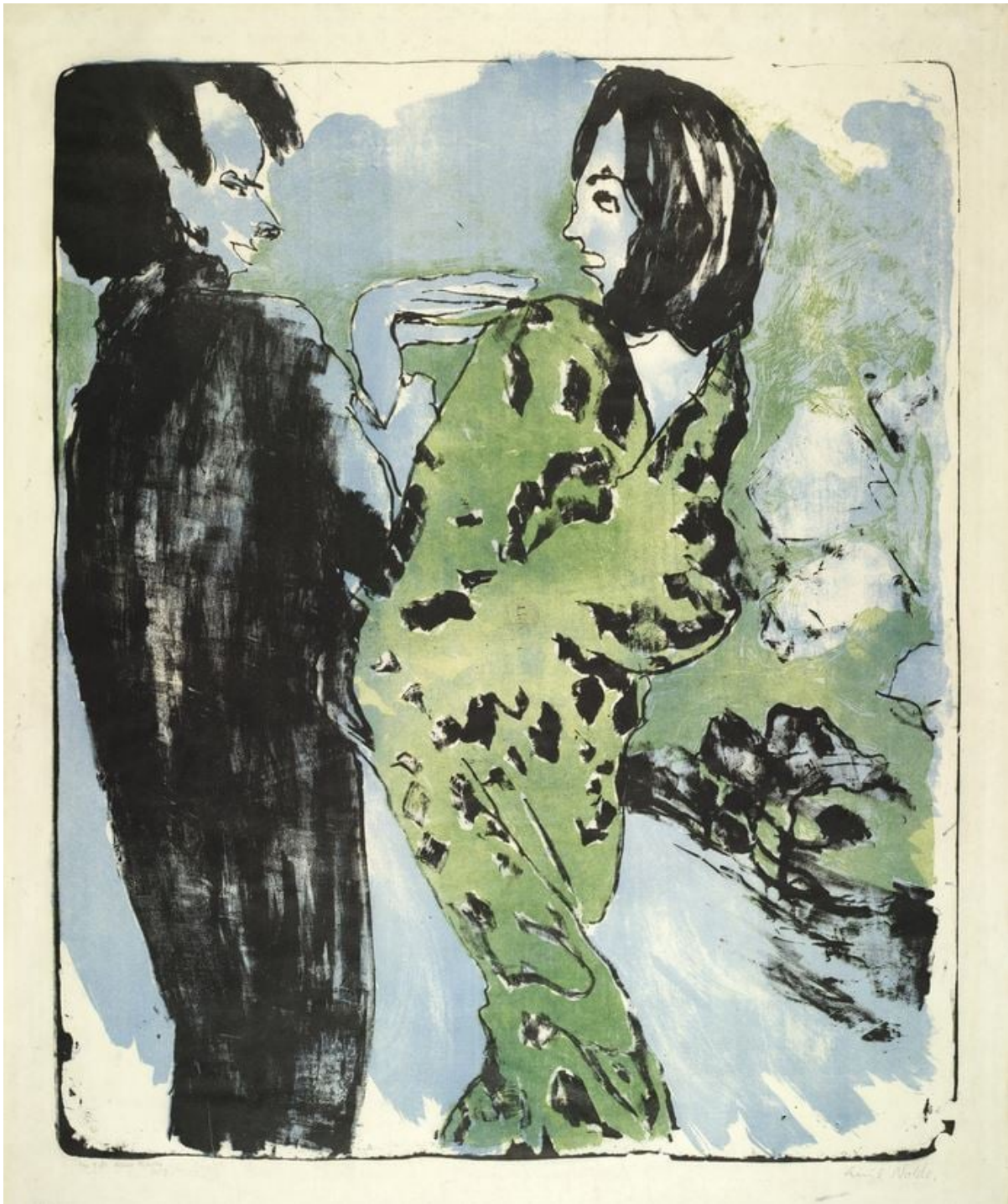


How to Make Women Want You

by [Justin Wong](#) (April 2020)



Young Couple, Emil Nolde, 1913

Part 1

When I was a young man, I wished to get laid. I must have been 19, and longed for the first experience of flesh forbidden to me. This was an all-encompassing pursuit of mine; I would do anything to attain such ends. I frequented cafes, bars, and bought clothes that set me back a small fortune. My go-to on how to achieve this was in the back of men's magazines. In such advertisements they always seemed to have some miracle cure as to achieve the damn near impossible, to make women fawn over you, to become seduced by your presence. These came in a multitude of forms, from pheromones to aftershave, from confidence to cars.

I tried all of these to no avail. My cherry remained as miraculously unplucked as an unharvested allotment despite efforts made and, more importantly, money spent.

There was one line I had yet to pursue, one thing I had not spent the money I made in servitude on. This was a course taught by experts on the so-called art of seduction. I knew this was something I had to give my due consideration. It said you will turn from "Loser to Lothario" on the advertisement.

This was scarcely something I could do immediately. I would have to save money to become a Lothario; the course would set me back £3000—a hunk of cash I had not on me. It would take me a few months of deprivation to save.

This actually worked out fine for me. By the time spring arrived, I would be ready with the adequate funds to attend that season's seminar—a five-day affair, Wednesday through

Sunday. A hotel room would be provided for all those unlucky in love.

In the months following, I booked my ticket and ate meagrely, swearing off anything in the way of extravagances.

When the day came, I packed my bag in the back of my sports car (the one I purchased so I wouldn't have to do the stuff I was doing), and drove. It was a merry adventure, experiencing my red Honda zooming through side roads like a steam engine chugging along railway tracks midst the gorgeous expanse of the country's Arcadian green; the world unperturbed, going about its way of life as in centuries past, with spring unfolding all around, and flowers bursting in bloom signalling new life. This was a wonder to behold in itself, the experience of the world around whilst riding rurally.

By the time midday came about, I arrived in the city, my sat nav helped to find the hotel I was to stay, a towering edifice that pointed to the heavens as a spire.

I asked at the reception where it would be before I was guided along in a seminar hall reserved usually for those in business, though now had in it the cursed in love, the sexless, and naturally, me.

The other members were a mixed bag, everything that could be found in terms of age, of race. They all weren't hideous, though of course some of them were.

We were handed notepads, pens and other such stationary, and we were handed the itinerary of the days which were to follow.

Today there was a lesson about how one is supposed to walk and "Don't listen to what women say, listen to how they act." Tomorrow was life lessons from an elderly pimp. Friday was "Don't be afraid to say what you think around women." Saturday was a course on how to juggle multiple women at once, something that appealed greatly to me, though perhaps we were getting ahead of ourselves somewhat.

Sunday was the day in which we put all this wisdom in practice, a time where we would go out to a club, a time where we would seduce beautiful women, or so we were told.

We at first were met with the person who was leading the event, named Chris, something of a Jack-the-Lad type, with good looks, the sort whom it seemed impossible to come up wanting in the lottery of love. This didn't stop him regaling us of his past, a time when he was like us. Saying this as if we were the lowest state a human being could possibly be, he told us about his life before, when he couldn't get laid for the exchange of a diamond necklace. But now had more women than he knew what to do with. It was a rags to riches tale, his life was—or, as he wittily put it, a rags to bitches tale. This was the tone in general of the week, and it was enjoyable in of itself. Was it £3000 worth of enjoyable? This was difficult to tell.

After the day's events were over, after the speakers dispensed

all in the way of wisdom they had to teach us, I got friendly with some of the others attendees. We would spend our time in each other's rooms, talking or watching films, regaling each other with stories of our lives, our absent sexual histories.

Afterwards, we were also to talk of all the lessons learnt, which were many—and were a multitude of things to think about. Some of the things we learnt we found true; others preposterous. Chris, the leader, managed to check in on us on those evenings, contemplating the things talked of in the hall and, he being full of life, managed to lift our spirits somewhat, though I wonder if this was part of his charm in so far as women were concerned: to be outgoing, never not talking.

As the days moved on, we learnt a lot in the 'art of seduction.' There was a lot to be taken in, learning much in the way of new things, the supply and demand of attraction, the feminist woman, why women more often than not initiate divorce. We learnt other economic theories, applied naturally as they were to the loins. The pareto principle among them—where 20% of the people own 80% of the wealth—was manipulated so it applied to sexual relations, with graphs in PowerPoint presentations, illuminated and projected across the white of screens. This suggested that the top 80% of women pursue the top 20% of men, creating inequality across the sexes, the bottom 80% are left to fend for themselves amongst the bottom 20% of women. Or so the theory went. This is magnificently depressing in itself, which probably went a great distance to explain my poverty as far as romance was concerned. Their solution so far as to solve this conundrum wasn't so clear or attainable. It was to advance ourselves in the region of the 20%, that ruling class of men who advance through love and, consequently, life with ease. They were the

people for whom women fawned over, were willing to embark on an erotic existence with.

This was perhaps easier said than done and, unless blessed with appropriate proportions, showered upon by that of genetic inheritance that made one dashing, that made one striking to glance upon, it appeared close to impossible to march up the rung into that priestly caste.

They assured us that this had little-to-nothing to do with looks, less to do with abs, and was rather something that we all could attain. Though they perhaps framed it in this way, seeing as the price we paid to attend the series of lectures was not what anyone would call meagre.

I wondered how did such a predicament fall upon us, that of my generation? Were things this bleak for our grandparents, our parents even? Did such places exist in an age previous to this?

When Sunday came, the day when we were to try out the knowledge we so intently went about learning. We were going to attend a night club that was not a distant walk from the hotel we were staying. We all gathered at the foyer of the hotel, him counting the numbers of those who were there, so he appeared less like a dating coach and more like a teacher on a school trip making sure none of the students had strayed.

This appearance changed quickly upon learning everyone was there, into something akin to a major getting his troops ready

for battle, where a speech of sorts was spoken. He assured us that all that we needed was to be confident.

We went to the club, as was usual for a Sunday Night, it was filled somewhat moderately with people, though not as filled as it would have been the day previously. There was an odd spattering of men present, there were beautiful women attendant also.

We did as Chris our leader said, and got talking to them. I personally spoke to a couple of them and, perhaps to give him credit, some of the things appeared to be rubbing off. I spoke to two eastern Europeans, who seemed enthralled with me. Such as girls I had met in similar circumstances of my life previously, weren't.

Dave the person who stayed next to me in the hotel, also seemed to be doing well, when I walked over to him, he too seemed to be talking to a beauty; a foreigner, a stunning creature who seemed so enthralled by one with such mediocre looks as to be unreal. I spotted Chris, walking across the room, with a freshly poured drink in hand.

"Chris," I cried out walking over to him.

"Hey," he said, "I saw you over there, talking to that girl. She's really into you, maybe you should take her back to your hotel room."

"Yeah I was talking to her,"

"Then, what's the problem? You're looking a bit down."

"A lot of these girls here are Romanians."

"Am I to blame if Romanians like to go to this club?"

"Well, no."

"Anyway, why do you care? A lot of these girls are smoking hot. It doesn't matter where they are from, right?"

"I suppose . . . "

"Good, well get in there," he said this giving me a pat on the shoulder, back in the direction of where the girl I was speaking to was standing. She was alone and smiling at me as if to lure me in seductively. I walked over to her, I bought her a few drinks, we danced, then had sex later on, in the early hours of the morning.

The thing I had desired most had finally come to pass, I had sex.

Though I probably should have noticed that something was awry, when waking in the morning, after our dream night of bliss she was there, dressed up as if to go off to work. The aura of the previous night she had, that of master temptress, enacting a seduction had all but vanquished.

"Hi," she said, upon seeing me awaken.

"Hi," I said coming from a wakeful sleep which only a long night of intimacy can provide, my gonads raw and chafed from experience.

"Can you give me some taxi fare?"

"What?"

"Taxi fare, I have no money to get home."

"How much will it be?"

"£60," she said sternly as if to haggle.

"How far away do you live?" I said dumbfounded.

I had enough money when I searched for my wallet, in trousers

lazily strewn across the floor, that hurriedly were pulled off in the passion of the night before. I felt not cheated as to her asking me for this, it was the least I could do, considering what she did for me, transforming my world to one of experience, my body a cherry popped, in the folds of the innocent no longer.

As the news of the following day got out, I wasn't the only one to successfully get laid, the majority of us did.

Some of us for the first time, and for those previously married, for the first time in years.

I exited the hotel and the city in my red Honda, in the direction in which I came with a confidence unseen, as my life in so far as love was forever transformed.

Part 2

The following years were a mixed bag, I moved jobs a multitude of times, along with towns, counties, in pursuit of gainful employment, anything so as to keep me from deprivation, the breadline. Considering the peaks and troughs regarding my work life, the raucous economy in part to blame for the topsy-turvy nature of my life, I had to move here-then-there as if I were a vagabond. My life in love had little in the way of peaks, only incessant troughs that were never able to pick up. No matter how much I applied the knowledge learnt, I was not able

to repeat the success in the club on that night.

I dressed well, I applied when I went to the clubs and bars all of the knowledge dispensed. Speaking as if I was raised without manners, walking around with confidence, with arrogance.

But none of this worked. I was as on my lonesome as if I had never spent time and money on becoming a Lothario.

Perhaps I thought something else was picking up, as I had met a companion, someone reserved not simply for the rudiments and mechanics of sexual gratification, but someone whom I could see spending my life with.

It was strange the way in which we met, considering I never pursued her. A couple of years after I attended classes on how to meet women, I put all of it to rest, as it was clearly getting me nowhere. I decided most of the stuff taught was nonsense. I would put these ideas and notions behind me. I would accept the fact that I would most probably never find love, never marry, and never have the joy of raising kids of my own.

With the horror of such a future; things weren't so bad. There were still things in my life I enjoyed, that didn't involve being rejected by an onslaught of sub-par women. The possibility of living, of dying alone wasn't that bad after a few months of contemplating that reality. This was the way my life was in fact to be, nothing short of a miracle would

transform such a destiny.

The majority of men that ever lived have been reproductively unsuccessful, and feminists have the nerve to say that men have been oppressing them. From DNA we [know](#) that 8000 years ago, for every seventeen women that had a child, every man did. The world seemed to me to be heading down this route, the one of noble savagery.

Upon coming into contact with Grace, I believed my lonesome destiny was to transform to include a relationship, companionship, love and, more importantly, sex.

It was on a Saturday and I was lost in idle relaxation, reading John Cheever's *Wapshot Chronicle*, a book I was thoroughly engrossed in. It was one of those days of spring in its infancy, with many people on the streets roaming, glad to finally rid themselves of their winter garb, where they were seen in short sleeves. A joy could be perceived in the hazy din of city sounds blending with joyous voices, meshed one into another, such as is not to be heard on days of winter, on days of autumn. A throng of people were to be found in the streets gloriously bathing in the sun's emitting rays, regardless of the faintness of its lustre.

I was outside the cafe reading, when a beautiful girl approached me.

"That's a good one," she said smiling.

"Do you think so?" I said.

"Yes, though I must say I prefer his short fiction."

"I'll make sure to check some of it out. I'll order it in my next haul of books."

It was from there we got to know one another, and made sure to take each other's phone numbers, I bought her a latte and we talked about our cultural pursuits, about literature, about movies.

It wasn't long after our initial meeting that I was sure we would be a pairing and our lives would interlock as lovers. Although whenever we met up, whenever we saw each other during a mid-week evening, to see a film or hang out, or get a night cap in a pub of equal proximity to where both we lived, our relations failed to be romantic in nature, our love not moving in that natural progression where an erotic element was added, where we, as a consequence, were just friends no more. I had my reasons for thinking this was so. We never held hands, our embrace never strayed beyond that of a parting hug, nor was kissing a thing we did—to say nothing of the sex act.

There may have been every possibility that Grace was frigid, waiting for me to initiate our friendship into romance, sexual union. This explanation was initially pleasing to me, but seemed somewhat insufficient—for could someone who approached

me as an exemplary stranger really be considered coy?

It may be so that she had confidence socially, but was puritanical in regards to romance. This wasn't the idea that I got from her. She appeared liberated from the shackles past generations had to wear, where women were expected to be retiring, demure, in a state of unending hysteria at the mention of anything pertaining to carnal pleasures. I had an adequate method in thinking such things, as in her apartment along with copies of John Cheever, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Dickens, among countless others, I saw also books written by political ideologues, by gender zealots. The Second Sex among them, a smattering of Germaine Greer, as well as some others from a contemporary wave, who doubtless preached their gospel, claiming that virginity and purity was a centuries old conspiracy to control the bodies of females.

If this was true, if she was someone of sexual experience whose pleasure has been known to be gained from the body, then where did this leave our relationship? She liked me, yes, but this affection clearly didn't spread into the realms of my wanting. She enjoyed my company, at least as dispassionately as she enjoyed the company of her brother, or her father. Maybe the thought of her and I having sex was as repulsive to her mind as it was with her kin.

If this was so, I felt somewhat uneasy about befriending her, to that of no sexual ends. For wasn't our relationship a great assault on my manhood? To be around a woman who viewed me as being unworthy of her love, her bodily desires. Being in her presence did much to shatter my sense of self-worth, my value as a romantic partner.

She talked freely about other men in her life, lovers she obviously copulated with, such as she wasn't with me. When talking with her, some of her references were obviously erotic, laughing at jokes with a knowing acknowledgement whenever we happened to be watching a sitcom, when talk most vulgarly veered down such avenues.

I was willing to believe, at certain times, that something serious existed between us, that she saw me as being worthy of such a relationship, of passionate desire. When speaking one evening, she out of the void stated that she watched pornography and, in the aftermath of viewing this, she was overcome by disabling guilt.

Of course, this said nothing as to our relationship, though I wasn't completely ruling out that this was said to rouse my desires for her, to get my gland harder than a kitchen surface. If such results were the thing intended, then she successfully achieved her aims. Apart from this, that of my wish fulfilment, there was a possibility she was playing games with me, creating a confusion in my mind. That this kind of act, our talk in presence and text, always veering on the question of sex, onto the body, was relaxation away from the toils of life. It was, to her, a hobby. Perhaps this was an inaccurate thing to say, and that such strange behaviour emanated from a sickness of the mind.

I didn't know if any of this was true. I never took the chance to see if this was so, I never once tried to make moves upon her, thinking it was too far into the season to risk such a thing, figuring it may separate anything in the way of

friendship we had built. This wasn't to say if she made moves upon me, I wouldn't indulge in the offer, taking up whatever in the way of crumbs she would put in my bowl. I wasn't sure if this was to be so, as she talked of other male friends she had, those she met at the law office, and bars that she in the weekends frequented, in which she hinted to me that she may be involved with in an intimate way. The ones she talked of previously, the ones that fomented her to a blushing when telling me of them, seemed to be most strange, when considering her background of boarding school, the money from which she was reared, her education in literature. For she seemed to take a liking to brutes, to those who were seedy and tattooed.

Perhaps this was what freedom did, the direction which society was to head when women were left to their own devices. Girls who are training to be solicitors who only date deadbeats and ne'er-do-wells. I myself wasn't too far removed from this category, only able to hold down part-time positions before the companies I worked for fired me, only to replace me with the next load of suckers. This was modern life in modern Britain, and I wondered to myself if the precariousness of my situation, my work-life, deterred Grace from taking a chance on me. If things in their present state were anything to go upon, the possibility of a life with me would scarcely be easy, low paid as I was, with scarcely enough wages for me myself to live upon, which was to say nothing of buying a house or raising a family.

In this economy were any of the other bums and lowlifes she hung around with fairing any better? It was unlikely they were. Though this didn't stop her from sleeping with them, although this was a guess, for I knew not with certainty the acts they got up to in a room to themselves when doors were

locked, when curtains closed.

One night when I felt like confessing all to her, to ask serious questions, I said "I wish to find a girlfriend, someone whom I could seriously see myself being attached to."

"Well I can go out with you to a night club, you know, be your wing man. I could get you to talk to girls, tell them what a great guy you are." She said as if interested in my love life.

"Yes, maybe," I said.

She never took me up on that offer, and upon reflection this might have been just as well. If she was to introduce me to girls, who was to proclaim to them all of the virtues in that of my possession, then they may well suspect something strange about the platonic nature of our relationship, for if I was as great as she said I was, then it begged certain questions as to why we were not a pairing. Why was our relationship as sexless as brother and sister?

There were other things that were to happen, that would make our friendship run past the boundaries of safety into danger. This occurred on an evening we met up in a pub. There was nothing unusual as to this, we often met in such establishments, watching the football on satellite. We enjoyed such an evening together, our conversation as wide ranging as it was, consisted of a multitude of subjects, from History to Greek mythology, depth psychology to eroticism. I couldn't fault her on her abilities as a vast conversationalist, her

education was clear to me, it was money well spent by her parents, as there was hardly a reference in regards to history, to literature she didn't quite grasp.

After the game was over, our drinks consumed, we walked back to hers, which wasn't too far a distance away from the pub. We made our way there via a Chinese restaurant, and from there went to her apartment, where she said I could spend the night. This was scarcely a new experience, as I had been inside her apartment previously, not solely alone, though in the company of other friends she had, who along with me, were brought together for movie nights.

"You can stay the night if you want to."

"Okay," I said to this.

"Though the un-foldable sofa you slept on last time is broken, you'll have to sleep in the same bed as me. You know, we can top and tail. "

Of course, I wasn't objecting to this situation, though I would be deceiving myself if through all this I wasn't confused, wishing that I could stay the night, in that of the same bed as her. This as welcome as it invariably was surprising, contradicted her previous claims as to our friendship's dispassionate nature, where we would be as physical as kin, as unconsummated as eunuchs.

"What is wrong with the bed?" I asked as something seemed to suspect about the story in which she gave.

"It's just broken, it needs repairing, my dad is coming down to fix it the next time he comes."

"Okay," I said.

Of course, this was a justified thing to say, though perhaps I said this so as to not tempt fate, as maybe she was coming around to the possibility of me in her life with greater affections than ones we now had. Although there was also the possibility that this was a part of some games she was in the process of enacting. Her main goals were to get me to desire her, before walking away into obscurity, leaving me in a state of confusion and despair.

After the greasy food we bought had been very much consumed, we watched in the living room a comedy movie, this was scarcely something that will be forged in my memory, though it did make me laugh.

This was before the inevitable was to occur, the things she talked of were to happen, that we were eventually to go to sleep, though in which way this was supposed to be remained something of a mystery, birthing confusion in my mind. Did she want our relations to progress in areas that were sexual? Or to remain as they were before, being platonic, the same as it would be if we were siblings. I have a sister, and our relations never extended into the state we were now heading,

that of sharing a bed in the vulnerability of our rest.

There were other reasons why I suspected that she desired something richer in regards to our relations, as it wasn't only once in the moments which preceded this, the hours of our watching a movie together, which she referenced sex, though she spoke of the moments she masturbated, too.

There were of course other aspects to go upon, additional instances which to me suggested that she was passionately enthralled by me, by my body, in an instance that occurred a few weeks prior to this, where we were in 'The Star and The Moon,' a regular place we frequented on a night we agreed to meet, for live music was played at the event. In this instance she walked in drunk, and sat next to me, fondling my arms and body.

"Have you been working out?"

"A little bit," I said being coy, for I had been in the gym the majority of the days of the week.

"You look good," she said slurring her words whilst of course grabbing my chest.

This seemed to be a one-way thing and if I did the same, traipsing drunk through the pub and grabbing women's breasts by the handful, I would have of course been handled roughly or worse.

Here on this night, sleeping on the same bed, I would be something of a fool not to come onto her, to take a punt at love.

Whilst we were in bed, the covers cast upon our bodies, leaving our heads and shoulders out, our voices were free to talk.

"So, do you want to do it?" I said.

"Do what exactly?"

"Have sex?"

"Oh please, I think of you like a brother."

"I have a sister and never once did we sleep in the same bed, or maybe my memory is getting a bit hazy with age."

"What do you want me to do? The other bed is broken."

We sat in silence saying nothing to each other.

"You know, I always thought that you liked me."

"Why would you think that?"

"Well, your friends said you liked me, they said that it's clear from the way you look at me."

"Well, they are wrong."

"Well, do you think that you and me, will ever go out?"

"No!"

"Well you could see why you maybe gave me the impression that you liked me—us being half-naked and in bed."

There was another silence that remained unbroken, interrupted only by our breathing, until she turned to me and said, "Look you probably won't want to go out with me anyway."

"Yeah, maybe you're right about that."

"Why? Because I'm a fuck up?"

“Probably.”

We said nothing after this, resting in silence, until I fell off to sleep, the awkwardness carrying forth in the morning when I awoke, where she prepared for us breakfast, which I ate consuming with the passion of an orphan.

It wasn't long after this I left, and a few weeks must have inconspicuously drifted past, until I heard anything from her again. She asked once more to meet up, saying she wanted to talk. Such talk to me sounded wildly ominous, and I wondered to myself deeply what it was she was after, following on from the confused behaviour of our previous encounter, of us sharing the same bed, though spending it as sexless as an older couple. I thought to myself, maybe this was her way of apologising to me, maybe on reflection her behaviour, that of leading me to sleep next to her, under the same covering, was under a new light of hindsight, misleading, manipulative.

Although, in the space of her messaging me, I thought things other than this, that maybe she wished to meet with me, so as to do as I wished, to confess her love for me, where we could be an item, such as that as I always wished. Although my thoughts, those of wishes, desires, probably helped to distort reality, such as it always does. This wisdom, of the wish being the father to the thought, did this simply cease to apply to this predicament? The one of our relations, for could our friendship be considered completely non-sexual, considering her behaviour previously, of her luring me into the sack, only to jilt me?

Perhaps she did come to her senses in regards to me in her life, that she desired me body and soul.

I chose not to base my life, my expectations around such possibilities, and Grace was nothing if not deceptive in my time of knowing her, so it made me wonder, glaring lost through the windows of this world, why I continued to be friends with her, to drop my life, whenever she desired to meet up.

For wasn't there a vaster degree to be lost, compared with that to be gained, as far as our friendship was concerned. Sure, it was lovely having her as a friend, to have a place to go, a social circle, but was this not omitting the deleterious effects this was having on my psyche, my soul, consumed as I was with dread, with confusion, with nihilistic views of love.

That being said, there was always the possibility of things coming around, her seeing me for the virtues I possessed, I decided to take her on her offer, to reconcile in the wake of the strangeness of our prior encounter.

Walking through the streets to the pub was a welcome experience, the emergence of spring was gloriously upon us, daylight was slowly decaying above me, a stark contrast to the evenings of a few weeks previous, which would have been as darkened as a crow's feather in this hour. Despite the pleasantness of the season, the wondrous atmosphere I graciously took in, the streets appeared strangely bereft of people, save for a few entering and exiting the restaurants and takeaways, or the supermarket for evening shopping.

The bar I entered, the one in which we agreed to meet, was filled as it usually was, many of the people congregated in such an establishment mid-week as numerously as they did in the weekends, with its offers on food and beer. Grace and I love the place for the live music on offer, though I'd be lying if this was the thing that dragged me here on this day, she clearly having something of import to communicate my way.

Though upon my arrival, I was there upon my lonesome, her being nowhere to be found, deciding to wait it out, getting a pint of beer at the bar, and a table for us both.

It wasn't long until she did arrive, it was perhaps intuitive of me not to buy for her a drink ahead of this, as she appeared as if starting the proceedings ahead of me, seeing as she was magnificently wasted, exemplified by the slight way in which she stumbled, it was further shown to me when she did walk to my table, the unfocused nature of her words, which trailed off in all directions as she spoke.

We sat down together, there on the stage was a guy singing and accompanying himself with a guitar.

Grace and I sat there in silence, until the song ended in which she cheered.

"Woo -ooh, that was amazing," She shouted, sounding somewhat different amid the mild clamour of clapping hands, which

succeeded the performance in which the audience gave.

"So, what was it you so urgently wanted to speak to me about?" I asked attempting our talk on the reason why it was we decided to meet in the first place.

"Yeah babe, I have something to tell you."

"What is it?"

"I'm going to be moving away in a few weeks!"

"Why?"

"I'm going to get married!"

"Really? To whom?" I said this wishing to present a cool air of indifference, no matter how much I was deceiving myself. If all this was true, this sudden and abrupt news as to her evasion from my life profoundly shook me.

"Who is he?" I asked.

"Well you don't know him; his name is Jeff."

"How did you two meet?"

"Through friends, they introduced us to each other, and you know from there we really hit it off, and messaged each other every day. So, we've decided to get married."

"And what about your job." I asked, talking on the practicalities of the situation only as I knew how.

"Well, I'm going to leave it."

"And how are you going to survive?"

"Through Jeff, you know he has a good job; besides I am not getting any younger. My eggs are depleting as we talk. You know I always wanted to start a family."

"O.K." I said to this, she probably could sense that I was being despondent, A profound misery had come over me since she out of nowhere announced the unexpected, her leaving my life never to glance back at it with wanting eyes again. We spent the evening talking about nothing in particular, partially reminiscing on the brief time we had known each other. By the end of the evening I was spectacularly drunk, returning to the bar on five or six occasions to refill my glass.

Despite all of this, the news, the drunkenness, the end of our relations as in the months of our knowing one another, we nonetheless managed to leave on a cheerful note. We vowed with one another to keep in contact, to not let relations come apart, despite the vast gulf now between us, her running off, to elope in matrimony, with what to me was a perfect stranger. Though he was quite foreign to her, too, her knowing him for a brief spool of time, not so much as to see his nature, his intent, his truthful self.

Though these choices, those of jumping over a widening expanse into the realm of marriage, was to be her problem, and it wasn't my job to advise her otherwise.

Though it did make me curious, wildly so, as to the person who she fell for, deciding to give her life away to

I wondered what it was in fact about him, which I lacked, which made him material for love, for romance, whereas I was regulated to that of the faithful platonic companion, whom she looked upon as nonthreatening as that of a poodle, or any neutered farm animal.

Though if our friendship was entirely innocent, entirely free from feeling, then why did she drag me this far, to tell me of this person, did she do this with her same gendered friends, or was the news mentioned by way of instant message.

Though after I wallowed awhile, lost in a self-pitying state, I decided to buck myself up, so as to not let this girl ruin

my sanity. It was true that in her evasion from the city, I would have next to nothing in the way of companions, less than that in the way of love interests, those whom I could potentially be sexually affiliated with.

This news that Grace so swiftly and out of the void sprang on me, inflamed me of my curiosity, as to what it was about him, that made her wish to dissipate the glorious structure of her life, so as to start a life anew with him saying farewell to her friends, her career, her position in which she laboured so strenuously to attain. I wished to see what this new guy, this Jeff possessed which I did not, she told me that he had a good job, I suppose that was one thing, seeing as at this moment I was working minimum wage.

I searched his profile on Facebook, through friends of hers.

Though his pictures showed that he was nothing desirous to look at, him being around 10 years older than her, or at least so in appearance. Though the backgrounds of his photos showed a beautiful and spacious home, a BMW in his driveway. Perhaps it was not wholly mysterious why Grace chose him over me, seeing as compared to how I was living in a minuscule apartment, I had to share with an ever-changing panoply of people who came and went from month to month.

I couldn't blame Grace for her behaviour, I really couldn't, his haggard looks and balding head were the price she had to pay for a way of life it was close to impossible for me to provide her in this present economic climate, of lowering wages, precarious contracts, inclining house prices.

It was with her as it was with all of us, that she wasn't depleting in age, as are none of us. And naturally she wished to have a progeny of her own, to be a mother, a close to impossible task in shared accommodation, with strangers in that of the same shared space, many of them, doubtless paedophiles.

Though I got used to the fact that Grace had in the passing of a number of weeks, though this in turn was a struggle for me to do, and there wasn't anyone else I knew with like her who could so readily fill her gap in my life.

There were of course girls I worked with at the minimum wage job I begrudgingly went to, day by passing day, though they weren't quite so drawn to me as Grace, or had partners, had lives of their own.

I would be lying to myself if I didn't say a space in my heart wasn't invented, in her evasion from my life, from the city in which I made my home, in which there seemed to be none adequate whom could replace her. Was this absence, the sense of loss I felt an admittance however secretly of my love for her? I'm not sure it was, though if that night we spent in bed turned out to be the ground in which she seduced me on, I wouldn't have refused her love, I would accepted her advances, graciously so.

But this at the moment was hypothetical, something of wishful thinking, and my mind couldn't wonder too far from the ruin of my soul in the wake of her exile. So much did it leave me in

an abject state of unending despair, that I wondered whether it was of greater benefit if I had never met her.

Such things, meaning grief and miseries are not to live with one forever, and I managed to pick myself up from the strangeness of our relations. There were of course to be others, though where in turn they were to be found was something that perplexed me greatly. It was true of myself as it was of Grace's ovaries, that I was not getting any younger, and when I looked at the situation in my life and held it in comparison to that of my Father's when he was a similar age, it couldn't be at a greater contrast. He was married, had a child, he owned a place of his own. I had none of these things, and was a veritable failure, who envisioned nothing drastic changing as far as work, as love, or property was concerned. How was I supposed to live now, that such things were denied me, that things of convention were closed to my experience?

Part 3

It happened to be a few months later that something strange happened in my life, Grace had very much disappeared out of the city and consequently out of my life. If the photographs were anything to go upon, which I peered at on social media, she was quite happy, settling into that of her new life, through hypergamy. Though a ghost from the past appeared to me.

It was a characteristic autumnal afternoon, verging onto that of evening. The sky now was as grey as pewter, with a feeling

of thickness, of electricity in the air, as on the moments which precede heavy, unending rainfall. The streets were remarkably filled, with people walking in that of every direction, pouring through the city streets, there were cars too, in their trickle, that swept through roads, driving through at their 30-mph speed. Though it made sense that things, that life going about its business took on a strange urgency, it being the completion of the working week, where people wished to commute back to their abodes so as to embrace the days of leisure before them.

I myself was ready for such an occurrence, I just had ended my working week, the one of my endless days of menial servitude.

It happened to be while I was in the throes of unwinding, walking through the town centre, I had exited a shop from which I purchased a tin of coke, which I consumed whilst walking around, aimlessly where I might find myself in shops. It was while I was doing this, I happened upon a face that was familiar, though it took me a while to discover who this was. Upon noticing him I grew transfixed immediately, changing the direction which he walked so I could follow his path.

It took me awhile for me to realise, to go through the filing system of my mind, until I knew who I was following. It was Chris from the seminar I went to only years before—where I hadn't experienced the fruits of reaping I was promised.

It wasn't a tremendous distance I had to travel before he went into a building, so I followed him. This took me inside a series of apartments, He didn't notice that I was behind him,

following him as if I were private detective.

I happened to see the floor he walked up to, the number of the door he entered. I was somewhat in two minds, divided about what it was I was planning to do or what, by confronting him, I desired to achieve. Regardless, I felt I had something to say about the convention, about my subsequent life after the event. After a few minutes of me waiting about, I decided to do the thing that I had planned to do when I followed him this short distance. I knocked on his door. After a few minutes of noises, I heard from behind the door a voice saying, "Wait a sec."

He opened the door, looking intently as if to figure out who I was.

"How can I help you?"

"Are you Chris?" I asked.

"Yes, what can I do for you?"

"I went to a seminar of yours a few years ago."

"If you want a refund, I can't do that for you."

"No, I just want to talk about women!"

"Alright, why don't you come in."

He made way for me, opening the door. The apartment was a dump—the building was nice, but there was mess thrown and scattered about the place and the atmosphere of the place was saturated with the smell of dope and dirty laundry.

"Have a seat," he said as he invited me inside his living room, there was marijuana scattered on the table, along with the associated paraphernalia. "So how are things, have you smashed any chicks since we last met?"

"No, I have been friends with some women, though they have chosen others over me. I'm not sure what it is, but I haven't been able to repeat the same success with women as I had on that night."

"Of course you haven't, because they were prostitutes."

"What?"

"Didn't you find it a bit strange that everyone managed to get laid that night?"

"Well, no. . ." I said.

"What are the odds of that happening? It would be like tripping over a leprechaun, whilst being struck by lightning, whilst simultaneously finding a four-leaf clover. It's amazing what people are willing to believe."

"I thought it was all that knowledge, those techniques you gave to us."

"That's all nonsense. If you can speak well in front of a crowd, sound well-read, and show a few graphs on overhead projection, then you give the impression you know what you are talking about."

"Well, isn't that immoral?"

"Do I feel bad about profiting off of people's vulnerabilities, making money off of their weaknesses? Absolutely not. If there weren't people like me there would be no such thing as politics. I'm quite mild in comparison to the crooks that haunt the halls of influence."

He sparked up a joint, and after inhaling it a number of occasions passed it to me. I refused his offer.

"So, there is nothing that can be learnt so as to seduce

women?"

"Possibly, though I have gone past trying to understand what's going on in the minds of women in '08. It is indeed all an enigma."

We sat in silence; he turned the television on in which the news appeared.

"I'm not quite sure," I said.

"About what?"

"There is something that can seduce women, that makes them desire you. Something that will make them give their hearts over to you regardless of who you are."

"Well if you know that, then maybe you should be running a seminar."

"There is something that will make them a slave to you. That will cause them to date you unconditionally. *It's called money!*"

I walked out of the apartment, and down the stairwell of the building. The majority of people who were casually walking

through the streets a few moments before had vanished or, for the few who had not, who were still out in the streets, their sauntering had sped up to a jog, as rain had begun to fall upon the world through which I obliviously made my way home.

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