

What the Other is Thinking

by Charles Lennox

The young lovers thought it charming how they kept finishing each other's sentences. "What a pair we make," they said in unison, and laughed, their laughter precise and synchronized. A beautiful harmony by candlelight.

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Patrons in the restaurant heard them and looked up from their fettuccine alfredo and shrimp antonelli and stared at the striking couple like a work of art they could not understand. They stared and stared and felt hopeful about the person sitting across the table from them.

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On their third date the lovers eloped. This is how the decision came to be: they'd watched a movie and were sipping tea on the porch, soaking in the sounds of cars on the street below and people talking their gibberish along the cold sidewalk, when one thought, We should get married, and the other, knowing their lover's thoughts, said, "Yes, let's do it right now."

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They tried to explain their connection. To family and friends and co-workers and neighbors and people waiting in line with them to buy their morning coffee. "It's like we're the same person," one lover said. "We can discern each other's mood in an exhale, a childhood memory in steps down the hallway, thoughts with a touch of the

hand." A grandmother nodded knowingly. "Yes, yes," she said, "this too will fade."

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"I miss you," one lover said. It was their custom to look each other in the eye as they made love. "Can we turn the lights off first-" the other lover replied.

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Six months passed and the lovers decided speaking was no longer a necessary component in their relationship. They did this over breakfast, delicately spooning pink triangles of grapefruit into their mouths. Not a word spoken.

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The landlord unlocked their door and found them in the living room watching the television on mute. It had been so quiet in there for so long that he thought they'd died or been murdered.

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They woke in the darkness, sobbing and unable to stop. One lover hid their face beneath the bed comforter while the other locked the bathroom door and cried in the bathtub with the water running. When the all night catharsis ended, the lover beneath the bed comforter knocked on the bathroom door and whispered, "I'm sorry. So very, very sorry."

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To celebrate their anniversary, they dined at the restaurant where it all began and spoke out loud about the future and together their

voices flew and sang. "When I was a child," one lover said, "I used to dream that the world and every living thing in the world were made of cotton and feathers and tissue paper. Anything soft. We'd all float together like clouds. When the people or animals crashed into one another, no one got hurt. Sometimes before I fall asleep I think about that dream, hoping I'll dream it again."

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"I never knew that about you," the other lover said.

