

BEAUTIFUL INEZ

A Novel

Bart Schneider



BART
SCHNEIDER

Beautiful
Inez

A NOVEL



Three Rivers Press
NEW YORK

Table of Contents

[*Title Page*](#)

[*Dedication*](#)

[*Epigraph*](#)

[voyant](#)

[future perfect](#)

[zen studies](#)

[perfect pitch](#)

[attraction](#)

[god of the sea](#)

[command performance](#)

[as if he means it](#)

[depraved](#)

[the other half](#)

[the art of the fugue](#)

[the mythological beast](#)

[jake's ribs](#)

[some loss](#)

[the whole hand](#)

[betrayal](#)

[new happiness](#)

[the news](#)

[c rations](#)

[the blindfold](#)

[circumstances](#)

[toy soldiers](#)

[the mind lasso](#)

[night picnic](#)

[skeleton key](#)

[everything precious](#)

[benediction](#)

[bigamy](#)

[the sharper, the kinder](#)

[old home](#)

[human](#)

[little bird](#)

[play me a song](#)

[the right of first refusal](#)

[hang up already](#)

[intervention](#)

[olympian poise](#)

[bubbles](#)

[lantern](#)

[the splintered white](#)

[countdown](#)

[matchmaker](#)

[chef's choice](#)

[force of habit](#)

[living fish](#)

[the torah](#)

[the chignon](#)

[hidden](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[THE STORY BEHIND THE BOOK](#)

[AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR](#)

[Reader's Group Guide - ABOUT THIS GUIDE](#)

[QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION](#)

[About the Author](#)

[NOVELS BY BART SCHNEIDER](#)

[Copyright Page](#)

*To my father, David Schneider, a generous and
compassionate man, who has always played Bach
with his eyes closed.*



Such beauty that for a minute death and ambition, even love, doesn't enter into this.

—RAYMOND CARVER

voyant

LANGUAGE, as Sylvia's mother was fond of saying, mimics the human condition. What is harmless one moment can become fatal the next. Drop a prefix, and, before you know it, what was innocuous has grown noxious, dispensing fumes that are certain to kill you.

Take *voyeur*, which derives from the French *voir*—to see. A powerless or passive spectator. You might define it that way, if you were willing to strip away its unsavory meanings and free it from the clutches of Peeping Toms.

Consider this: as a girl in Sacramento, Sylvia liked to climb trees. She started out in the fruit and nut trees of her neighborhood and then branched out, if you will, to the spreading oaks on the capitola grounds. Innocuous enough, you might say. Yet the physical pleasure she took in scrambling from limb to limb and hoisting herself into a hidden hollow was more than matched by her exhilaration with what she saw: a long-legged woman mowing her lawn in a pair of powder-blue shorts, a pair of terrier mutts humping in the early morning, the opened mouth of an ingenue as a sailor squeezed one of her smallish breasts.

Now, as a woman in San Francisco, Sylvia takes a heightened pleasure in what she sees, but she no longer worries about concealing herself. When Sylvia moved to San Francisco last year, she found a one-bedroom apartment, three flights up, situated along the Hyde Street cable-car line. Home in the evenings, she watches the corner of Washington and Hyde through her curtainless front window. Sipping a glass of cheap burgundy and listening to a Bobby Darin record, Sylvia watches her neighbors, briefcases and sacks of groceries in tow, climb on and off the cable car.

She's particularly fond of the balletic passengers, who spring onto or off of the car's running board even when it's in motion. So far she hasn't witnessed a single mishap among the leapers. Catlike, on their way to their various rendezvous, they bound from curb to running board with the grace of the man leaping a puddle in the famous photograph by Cartier-Bresson. Sylvia used to imagine that she was the Parisian in the photograph, her long, open-scissored leap, reflected in the pooling water, an emblem of decisiveness.

Despite Sylvia's good high-school French—her mother used to tell her that she was born to be a linguist or an impostor, maybe both—the closest Sylvia has gotten to Paris is through a monograph of Cartier-Bresson photos, a sampling of Debussy and Ravel recordings, and the lovely baguettes from Simon Brothers, flown in every other day from Paris, that she occasionally slips under her raincoat. Sometimes she pretends that it is Paris she's watching out her window.

Watcher might be another word she could apply to herself. Socially, it would make her more acceptable, but who wants to settle for a word so bereft of nuance? Anyway, watchers have become as common as birds in 1962, now that every man, woman, and child in America has a television of their own. Those few citizens not spending their leisure time watching TV are scanning the skies for

orbiting chimpanzees or astronauts. Sylvia prefers more intimate curiosities.

ONE evening, shortly after moving to San Francisco, Sylvia took a random stroll down Van Ness Avenue and saw a symphony crowd billowing out of cabs and town cars and up the grand stairway to the lobby of the War Memorial Opera House. Although she was no more dressed for a concert than a woman walking her dog, she let herself get swept along with the crowd and, with neither dog nor ticket, climbed the stairs with the concertgoers and milled about the lobby, underdressed but unrepentant.

She remembered how not long after the Second World War, as a seventh grader from Sacramento, she visited the Opera House, where delegates of fifty nations had drafted and signed the United Nations charter. She'd imagined herself as a delegate from Ceylon, one of the exotic nations from which she had postage stamps. Seventeen years later, as she milled about in the lobby without a ticket, dressed in pedal pushers and a navy blue car coat, a voice in her head announced: *The delegate from Ceylon, Sylvia Bran.*

In September, as the anniversary of her first year in San Francisco nears, Sylvia gets an opportunity to attend a symphony concert at the Opera House. Her boss at Myerson's—"The grand piano store of the West"—offers her a complimentary ticket. Although the ticket has a hole punched through it, Sylvia is ushered through a velvet curtain to a freestanding upholstered chair in a box of her own. She might as well be the queen of Ceylon.

At first, it is hard to reconcile the formality of the setting and occasion with the casual, backstage banter that follows the musicians to their seats. Some of them tune their instruments on the fly amid a cacophony of scales and eighth-note passages. Then Inez Roseman appears onstage with her violin. Of course, Sylvia doesn't yet know who the exquisite violinist is, but talk about regal. She wears her hair—a shade of blond that can't have come out of a bottle—brushed back, with a silver comb at each temple. Surely this tall and graceful figure is cut from another cloth. The knots of standing musicians seem to part for her as she makes her way, without a word, toward the front of the first violin section. Is the stunning violinist contemptuous of her joking colleagues? Do they despise her for acting as if she's too good for this world?

Sylvia pays close attention to the violinist's gestures—the lovely way she brushes a hand under her skirt before sitting; her manner of dropping a square of silk onto her left shoulder and shrugging into place before lifting the violin and clamping it with her chin. The other violinists all seem to have more elaborate devices or padding to protect their chins and shoulders. This one, with her square of silk, is, in effect, riding bareback. The violinist closes her eyes as she begins to tune her instrument. Sylvia imagines the inner ear against which the violinist measures her A and pictures a flower within a flower. Clearly, the violinist has perfect pitch, a kind of magnetic north that draws her to its incontrovertible center. In college, Sylvia had known a French horn player with perfect pitch, and she'd always wondered what it was like for him to live among the common folk with wavering intonation.

The dashing Brazilian conductor, João Bonfá, gives his downbeat, and the opening measure of an orchestral suite by Berlioz rises to Sylvia's box. She is sitting close enough to study the supple grace of the violinist's bow arm, and, gradually, locks into the breathing pattern of the silk-shouldered

beauty.

At intermission, Sylvia asks an usher the name of the first violinist sitting second stand outside.

“That’s Inez Roseman; beautiful Inez.” The elderly matron, whose white hair is slipping out of her chignon, turns her head dismissively. Is the gesture meant as a comment on the violinist or on the philistine posing the question? Sylvia decides the latter. Maybe the usher remembers her complimentary ticket, the one with the hole punched through it, and holds that against her.

“Has she been with the symphony for long?” Sylvia persists.

“Yes,” the usher says, turning toward Sylvia. “She’s been in the symphony for nearly twenty years.”

“How could that be? She doesn’t look like she’s much past thirty.”

“Well, I’m not lying to you. Some of us age better than others.” The usher takes a linen hanky from her clutch and, unfolding it, reveals a small stash of lemon drops. She offers one to Sylvia.

“No, thank you.”

The matron plucks a lemon drop from her linen wrap and drops it on her tongue. “Of course, Inez got into the symphony when she was very young.”

“She’d have had to.”

“And you know who she’s married to,” the usher says, in a stage whisper.

“No, I’m afraid I don’t.”

“Jake Roseman.” The usher puckers her lips around her lemon drop. “You know, the attorney who’s creating all the fuss with the colored.”

Sylvia has read about him in the *Chronicle*. He seems to be something of a sensationalist. A white lawyer working on behalf of the Negroes, a favorite of the liberal columnists.

“I’ll tell you one thing,” the usher says, “the man has no feeling for music, even though his father played in the symphony for years.”

“His father played?” Sylvia asks.

“His father was the first concertmaster under Monteux. He was Inez’s teacher. But you never see the husband here. Maybe he’ll come next month when Inez plays her solo. If we’re so lucky.”

“What will she be playing?”

The usher puts her hands on her hips. “My, you ask a lot of questions. You ought to be a reporter.”

“I *am* a reporter,” Sylvia says, tasting the words as she speaks them.

“What do you know?” The matron’s eyes brighten—everything seems to make sense to her now.

“But you haven’t answered my last question,” Sylvia says.

“Your last question?”

“What will Mrs. Roseman be playing?”

“Oh, yes, the Goldmark Concerto.”

“I’m afraid I’m not familiar with Goldmark.”

“Karl Goldmark.”

“And when did he live?”

The usher looks flustered. “When did he . . . ? He was . . .” Her hands go up to her hair and flutter their crooked, arthritic way around the loose knot of her chignon. “He was a Romantic.”

“Of course.”

Now the old woman, a flirt at heart, narrows her eyes and offers a gamine smile. She holds out her hand to Sylvia. “Elizabeth Mier. That’s Mier, MIER.”

Does Elizabeth Mier expect her to jot down the correct spelling of her name? Sylvia takes her hand. “Pleased to meet you,” she says without offering her own name. The power of the press.

By the time the voyeur-turned-reporter is back in her box, the curious constellation of the Roseman family has woven itself around her. The French have another word, a first cousin of *voyeur* that hasn’t really crossed over into English. *Voyant*. We do have *clairvoyant*, but how much more elegant to be *voyant*, a simple seer.

Back in her seat, Sylvia Bran’s career as a voyant is about to begin. As the lovely violinist walks back onstage and drops her square of silk onto her shoulder, Sylvia holds her breath.

future perfect

IT so happens that Inez Roseman is a trusting soul—a fact that might surprise her husband and even her children, who, young as they are, know plenty about trust. The common error is to confuse trusting with trustworthy, qualities that don't necessarily go hand in hand. Can “a woman of moods,” as her husband puts it, be anything but unreliable? Maybe not. But there's nothing to stop her from believing that salvation, if there is to be any, might come as unexpectedly as a stranger to her front door.

Consider this: a young reporter comes to the house this morning, as completely unannounced as the Avon lady, and Inez opens the door for her. When the chimes ring, Inez is curled half-naked in a fetal position on her bed. She takes a quick inventory. The kids are off to school, and Jake made his way out the back door an hour ago, tiptoeing half-blind with an armful of shirts for the cleaners. Between his teeth he held an English muffin smeared with boysenberry jam—this to ensure that whatever garment was not stained when it walked out the door would be by the time it reached the cleaners. The reporter, it turns out, made arrangements last week, but Inez has done her best to put it out of her head.

Inez throws on a robe and opens the front door to the newspaper woman, who is hunched on the doorstep in her black trench coat. A chicky girl, as Jake would say, straight out of central casting. It's all that Inez can do to keep from laughing. Why has she agreed to such nonsense?

“I'm Sylvia Bran from the *Chronicle*.”

“How do you do? Inez Roseman.”

“Of course.”

“You've missed him.” She wants to play with the girl.

“No, no . . . I don't want *him*, Mrs. Roseman.” The young woman blushes. “I called last Tuesday? . . . We spoke briefly?”

The reporter states this as a question. Inez isn't about to help her.

“I want . . . I want to talk with *you*, Mrs. Roseman.”

“Well, now that we have that established, would you like to come in?”

Inez leads her guest into the living room and has her sit. Once she has a moment to study the reporter, Inez takes a liking to her. You wouldn't go out of your way to describe the girl as attractive. She has a pointy nose and wears her dirty-blond hair in bangs. She comes across as intelligent, perhaps even a little cunning. Her green eyes are quite pretty and not at all shy about taking in what she wants. Inez offers her coffee and a slice of crumb cake.

“You don’t need to bother.”

“Not at all. I have a pot of Folger’s on and a cake left over from last night.”

When Inez returns with a tray from the kitchen, the reporter gives a quick couple of claps to her hands. “I’m really excited to do this story.”

“What story?”

“About your solo performance.”

“It hardly seems to warrant . . .”

“I understand it’s quite rare for a section player to be given a chance to play a concerto.”

“Rare, but not unprecedented.”

“My editor . . .”

“I’m sure your editor would prefer a story about my husband.”

Sylvia Bran takes a breath and curls up her bottom lip and chin in a fetching, comic-book expression of disappointment. Then she fixes her eyes on Inez. “Would you prefer that we not do this?”

Of course, Inez would prefer not. She’d prefer to be back in bed. She’d prefer to do nothing at all. She watches the reporter push two fingers through her bangs. For some reason, Inez doesn’t want to disappoint her. “No,” she says. “I’m happy to talk with you.”

The young woman is sitting on the yellow teak sofa, which, despite the beauty of its lines, is not particularly comfortable. Inez hands her a cup of coffee and a piece of cake. Sitting upright, Sylvia Bran seems anxious to start the interview.

“Why don’t you catch your breath for a moment?” Inez says, hoping to study the young reporter a little longer.

Sylvia wants to make a good impression. She forces a smile, takes a quick bite of cake; a sprinkling of crumbs spills onto her lips. Then she pushes her plate aside and takes a walloping gulp of black coffee. A girl could burn her gullet like that.

After performing a curious exercise in concentration, shutting her eyes and breathing very deliberately, like an athlete under pressure, the reporter flips open her notebook. “Before we talk about the concert,” she says, finally, pencil in hand, “I’d like to ask a few questions to put things in context. Tell me, what’s it like to live with Jake Roseman?”

The reporter might have employed a little finesse. Of course, Sylvia Bran only wants to talk about Jake, Inez’s famous mate.

“Subtle question,” the reporter says, offering a wonderfully melodious laugh.

Inez shrugs. “Oh, it isn’t that bad.”

Sylvia goes at her slice of crumb cake with a sudden ferocity. Not quite finished chewing, she says, “You don’t have to answer that question if you don’t want.”

“So what’s the question?” Inez says in a nasal imitation of Groucho Marx. She wants to make the reporter laugh again.

“I asked what it was like—”

“Yes, to live with Jake. Here it is in a nutshell: everything becomes public with Jake. He’s an extrovert, and I’m quite the opposite. I find the public part difficult.”

Sylvia flips open her notebook and starts to dash and dot along in a remarkable shorthand. The reporter pushes a final forkful of cake into her mouth and chews for a moment. “But your husband hasn’t always been in the public eye,” Sylvia says, “and you’re on the stage all the time.”

“You’re right,” Inez says. “I was trained early to perform in front of an audience; groomed, you know, to have a solo career. Perhaps my temperament wasn’t right for it. Jake, on the other hand, has always been a public event waiting to happen.”

“So you decided against pursuing a solo career?”

“Right.”

“Was that a hard decision?”

Inez stands and walks over to the side table. “Not at the time. I was young and in love and I thought I could do anything. The decisions you hardly think about are the ones your life pivots around.” Inez slices a wedge of crumb cake large enough to choke the reporter. “Please, have another piece.”

“I shouldn’t, but it’s delicious. I’m afraid I’m making a pig out of myself.”

“I won’t tell anybody.”

Clearly, Sylvia Bran has experience interviewing the reticent. She knows when to back off and when to follow a lead. She eats a few more forkfuls of cake and keeps an eye on her host.

Inez draws a hand through her hair and considers the reporter. She guesses that Sylvia is twenty-five and lives with her parents. Not in the city, but in a modern rambler in San Leandro, Fremont, San Mateo. Perhaps she has a boyfriend named Ralph or Jerry who works in an electronics firm, who takes her bowling, who gave her a transistor radio for her last birthday.

As Sylvia takes her next bite of cake, Inez bombards her with questions.

“Where do you live?”

“Russian Hill.”

“In the city?”

“Yes, along the cable-car line on Hyde.”

“How old did you say you were?”

“I didn’t say.”

“Well, how old are you?” Inez is surprised by her own rudeness.

Sylvia swallows hard. She seems to have trouble remembering her age. “I’m thirty.”

“You don’t look twenty-five.”

“I’ll take that as a compliment,” Sylvia says, with a certain pluck. “I was born in 1932—March the night after the Lindbergh boy was kidnapped. My mother linked my birth with the kidnapping so often that I started to feel responsible for it.”

“Funny, I pictured you still living with your parents in your girlhood room.”

“I’ve already been married and divorced.” Sylvia shows her left hand—a chapped, nub-nailed paw that proves nothing at all except that a bit of moisturizer is in order. “I used to wear a ring, even after the divorce, but not anymore. Maybe I’ve made peace with the whole thing.”

Inez looks at her own ring, with its crescent of tiny diamonds. “How long were you married?”

“A couple of years.”

“Not so long.”

“Long enough.”

“Sounds like you made the right decision.”

The reporter nods and again fixes her large eyes on Inez. The kid, who might not be a kid after all, has a penetrating gaze. When was the last time someone paid this much attention to her? “Will you excuse me for a moment?” Inez says. “I’m beginning to feel a bit like a hausfrau sitting around in my robe. Help yourself to more cake.”

AFTER examining the half circles under her eyes, Inez brushes out her hair and applies a dab of red lipstick to each cheek, rubbing in a bit of color. With her visitor in the other room, Inez needs to propp herself up. She begins by slipping into the linen dress she’s recently picked up at Magnin’s.

“How would you describe this color?” she’d asked the saleslady, who wore a boxy suit and reminded her of the designer Edith Head.

“I’d call it aubergine,” the saleslady said, making an O of her thickly caked pink lips.

Inez snuck a look at the price. “It’s quite a lot of money to dress up like an eggplant.”

“Well, it *is* sleeveless,” the saleslady chirped, as if the minimum length of fabric justified the maximum price. More likely, it was the suggestion of Jackie Kennedy that upped its price. The saleslady smiled at Inez. “I think it will look lovely on you with your nice tan arms, your cute size. Try it on.”

When she returned from the dressing room she expected adoration, and Edith Head delivered.

“Oh, yes. Simple. Understated. But ravishing.”

Now she lifts her violin and bow from the open case in the bedroom and strolls, as a ravishing eggplant, into the living room. She makes a point of drawing her bow across a cake of rosin more times than she needs to. She wants the reporter’s undivided attention.

“My God,” the reporter says, staring even more intently than before, “what a beautiful dress.”

“Do you think so? I just picked it up for the concert. I thought I’d try it out on you.”

“It’s absolutely beautiful. Are you going to play a little from the Goldmark?”

“No, no. Forgive me, this is awfully pushy of me. This interview business has gotten me nervous. I thought a little music might relax me. You said you were born in 1932—how about I play something you performed in a recital that year?”

“I’d be honored. How old were you, if you don’t mind my asking, in 1932?”

“I was ten.” Inez stands in front of the reporter. “Do you know Paganini?”

“Barely. He was a virtuoso violinist.”

“Right, and only mad violinists play his caprices in public.”

“But you played them at ten?”

Has the reporter caught her lie? Can she possibly know that the hands of most ten-year-old girls are too small to play the caprices?

“This is number twenty, the Allegretto in D Major.”

Inez draws her bow across the D and the A strings, introducing the stately theme and the drone of the D string. There is an opening calm before the madness begins with a circular flurry on the A string. As she practiced these passages—and it could go on for hours in an empty house—she pictured the elaborate scrollwork of a medieval door. As a teen, after her breasts had begun growing out of control and forced her to alter her bowing posture, she often imagined someone touching her while she practiced, and a few times she actually climaxed, her legs twisted around each other like a model.

sculpture or a wrought-iron plant stand.

A successful performer of Paganini turns herself into a machine that produces breathless line bursts as distinctly articulated as the devil's teeth. But standing before her guest at the breakfast room table, Inez mucks through a passage with a shameful smear of legato when it calls for tidy staccato. How pitiful a creature she's become, trying to impress a chicky reporter she's just met and doing so poorly a job of it. Who else devotes so much time to confirming her imperfection? A simple man blessed with minor carpentry skills could have built a viable four-bedroom house in the time she spent trying to saddle the hysteria in this three-minute caprice.

"Beautiful," Sylvia says. "Absolutely beautiful."

Inez knows enough to keep quiet. "Thank you," she says and puts her instrument down.

"What kind of violin do you play?"

"It's a Landolfi. Pietro Antonio Landolfi," Inez says in a robust Italian accent. "I've always loved saying his name. It's quite a nice instrument. Circa 1770, Milan."

"Such a beautiful sound." Sylvia closes her eyes for emphasis.

"Thank you."

"How old were you when you started playing?"

"What are you after—ancient history?"

"Our readers are curious about these kind of things."

"I was five."

"Is that when you started studying with the concertmaster, Mr. Roseman?"

"That was a few years later."

The reporter gets busy with her shorthand again. "And he introduced you to his son?"

"No, that was Jake's doing."

"How do you mean?"

Inez sits down beside Sylvia Bran on the teak sofa as the reporter flips her pad to a blank page. "I'm curious what you have in mind with this story," says Inez.

Sylvia doesn't rush to answer. "We were thinking of a longer piece for the Sunday magazine section."

Inez shrugs. "Why?"

Sylvia lifts her coffee cup and takes a dainty sip, her long nose tipping rather beautifully into the bell of the cup. Inez watches the reporter's eyelids flutter a moment. "My editor thinks that you and Jake are among San Francisco's most fascinating couples," Sylvia says. "And with your solo concert coming . . ."

"So you'll want to talk with Jake as well."

"Yes, if he'll talk to me."

"Jake? He'll talk with anybody."

"I'm really more interested in you, Mrs. Roseman."

"Why don't I believe you?"

The reporter doesn't answer. Nor does she smile. She challenges Inez with a steady gaze.

"What kind of ground rules can we establish?" Inez asks.

"What do you have in mind?"

"You promise not to print anything that I don't approve."

The reporter is silent. It seems as if she is considering the request. "I can't do that."

"Then I can't talk to you." Inez sighs.

Sylvia smiles. A disappointed smile. She rises briskly out of the Danish modern sofa.

The smart thing would be to let the reporter go. "Sit," Inez says.

"I don't want to force you to do anything you don't want to do."

"Sure you do." Inez smiles at Sylvia, the urchin with the yellow pad. "I guess I'll have to be careful of what I say."

And then Inez proceeds to be anything but careful. Growing up, she was the storyteller in her little family of three. Her meek father and older sister, Bibi, sheltered and unstable, listened to anything she cared to tell them about the wider world. Inez lifts her coffee cup and takes a short sip. She smiles at Sylvia the reporter. "Would you like to hear about how Jake and I met?"

"Absolutely."

It surprises Inez how well she remembers the day, after twenty-five years. It was a sunny afternoon in the fall, and Jake was sitting on the front steps of his house, barefoot in dungarees and a T-shirt, whistling "Lovely to Look At," a song she knew from the Hit Parade. She'd never before spoken to the boy, but she knew that he was nearly seventeen years old, almost two years older than she was.

“You’re Inez,” he said, standing as she approached. “I don’t believe we’ve ever been introduced. I’m Jacob Roseman. Jake.” He stuck out his hand to shake, and Inez already felt at a disadvantage, she had the violin in one hand and her music in the other.

As Jake began running his charms and Inez managed to consolidate her things to shake hands, she looked down at Jake’s bare feet—his long, beautifully shaped toes—and felt desperate to get away. The music room with Mr. Roseman wasn’t necessarily a relief, but it was at least familiar. An hour with the Bruch concerto might cure the distraction. When she lifted her eyes, Jake smiled at her.

“My father talks about you all the time. *Inez . . . Inez . . .* It’s like a holy word in our house and, in case you haven’t noticed, it’s not a very holy house. *Inez . . . Inez . . .* He’s very proud of you. You’re the best student he’s ever had. I’ve heard him say that. No fooling. And, you know, he’s been teaching for a hundred years. Methuselah is his first cousin on his mother’s side. Another thing, if you don’t mind my saying, you’re very pretty. Exceptionally so.

“But my father never mentions your beauty. I noticed that myself. The truth is, I’ve watched you come and go for years, but I never paid a whole lot of attention. You know how it is; this place is like the ferry terminal with baby violinists coming and going all day. You see people but you don’t really see them. It’s like watching a plant grow. Then one day you realize that beauty has been walking in your house for years.”

“Oh, c’mon,” Inez said.

“Forgive me. Let me tell you a secret: I’ve been jealous of you since my father mentioned that you don’t go to school.”

“I have a tutor. It’s the only way I can get my practicing in.”

“A likely story,” Jake said and smiled like the boy in the Colgate tooth powder advertisement of the day, his large white teeth gleaming.

Inez had seen Jake at his father’s recitals. She sometimes overheard the older students talk about him. He was an only child and a willful boy who told his father that he’d have no part of the violin. But he was also very bright, a chess wiz and captain of the Lowell High debate team. He’d just graduated from high school, at sixteen, and was on his way to Cal in the fall.

Jake swayed back and forth like a boy playing tag, daring her to tag him. “I don’t care if you’re just playing hooky,” he said. “I still think you’re quite a dish.”

“Can you imagine somebody saying that?” Inez asks Sylvia, who’s never been a *dish*, nor ever will be. The reporter bends over her yellow pad, scrawling in shorthand.

At fifteen, Inez continues, she was beginning to realize that her looks were pleasing. Teenage boys and young men showed uncommon attention. She never quite knew what to make of this phenomenon but she wasn’t going to be bullied by a frisky-boy debate champ. She lifted her head and looked directly into Jake Roseman’s green eyes.

“Please don’t speak to me like that. I don’t like to be embarrassed.”

“Sorry,” Jake said, shaken by her forthrightness. “I didn’t mean to embarrass you.”

Inez was also taken aback by her bluntness. It reminded her of the time, two years earlier, when she’d spoken to Mr. Roseman in anger.

“I’m sorry, Inez,” Jake repeated, truly contrite.

Right then, Mr. Roseman opened the front door.

“Are you harassing my student, Jacob?” Her teacher popped open his pocket watch. “Is that why we’re running off the timetable? Inez, you come in here and tell me how you got that boy to apologize to you. This is unheard of. I’ve never heard it myself. I bet he was expounding his political theories on my son the anarchist.”

AFTER Inez’s lesson, Jake was waiting in the front hall. “I wanted to apologize again,” he said.

“No need.”

“You don’t hold grudges?”

“Not usually,” she said, putting her left hand behind her back and crossing her fingers.

“That bodes well for our future.”

“What future?”

“The future perfect,” Jake said, flashing his white teeth. “It’s a tense that I adore.”

Nobody had ever flirted with her so openly. Inez told herself to stand up straight. “You’re odd,” she said.

“Thank you.” Jake bowed broadly like a circus clown. “Hey, there’s something I want to ask you.” He leaned back against the wall, disturbing a framed publicity photograph of Pierre Monteux. Inez watched the image of the fabled conductor swing on its hook. Monteux, the man who’d premiered Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre du Printemps* in Paris, had just completed his third season in San Francisco. The photograph must have been new to the wall or she’d have noticed it before.

Sylvia the reporter looks up from her pad and smiles. “Sounds like you were noticing a lot of things for the first time.”

The photograph was inscribed to Inez’s teacher.

To Isaac Roseman, my shining light in San Francisco.
PIERRE MONTEUX, 1937.

Inez let out a little gasp. Perhaps it was the picture of Monteux, or the idea that she was aligned, r

matter how indirectly, with musical history. More likely, it was the handsome young man standing in front of her.

“He has a lot more trophies like that,” Jake said. “You should have him show you sometime.”

That was about the last thing Inez would do. She gave an impatient shake to her violin case. “Do you have something else to say to me?”

“Yes.” Jake stood off-balanced on one foot. She half-expected him to hop. “You know about my dad’s concert next month? The first of the Mozart cycle.”

Inez nodded. Isaac in his tireless desire to stay active as a soloist was presenting a three-concert series of Mozart sonatas at the Legion of Honor’s new theater. Jake squared off with both feet on the floor. “I wondered if you’d like to go with me.”

“With you?” Inez said, momentarily flustered. “Why?”

“Why? Because I’d like to get to know you. And I get kind of lonely, you see, going to my dad’s concerts.”

Inez tried to imagine Jake Roseman being lonely. It had never occurred to her that sixteen-year-old boys got lonesome, and this one seemed so capable of keeping himself entertained. She imagined that Jake traveled with a personal entourage of good cheer even when he was by himself.

“So how about coming with me?” Jake said. He lifted his chin and looked as if he was about to start whistling again.

“All right,” Inez said and steered herself and her violin toward the front door.

From her father’s car, she could see that Jake was standing in the picture window watching. He neither smiled nor waved, which did not strike her as peculiar. Perhaps a bit of her stoic sensibility had rubbed off on him.

A week later Jake telephoned to say that he’d be by with his family the following Friday night to pick her up, if she was still game. Inez’s sister helped to pin up her hair. She wore a dress, a silk violin case that Bibi had made for a recital Inez had given the year before. She’d refused to wear it then because it seemed too fancy. Now it looked wonderful to her.

Inez catches Sylvia’s eye. “I know this goes against the popular perception,” Inez says, “but I think that children grew up faster in the thirties than they do now.” Certainly, more was expected of them, she thinks, though maybe it was just that way for her and Bibi because they didn’t have a mother. Even at fifteen, Inez was a young woman. Well-mannered and poised. Her future as a violinist was set before she was ten. She realized that much in her little family was being sacrificed for her benefit, to pay for her tutor and violin lessons. Her father worked twelve hours a day in his frame shop. The only time he took off was to drive to lessons or recitals and occasionally to have a Sunday walk with his daughter at Aquatic Park or the wharf. Bibi became a skilled seamstress before she was out of junior high. Most evenings their small den served as a fitting room while Inez practiced. Bibi said that the women loved

the bright meanderings of the violin, that it gave them the feeling that they were having their dress fitted in Paris or Vienna.

The night Isaac Roseman's Buick pulled up, Inez and Bibi watched from the upstairs bedroom. "Enjoy yourself, Nez," her sister said. "You look beautiful."

Inez hadn't pictured a first date like this: sitting in the backseat with Jake while her teacher, dressed in his shiny tuxedo, chattered with his wife in the front. It was quiet in the backseat. She didn't mind the quiet. She never minded quiet.

"One of these days," Jake said, breaking the silence, "I'm going to get a car of my own."

Inez nodded in agreement. "I bet you will."

"Jacob," Mr. Roseman called from the front seat, "how do you propose to pay for this automobile?"

"With cash money."

"Oh, cash money."

"And if you're lucky, I'll give you a ride."

Mr. Roseman laughed. "If I'm lucky, he'll give me a ride."

"And, in case you want to know something else," Jake said, "I'm going to marry Inez."

Mrs. Roseman gasped at the absurdity of Jake's pronouncement.

"Nonsense," Mr. Roseman said. "That is nonsense, Jacob. Don't embarrass the poor girl."

Inez accepted the news of her forthcoming marriage to Jake Roseman with remarkable equanimity. She rather liked the idea, even though she hardly knew the young man. It made an odd sense. Who else was she going to marry? Clearly, the son was nothing at all like the father. Jake smiled at her in the backseat and she found herself smiling back. The deal, strange as it seemed, had been made. They hadn't even touched each other, hadn't yet held hands, but Jake blew her a kiss and she blew one back.

Inez finishes her little tale and looks up at Sylvia the reporter and then down at the ruins of pencil marks on Sylvia's notepad. Sylvia is rubbing her eyes, poor girl. What the hell kind of reporter gets tears in her eyes?

zen studies

THE first time Jake visited Christine Newsome in her Pacific Heights mansion, she'd greeted him at the front door. But in the half-dozen years since, he's always approached the home, at Christine's request, via the trade entrance, which, though a curious form of slumming, became part of the ritual with Christine. Jake liked walking up the brick alley behind the mansion and sometimes donned a brimmed tradesman's cap to enhance the effect. Passing the trash bins in the alley even inspired a bit of vandalism. One Tuesday during the 1960 presidential campaign, Jake snuck out to the rolling front lawns of the Newsome mansion, ripped two Nixon-Lodge signs from their stakes, and buried them in the trash bins. That act of conscience, not related to the lady of the house, made his afternoon with Christine all the more pleasurable.

Christine had been his client at one time, so Jake could rationalize the trade entrance on those grounds as well. She'd hired Jake to look over business papers her husband had prepared involving property in her name. Christine was afraid that her husband, Derek, a top executive at Holman & Newsome, the accounting firm his grandfather founded, was trying to screw her. This was just one of the complications that arose when two family fortunes lived side by side in the same house. Not exactly Jake's specialty. He would have referred Christine to someone more skilled in this area, if he hadn't found her so charming. "I admire Derek's ardor," she'd said of her husband, "but I'm afraid he reserves it all for his business deals."

Every second or third Tuesday—the servants' day off—Jake makes arrangements to visit Christine. There never seems to be a hitch. In the span of two hours away from the office, Jake assembles lunch, takes cabs over to Pacific Heights, engages in a satisfying conversation or two, has a tasty meal, screws his heart out with Christine, and is swept back to his office, pulsing with vigor. No other ritual in Jake's life operates with such efficiency and offers such pure pleasure. Not long after they began seeing each other, Christine entrusted Jake with a key to the trade entrance of the Jackson Avenue Tudor and even explained the intricacies of the security system.

On the appointed Tuesdays, Jake often strolls up Market Street and plucks delicacies from the food marts—poached salmon fillets and ripe, lime-scented avocado halves stuffed with chilled cocktail shrimp. Some days he'll go pure aphrodisiac, picking up a dozen oysters on the half shell or a pint of Siamese sevice, with the fruit of the sea pickled in equal parts lime juice and soy. Almost always he dips into Slavin's Tropical Health Mart for a quart of their house salad: guava, mango, and cherimoya with pomegranate seeds and slices of blood orange and fried plantain. As he gathers treats on Market Street for his lover, Jake feels like a sport of twenty, whistling Thelonious Monk riffs among the throngs of bargain shoppers and the gaggles of greaser punks and the anxious tourists who have lost their way. He sidesteps winos outside the twentyfive-cent theaters and hustles past flanks of dreamboat sailors, those poor, uniformed fools who always seem to be on the prowl, in twos or threes, for something better than they'll ever find.

- [**Twelve Kings in Sharakhai \(The Song of the Shattered Sands, Book 1\) pdf**](#)
- [God Save the Mark: A Novel of Crime and Confusion online](#)
- [**Shakespeare A to Z: The Essential Reference to His Plays, His Poems, His Life and Times, and More pdf, azw \(kindle\), epub, doc, mobi**](#)
- [Todo sobre las mujeres for free](#)

- <http://tuscalaural.com/library/Twelve-Kings-in-Sharakhai--The-Song-of-the-Shattered-Sands--Book-1-.pdf>
- [http://metromekanik.com/ebooks/Septic-Tank-Options---Alternatives--Your-guide-to-conventional--natural-and-eco-friendly-methods---technologies.](http://metromekanik.com/ebooks/Septic-Tank-Options---Alternatives--Your-guide-to-conventional--natural-and-eco-friendly-methods---technologies)
- <http://creativebeard.ru/freebooks/One-Taste--Daily-Reflections-on-Integral-Spirituality.pdf>
- <http://aneventshop.com/ebooks/Mornings-with-Barney--The-True-Story-of-an-Extraordinary-Beagle.pdf>