

TWO COUNTS OF RAPE

Count Number One

“Let go!” I shouted at the ridiculous man in a raincoat, or at least he reminded me of one.

I tried to have a good look at him but it was dark, wet. I shouted again, thumping him with my right elbow on his left shoulder blade, punching him on the jaw. By then he had stopped being ridiculous.

“Let go of me!”

He did not shout back, still grabbing my neck with his right hand. With his left he tried to feel who or what I was, avoiding my blows.

“Just this once, lady!” he pleaded with me.

“Let me be!”

“I know how much you’ll like it, because I know what you like!”

“You know nothing!”

He wanted me. Oh, how he wanted me.

“Let me be!”

He pulled at my hair until several strands snapped. He held me so tight I found it difficult to breathe. I thought it was not happening for real, that it could only be a nauseating dream.

“Romance, all I need is romance!” was his reply.

There is nothing in the world I would like better myself, I thought.

“Romance?”

I tried to fight him back while uninvited thoughts took over my mind. I should have never worn the green dress. Anything that alluring is inappropriate. And I am far too made up for a Tuesday night. My perfume, my fancy earrings, my very red lips.

“It’s not my fault, but yours!” he whispered in my ear, as if he had been privy to my thoughts.

And with his jerks I came to my senses. All those thoughts speeding through my mind were no gods to follow, no beliefs to own up to. Guilt, if you happen to suffer from such a disease, should be spread thinly enough. But it was too late, for I had taken refuge solely in my mind.

“Please, please, please!” I could only say.

It was all over in a flash, and for that I was grateful. Oh, but the pain! When he finished he thanked me and asked *did you enjoy that?* What could I do but look away in order to put a clean end to it.

Count Number Two

It is called making love, as if love could be made. There is no imposition, no obvious savagery. But then it is done his way, first like this, and then like that. He does the talking and leads the way.

“Touch me this way, with one hand here and one hand there!”

“But...”

“I’m aware of what you like and I’ll give it to you.”

“But...” I repeat.

“I know how much you like it!”

“You know nothing!” I think but not say.

But he wants it. Oh, how he wants it.

“Romance, all I need is romance!” he cries.

There is nothing in the world I would like better myself, I want to say.

“Romance?”

It is about him taking what he needs. In exchange I get a lick here and a pat there.

“And so how’s that?” he asks, looking up briefly and smiling as if he has just performed an experiment with some degree of success.

There is so little in terms of foreplay –or any kind of play for that matter– that I have to arouse myself with the only thing at my disposal, my mind.

“Please!” I can barely say, just once.

It is all over in a flash, for that I am grateful. Oh, but the pain! When he finishes he thanks me, and asks *did you enjoy that?* What else can I do but look away in order to put a clean end to it.

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