

THE REENTRY

Finally, after what seemed like an hour, the battle was over. Just as sudden as it started... it stopped. A sigh of relief came over the conductor as he saw the sun rise above the clouds. He sensed a smooth ending to this mysterious, yet magnificent piece of music.

The pianist relaxed and moved back to a more workable tempo. She slowly meandered her way back into the original melodic line that began this journey.

Herr Foltz, sensing this, moved to gather in the various parts of his orchestra. Reining them in from the many places they had drifted to throughout the concerto, took several verbal commands for him to accomplish his mission. He, like the rest of the musicians, stood in a state of shock in the aftermath, of what they had just experienced.

The twins seemed drained as their sister settled down from the journey. They followed with a series of short melodic vignettes atop the familiar thematic line that she played. It was a beautiful melodic line, but one that had been emotionally deadly, in its execution.

She slowed the tempo to quasi-rubato, toying with single notes as though composing the last notes as she went along. Her breathing pattern matched the largo-like speed. She seemed to drift in and out, of a hypnotic state.

The counter melody played by the cellist, segued into the single line in harmony with the twins. The young women executed the haunting sussurando ending, in absolute emotional surrender, depending on sheer instinct. They held the note for what seemed a lifetime. The maestro swept the orchestra for the last

time. The silence was moving and frighteningly effective, throughout the concert hall.

The final orchestral note, a triple C below the staff, by the contra basses, held the bottom note for an eternity. The high melodic note drew the last ounce of life out of the extended chord. The long horns cried overhead, and the timpanist rolled like thunder at triple pianissimo.

The string players held their position breathlessly. This feeling engulfed the Hall. The sheer magnitude of this experience shook the hall to its rafters. The artists re-entered the universe together. Then there was absolute silence.

They stood perfectly still with their heads bowed. So too, did the pianist, and the cellist. There, four women, drained of the last ounce of their emotional being, breathed a sigh of musical relief. Tiny droplets fell from beneath their hair as they bowed. They were tears of elation and the quizzical frustrations of an involuntary sexual release.

After an inordinate number of seconds in which no one knew quite what to do, the audience suddenly exploded into applause. This response shook the walls even more in the Mecca. Once started, the volume grew tenfold. The response corresponded with the magnitude and brilliance of the performance.

The maestro turned to acknowledge the twins, their sister and the cellist. Their sister, who beckoned the cellist to come forward, joined the twins at center front. This was indeed a break from tradition. The cellist looked at the conductor for approval. He bowed his head in granting her permission. Then, the four women accepted the thunderous applause raining down from the balcony, along

with the mounds of flowers. The outpouring of applause lasted a long time, the audience realizing that they had just witnessed classical history.

The young women grasped hands in support of each other, then, together they bowed. They remained in this position for several minutes as the stage quickly filled up with new flowers. The shouts of Bravo! Bravo! Clapping, whistles and stamping feet, filled the Hall.

Slowly, the lights rose as the musicians bowed once more to the orchestra and Herr Foltz. The twins took turns as if on cue, and embraced the cellist in tears. There was a special way that they embraced and looked into each other's eyes. They shared a newfound secret that no one else understood and yet they were cultures apart. The language of love was universal on this special night. The invisible seduction was another matter. It was to have deadly consequences.

The sisters and the cellist turned and walked from the stage amidst more applause and catcalls. One twin said to her sisters; "I've just lost my innocence." Her sisters nodded sadly in agreement. The cellist understood their pain and their pleasure.... in another language... in her own way. They disappeared amongst tears of fright, and the loud responses to their playing.

The lights lowered to a glow, then to dim, and finally, they faded to dark. The girls left behind a mountain of bouquets and a dozen unanswered questions along with unforeseen mystery.

AFTER CONCERT PARTY

Herr Foltz held court as only he could at the after-concert party. He convincingly explained the absence of the featured artists as fatigue and a mix up in communication. The cellist walked around in the party, champagne glass in hand, in an emotional stupor. She was dazed and unsure as to how she should feel, and confused about what she had experienced.

The Maestro had a good explanation for the mysterious final encore concerto piece that drew as many questions as it did accolades from the critics and patrons alike.

“It was a piece that I discovered several years ago and kept it in secret until exactly the right time to unveil it with the right artists.,” he said, proudly.

“Tonight was the perfect time to present it at such a momentous affair. This celebration called for new music. With the reuniting of all the people of the great city of Berlin, the collection of the finest classical musicians that Germany... all of Europe, it was the perfect night to make it right. What better way than with new and exciting music.” With that announcement, the maestro gestured for the elite patrons of classical music to raise their glasses in honor of the evening... and his return to classical greatness.

The clicking of crystal long stemmed glasses and the many toasts of champagne would go on into the night. Herr Foltz basked in the limelight amongst Germany’s social elite once again.

The late night news carried an enthusiastic accounting of the night’s festivities at the Hall. The morning news would only embellish the evenings’ concert with more of the same, or so they thought.

HARI KARI

The girls did not appear in the lobby for the scheduled flight on their itinerary. A concerned knock on the door of their suite brought silence, and after several attempts to arouse them, the manager opened the door. His eyes bulged and he grasped for air, as he looked inside. The three girls lay hand in hand. Each of them had a single wound to the stomach and a small trickle of blood. They had formed a final circle and committed Hari Kari, still wearing the gowns from the performance of last evening.

The piano sat partially destroyed. On top of it lay a shredded copy of the untitled concerto, the final music they played a scant few hours before. Their priceless violins lay smashed into bits next to the music.

Meanwhile, the next evening an ocean away:

THE CRASH

The fast-falling snowstorm rolled in, attacking the mountain as aggressively as did the Chinese Bandits, at the height of the Korean Conflict.

It had begun to snow earlier this Saturday afternoon and had gone on into the evening. It was now nearly 9:30 P.M. The forecast predicted no let up for the next forty-eight hours. Perfect for the many skiers that crowded the resorts up the mountainside.

Each passing minute brought an increase of flurries, making the narrow road leading to the exclusive enclave of ski cabins and condominiums, more difficult to navigate.

A sleek silver two-seater coupe' sped down the mountainside as if on the autobahn, being road tested by a professional driver.

Only her eyes and hands were visible. Each new snowflake helped to frame the face of the woman who sat behind the wheel of this expensive sports car. The custom made sound system of the coupe' blasted loudly. The classical music was out of character with this maniacal descend. The music, speed and lack of fear, accompanied her, as she geared the coupe' around yet another steep curve at death defying speeds. She showed complete disregard for the snow, the mountain, or her own safety.

A trance-like gaze covered her eyes as she gripped the mahogany steering wheel tighter. The coupe' obeyed her every command hugging the increasingly narrowing road downhill.

Her hands revealed what her face hid underneath the leather hood. The brown skin showing through her leather driving gloves began to glisten with each turn of the wheel. There were no other signs of emotion.

The increasing snowflakes pounding the windshield, made her accelerate. The greater volume of snow forced the single wiper to work overtime, exceeding its capabilities. She took each curve even closer. As the music moved, so too, did the driver.

She began to see colors as the sound system bellowed out the mysterious concerto. The music seemed to propel her to move in an even more dangerous groove.

A single bead of sweat appeared on her temple and slowly made its way down her face, tracing her finely sculpted cheek on the left side. She allowed it the luxury of finding its own way down to her neck before disappearing into her beige turtleneck sweater. She wore a single gold necklace with a figurine inside her expensive ski jacket. The coupe's interior smelt of an exotic perfume.

She left in a hurry, just as the snow began to fall, taking the back road. She knew it was the road that had more curves and was the one less travelled. It was also the more dangerous of the two roads that led to the million dollar condominiums at the top of Mount Washington. She had to get down the

mountaininside and on to her mission. Nobody knew she was going. She did not know where she was headed either, or why. Nevertheless, she had to go.

She was aware of "Killer's Korner." There were warning signs all around the resort, to steer clear of it.

The hair pin curve had claimed the lives of more than a dozen people over the years. Most people avoided it and took the long, safer, and more scenic road. She was in a hurry, and the night was passing as fast as the falling snow.

Gearing down the five speed sports car, her right hand and both feet danced in sync as she moved from brake to clutch, and then to the gas pedal. Fast approaching "Killer's Korner," she was well aware of the dangers ahead, yet she drove without fear "Drive with care" signs were posted every few feet, and arrows pointed to the sharp hairpin curve.

She geared down the coupe' to low gear and the motor groaned as it adjusted to the maneuver of the slower gear against the speed at which it was commanded. The coupe fishtailed, and held fast to the inner edge of the curve. She expelled a sigh of relief as she turned, she had successfully guided the coupe around the dangerous curve without going over the side.

Then, just as she shifted to accommodate the straightaway, she saw it, but it was already too late.

The huge eight-point buck stood majestically in the center of the narrow road, unmoving. He looked into the lights quizzically, as though someone had invaded his space. The slight turn of the wheel was all she needed to realize that the coupe' could only take so much. She vainly tried to miss the buck, but failed

in her best efforts. The turn of the wheel and the clip of his shoulder started her on her death dance. The buck lowered his head as she swerved to miss him. The night's silence shattered as the two forces met. The coupe' shuddered and spun out beyond her control. The buck sat down in his tracks.

Slowly, the car began its descent, sliding inch by excruciating inch, down towards the outer edge of this steep mountain. She fought hard to control the sports car, with both hands wrestling the steering wheel frantically to her left. She fought a losing battle. The rear end fishtailed even more seductively along the road sloshing the soft snow as it sashayed out of control. It formed a snake like pattern as it moved dangerously closer to the outer edge of the mountain. The music intensified and seemed to rise in volume with this deadly drama, unfolding on the side of this mountain.

It was here that her coolness betrayed her. The car followed the dictates of the snow covered road. In slow motion, it broke through the railing there to prevent such an occurrence. The music from the surround sound Bose car theater became one with the coupe'. The sleek silver car went airborne. The music amplified the silent mountainside, destroying its tranquillity.

The car twisted and spun counter-clockwise like a drunken ballroom dancer, lost in the rhythm of a rock and roll song, before plunging down into blackness. The car came to rest upside down, just over and down the steep mountain decline landing precariously, atop trees, saving it the plunge downward to sure death.

The uninvited guest, crashing in the treetops, disturbed the snowbirds who squawked angrily as they flew away to safety. The spinning wheels of the coupe' matched the majestic finale of the concert piece. The last note eerily sustained itself, as the tires turned for the last time. The applause of the concerto synchronized with the beat of the fast falling flakes, then faded away into silence.

Quickly more snowflakes rushed in to cover the tracks of this mishap. Within a few hours, surely before the break of dawn, the falling snow will have done its job. The snow would erase the deadly trail over the mountainside, and provide a snow top hiding place for the coupe'.

It would be highly unlikely that anyone else would attempt the trip down the mountain. The blizzard conditions would force the closing of the roads leading up to the slopes. By mornings' light, the overturned coupe' would be a slight hump that would go unnoticed until the snow melted.

DISCOVERING THE CRASH

It was just at sunrise when the two young skiers Stanley and Aulikki, raced down the narrow road leading from the resort as their boss had instructed them to do. This was the part of the job they loved, to be able to ski free for a few hours each morning. They were anxious to test the new snow as well as their skills down the mountainside...