

The Shop Girl

by Sheila Luecht

She quietly typed her name in next to his. Giving herself a way to imagine it. What would a life with him been like. She really had no idea. It was so far away in the past. It was a bit of something that once in a while seemed like it was real, and most likely it was not.

So much of her memory was being eaten away by this terrible disease. She had to remind herself of what was real and what was not all the time. She had a very interesting life, too interesting for some tastes.

The shoes at the Papagallo shop. She only bought them on sale back then. Her dresses were short, her body was thin, she was tall. Her hair was a kind of gilded chestnut. The eyes which looked out then were a hazel green, and mostly, well, mostly not too made up. Mostly beautiful. They looked into his and saw someone that no one else had seen before.

He could be spent. He could be drunk in and used up and spent, all in one delicious gaze as she became aware of him. She now cannot remember how they first met. Oh, she knew the place, the year, the season, but not the moment. Wait, was it that Mrs. Petrusaka that introduced them? She knew him. Yes, she was playing match maker. He must have expressed an interest in her. He must have asked to be introduced.

Just a little shop girl in for the summer. Working on a typewriter. Barely knowing where the keys were. That was her. She was terrible at it. He was in a suit. He looked short, and thin, but something about him was captivating. He was in his own way handsome. He worked in Antique Silver. His department worked under the same man whose office she worked in.

That is somehow, how they met. In a musty old department store that once heralded the era of elegant ladies who shopped, dined and sent their packages home. They were riding the tail of the comet, in a few years the place would not be recognizable and in a few decades it would be completely gone. Gone, just like the shadow of

this young man and this young woman, about to embark on the most wonderful adventure of first love.

She could remember it if she slept. If she laid down her head and conjured the dreams, it would play out for her like a movie. She would remember the first kiss by Rodin's the Thinker, a small, secluded pond. Just the right spot for the most romantic kiss recorded in this world. It was the one where dewdrops left the most interesting glow, to light the way under the leaning tree. Where the hedges hid them for a single moment in time, that was never to be repeated again.

A first kiss with meaning and passion met equally. Not the french kiss trial on the speech bus with a boy on the team. Not an experiment. No, the first kiss, a contract almost, to begin something very meaningful.

Closing her eyes, she laid back. Gone were the age spots on her hands, gone the body of a matron, gone the silver hair, gone the demeanor of an aged woman, in its place the her of long ago, the shop girl.

