

Mercury Unbound - 5

by J. Mykell Collinz

As the music concludes, I'm finally in control of my emotions enough to look around, to show my face again. Sandy's inquisitive expression tells me he wants to say something so I remove the tiny transducers from my ears.

He says: "You like Dvořák? His music fits this landscape, doesn't it? You know who else? Buddy Holly. Yeah, he's from Lubbock, the city we just passed. He rode this highway many times. There's a small recording studio up ahead in Clovis, just across the border into New Mexico. That's where he recorded most of his early hits. You want to stop there and check it out?"

His comments bring tears to my eyes again and, to avoid a misunderstanding, I quickly explain: "My husband, Dan, idolized Buddy. He even thought he could sing like Buddy, with his childishly cheerful, falsetto voice."

For once, Sandy knows enough to remain silent, giving me time to mentally compose myself. I can see he already understands. Still, I need to say it: "Dan died a few months ago with cancer. I'm not over it yet, obviously. Probably never will be. But I'm sorry to bring it up. I'm not trying to spoil anybody's mood."

Sister Helen takes her eyes from the road for a quick glance in my direction, and says: "He's up there in heaven right now, dear, looking down at you. And he's very proud of how you're carrying on with your life. Don't you ever doubt that."

Sandy sings: "I love you, Peggy Sue. With a love so rare and true. Oh, Peg-gy, how I love you-a-hu a-huhu."

His vibes remind me so much of Dan, I laugh and cry at the same time. He also reminds me of how I felt when I first met Sister Helen, like she had been sent to me, to keep me from falling apart. Except he's a man and I want to make love to him. I can feel the fluids inside my body already beginning to flow in preparation.

