

Seduction

An obese woman, trapped in a lack-luster marriage finds motivation to lose weight from her Seduction class. Insidiously changes creep into her life. "Does she lose only her fat?" wonders the author.



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The first time I thought of losing weight, I was in the 'Seduction' class.

"A few pounds off those thighs and waist," Michael said pointing to my navel, "and you'll be a gorgeous swan!"

I nodded slowly.

I was a slow person. It wasn't just the fat that weighed me down, my mind worked slowly too. Behind my back, my colleagues whispered, "Babel". It was an acronym for 'Baby Elephant'. I ignored it when I could. Other times I had earplugs.

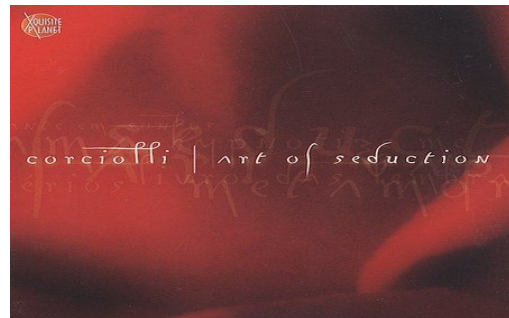
Work was dissatisfying, pay wasn't. Sitting at my desk most of the day, I let the fat accumulate. They gathered in force and in number in the nooks and crannies of my body and made themselves at home. From



pleasantly plump to overweight to obese – the transition took less than a year.

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I wasn't bothered. I was married.



My husband never complained about my weight.

'Seduction' happened just after I met Michael. He brought back all the school girlishness in me. I had an instant crush on him.

"Seduction is an art and whoever masters it never lacks admirers." I listened to Michael spellbound. His classes went on for an hour, three times a week.

Sitting among younger, prettier and slimmer women, made me feel unique. I stood out. People noticed me. That's how Michael noticed me.

"The art of seduction starts at the eyes. But what good are the eyes if the other person doesn't notice you?" I was at an advantage here.

Initially when I experimented, men were shocked rather than surprised. Out of curiosity, they responded. It worked. I found ways to better my art.

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I started having fun.

In the evenings, after my class, my husband always had dinner with me. He went back to work sometimes, actually quite often now, but always returned for our two hour dinner. During our first married month, he christened it "Two-Some-time". The name stuck and so did the time. Sometimes when I went out with friends, ate dinner at work, or just couldn't make it, he ate alone at home.

Our dinner conversations bore the same pattern.

"Is that what we are having for dinner today? Looks good to me", boomed Richard happily. Even if we were having instant noodles, Richard made the same mundane comment. I never responded. After a while of silence, he asked his next usual question.

"So how was your day honey? Amazing I hope?"

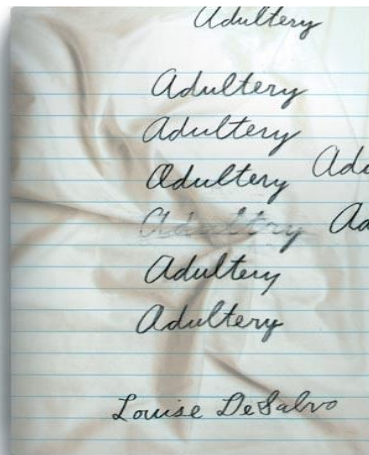
I grunted. I didn't feel the necessity to discuss my days with him. He always gave me a minute or two, expecting something more than just a grunt. It amazed me how patient a man could be. Two years of asking the same question and still he waited for my reply.

"My days don't change any more. I have been passed on by younger blood for promotion. No matter how much I try, my juniors keep outshining me. The way things are, soon I will be holding the same position for the longest time in history," Richard ended with a chuckle.

I couldn't understand how someone could make fun of his failures.

I always ended my meals before him and whenever I finished I got up and left. Sometimes I said, "I am done", and sometimes I just left with just the sound of my chair pushing back. Every time, Richard looked up at me, into my face and smiled. Then he said the three words that always left me disgusted.

"I love you."



I had been married for two years now. We met at a common friend's place. His loneliness, long bachelorhood and his parent's nagging - all contributed to our hasty courtship and rapid marriage. I was slow and by the time I realized where I was headed, I found myself married to a man I had known only for a few weeks.

Richard was rich and ugly. Childhood mumps, measles, playground injuries had all left their indelible unappealing marks on his face and body. Combined

with his fierce green eyes, it was easy to imagine him as a gun toting mafia man. For a man that looked like this, he was surprisingly gentle. He never raised his voice.

"....and so you see the benefits of

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weight loss are manifold and the best way in that direction is sustained starvation," Michael's drone broke my reverie. Everyone in class knew why he brought up the weight loss at least once. It was for me.

I decided to slim down. I had found a strong motivation to do it.

A year ago my world had fallen apart. One Monday night, when Richard returned late, I smelt her on his shirt for the first time. It was a powerful feminine smell. The next week he went on a business trip - or so he said, in Hawaii. Whenever I called him at the hotel, a husky female replied. She said she was the attendant. Obviously, I knew what needs she attended to!

When he returned, he came back with a gift for me! That was so unlike him. Richard wasn't a romantic, he didn't even come close. During our courtship, any planning was done by me. He just paid the bills. A candle light dinner was 'severe straining on his myopic eyes', a cruise was 'never-ending sea sicknesses, a gift was 'simply a waste compared to food' and love was 'overrated', 'compatibility was better'...his list was endless.

A diamond pendant hanging from a white gold chain- it was a beautiful necklace. None of the jewelry I owned measured up to it. At another time, a more naive myself would have loved it.

"Don't you like it?" Richard asked surprised.

"It must have cost a fortune, why did you buy it?"

"I wanted to surprise you. I had forgotten your last birthday so I thought..." his voice trailed off into a hurt silence.

I looked up at him. The same faint feminine smell wafted to my nostrils. His green eyes, pock-marked face, long-drawn chin looked comically sad.

My dieting was killing me. When I starved, the initial pangs of hunger and craving gave rise to a pain previously unknown. Only three meals a day with half sized portions, and a measly fruit was all I allowed myself. It was tough. After two weeks of torture, I got used to it. That's when I started walking, taking the stairs, moving about my cubicle every five minutes. When hunger hit me, I drank water. When I panted, I stopped and drank water. When others gobbled food, I drank water. All day the only thing abundantly available to me was water. If I didn't have a strong motive, I would have surely given up.

Seduction classes went on as usual. Michael's soothing drone, kept me listening. The dream of being an extremely attractive and universally coveted woman constantly fuelled my otherwise excruciating regime.

After a month, Michael noticed.

"You look lighter on the top. Your face looks thinner. Have you been working out?"

I wasn't exactly working out; I was starving myself, one day at a time. So, technically my answer was a no. He was surprised, but didn't follow up.

Another month slowly passed. Richard noticed.

Looking up from his cereal bowl, he remarked, "You look weak and perhaps a little thin. Is everything alright?"

I nodded nonchalantly. His gaze settled on my face, moved slowly down to my shoulders, lingered at my neck and then fell back to his bowl. I heard him sigh as he took another mouthful.

Perhaps he wondered why I never wore the necklace.

Things had only got worse. Just like the fat that I had let accumulate, I let my marriage fester in neglect. Things that I could fix went unnoticed. Things I could have cared for went to ruin. Things I should have tended to went rotting. In the last two months, as my body became slimmer, and stronger, my marriage became paler and weaker. Through all this, Richard never complained.

Six months, six long months later, I found myself looking completely different. The roundedness was replaced by straightness. The wobbly, soft fat in my

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arms, belly and thighs gave way to harder surfaces. My face, the round plump happy one looked gaunt, stretched and thin. When my fat left me, it also took away the gentleness from my features. I looked older than my age. Now I had a body that could fit into smaller sizes, smaller seats and smaller spaces, but I lost the cheery softness that came with it.

'Seduction' class was nearing an end. Michael's lectures had become repetitive. My classmates couldn't stop commenting on my transformation. My diet,

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my regime my routine got discussed, dissected and debated upon. I attained a new position – that of awe and inspiration.

Richard had been mostly absent during the last six months. Business trips had tripled, his personal friend's circle had multiplied, his extra-curricular activities increased manifold. He submerged himself in never-ending engagements. I saw very little of him and heard even lesser.

Sometimes at laundry, I smelt his unwashed shirts, forcing my nostrils to get a whiff of adultery. I scrutinized his clothing to find a red mark of lipstick. I rummaged through his papers to see a loving note. I stole his mobile to see any repetitive mysterious calls. Every single time, he got the better of me. I was never successful in my sorry quest. That neither deterred nor shook my conviction.

One sunny morning I realized that time had come. Looking my prettiest, I went to work. My 'Babel-calling-colleagues' unanimously remarked on my great looks, even my manager stopped by asking about my health. I was getting all the attention that was long due. I felt supremely confident.

For the six months of 'Seduction' class, which was only theory, I had held my own practice. At coffee houses, at clubs, at bars, at pubs, standing in queue close to the next man, I found my targets- painstakingly. Experiments had gone awry, embarrassments were regularity, disgust was inevitable and yet I held on. My weight made me the laughing stock. Now I looked different. I knew I would be successful – now would be different.

It took a little over a month. Every time I faltered, the infidel smell on Richard's shirt egged me on.

Late one night, I sat up waiting for Richard to come home. I had news.

When he closed the door behind him, and turned around, I said, "I need to talk to you."

"Oh! I didn't see you there." He smiled.

I waited for him to get closer.

"I am pregnant."

A wave of disbelief passed into shock on his face.

"But, I don't think..." he stopped abruptly.

Looking intently into my eyes, he paused to think.

I knew what was passing through his mind. It was not his child. To be honest, I didn't know whose it was. When I was obese, doctors had told us, how difficult it would be for me to conceive. It had broken our hearts. Now, when I had finally achieved the miracle, I was an adulteress.

After what seemed to be an eon, Richard spoke.

"Congratulations." He walked away.

<http://www.christinas-home-remedies.com/image-files/depression-drawing.jpg>

