

Challenging Husbands Can Be Thrilling

by Rosalyn Hurst

A small town has a magnetic centre lying deep in the rippled sediments, but which now and then send vapours up through vents to the open air, drawing the citizens back from foreign and exotic locations. Many return not knowing it will be their final visit.

Of those most recently infected by a recent miasma was Philippa, who, lying in the arms of her lover felt such a recall, such a spasm of wanting to return, that she made immediate plans to start her journey within hours.

“My beloved, my gorgeous man,” Philippa began, running a finger down his muscled chest, snuggling into his arms so he could not see her face, “I should return home.” He twitched, “Not to leave you my precious, that would never happen, but I have to check on Mum and just pick up some things now we are truly together. You don’t mind?”

She gave a tender kiss, “I’ll be back by six and then we can our usual cocktail and perhaps go out for dinner?”

She took his silence and immediate and rather violent love making as both understanding and agreement.

On the train Philippa phoned Collette.

“Collie darling, it’s Philippa, Pippa darling, don’t say you’ve forgotten me? Can we meet, I have great news, say in an hour?”

Collette wearily agreed. It had been a boring day in a boring week, and there were a couple of hours to kill before school pick up.

Just typical of Pippa not to give more notice, but they had been friends since they were five and some people just never change. Anyway it would enliven the day to hear of Pippa's latest lover, her meeting with the glitterati of London, to find out if Prince Andrew was as bad as they say, for her friend moved in that exotic world like a fresh breeze swirling around a tawdry world of psychopathic business leaders and politician and predators, their wealth derived from ill gotten riches.

The Cosy Cafe was not the ideal location for a catch-up, though they did serve an ambiguous wine and it was near the station. Collette was already there nursing a large glass of pink liquid as Pippa burst in.

"Collie, you are the first to know, I am married, did the deed yesterday! What do you think?" She flashed a modest ring, "We're going to Sri Lanka just for the weekend and he says I can choose my engagement ring then."

"Wowsie," observed Collette, stung that she hadn't been invited to the wedding and asked brusquely "Why wasn't I asked, you were my bridesmaid for god's sake."

Pippa put a hand out, actually rather ashamed, "it was all so sudden, so quick. Jasper was just back from Afghanistan and he has to go to Bolivia in three weeks. Oh Collie, he is so gorgeous and clever and sexy, how could I resist?"

Collie is a forgiving woman and caught the excitement, "and is he rich, if so, sounds perfect. Let's see if we can get a bottle of fizz to celebrate."

A surprise to Collie, for Pippa who had been known to drink a whole bottle in seconds without bothering with a glass, said, "Jasper is not like the others. He's only been in London a few months. He earns everything from his books and TV programmes."

Collette was pleased, this was a real change from the useless weirdos they had spoken of before.

Pippa continued in a rush with a sparkle in her eyes. "He is very conscious of good health so I'll just have a glass. Oh Collie I need to keep fit, I now go running with him. Jasper said I should start Spanish lessons, he is fluent of course and I am reading the entire novels of Jaime Guzman the Bolivian poet although I have just found out he was bisexual and Jasper is not comfortable around Bisexual people. I do hope I can go to Bolivia on this trip. If not there will be another one, I never know what is going to happen these days, its so thrilling."

After meandering to the station to wave off Pippa, Collette thought what a boring and uneventful life she led. Meeting Pippa always unsettled her. She thought if ever she left this town she would never return and could not understand why Pippa actually came down when a phone call would have sufficed.

On the train, Pippa realised she had spent so much time talking to Collie then they had walked around the old streets. She had imagined showing Jasper where she grew up, her primary school the little park where the kids had smoked pot, and finally that she had completely forgotten to visit her mother. Still, mother had dementia and would not remember anyway.

When she walked in Jasper was sitting just by the door, he had moved a chair into the hallway so she could not move around it.

“Just where have you been?” he began quietly.

“I took the train back home, why do you ask?”

“Don’t you question me,” she saw his fingers clench, she saw him ready to spring.

“Don’t be like that Jasper, what’s the matter?”

“And who did you see and just what did you talk about?”

“My mother,” she lied continuing, “I can see who I like, you’re not going to stop me, just who do you think you are?” Not wise words in these dangerous circumstances. A quiet snarl

“The Home rang, you mother is dead and they hadn’t seen you.”

Like a true predator he leapt up without warning.

“I told you, you do not challenge me. You are my wife you never lie, you never question and you do as you are told!”

“Stop it Jasper! Pippa started but did not manage to utter, “I am off,” as he grabbed her throat with her dying thoughts, ‘Is this a sex game?’ and then the realisation, ‘if it is, then this is not very thrilling.’