

1952

In the summer
of 1952 I was
painting all
day at the
Art Student's
League in
New York.
I was read-
ing a 17 vo-
lume set of
Balzac's
Splendid Mis-
eries Of Pa-
risian Life
all night. I
believed I
disliked paint-
ing because
there were
no words in
paint.

I believed
I disliked
writing because
there were
no paintings in
words. I did
not realize that
I was rigorously
struggling to
pretend I liked
to paint because
people gave me
enormous approval
for doing something
I didn't enjoy.
My entire sensu-
al life consisted
of endlessly wash-
ing brushes
and seeing

ing a very pretty
girl with curly
black hair dart-
ing back and
forth side ways
to me out of the
corner of my
eye at odd
intervals while
I painted. She
talked to every-
one but me. This
was a time of
deep love quest,
a golden era of
young men in
friendly competi-
tion for parasit-
ic ends of
dubious empa-
thy and po-
tent

ially dull hideous
issue. I was easily
spotted as, He Who
Was Never Going
To Support A Wife
And Children. I had
cheerfully accepted
being considered by
all women to be a
moneyless, dull,
friendship, warmth,
seduction
*blind alley, dupe
bottom of the
bag, marriage
cul-de-sac,*
enslavement
useless, dead
end.
In a
great wet
steamy New
York August
heat wave

skin wet
the pretty girl
me out of the corner
me and asked me if I'd like
snowy off shoulder blouse
skirt and 4th Street leather thong
Her shoulders were little pushy breasts.
"Let's go for a walk around the Village,"
"I'd love to," I said. I was delighted. She was
a bus to the Village. "I'm going up to Boston
night dark eyes dripped fire. She dripped honey
bent razor thin, high elegant aquiline Jewish nose
alone in Manhattan. Walking around the Village with
nose, and shining night dark hair was beyond my myths. It was an astonishing never dreamt of come true.
Of course the great sucker fish of love rushed up out of the
It was one of those just things. We walked and talked and laughed all night from Greenwich Village to the UN
on the East River and back down again to the Village up to her room in a Village brownstone and into bed. She
was soft as a sun. I was hard as a rock. She stretched out on an ocean of white bathrobe. We no sooner got started
at the slippery sloth with four wings, her white robe thrashing, dark feathers beating endless shadow, when a warty
voice groaned from the door. "Oooh. Honey. Ooog. You know it's wrong to. Arrgh. Do that. Missssss. Oooooook,"
her goat legged landlord orgasmed as he drooled through a crack in the door frame. Her night dark eyes dripped
venom. She pushed me off and leaped to the door, opened it, and slugged her landlord screaming, "Cretin! You
callow pervert. You should be blinded. Go away you loathsome dwarf!" She slammed the door. I will love her
forever if for nothing else than the lovely Artemis class she flung in the face of the hideous. And well I might
have yelled out, "I believe in the goddess Artemis of the sweet thousand grape breasts." Running back
to bed, her night dark eyes smiled on my erection. "Let's go up to your place," she whispered. She swept
all her clothes out of her closet. Rushing down the stairs, each with a mountain of her clothes in our
arms, we jumped in a cab, went up to my rooms on 113th and Broadway and fell into love
like sex starved 1950's high school hockey players graceful as wet cardboard swans
flopping in sweat on heat wave ice for hours and hours. "I think I better call
my beau in Boston." she whispered in my ear late the next night.
Let him go fuck himself," I shoved. "You are so
méchant," she whispered as
she disappeared into
the dark on her
way to the
teleph
one.

eyes dew
who was ignoring
of my eye smiled up at
to go for a walk. She wore a
slipped in a wrap around Levi's
sandals. Her dark hair shined night.
As red as Babylon olives her full lips.
she said. Her night dark mouth opened.
a very pretty little love goddess. We rode
tomorrow to get married," she said. Her big
above and below the windowsill. She had the
that was disappearing very fast. I had been very
a pretty girl with night dark eyes, elegant Jewish
sea onto the shore of my being and devoured me.

“O!
He’s
actually
cried. He’s
a splendid beau.
He’s coming down
for me tomorrow. I can’t
break his heart,” she sighed.
*When you are near to tears
you are near the truth.* I realized
“What about my heart?” I asked.
“You’re Gatsby. He’s Tom,” she whispered.
Thank God I’ve read Balzac, I thought. She
whispered. “He’s the kind of boy who tries with all
his might to be what he thinks everyone else thinks he’s
supposed to be. Yes, he has the imagination of a flea but he
possesses the heart of a rock. He’s pure as the driven snow. He
really loves me.” She put on a thick Gypsy act Ipsy Pipsy dress and
heels. Her fiancé arrived. He had driven all night. He wore a fake wasp
Boston tennis costume. She sat us down on the bed and told us to discuss who
was better for her. She looked back and forth at us like a tennis referee. “I will take
care of her forever,” he whined, like a dog glued to a food provider. I was engulfed in pity
for his incredible suckerdome for a woman who screwed behind his back. “I’m not arguing about
owning someone. I don’t want to own anyone. I’m out,” I said as I walked out. “*She didn’t
try to stop me,*” I thought. I was and am a tough New Jersey Jew but I did not know how tough I
was. Four months later that winter she broke into my rooms at 7 AM, in a Technicolor Gypsy costume
including scarlet satin peasant blouse, gold earrings, shiny black nylons, and leather thong sandals.
She jumped on me and whispered, “I’ve left him! I’m going to live with you!” She tried smothering
me with kisses exactly like my mother did when she would swoop down on me before I
was three and I had yet to master the duck and run. I had been up till 5 AM reading, *What
Love Does To Old Men*. I thought all of this was in a dream of my mother grabbing me to
engulf me. In those days my dreams were essentially smarter than my intellect. In a
deep sleep, I threw her off my bed and grumbled sternly, “Why don’t you go home
and have some kids with your fool.” She walked out. Was I tough? I was tough
enough. Sure I had it rough. But I had the right stuff. So? So I lost a little
goddess. So? So What? Was I tough? I was so tough I cried like a
nightingale for a rose to open for six months but I knew
from beyond the stars before I was born that:
*no one ever plucked a rose without
sensing the stab of a thorn.*
¹⁰² Hajfic enough is enough!