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workshops

## The Noisy Silence

by Maureen Marsh

‘Why is silence so worthy of suspicion?’ She pondered as they sat together not talking, the air pregnant with dark and difficult energy. When he did finally turn to her and speak, it was tentative and faltering ‘I’ve met someone...’

No more words required. Those 3 being enough to fill a universe.

6 weeks later, on the coattails of that revelation she signed on to an ‘Abundance and Gratitude’ weekend workshop, on the heavy endorsement of her best friend. Taking her wounded ego in one arm and her broken heart in the other, she entered the cavernous hall where the workshop was being held.

Glancing around the hall at the dozen or so troubled and troubling looking characters, she wondered if it had been a good call. Spending the weekend with Strangers, engaging in vaguely embarrassing spiritual practices and verbal disclosures, might just be enough to send her over the edge, she felt.

They sat in a circle and introduced themselves in turn to the group in cliched form. She noticed him straight away. Not because he was particularly handsome, no, but because he cut a tall and imposing figure in an odd kind of way. One eye ever so slightly squint and impossibly, suspiciously blond hair and a manner that suggested that he was not new to this kind of spiel. He intrigued and repelled her in equal measure.

After a series of exercises taken straight out of the book of Spiritual cliches, they stopped for a break. She headed immediately to the coffee and biscuits. He was already there.

‘Are you enjoying it?’ He said.

‘Sort of’ she answered, pausing ‘I like the biscuits.’

Laughter, then silence. A different kind of silence, yearning and sensual.

After the first day of the workshop was finished they went for a drink together and he revealed to her in no uncertain terms, what had already been revealed in the silence. After day 2, they exchanged numbers. She went home giddy and elevated. An almost hysterical energy filling the large wounded abyss within.

She entered her living room. Both cats were asleep. Smudge perched on the arm of the sofa, half his tummy spilling over the edge and Bathsheba stretched out long and seductively on the table, a white expanse of furry tummy on display. A half drunk cup of tea that had been left on the table the day before was now tipped over and the contents had left a large, brown water stain, still damp on the table cloth. Bathsheba opened one lazy eye at her, as if to say,

‘Yes it was me, and yes, I give zero fucks!’

She laughed, closed her eyes and imbibed the soulful silence of the cats.

The silence of cats, she thought, the best silence there is.