

One of the fruits of exploring on-line was locating someone I had dropped all contact with almost 10 years ago. We met during school (I won't use her name, only because she insisted that I not, when I told her what this piece was going to be about) - the first time I saw her, I was floored - you know the imaginary person we all carry around in our heads, the one to whom we compare all potential lovers & soul-mates to.... this person fit most of the bill, as close to anyone else I'd met up to that time. We had several classes together, got along well & began hanging out quite a bit. Eventually, we ended up sharing a place (well, a trailer) together.

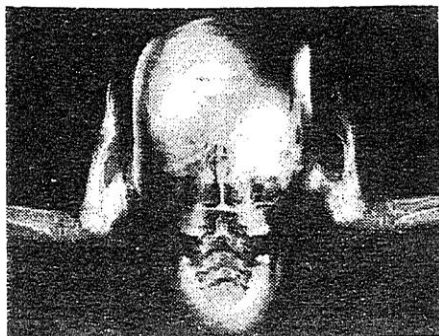
A Night To Forget



By this time, things should've flourished; we spent a considerable amount of time together & there was a lot of affection between us - the only thing was, as much as she was what I wanted, I was not what she wanted. There wasn't any big cathartic seizure of yelling, rage and jealousy that would have at least provided an outlet; it was very quiet, an accumulation of little things: certain behavior, hesitations & evasions that all added up to the strong feeling she did not want me in the role of her lover.

NIGHT: Why are many people in love with people who hurt them?
SAFFRON: That is a strange one, isn't it? If people could only sort that one out. I don't think people intentionally go around wanting to be hurt. But a lot of people stay too long in things that have gone bad. Sometimes it is better to get out quick if things are bad rather than carrying on with something that is going to hurt and last for a long time.

NIGHT: Have you been involved in a bad situation that you let drag on?
SAFFRON: Yes, a very bad situation, and that is probably where a lot of my anger and, hopefully, a lot of my lyrical ideas were spawned from. But I believe you get strength from things like that. In a way you don't want to get over it but you have to. To learn and be stronger. So you can shake their hand the next time you see them and say, "Fuck you!"



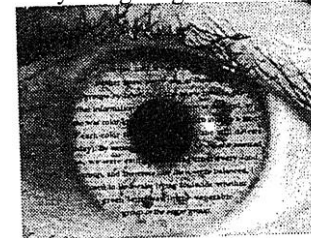
Of course. I didn't want to know this - I tried to change, thinking I could make myself into the type of person that she'd want. When that didn't work, I isolated myself to obsess (excuse me; 'focus') on what to do. I drank a lot; stopped interacting with people (except for my counselor - more on that later), which led to several weeks of not attending classes & not even noticing, and sleepwalking - a truly frightening experience, to wake up **in the front room, standing** up & no idea how I got there... All of this led up to one extremely horrible night of alcohol & cutlery - a birthday celebration for a friend which led to my friend spending the good portion of the evening with his head in the toilet, and one last-ditch effort on my part to salvage my relationship with my roommate by sawing on my wrists with (dull) knives to prove my devotion. The success of that evening led me to consider suicide.

All very melodramatic - *pathetic* may be a more accurate description - but consider being in your early 20's and coming around to the harsh realization that this person who'd I'd invested so much in, whom I'd be willing to do anything for, didn't want me - no matter how hard I'd try, no matter what changes I'd make, nothing I could say or do would make her want me - it's 8 very ugly epiphany. no matter what age you are. There were also other factors involved in this situation; I started undergoing counseling because I wasn't adapting well to my environment - once again. I'd left people I knew in KS to go after my goals (**distance and escape**) and a visit in the Fall had set that Off. When we started having problems with our situation, it just added that much more to the misery.

How To Maintain Your Dignity

In order to maintain your dignity you must know where it comes from. When you meet somebody you should smile and shake hands. Once you start shaking, it is important to feel that your life is passing in front of the eyes of the person you are meeting. This mini-review is being done without judgment. In fact you are viewing this person's life in much the same way. Each shake of the hands represents a decade of life being viewed. Once all the decades are reviewed then the handshaking stops. You now feel that this person knows absolutely everything about you and that he or she understands you completely. This is a good feeling. If this ritual is done properly you will become the honorable Ambassador from the country of You. As an ambassador you represent all the incredible aspects of this wonderful country of You with its rich historical past and its strategic position in the world of the future. So therefore to maintain dignity is of vast importance. As ambassador you must also find out the local customs that exist outside of yourself. The more you find out about these strange new customs of your host country (the person you are meeting) the more dignified you become. Some countries owe a lot of money to other countries but these countries still manage to maintain their dignity. If you are a country like this try exporting. As ambassador of everything you have ever done or will do, the most important thing you must learn is to wave and smile.

The attempt was obviously unsuccessful and pretty pathetic (although in retrospect, it's rather comic in a dark vein - I sealed up all the windows & doors with duct tape & sat at the kitchen table with the oven door open & the gas on high. Sat there breathing deeply for about 20 minutes until: 1) I realized how utterly stupid I was to get to this point, and 2) I realized how much the gas bill was going to be.) It was enough, however, to break through the wall of my personal Hell of self-loathing & pity and to just get on with things. I went back to classes, did my film & got through the remainder of the semester. When our lease was up, I got all of my things together and left - no teary goodbyes, no last bitter words; just Out & Don't Look Back.



Entertainment, Therapy or Just Fucking Nuts?