

# where you had me

*by* Jerry Ratch

You already had me in all your other paintings. You already had me in every possible position. Underwater, in a car seat, on your back lawn at night with lightning coming from the west, bending over to sniff a rose, with my panties down around my knees. You already had me in your basement, your bedroom. You had me on your Dad's ski boat. You had me in my own little studio apartment. You had your way with me wherever and whenever you wanted. And if I had it to do over again, I would not hesitate.

You had me on all fours. You had me on my back. You had me floating near the ceiling of your bedroom. You held me under a lamplight, examining my chrysalis wings. You added a fragile ring of kisses around my neck, marking your territory, and I let you. I let you in.

You kissed the light down below my navel that went travelling down beneath my bikini. And I drew the honey from your middle, as often as I could get it. And yes, you heard the reports. I was cooing like a dove, then yipping like a puppy. Once in a great while growling like a lion or a tiger. And yes, I was wounded, turning around, beautiful, fair, dangerous and wolf-like.

I would have hiked up my dress again to get at you, a million times our mortal, to smell that nearly fatal, persimmon smell of yours. I am she who was fertile, she who carried a load, noble, generous. Now the sweet roses are thrown down at the threshold, and still another ghost of the rose keeps questioning after me — Who can it be now, who carries his name inside her? It could have been you. Oh, it should have been you!

