

Amara, means 'immortal one' in one language, 'grace' in another, and 'God's sister' in yet another. Amara Charles personifies all of these qualities and more, and is one of the bravest, most transparent, mystical poets I know. Who else can tantalize us to consider our sensuality in the same breath as tempting us with the contemplation of our divine purpose in the way that she does? Who else can encourage us to take the titillating risk of exposure in passion while at the same time honoring what is deeply and profoundly pure, untainted, pristine, in our most secret selves? Amara expertly shows women and men how to abandon preconceived ideas, beliefs, and concepts of love, passion, sensuality, and sexuality. She lives the truth that while deliciously living to the luscious fullest, there may come a moment when it all has to fall away in order for true ecstasy to be experienced as a living presence in our lives. Her poetry shows us that it is not enough to possess a raw nugget of gold - it is necessary to let life, love, sensuality, and passion, run over it until the gold illumines the entire universe. Through her poetry, Amara reveals that trials, tribulations, relationships, joys, sorrows, must run over the gold of the raw self to polish it to its full beauty.

As the unique mistress of succulent metaphor, Amara weaves and crafts epiphanous reminders that dreams are meant to be lived, and that we live the truth of our individual human existence in order to liberate the collective soul of our shared humanity.

S. O.

The lens through which Agnes sees the world reminds us of our own private moments when we dare to surrender, let loose a bit of wildness, and allow ourselves to be seen. Imagine the tenderness, the acceptance and the love that must flow forth from her spirit to capture the precious, fragile and sometimes even fierce beauty that she sees within the men and women fortunate to appear in the presence of her gaze.

Agnes not only has an eye for beauty, her photos amplify the words on these pages and they float through the realms of poetic imagery leaving an indelible reminder of our own natural grace. As one of the many who have been blessed to arrive before the magic of her loving lens, I celebrate her gift of catching the allure of such raw, sensuous loveliness we often let slip by unnoticed. Her elegant photos inspire us to undress, to make love and to share with our lovers the vulnerable exquisiteness of our souls.

You can almost feel the instant she softly presses the button of her camera giving permission to expose the elegance and poise illuminated by the pure presence shining through her photography.

Joella Autorino

A GOOD
Poem
OR A Good
Lover

*A good poem or a good lover
Should be like too hot food
You need to spit out before getting burned.*

*A good poem, or a good lover.
Needs to be dangerously beautiful
Coiled and ready to strike
Shooting deep penetrating spurts
Of delirious venom into your veins and blood.*

*A good poem or a good lover
Should take you close to death every so often
Or as often as possible.*

*We should be begging our lovers or poems
To be more lethally loving
Extinguishing our futile attempts to escape
Those ravishing bouts of passion and laughter
That keep happening
In the middle of everything.*



Aching to Open

In every town
I have seen a woman digging
Angry holes in her garden
Searching for her husband's eyes.

Few can stand the searing wails
Of her manic fury
Exposing the insanity
That keeps ripping through the veils
Of her unfelt forgotten body.

Her longing still roams through the streets.
Her yearnings will haunt you every single night
Sooner or later wildly escaping
Every law, every custom
All that is proper.

There is no fury or hurt greater
Than a Soul too afraid to open.

There is no fury or hurt greater
Than a Soul too afraid
But aching to open.

I know the moment your fragile beauty
Was bruised and taken.
I know that even the most well meaning words
Can be too painful to hear.
I can see how you have tried to be so strong, my dear.

That is why I will call to you softly
A thousand times or more.
I will touch you-
I will leave my door open
Until you are ready .

I will wait right here.
Even if you recoil a hundred times
Bash down my offered hands again.
I can see through the bars
Of your noble prison.

You look so tired
Locking yourself against the forces of love.
It is exhausting holding back,
Hoping for more time.

The years
And the body's resentments do not lie.

The years
And the body's resentments do not lie.

Only the mind is clever enough to hide truth for so long.

It is only a powerful, clear, conscious love
That can wake you from this unhealed dream.

I will in dwell in my own devotion and truth
I will grow stronger, more aware
Waiting for you.

So come, dear one.
And be with me
Watch me carve my gratitude from God's loins.
Why not eat and drink and laugh at the table once more?
Lie down your burden of stones.
Open gently
And let this ordinary sunlight
Touch you once more.
Lets speak of this glorious day.



If I
could
Touch
you

*If I could touch you softly enough
I would disappear into the folds of your breath
In between the moments of your heart.*

*I would like to bathe you
In your own tears
Until you cannot remember
Whether to laugh or cry anymore.*

*How did you manage to keep
Yourself hidden?
Your treasure securely tucked away from so many?*

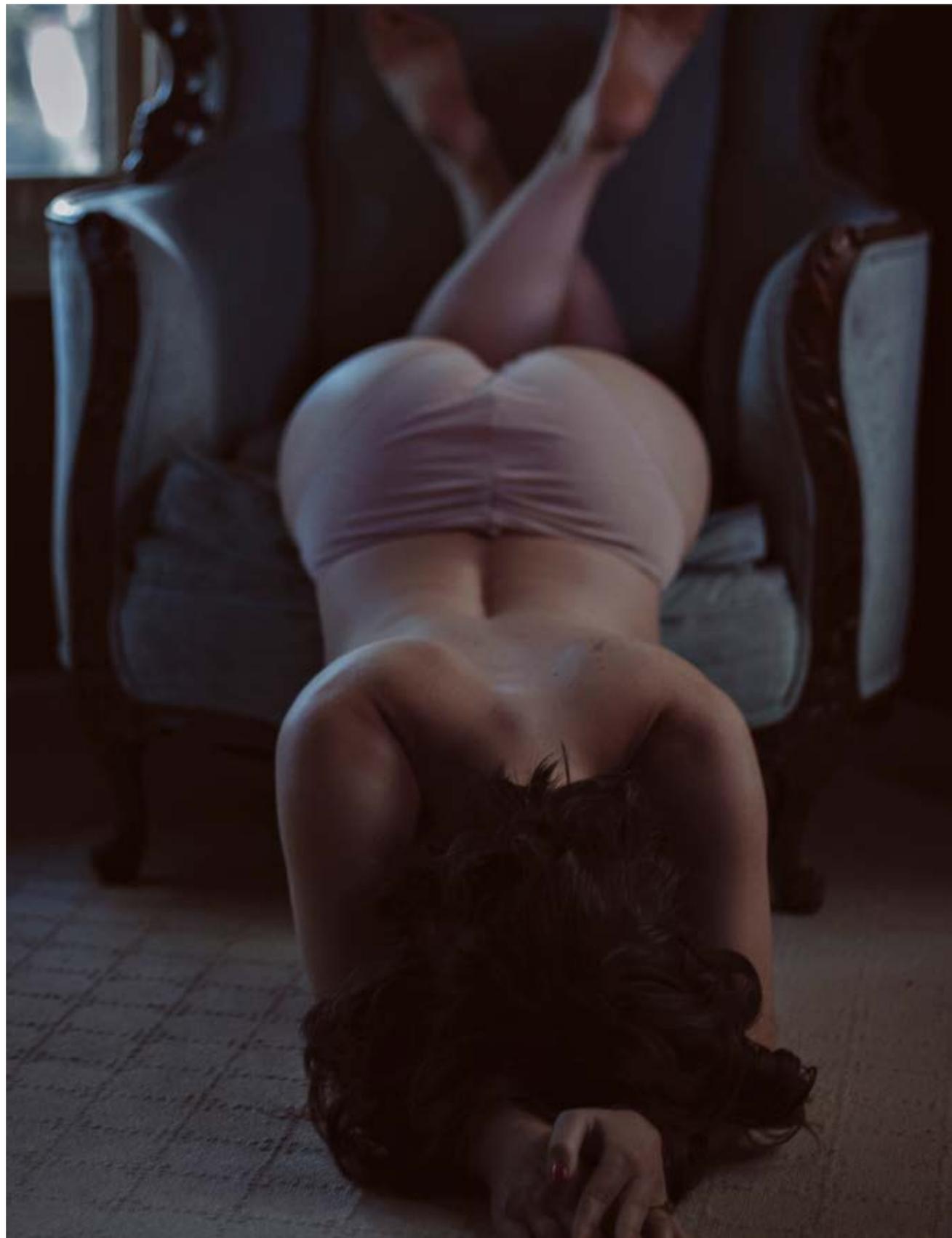
*Come here; let me open your gifts one by one.
It's no good wrapping yourself up anymore
Saving your self for later.
No more questions about your shining.*

*I am asking you to be true
Go ahead, spill yourself all over.
The world has not made a box big enough
To hold down love.*

*Come to me in the night
And I will find a place
For your sadness and worry tears.
I have such a large bucket I need to fill.
I promise to add them to the ocean.*

*Let me untie you tonight
Let me unravel you
Lift the stones from your body.
Let me touch you so gently*

*Smooth you down
Until you finally let yourself feel that one
Single, timeless wave of bliss
Demanding its way inside you
Relentlessly pulling all your clothes off
Cornering you to remain
Utterly still.*



Everywhere I turn

How I long to sail effortlessly into the arms of God

Leave my boat and ropes to rest

Only the little things to do

still keep me here

Everywhere the sweet calling

The ecstatic song

I turn my head, smiling

Because everywhere I turn,

Everywhere I turn

you find me

everywhere

I turn.

Not
EVERYBODY
is
Ready

*Unfortunately,
Not everybody is ready
Right now,
This instant
To be Utterly Taken
Completely pulled out from hiding
Rendered into a dazed stupor
Of their own preciousness.
No, not everybody is ready.
But that doesn't keep me from trying.*



How I Thank You

*There are times I become so full, so ripe
I grow like a soft fruit that needs to be picked.*

*I am waiting for you to devour my pleasure.
I am preparing myself, gathering all this for you, beloved One.*

*Please do not fear the taste of my offering
For if you do, this meal grows cold inside and goes to waste,*

*I want to give you my sweet nectar
That keeps filling me up with everything I am.*

*I want you to take my ecstasy
And touch life's heart before you die.*

*Fill me
That I may finally be divinely sated with existence.*

*Dissolve anything less than absolute love.
Cut through all my smiles, my rage, every single tear.*

*Carry me home to be washed, blessed, fresh and clear.
Do you realize you do this for me?*

*For then you will see how I cherish, how I need you this way.
Because then you will know how I thank you my Friend, how I thank you.*

ONE
Night
I'll come by

One night I 'll come by
Dressed just the way you like.
One night I 'll come by
And let my eyes remind you of whatever you love
most.

I will cover you like your favorite blanket
Let the warmth and promise
Of my secret places
Neatly fold away your best excuse.

Until your resolve slowly hardens
Into the strongest surge of love you've got.
One night I 'll come by
And you will not be able to resist letting me in.

Why hold back behind the begging
Of our pure embrace?
Please, bless me with your precious rain.

I am asking you to flood the chambers of your heart
Where our prayers, whispers, voices cease.

Hey stranger, One night I 'll come by and your
Distractions will drop to the floor like my panties.

All fear shattered
Cracking through the clouds
Suspended in between my legs

Sweetly surrendering in You.
Everything happens when I come by.

One night I 'll come by
Dressed just the way you like.
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And let my eyes remind you of whatever you love
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My Body Moans

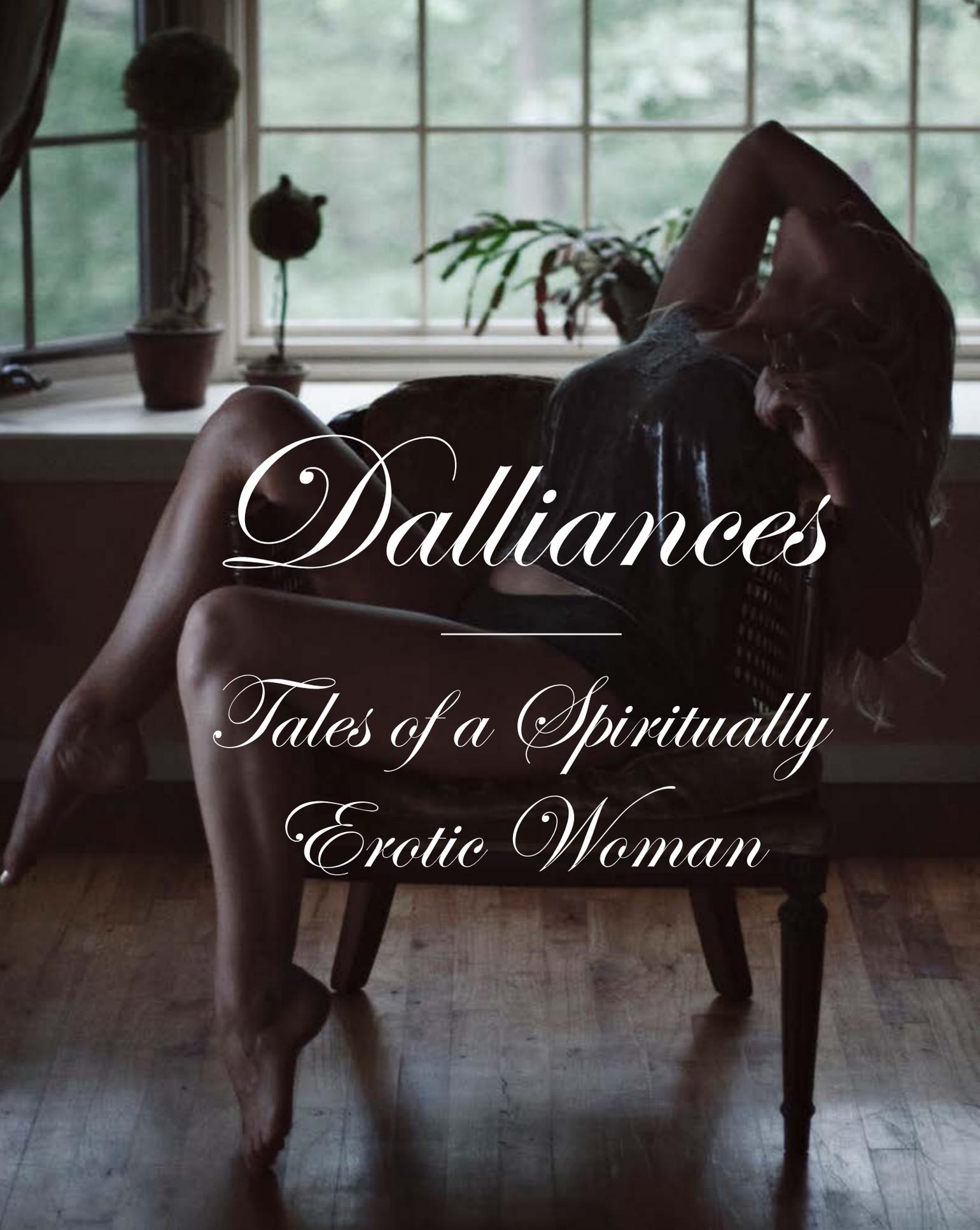
This breeze of freedom that nobody sees.

*Blowing out romantic candles,
Long held beliefs, the forever everybody's looking for.
Just a puff of smoke not worth squandering a life over.*

Or maybe sages just like keeping the fun to themselves.

*Lured by such a lonely call.
No one visits here unmarked by the scars of bliss.
This hall has such an irresistible pull*

*Does everything, everything? Have to go?
And my body moans, yes. Yes.*



Dalliances

Tales of a Spiritually Erotic Woman

INTRODUCTION

One time, after a particularly sweet and passionate dalliance, a man looked into my eyes and asked, “Were you always this way?” I believe he expected me to say something like “Yes, I’ve always been highly sexual.” He looked amused and somewhat surprised by my reply, “No,” I smiled, remembering times when sex was not all that important for me, “it’s something I learned,” adding, “I’ve had some excellent teachers.”

When he drifted away from my boudoir, dreamily happy with our time together, I wondered, “How did I come to see sex the way I do?” I had to laugh, because this man like others may have thought I learned secret skills from teachers or books, or perhaps he thought I had several Adonis lovers I considered “teachers.” While I have indeed read, attended courses, and learned from several great teachers—none of these were the actual ways I came to experience this subtle and mysterious art.

Unlike other arts where you might carefully observe a master while training for years to glean his skills—how can this be done with sex? Some would argue whether sex should even be considered an art. After all, who are the renowned masters, and where is the evidence of their craft? While certainly history is replete with stories of famous seductions and torrid passions powerful enough to change the course of history, those skilled in the arts of love are hardly revered as great artists. No, when it comes to acquiring mastery in what at one time in Chinese history were called the ‘Bedchamber Arts,’ the path of experiencing sex as a means to artistic or even spiritual attainments remains veiled in obscurity. While becoming well practiced in the sexual arts offers neither recognition nor promise of fame, it does offer the ephemerally sweet reward of goodness shared.

But I would beg to differ with those who say there is no art to sex, for becoming exceptionally attuned to the needs and guiding the fluctuating nuances of sexual forces into heightened crescendos of intense beauty can be taken to the level of an art, albeit a most illusive one. Sex is rightly an intimately private affair and should not be pursued the way one might seek to become a famous painter or architect. Perhaps the art of sexual expression is more akin to poetry, cooking or even archery, where, in its highest expression there is no target, no goal and nothing to be gained other than the experience of ultimate reality.

*One hurried passionate and clandestine encounter
with a stranger is more beneficial than a hundred quiet
and relaxed engagements at home with one’s mate.*

THE SEXUAL TEACHINGS OF THE WHITE TIGRESS



Spreading His Wings

A dear friend called to ask if I could help her out with a delicate matter regarding her nineteen-year-old son. Currently, he was consumed by his computer studies at college.

She said, "He's actually doing great in school but he hangs out with his guy friends all the time. I don't think he meets many girls and he still seems pretty shy around the ladies," adding, "I don't think he's gay though, just a late bloomer. I can tell he hasn't had sex with a woman yet."

"What's the hurry?" I said, "Nineteen is still pretty young."

"Oh, I know, it's not like this is an emergency or anything. When we were talking the other day he let me know he's definitely more than slightly curious. But he doesn't know what to do. That's when I got the idea about you. I thought maybe you could initiate him in a wonderful way to sort of get him started. I couldn't think of anyone better."

Although I had never met the young man it didn't take me half a breath to say, "Yes." "Does he want to meet me?" I asked.

"Oh yes, I told him about you and even showed him your picture."

"And he is still interested?" I joked.

"Yes, he seemed intrigued by the idea, and would like to meet you."

Over the years I had only heard his mother's fond stories about what her son was up to. What a way to finally meet I thought. "Ask him to call me."

When we talked on the phone I knew this was going to be amazing. Years later, while writing this, it turns me on just thinking about what happened. He already had reservations to fly out to visit his Mom in a couple of weeks, so we both had plenty of time to ponder the idea of getting together in this way. We spoke on the phone a few times, finding out details about each other's lives while only occasionally, indirectly mentioning our date.

I put aside three entire days for this luxurious initiation. In the meantime, I lovingly cleaned my home, went shopping and got enough food so we wouldn't need to leave if we didn't want to. I bought him little gifts and then waited. I remember the preparing, finding things to show him, choosing what I wanted to wear, the music to play, preparing the rooms we would be in, all in loving anticipation of meeting this, from what I could hear over the phone, eager young man.

I looked forward to this day probably as much as he did. As I opened the door I peered into the face of a boy, already grateful, already happy, and so shy! I am sure I will not be able to convey how incredibly alive I felt. Although his mother mentioned he was gentle-hearted and handsome, nothing we talked about prepared me for his innocence. When I saw him standing there so nervous and vulnerable, an exquisite shiver of desire vibrated through my body. Suddenly it dawned on me. What a beautiful thing for his mother to arrange. We sat down and shared praises and stories of his hilarious, wise and truly non-conventional mother. From the second we began talking I could have pounced upon his pearl-like skin, but instead decided to stretch out his shyness until he could no longer stand the thought of not touching me. Although we both knew full well what we wanted to do, I decided I was going to become irresistible. And he was going to have to make the first move.

Can you imagine how beautiful I felt? In those first conversations, watching him notice my every move, I felt sweetly enchanted, absolutely desired. It's the way a woman should be wanted. It felt good to be much older, and more used to navigating through uncomfortable beginnings. Still, I was surprised by how simultaneously unnerved and aroused I was by his unguarded fascination of me. I felt vast and mysterious to him. I



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