

# The object of my affection....."Red, red wine - Will thy fresh lips ever meet mine"

*by* Christina Hansson

There wasn't anything I could do about it. No, seriously, I was no longer my own master. It was as if a formidable magnetic field had begun to assert its very heavy influence, on my whole being, not just those supposedly responding magnetite crystals in my brain, paralleling those of the path-seeking migratory birds. Was this really happening? Was I dreaming? Was it night or day? I could no longer tell which was which. And, I guess, neither could the object of my affection. Lord, it wasn't an easy situation. These walls around me, so unaffected by anything, their paleness, no sentiment. How I envied them now. And through sleepless nights, tear-filled eyes, feelings of such torment, nothing about them would ever change. But I had changed, and to what effect? What good would ever come out of it? There was no telling. My hopes were still high, higher than the sky one could say. That was too much to think of, of course. That would only mean too much hope in vain.

There was this new shop I had not noticed before, one evening, on my way home after working a bit late. I had told Paul that I was just going to shop for some new shoelaces and some vegetables, then I'd be home. Just a few blocks away, actually. I had taken a shortcut through an old narrow alley, turned at the corner and expected to see my usual grocery store. It had been a few weeks, I had made some purchases up at the supermarket instead, but I was surprised to see that there had now been a change: It was converted into a wine & spirits store. How unexpected! As it was, I thought I might

just look at the goods, see what they had in there, if they seemed knowledgeable and so on. I turned the old cast iron handle which creaked somewhat, the bell rustled and the spring shut the door behind me with a brief slam. There was another atmosphere now, as I had expected: The faint aroma of fermented grapes and some cherry brandy was evident, subdued lighting, oak casks, robust cases full of vodka, aquavit, wine from around the globe. I noticed some of my favourite Cabernets and Chardonnays, this could have been a good sign maybe.

"Can I help you, Miss?"

I turned around, a bit startled as I had been brooding for a while and not really noticed that the shop attendant had showed up behind me. I don't know what I had expected, a middle-aged greyish fellow maybe, but this was quite the opposite: A girl in her twenties, dark, slender, wearing a knitted V-neck sweater and a kilt, looking very neat and knowledgeable indeed. Such startling blue eyes, I thought, they seemed to be penetrating you, as if she were a mind-reader or something.

"Anything in particular that you were looking for, Miss?"

She had had to pose a new question; I could not bring myself to answer immediately while I looked her over. That felt so embarrassing, but now that I felt such a good feeling in my stomach I know I'd had to linger for a while, it was so worthwhile.

"Ah, well, I.... I thought I'd pop in here, to see what it was like, I was so surprised to see the change of ownership and business completely. I haven't decided on what I actually want."

Lord, that seemed too hesitant, and maybe revealing. What would she say?

"OK, maybe you'd like to try our new Cabernet? It's a fairly low-priced wine, actually, but a very good buy, I think!"

How could she have gained so much knowledge as to be in here, I thought. She seemed so young, "inexperienced" came to my mind, also a word of double meanings....

"Cabernet, that would be great! Always liked that variety."

I took the glass, smelled the aroma very carefully. What lovely flavours! I think I closed my eyes briefly as I tasted the first drops, wanting to really take in the full taste with no interruptions from the other senses. But my imagination seemed to race, images came to me as I drank, filled with those exquisite sensations, the soft touches.....

"Now how was that?"

No, it wasn't true, I was just imagining things again. But it was as if she had done something to me and she had asked about my feelings of pleasure afterwards. I had to shake those images and feelings away, this was just a question about the wine, come on!, I thought.

"Exquisite! Well, very full, fruity, vanilla, just what I like! What a great offer!"

Vanilla, oh, that's probably the taste of her, I imagined. And if she had a better offer, I would take it this very instant.

"Napa Valley, eh?"

I just wanted to know more about where the grapes had been grown, but at the same time it made me think about kissing along the nape of her neck. Why was this happening?

"Yes, that's correct. I was there once; That vineyard really held something special, it was so beautiful, the green valley among the hills, the misty mornings, that Pacific climate, so perfect..."

And you are also beautiful and perfect, I thought. Oh, why was beauty so contagious? Well, simply: If it wasn't, we wouldn't still be here on Earth! Now, come, I had to decide what to do with this conversation that was getting out of hand, even if I hadn't yet said anything stupid.

"Well, it really, really surprised me. I think I'll have three bottles, please."

I think I tried to smile politely, hoping my new interest couldn't shine through that easily. She stooped a bit to take out the brown paper bag, and I felt sorry that I couldn't get a glimpse of her ass. My eyes should have been absentmindedly studying the bottles all around, but I was too gripped now; I think I glanced down at her breasts more than once, it was too strong an impulse to resist.

"There you go, Miss. Ah...that'll be twenty-two pounds ten, please. It's a bargain for these wines, really."

Yes, sweetheart, and you could be a bargain for anybody, I thought. Everything we said seemed to echo back as something completely different, it was crazy!

"Thank you so much! Maybe I'll drop in again, you seem to have a good selection! Bye! "

"Well, good-bye! You're welcome!"

I noticed I had a hard time walking away from those eyes of hers. But gosh, I just had to find some groceries! What would Paul say if all I got were these bottles? Or would he think about it at all? I

didn't know. I went across the street, there was a convenience store, I remembered that they had vegetables even though the price was a bit too high. Looking through the piles, I tried to read the price labels, but they seemed blurred; There was still too much of emotion in my body for my head to think clearly.

"I'll have these, please."

I put some tomatoes, cabbage, onions, carrots and a cucumber on the desk. The cashier, possibly of Indian origin, gave me a friendly smile and I quickly paid for the goods. Hurrying back along my usual path for home, I could finally think about dinner; the girl was gone from my mind for now.

"Paul, sweetheart? Hey, I got stuck in the new wine store for a while, but that was good, actually: I found some bargain bottles!"

"That's great, honey!"

Paul gave me a brief kiss and he caressed my hair and back; I suddenly felt better, maybe we could have 'something very special' for desert? I got naughty thoughts about him and that was good.

"Should I make vegetables au gratin maybe? I know you like that. And some cold cuts, I know we have some if you didn't dip into them!"

"I know what you should dip into....."

He started kissing me, hotter, his hand went into my blouse, he felt my nipple.

"Paul, we can do a quick one while we wait for the oven."

"Yes, sweetie..."

He could hardly move away from me, we kept standing there, just fondling each other. I let my skirt drop and he undid my buttons. It

was so arousing to feel his large hands on me, caressing my breasts and my belly. It was the part of male companionship I really liked: To feel taken care of, cherished, so smoothly caressed by a guy.

