

The Lady and the Boy

by Shane D. Horne

Her body is warm and she sucks on a menthol cigarette and frost or smoke seep from her barely parted lips. A gloomy dawn pervades the cold motel room. No birds can be heard ushering in the rising sun. Only the gentle hum of the bar fridge fights off the oppressive silence.

The lady graced the warm and inviting bar with adulterous intent. A sultry atmosphere danced upon her wake. Her make up was perfect, her black dress slimming, and her scent alluring. If seduction ever walked on two legs, it was she. They told her she was like them. They said she needed it. She thought she wanted it.

He wasn't alone. He vied for her attention like a sick puppy. A youthful version of her spouse, the boy was muscular, headstrong, and handsome. Her body warmed to the sight of him but it was laced with something. He reminded her of someone. Someone pretty from a story. But her memory failed.

Luring him took all of a look and a smile and yet the boy considered her a triumph. He bought her a drink and whispered things only a younger man would, and she remembered thinking: 'yes, this is just how it should be.'

She recalled how it felt to have him inside her. Smaller than what waited at home but enthusiastic, a sexual caring she had learnt to live without. He was determined to impress her, as if it mattered, which it did, but not anymore. His eagerness to fuck released countless endorphins.

She considers her husband, as she sits at the dresser. She fixes her sweat marked make-up and ties her disheveled hair into a loose and respectable bun.

'Mistakes are made and cannot be undone, only rectified,' she tells the adulteress in the mirror. Her walk of shame will not occur.

She will have none of it. The thought will come and go like a shooting star, a transient figment within her dignified mind.

She glances at the sleeping boy on the bed behind her, not yet dead to the world. The lady walks over and pushes the brown hair from the boy's forehead and his eyes open wide then wider again. She stands.

'Such a lovely red scarf.' She gazes down at him, tenderly. But there is no pity in her. Not for him or herself.

The simple starched sheets cover only his pale legs and flaccid manhood and he makes a small growl of defiance.

She slips back into her slim dress and douses her clothes with Chanel No. 5, covering the night's decadent scent.

'You look so cold now, sweetie.' She crosses the room and pulls the covers over him, kissing his wintry cheek. 'But you're still so handsome.'

She strokes his red scarf and wipes her fingers on the clammy pillow. The lady picks up her pumps and rises and walks out the door, turning only to switch off the light and watch the light fade from his eyes.

