

The Literary Bubble

by Diana Raab

There's a calm in this room, as people enter, scrambling to find a seat for this reading of passions we both share. It's not mine nor your day to read, but we gather to support our literary friends. Had I known you'd sliver back into my life after those two months away, I might have dressed for the occasion—the shortest skirt and tightest blouse in my daughter's closet.

I love seducing you, but there's no warning of your rare appearance, those silvery blue eyes of desire, framed by shoulder length salt and pepper hair, upon your six-foot three frame, and glistening smile, a composite that pleads for my attention.

You stare at my tantalizing jeans, fashionable tennis shoes, a white blouse and purple shawl, trying to hide secrets about your fantasy woman as you enter arm in arm with the one who you call your partner.

You and I have never spoken any forbidden words of lust and desire. Our eyes and all the cosmic forces do it for us, and in the climate of our literary world, jumping into the sack with you would illuminate trouble.

For months I've shifted from longing to disgust wanting you in my space and then wanting you gone. My heart cannot take this trance you put me in.

I am no longer seventeen. I hate games, but I still love hiking the mountains and baking chocolate chip cookies and making love under a moonlight we both share.

Your presence confuses me, like grabbing a lobster in action. I am pulled into your intoxicating bubble which engulfs me and robs me of vital oxygen, as I hold onto the desire to keep my own family together.

The strangers in this room know nothing of these ethers which pass between you and I, as we sit patiently waiting for poets to read, but just feel the beat of one another's hearts.

I glance in my purse, scrambling for a pad, but instead pull out a knife. I want to cut through this bubble you put me in. A Swiss Army knife— a gift from mother long-gone who used it to cut apples for her horse lover, who I hated because she loved him more than me.

Suddenly, our bubble collapses, we walk out, way before the clapping and the last chance for you to turn around and cast your spell on me. I didn't want to see the face of that woman who you fuck every night, while thinking of me. What I did want was for you to admit that I was the reason you showed up tonight, but you never will. Men are liars.

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