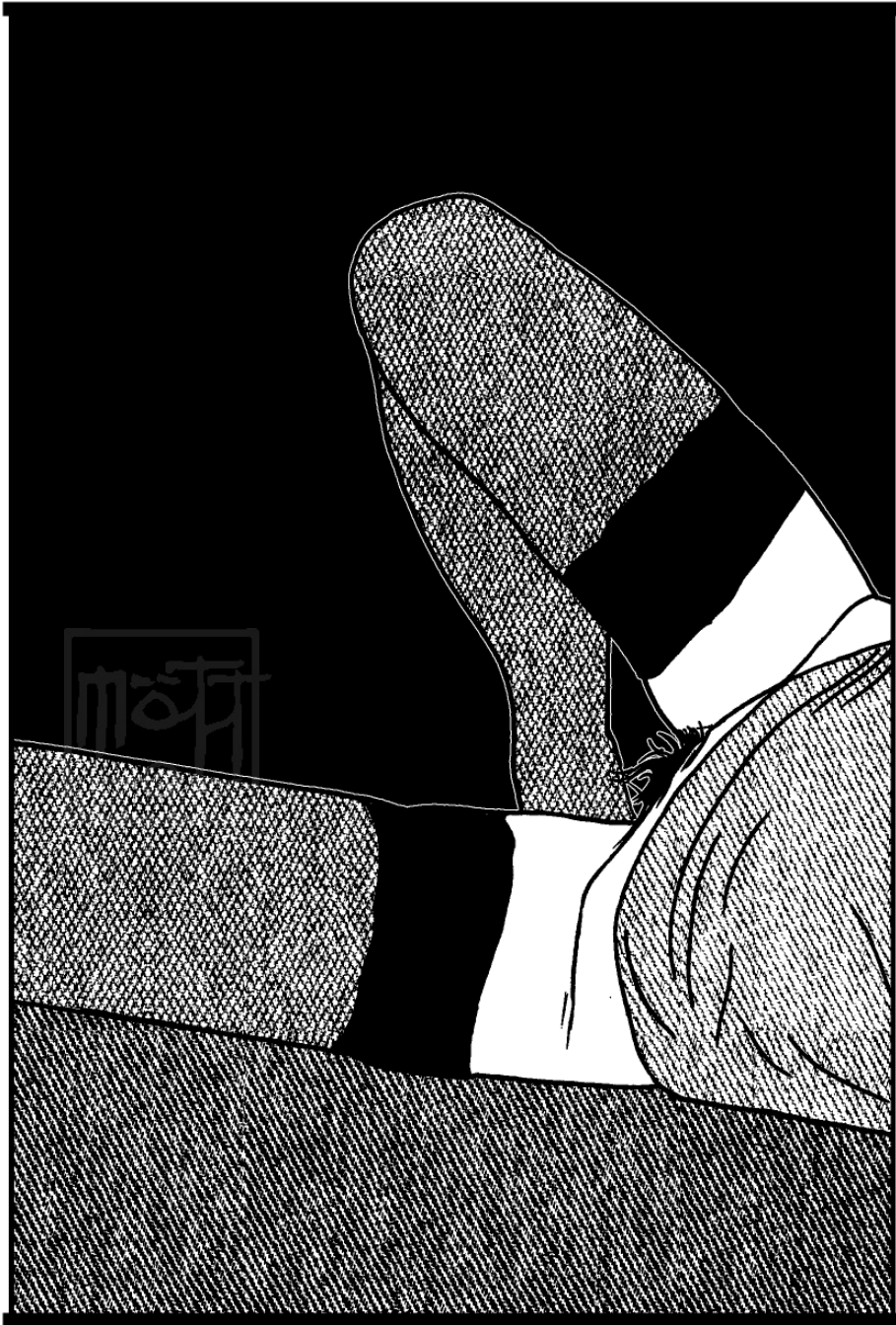
Somnambulatory Curse II

Chaos dream-state.

A familiar voice pulls me in.

Comforting whisper...“Do you want to do it?”

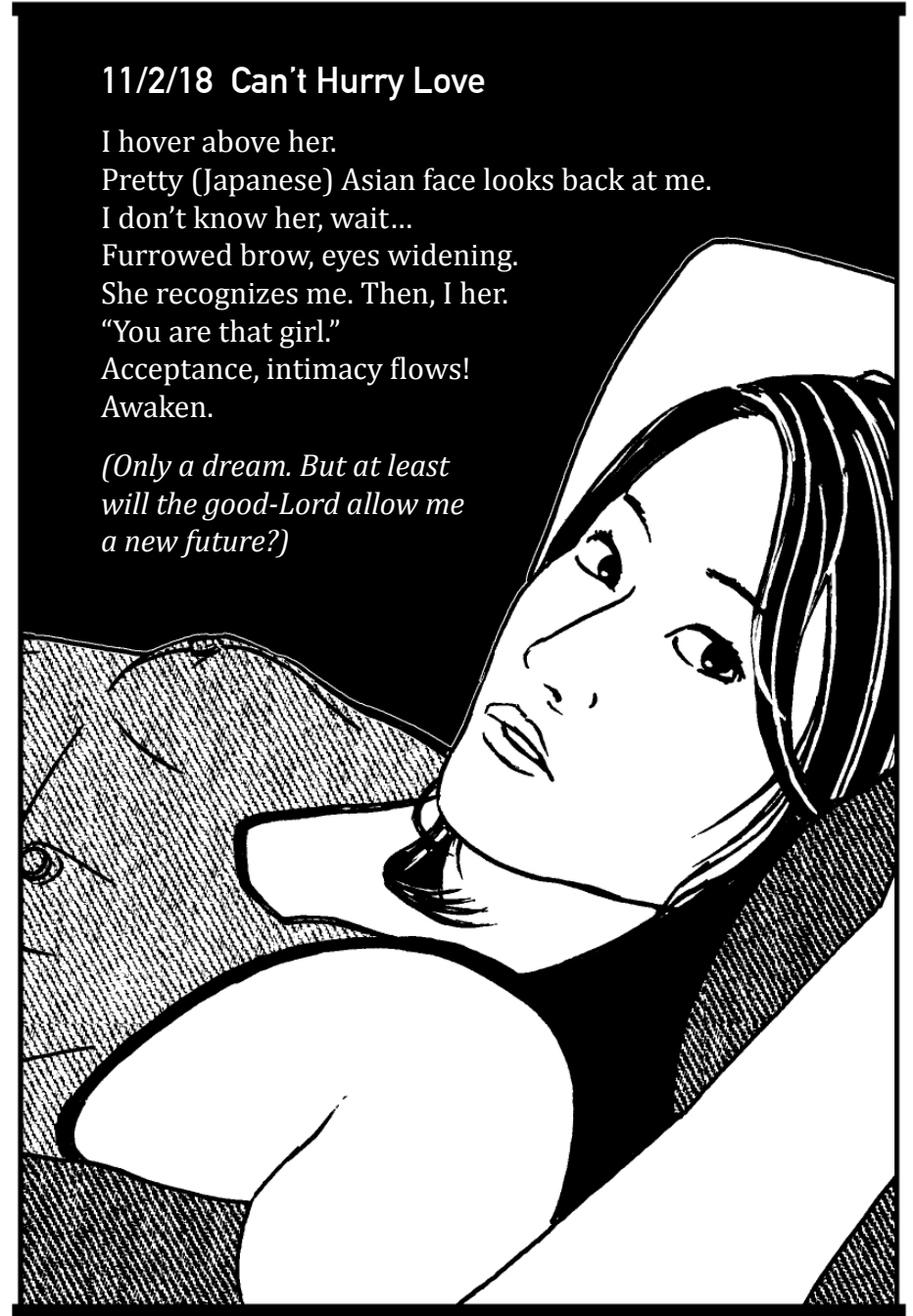
“Yes!” “It’s just the two of us.”



11/2/18 Can't Hurry Love

I hover above her.
Pretty (Japanese) Asian face looks back at me.
I don't know her, wait...
Furrowed brow, eyes widening.
She recognizes me. Then, I her.
"You are that girl."
Acceptance, intimacy flows!
Awaken.

*(Only a dream. But at least
will the good-Lord allow me
a new future?)*



11/3/18 New Girl!

Pretty beach-blond-hair girl. Like an early me, like high school sweetheart Susie (Fox!). Calls to me from afar.

Closer in. Yes-pretty!

Small talk. Embrace.

KISS.

Arousal.

She moves her hand downward, gropes my hard member. Palm below shaft, a few strokes. She smiles!

I palm her round-butt with both hands then explore her crotch.

Surprise! A large panty-shield!

I smile, "How about another time, soon."

She purrs, "How about a quickie?" Now.

"Are you sure?" "No wait, let's go!"

Pulling my arm, still in embrace, "Let's go in this room over here."

"Don't you need to turn-off the car?" I ask.

"No, let's go." Smiling.

Open door.

Hard rock anticipation.

Warmth.

Awaken.

(Piss away morning wood. By now-what else were you thinking?)

5/5/18 Up the Ante

She's not in my wheelhouse at the moment (very attractive with any offer of relationship/dowry short of already owning the house so she can quit her job and





move-on-in to be met with discontent. But, hey, I ain't done yet!).

Although...She's cute/pretty and looks smart.

Like could never turn to love, I'm not nervous about her.

But I would certainly *do* her.

And she wants it—Me, and now!

She makes a gesture towards me, she wants me to point at her to confirm she is the one.

I up-the-ante and blow her a kiss.

Smiles, she sends it back.

It's on!

I move towards her, each step a lightening grey to whiteness.

Awaken.

3/4/19 Another Girl

Another girl. Woman! (not her).

Filipino? Spanish? Bronzy-brown skin and topless!

Only panties. She sits on my lap—warmth.

Her arms wrap around my shoulders.

Both my hands cradle her supple breasts.

Palm-fitting-breasts.

Yes! I am me again. Almost.

My right hand moves down, caressing her smooth-tan-slender belly.

Lower.

My fingers slide below the elastic band that tops her panties.

Yield. Warmth offered.

Encouraged silence.

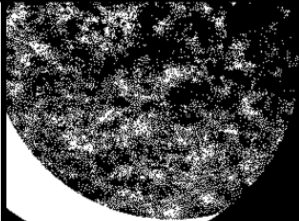
Yes, yes, yes...

then—Here? With others near by?

We could move...

Yes.

Awaken.



art t/k

10/83 Happy Ending

She's at the restaurant/bar's disco-solo-looking.
Looks Japanese? (*Konban-wa!*), cute-twice my age?
Ignore friend's rolling-eyed, up-turned brow-let's
dance!

Mirror-ball, *September*-Earth, Wind & Fire groove, my
white-guy rhythm sometimes grooving, sometimes
robotic-she's all smiles and shaking it too.

Mercedes coupe outside in the parking lot, a little in-
timidated but get her number. Hi! she answers, Y-e-s!
(Sushi dinner) then blanket on the beach.

Stars, night, salty Ocean redolence, kiss, grope, KISS

She moves down under the blanket, unzips my fly.

Rock-hard-boner enveloped in warmth-kiss,

Up, down, y-e-s, I'm about to erupt-hastily pull back.

She moves back up, "You don't like that?"

I do, yes, I do-but about to explode.

Cougar smile, "That's okay!"

fin.
[the end]
(that's all folks!)