

Phase Four

Moving In for the Kill

First you worked on their mind—the mental seduction. Then you confused and stirred them up—the emotional seduction. Now the time has come for hand-to-hand combat—the physical seduction. At this point, your victims are weak and ripe with desire: by showing a little coldness or uninterest, you will spark panic—they will come after you with impatience and erotic energy (21: Give them space to fall—the pursuer is pursued). To bring them to a boil, you need to put their minds to sleep and heat up their senses. It is best to lure them into lust by sending certain loaded signals that will get under their skin and spread sexual desire like a poison (22: Use physical lures). The moment to strike and move in for the kill is when your victim is brimming with desire, but not consciously expecting the climax to come (23: Master the art of the bold move).

Once the seduction is over, there is the danger that disenchantment will set in and ruin all your hard work (24: Beware the aftereffects). If you are after a relationship, then you must constantly re-seduce the victim, creating tension and releasing it. If your victim is to be sacrificed, then it must be done swiftly and cleanly, leaving you free (physically and psychologically) to move on to the next victim. Then the game begins all over.

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Give Them Space to Fall— The Pursuer Is Pursued

If your targets become too used to you as the aggressor, they will give less of their own energy, and the tension will slacken. You need to wake them up, turn the tables. Once they are under your spell, take a step back and they will start to come after you. Begin with a touch of aloofness, an unexpected nonappearance, a hint that you are growing bored. Stir the pot by seeming interested in someone else. Make none of this explicit; let them only sense it and their imagination will do the rest, creating the doubt you desire. Soon they will want to possess you physically, and restraint will go out the window. The goal is to have them fall into your arms of their own will. Create the illusion that the seducer is being seduced.

Seductive Gravity

In the early 1840s, the center of attention in the French art world was a young woman named Apollonie Sabatier. She was so much the natural beauty that sculptors and painters vied to immortalize her in their works, and she was also charming, easy to talk to, and seductively self-sufficient—men were drawn to her. Her Paris apartment became a gathering spot for writers and artists, and soon Madame Sabatier—as she came to be known, although she was not married—was hosting one of the most important literary salons in France. Writers such as Gustave Flaubert, the elder Alexandre Dumas, and Théophile Gautier were among her regular guests.

Near the end of 1852, when she was thirty, Madame Sabatier received an anonymous letter. The writer confessed that he loved her deeply. Worried that she would find his sentiments ridiculous, he would not reveal his name; yet he had to let her know that he adored her. Sabatier was used to such attentions—one man after another had fallen in love with her—but this letter was different: in this man she seemed to have inspired a quasi-religious ardor. The letter, written in a disguised handwriting, contained a poem dedicated to her; titled "To One Who Is Too Gay," it began by praising her beauty, yet ended with the lines

And so, one night, I'd like to sneak,
When darkness tolls the hour of pleasure,
A craven thief, toward the treasure
Which is your person, plump and sleek. . . .
And, most vertiginous delight!
Into those lips, so freshly striking
And daily lovelier to my liking—
Infuse the venom of my spite.

Mixed in with her admirer's adoration, clearly, was a strange kind of lust, with a touch of cruelty to it. The poem both intrigued and disturbed her—and she had no idea who had written it.

A few weeks later another letter arrived. As before, the writer enveloped Sabatier in cultlike worship, mixing the physical and the spiritual. And as before, there was a poem, "All in One," in which he wrote,

Omissions, denials, deflections, deceptions, diversions, and humility—all aimed at provoking this second state, the secret of true seduction. Vulgar seduction might proceed by persistence, but true seduction proceeds by absence. . . . It is like fencing: one needs a field for the feint. Throughout this period, the seducer [Johannes], far from seeking to close in on her, seeks to maintain his distance by various ploys: he does not speak directly to her but only to her aunt, and then about trivial or stupid subjects; he neutralizes everything by irony and feigned pedanticism; he fails to respond to any feminine or erotic movement, and even finds her a sitcom suitor to disenchant and deceive her, to the point where she herself takes the initiative and breaks off her engagement, thus completing the seduction and creating the ideal situation for her total abandon.

—JEAN BAUDRILLARD,
SEDUCTION, TRANSLATED BY
BRIAN SINGER

The rumor spread everywhere. It was even told to the queen [Guinevere], who was seated at dinner. She nearly killed herself when she heard the perfidious rumor of Lancelot's death. She thought it was true and was so greatly perturbed that she was scarcely able to speak. . . . She arose at once from the table, and was able to give vent to her grief without being noticed or overheard. She was so crazed with the thought of killing herself that she repeatedly grabbed at her throat. Yet first she confessed in conscience, repented and asked God's pardon; she accused herself of having sinned against the one she knew had always been hers, and who would still be, were he alive. . . . She counted all of the unkindnesses and recalled each individual unkindness; she noted every one, and repeated often: "Oh misery! What was I thinking, when my lover came before me and I did not deign to welcome him, nor even care to listen! Was I not a fool to refuse to speak or even look at him? A fool? No, so help me God, I was cruel and deceitful! . . . I believe that it was I alone who struck him that mortal blow. When he came happily before me expecting me to receive him joyfully and I shunned him and would never even look at him, was this not a mortal blow? At that moment, when I refused to speak, I believe I severed both his heart and his life. Those two blows killed him, I think, and not any hired killers. • "Ah God! Will I be forgiven this murder, this sin? Never! All the rivers

No single beauty is the best,
 Since she is all one flower divine ____
 O mystic metamorphosis!
 My senses into one sense flow—
 Her voice makes perfume when she speaks,
 Her breath is music faint and low!

Clearly the author was haunted by Sabatier's presence, and thought of her constantly—but now she began to be haunted by *him*, thinking of him night and day, and wondering who he was. His subsequent letters only deepened the spell. It was flattering to hear that he was enchanted by more than her beauty, yet also flattering to know that he was not immune to her physical charms.

One day an idea occurred to Madame Sabatier as to who the writer might be: a young poet who had frequented her salon for several years, Charles Baudelaire. He seemed shy, in fact had hardly spoken to her, but she had read some of his poetry, and although the poems in the letters were more polished, the style was similar. At her apartment Baudelaire would always sit politely in a corner, but now that she thought of it, he would smile at her strangely, nervously. It was the look of a young man in love. Now when he visited she watched him carefully, and the more she watched, the surer she was that he was the writer, but she never confirmed her intuition, because she did not want to confront him—he might be shy, but he was a man, and at some point he would have to come to her. And she felt certain that he would. Then, suddenly the letters stopped coming—and Madame Sabatier could not understand why, since the last one had been even more adoring than all of the others before.

Several years went by, in which she often thought of her anonymous admirer's letters, but they were never renewed. In 1857, however, Baudelaire published a book of poetry, *The Flowers of Evil*, and Madame Sabatier recognized several of the verses—they were the ones he had written for her. Now they were out in the open for everyone to see. A little while later the poet sent her a gift: a specially bound copy of the book, and a letter, this time signed with his name. Yes, he wrote, he was the anonymous writer—would she forgive him for being so mysterious in the past? Furthermore, his feelings for her were as strong as ever: "You didn't think for a moment that I could have forgotten you? . . . You to me are more than a cherished image conjured up in dream, you're my superstition . . . my constant companion, my secret! Farewell, dear Madame. I kiss your hands with profound devotion."

This letter had a stronger effect on Madame Sabatier than the others had. Perhaps it was his childlike sincerity, and the fact that he had finally written to her directly; perhaps it was that he loved her but asked nothing of her, unlike all the other men she knew who at some point had always turned out to want something. Whatever it was, she had an uncontrollable desire to see him. The next day she invited him to her apartment, alone.

Baudelaire appeared at the appointed hour. He sat nervously in his seat, gazing at her with his large eyes, saying little, and what he did say was formal and polite. He seemed aloof. After he left a kind of panic seized Madame Sabatier, and the next day she wrote him a first letter of her own: "Today I'm more calm, and I can feel more clearly the impression of our Tuesday evening together. I can tell you, without the danger of your thinking I'm exaggerating, that I'm the happiest woman on the face of the earth, that I've never felt more truly that I love you, and that I've never seen you look more beautiful, more adorable, my divine friend!"

Madame Sabatier had never before written such a letter; she had always been the one who was pursued. Now she had lost her usual self-possession. And it only got worse: Baudelaire did not answer right away. When she saw him next, he was colder than before. She had the feeling there was someone else, that his old mistress, Jeanne Duval, had suddenly reappeared in his life and was pulling him away from her. One night she turned aggressive, embracing him, trying to kiss him, but he did not respond, and quickly found an excuse to leave. Why was he suddenly inaccessible? She began to flood him with letters, begging him to come to her. Unable to sleep, she would wait all night for him to show up. She had never experienced such desperation. Somehow she had to seduce him, possess him, have him all to herself. She tried everything—letters, coquetry, all kinds of promises—until he finally wrote that he was no longer in love with her and that was that.

Interpretation. Baudelaire was an intellectual seducer. He wanted to overwhelm Madame Sabatier with words, dominate her thoughts, make her fall in love with him. Physically, he knew, he could not compete with her many other admirers—he was shy, awkward, not particularly handsome. So he resorted to his one strength, poetry. Haunting her with anonymous letters gave him a perverse thrill. He had to know she would realize, eventually, that he was her correspondent—no one else wrote like him—but he wanted her to figure this out on her own. He stopped writing to her because he had become interested in someone else, but he knew she would be thinking of him, wondering, perhaps waiting for him. And when he published his book, he decided to write to her again, this time directly, stirring up the old venom he had injected in her. When they were alone, he could see she was waiting for him to do something, to take hold of her, but he was not that kind of seducer. Besides, it gave him pleasure to hold himself back, to sense his power over a woman whom so many desired. By the time she turned physical and aggressive, the seduction was over for him. He had made her fall in love; that was enough.

The devastating effect of Baudelaire's push-and-pull on Madame Sabatier teaches us a great lesson in seduction. First, it is always best to keep at some distance from your targets. You do not have to go as far as remaining anonymous, but you do not want to be seen too often, or to be seen as

and the seas will dry up first! Oh, misery! How it would have brought me comfort and healing if I had held him in my arms once before he died. How? Yes, quite naked next to him, in order to enjoy him fully. . . . " When they came within six or seven leagues of the castle where King Bademagu was staying, news that was pleasing came to him about Lancelot—news that he was glad to hear; Lancelot was alive and was returning, hale and hearty. He behaved most properly in going to inform the queen. "Good sir," she told him, "I believe it, since you have told me. But were he dead, I assure you that I could never again be happy." . . . Now Lancelot had his every wish: the queen willingly sought his company and affection as he held her in his arms and she held him in hers. Her love-play seemed so gentle and good to him, both her kisses and caresses, that in truth the two of them felt a joy and wonder of which has never been heard or known. But I shall let it remain a secret for ever, since it should not be written of: the most delightful and choicest pleasure is that which is hinted at, but never told.

—CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES,
ARTHURIAN ROMANCES,
TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM W.
KIBLER

He was sometimes so intellectual that I felt myself annihilated as a woman; at other times he was so wild and passionate, so desiring, that I almost trembled

before him. At times I was like a stranger to him; at times he surrendered completely. Then when I threw my arms around him, everything changed, and I embraced a cloud.

—CORDELIA DESCRIBING

JOHANNES, IN SØREN KIERKEGAARD, *THE SEDUCER'S DIARY*, TRANSLATED BY HOWARD V. HONG AND EDNA V. HONG

It is true that we could not love if there were not some memory in us—to the greatest extent an unconscious memory—that we were once loved. But neither could we love if this feeling of being loved had not at some time suffered doubt; if we had always been sure of it. In other words, love would not be possible without having been loved and then having missed the certainty of being loved. . . . The need to be loved is not elementary. This need is certainly acquired by experience in later childhood. It would be better to say: by many experiences or by a repetition of similar ones. I believe that these experiences are of a negative kind. The child becomes aware that he is not loved or that his mother's love is not unconditional. The baby learns that his mother can be dissatisfied with him, that she can withdraw her affection if he does not behave as she wishes, that she can be angry or cross. I believe that this experience arouses feelings of anxiety in the infant. The possibility of losing his mother's love certainly strikes the child with a force which can no more be

intrusive. If you are always in their face, always the aggressor, they will become used to being passive, and the tension in your seduction will flag. Use letters to make them think about you all the time, to feed their imagination. Cultivate mystery—stop them from figuring you out. Baudelaire's letters were delightfully ambiguous, mixing the physical and the spiritual, teasing Sabatier with their multiplicity of possible interpretations.

Then, at the point when they are ripe with desire and interest, when perhaps they are expecting you to make a move—as Madame Sabatier expected that day in her apartment—take a step back. You are unexpectedly distant, friendly but no more than that—certainly not sexual. Let this sink in for a day or two. Your withdrawal will trigger anxiety; the only way to relieve this anxiety is to pursue and possess you. Step back now and you make your targets fall into your arms like ripe fruit, blind to the force of gravity that is drawing them to you. The more they participate, the more their willpower is engaged, the deeper the erotic effect. You have challenged them to use their own seductive powers on you, and when they respond, the tables will turn and they will pursue you with desperate energy.

I retreat and thereby teach her to be victorious as she pursues me. I continually fall back, and in this backward movement I teach her to know through me all the powers of erotic love, its turbulent thoughts, its passion, what longing is, and hope, and impatient expectancy.

—SØREN KIERKEGAARD

Keys to Seduction

Since humans are naturally obstinate and willful creatures, and prone to suspicions of people's motives, it is only natural, in the course of any seduction, that in some ways your target will resist you. Seductions, then, are rarely easy or without setbacks. But once your victims overcome some of their doubts, and begin to fall under your spell, they will reach a point where they start to let go. They may sense that you are leading them along, but they are enjoying it. No one likes things to be complicated and difficult, and your target will expect the conclusion to come quickly. That is the point, however, where you must train yourself to hold back. Deliver the pleasurable climax they are so greedily awaiting, succumb to the natural tendency to bring the seduction to a rapid end, and you will have missed an opportunity to ratchet up the tension, to make the affair more heated. After all, you don't want a passive little victim to toy with; you want the seduced to engage their will in all its force, to become active participants in the seduction. You want them to pursue you, hopelessly ensnaring themselves in your web in the process. The only way to accomplish this is to take a step back and make them anxious.

You have strategically retreated before (see chapter 12), but this is dif-

ferent. The target is falling for you now, and your retreat will lead to panicky thoughts: you are losing interest, it is somehow my fault, perhaps it is something I have done. Rather than think you are rejecting them on your own, your targets will want to make this interpretation, since if the cause of the problem is something they have done, they have the power to win you back by changing their behavior. If you are simply rejecting them, on the other hand, they have no control. People always want to preserve hope. Now they will come to you, turn aggressive, thinking that will do the trick. They will raise the erotic temperature. Understand: a person's willpower is directly linked to their libido, their erotic desire. When your victims are passively waiting for you, their erotic level is low. When they turn pursuer, getting involved in the process, brimming with tension and anxiety, the temperature is raised. So raise it as high as you can.

When you withdraw, make it subtle; you are instilling unease. Your coldness or distance should dawn on your targets when they are alone, in the form of a poisonous doubt creeping into their mind. Their paranoia will become self-generating. Your subtle step back will make them want to possess you, so they will willingly advance into your arms without being pushed. This is different from the strategy in chapter 20, in which you are inflicting deep wounds, creating a pattern of pain and pleasure. There the goal is to make your victims weak and dependent, here it is to make them active and aggressive. Which strategy you prefer to use (the two cannot be combined) depends on what you want and the proclivities of your victim.

In Søren Kierkegaard's *The Seducer's Diary*, Johannes aims to seduce the young and beautiful Cordelia. He begins by being rather intellectual with her, and slowly intriguing her. Then he sends her letters that are romantic and seductive. Now her fascination blossoms into love. Although in person he remains a little distant, she senses in him great depths and is certain that he loves her. Then one day, while they're talking, Cordelia has a strange sensation: something about him is different. He seems more interested in ideas than in her. Over the next few days, this doubt gets stronger—the letters are a little less romantic, something is missing. Feeling anxious, she slowly turns aggressive, becomes the pursuer instead of the pursued. The seduction is now much more exciting, at least for Johannes.

Johannes's step back is subtle; he merely gives Cordelia the impression that his interest is a little less romantic than the day before. He returns to being the intellectual. This stirs the worrisome thought that her natural charms and beauty no longer have as much effect on him. She must try harder, provoke him sexually, prove to herself that she has some power over him. She is now brimming with erotic desire, brought to that point by Johannes's subtle withdrawal of affection.

Each gender has its own seductive lures, which come naturally to them. When you seem interested in someone but do not respond sexually, it is disturbing, and presents a challenge: they will find a way to seduce you. To produce this effect, first reveal an interest in your targets, through letters or subtle insinuation. But when you are in their presence, assume a kind of

coped with than an earthquake. . . . The child who experiences his mother's dissatisfaction and apparent withdrawal of affection reacts to this menace at first with fear. He tries to regain what seems lost by expressing hostility and aggressiveness. . . . The change of its character comes about only after failure; when the child realizes that the effort is a failure. And now something very strange takes place, something which is foreign to our conscious thinking but which is very near to the infantile way. Instead of grasping the object directly and taking possession of it in an aggressive way, the child identifies with the object as it was before. The child does the same that the mother did to him in that happy time which has passed. The process is very illuminating because it shapes the pattern of love in general. The little boy thus demonstrates in his own behavior what he wants his mother to do to him, how she should behave to him. He announces this wish by displaying his tenderness and affection toward his mother who gave these before to him. It is an attempt to overcome the despair and sense of loss in taking over the role of the mother. The boy tries to demonstrate what he wishes by doing it himself: look, I would like you to act thus toward me, to be thus tender and loving to me. Of course this attitude is not the result of consideration or reasoned planning but an emotional process by identification, a natural exchange of roles with the unconscious aim

of seducing the mother into fulfilling his wish. He demonstrates by his own actions how he wants to be loved. It is a primitive presentation through reversal, an example of how to do the thing which he wishes done by her. In this presentation lives the memory of the attentions, tenderesses, and endearments once received from the mother or loving persons.

—THEODOR REIK,
OF LOVE AND LUST

sexless neutrality. Be friendly, even warm, but no more. You are pushing them into arming themselves with the seductive charms that are natural to their sex—exactly what you want.

In the latter stages of the seduction, let your targets feel that you are becoming interested in another person—this is another form of taking a step back. When Napoleon Bonaparte first met the young widow Josephine de Beauharnais in 1795, he was excited by her exotic beauty and the looks she gave him. He began to attend her weekly soirees and, to his delight, she would ignore the other men and remain at his side, listening to him so attentively. He found himself falling in love with Josephine, and had every reason to believe she felt the same.

Then, at one soiree, she was friendly and attentive, as usual—except that she was equally friendly to another man there, a former aristocrat, like Josephine, the kind of man that Napoleon could never compete with when it came to manners and wit. Doubts and jealousies began to stir within. As a military man, he knew the value of going on the offensive, and after a few weeks of a swift and aggressive campaign he had her all to himself, eventually marrying her. Of course Josephine, a clever seductress, had set it all up. She did not say she was interested in another man, but his mere presence at her house, a look here and there, subtle gestures, made it seem that way. There is no more powerful way to hint that you are losing your desire. Make your interest in another too obvious, though, and it could backfire. This is not the situation in which you want to seem cruel; doubt and anxiety are the effects you are after. Make your possible interest in another barely perceptible to the naked eye.

Once someone has fallen for you, any physical absence will create unease. You are literally creating space. The Russian seductress Lou Andreas-Salomé had an intense presence; when a man was with her, he felt her eyes boring into him, and often became entranced with her coquettish ways and spirit. But then, almost invariably, something would come up—she would have to leave town for a while, or would be too busy to see him. It was during her absences that men fell hopelessly in love with her, and vowed to be more aggressive next time they were with her. Your absences at this latter point of the seduction should seem at least somewhat justified. You are insinuating not a blatant brush-off but a slight doubt: perhaps you could have found some reason to stay, perhaps you are losing interest, perhaps there is someone else. In your absence, their appreciation of you will grow. They will forget your faults, forgive your sins. The moment you return, they will chase after you as you desire. It will be as if you had come back from the dead.

According to the psychologist Theodor Reik, we learn to love only through rejection. As infants, we are showered with love by our mother—we know nothing else. But when we get a little older, we begin to sense that her love is not unconditional. If we do not behave, if we do not please her, she can withdraw it. The idea that she will withdraw her affection fills us with anxiety, and, at first, with anger—we will show her, we will throw

a tantrum. But that never works, and we slowly realize that the only way to keep her from rejecting us again is to imitate her—to be as loving, kind, and affectionate as she is. This will bond her to us in the deepest way. The pattern is ingrained in us for the rest of our lives: by experiencing a rejection or a coldness, we learn to court and pursue, to love.

Re-create this primal pattern in your seduction. First, shower your targets with affection. They will not be sure where this is coming from, but it is a delightful feeling, and they will never want to lose it. When it does go away, in your strategic step back, they will have moments of anxiety and anger, perhaps throwing a tantrum, and then the same childlike reaction: the only way to win you back, to have you for sure, will be to reverse the pattern, to imitate you, to be the affectionate, giving one. It is the terror of rejection that turns the tables.

This pattern will often repeat itself naturally in an affair or relationship. One person goes cold, the other pursues, then goes cold in turn, making the first person the pursuer, and on and on. As a seducer, do not leave this to chance. Make it happen. You are teaching the other person to become a seducer, just as the mother in her own way taught the child to return her love by turning her back. For your own sake learn to relish this reversal of roles. Do not merely play at being the pursued, but enjoy it, give in to it. The pleasure of being pursued by your victim can often surpass the thrill of the hunt.

Symbol: The

Pomegranate. Carefully cultivated and tended, the pomegranate begins to ripen. Do not gather it too early or force it off the stem—it will be hard and bitter. Let the fruit grow heavy and full of juice, then stand back—it will fall on its own. That is when its pulp is most delicious.

Reversal

There are moments when creating space and absence will blow up in your face. An absence at a critical moment in the seduction can make the target lose interest in you. It also leaves too much to chance—while you are away, they could find another person, who will distract their thoughts from you. Cleopatra easily seduced Mark Antony, but after their first encounters, he returned to Rome. Cleopatra was mysterious and alluring, but if she let too much time pass, he would forget her charms. So she let go of her usual coquetry and came after him when he was on one of his military campaigns. She knew that once he saw her, he would fall under her spell again and pursue her.

Use absence only when you are sure of the target's affection, and never let it go on too long. It is most effective later in the seduction. Also, never create too much space—don't write too rarely, don't act too cold, don't show too much interest in someone else. That is the strategy of mixing pleasure with pain, detailed in chapter 20, and will create a dependent victim, or will even make him or her give up completely. Some people, too, are inveterately passive: they are waiting for you to make the bold move, and if you don't, they will think you are weak. The pleasure to be had from such a victim is less than the pleasure you will get from someone more active. But if you are involved with such a type, do what you need to if you are to have your way, then end the affair and move on.

22

Use Physical Lures

*Targets with active minds
are dangerous: if they see through your
manipulations, they may suddenly develop
doubts. Put their minds gently to rest, and waken
their dormant senses, by combining a nondefen-
sive attitude with a charged sexual presence.
While your cool, nonchalant air is calming
their minds and lowering their inhibitions,
your glances, voice, and bearing—oozing sex
and desire—are getting under their skin, agi-
tating their senses and raising their temperature.
Never force the physical; instead infect your targets
with heat, lure them into lust. Lead them into the
moment—an intensified present in which mo-
rality, judgment, and concern for the fu-
ture all melt away and the body
succumbs to pleasure.*

Raising the Temperature

In 1889, the top New York theatrical manager Ernest Jurgens visited France on one of his many scouting trips. Jurgens was known for his honesty, a rare commodity in the shady entertainment world, and for his ability to find unusual acts. He had to spend the night in Marseilles, and while wandering along the quay of the old harbor, he heard excited catcalls issuing from a working-class cabaret, and decided to go in. A twenty-one-year-old Spanish dancer named Caroline Otero was performing, and the minute Jurgens laid eyes on her he was a changed man. Her appearance was startling—five foot ten, fiery dark eyes, black waist-length hair, her body corseted into a perfect hourglass figure. But it was the way she danced that made his heart pound—her whole body alive, writhing like an animal in heat, as she performed a fandango. Her dancing was hardly professional, but she enjoyed herself so much and was so unrestrained that none of that mattered. Jurgens also could not help but notice the men in the cabaret watching her, their mouths agape.

After the show, Jurgens went backstage to introduce himself. Otero's eyes came alive as he spoke of his job and of New York. He felt a heat, a twitching, in his body as she looked him up and down. Her voice was deep and raspy, the tongue constantly in play as she rolled her Rs. Closing the door, Otero ignored the knocks and pleas of the admirers dying to speak to her. She said that her way of dancing was natural—her mother was a gypsy. Soon she asked Jurgens to be her escort that evening, and as he helped her with her coat, she leaned back toward him slightly, as if she had lost her balance. As they walked around the city, her arm in his, she would occasionally whisper in his ear. Jurgens felt his usual reserve melt away. He held her tighter. He was a family man, had never considered cheating on his wife, but without thinking, he brought Otero back to his hotel room. She began to take off some of her clothes—coat, gloves, hat—a perfectly normal thing to do, but the way she did it made him lose all restraint. The normally timid Jurgens went on the attack.

The next morning Jurgens signed Otero to a lucrative contract—a great risk, considering that she was an amateur at best. He brought her to Paris and assigned a top theatrical coach to her. Hurrying back to New York, he fed the newspapers with reports of this mysterious Spanish beauty poised to conquer the city. Soon rival papers were claiming she was an Andalusian countess, an escaped harem girl, the widow of a sheik, on and on. He

The year was 1907 and La Belle [Otero], by then, had been an international figure for over a dozen years. The story was told by M. Maurice Chevalier.

• "I was a young star about to make my first appearance at the Folies. Otero had been the headliner there for several weeks and although I knew who she was I had never seen her before on stage or off • "I was scurrying along, head bent, thinking of something or other, when I looked up.

There was La Belle, in the company of another woman, walking in my direction. Otero was then nearly forty and I was not yet out of my teens but—ah!—she was so beautiful!

• "She was tall, dark-haired, with a magnificent body, like the bodies of the women of those days, not like the lightweight ones of today." • Chevalier smiled.

• "Of course I like modern women, too, but there was something of a fatal charm about Otero. We three stood there for a moment or two, not saying a word, I staring at La Belle, not so young as she once was and maybe not so beautiful, but

still quite a woman. • "She looked right at me, then turned to the lady she was with—some friend, I guess—and spoke to her in English, which she thought I didn't understand. However, I did. • " 'Who's the very handsome young man?' " Otero asked. • "The other one answered, 'He's Chevalier.' • " 'He has such beautiful eyes' ha Belle said, looking straight at me, right up and down. • "Then she almost floored me with her frankness. • " 'I wonder if he'd like to go to bed with me. I think I'll ask him!' Only she didn't say it so delicately. She was much cruder and more to the point. • "It was at this moment I had to make up my mind rather quickly. La Belle moved toward me. Instead of introducing myself and succumbing to the consequences, I pretended I didn't understand what she'd said, uttered some pleasantries in French and moved away to my dressing room. • "I could see La Belle smile in an odd fashion as I passed her; like a sleek tigress watching its dinner go away. For a fleeting second I thought she might turn around and follow me. • "What would Chevalier have done had she pursued him? His lower lip dropped into that half pout which is the Frenchman's exclusive possession. Then he grinned. • "I'd have slowed down and let her catch up."

—ARTHUR H. LEWIS,
LA BELLE OTERO

made frequent trips to Paris to be with her, forgetting about his family, lavishing money and gifts on her.

Otero's New York debut, in October of 1890, was an astounding success. "Otero dances with abandon," read an article in *The New York Times*. "Her lithe and supple body looks like that of a serpent writhing in quick, graceful curves." In a few short weeks she became the toast of New York society, performing at private parties late into the night. The tycoon William Vanderbilt courted her with expensive jewels and evenings on his yacht. Other millionaires vied for her attention. Meanwhile Jurgens was dipping into the company till to pay for presents for her—he would do anything to keep her, a task in which he was facing heavy competition. A few months later, after his embezzling became public, he was a ruined man. He eventually committed suicide.

Otero went back to France, to Paris, and over the next few years rose to become the most infamous courtesan of the Belle Époque. Word spread quickly: a night with La Belle Otero (as she was now known) was more effective than all the aphrodisiacs in the world. She had a temper, and was demanding, but that was to be expected. Prince Albert of Monaco, a man who had been plagued by doubts of his virility, felt like an insatiable tiger after a night with Otero. She became his mistress. Other royalty followed—Prince Albert of Wales (later King Edward VII), the Shah of Persia, Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia. Less wealthy men emptied their bank accounts, and Jurgens was only the first of many whom Otero drove to suicide.

During World War I, a twenty-nine-year-old American soldier named Frederick, stationed in France, won \$37,000 in a four-day crap game. On his next leave he went to Nice and checked himself into the finest hotel. On his first night in the hotel restaurant, he recognized Otero sitting alone at a table. He had seen her perform in Paris ten years before, and had become obsessed with her. She was now close to fifty, but was more alluring than ever. He greased some palms and was able to sit at her table. He could hardly talk: the way her eyes bored into him, a simple readjustment in her chair, her body brushing up against him as she got up, the way she managed to walk in front of him and display herself. Later, strolling along a boulevard, they passed a jewelry store. He went inside, and moments later found himself plopping down \$31,000 for a diamond necklace. For three nights La Belle Otero was his. Never in his life had he felt so masculine and impetuous. Years later, he still believed it was well worth the price he had paid.

Interpretation. Although La Belle Otero was beautiful, hundreds of women were more so, or were more charming and talented. But Otero was constantly on fire. Men could read it in her eyes, the way her body moved, a dozen other signs. The heat that radiated out from her came from her own inner desires: she was insatiably sexual. But she was also a practiced and calculating courtesan, and knew how to put her sexuality to effect.

Onstage she made every man in the audience come alive, abandoning herself in dance. In person she was cooler, or slightly so. A man likes to feel that a woman is enflamed not because she has an insatiable appetite but because of him; so Otero personalized her sexuality, using glances, a brushing of skin, a more languorous tone of voice, a saucy comment, to suggest that the man was heating her up. In her memoirs she revealed that Prince Albert was a most inept lover. Yet he believed, along with many other men, that with her he was Hercules himself. Her sexuality actually originated from her, but she created the illusion that the man was the aggressor.

The key to luring the target into the final act of your seduction is not to make it obvious, not to announce that you are ready (to pounce or be pounced upon). Everything should be geared, not to the conscious mind, but to the senses. You want your target to read cues not from your words or actions but from your body. You must make your body glow with desire—for the target. Your desire should be read in your eyes, in a trembling in your voice, in your reaction when your bodies draw near.

You cannot train your body to act this way, but by choosing a victim (see chapter 1) who has this effect on you, it will all flow naturally. During the seduction, you will have had to hold yourself back, to intrigue and frustrate the victim. You will have frustrated yourself in the process, and will already be champing at the bit. Once you sense that the target has fallen for you and cannot turn back, let those frustrated desires course through your blood and warm you up. You do not need to touch your targets, or become physical. As La Belle Otero understood, sexual desire is contagious. They will catch your heat and glow in return. Let them make the first move. It will cover your tracks. The second and third moves are yours.

*Spell SEX with capital letters when you talk about Otero.
She exuded it.*

—MAURICE CHEVALIER

Lowering Inhibitions

One day in 1931, in a village in New Guinea, a young girl named Taperselai heard some happy news: her father, Allaman, who had left some months before to work on a tobacco plantation, had returned for a visit. Taperselai ran to greet him. Accompanying her father was a white man, an unusual sight in these parts. He was a twenty-two-year-old Australian from Tasmania, and he was the owner of the plantation. His name was Errol Flynn.

Flynn smiled warmly at Taperselai, seeming particularly interested in her bare breasts. (As was the custom in New Guinea then, she wore only a grass skirt.) He said in pidgin English how beautiful she was, and kept repeating her name, which he pronounced remarkably well. He did not say

*You're anxiously expecting
me to escort you \ To
parties: here too solicit my
advice. \ Arrive late, when
the lamps are lit; make a
graceful entrance— \ Delay
enhances charm, delay's a
great bawd. \ Plain you
may be, but at night you'll
look fine to the tipsy: \
Soft lights and shadows
will mask your faults. \
Take your food with dainty
fingers: good table manners
matter: \ Don't besmear
your whole face with a
greasy paw. \ Don't cat
first at home, and nibble—
but equally, don't indulge
your \ Appetite to the full,
leave something in hand. \
If Paris saw Helen stuffing
herself to the eyeballs \
He'd detest her, he'd feel
her abduction had been \ A
stupid mistake. . . . \ Each
woman should know
herself, pick methods \ To
suit her body: one fashion .
won't do for all. \ Let the
girl with a pretty face lie
supine, let the lady \ Who
boasts a good back be
viewed \ From behind.
Milanion bore Atalanta's
legs on \ His shoulders:
nice legs should always be
used this way \ The petite
should ride a horse
(Andromache, Hector's
Theban \ Bride, was too
tall for these games: no
jockey she); \ If you're
built like a fashion model,
with a willowy figure, \
Then kneel on the bed,
your neck \ A little arched;
the girl who has perfect legs
and bosom \ Should lie
sideways on, and make her
lover stand. \ Don't blush
to unbind your hair like
some ecstatic maenad \
And tumble long tresses
about \ Your uncurved
throat.*

—OVID, THE ART OF LOVE,
TRANSLATED BY PETER GREEN

"How do you attract a man," the Paris correspondent of the Stockholm Aftonbladet asked *La Belle* on July 3, 1910. • "Make yourself as feminine as possible; dress so that the most interesting portions of your anatomy are emphasized; and subtly allow the gentleman to know you are willing to yield at the proper time. . . ." • "The way to hold a man" Otero revealed a little later to a staff writer from the Johannesburg Morning Journal, "is to keep acting as though every time you meet him you are overcome with fresh enthusiasm and, with barely restrained eagerness, you await his impetuosity."

—ARTHUR H. LEWIS,
LA BELLE OTERO

"I missed the mental stimulation when I was younger," he answered. "But from the time I began to have women, shall we say, on the assembly-line basis, I discovered that the only thing you need, want, or should have is the absolutely physical. Simply the physical. No mind at all. A woman's mind will get in the way." • "Really?" • "For me . . . I am speaking of myself. I don't speak for male humankind. I am speaking for what I've discovered or what I need: the body, the face, the physical motion, the voice, the femaleness, the female presence . . . totally that, nothing else. That's the best. There's no possessiveness in that." • I watched him closely. • "I'm serious," he said. "That's my view and feeling. Just the elementary

much else, mind you—he did not speak her language—so she said goodbye and walked away with her father. But later that day she discovered, to her dismay, that Mr. Flynn had taken a liking to her and had purchased her from her father for two pigs, some English coins, and some seashell money. The family was poor and the father liked the price. Tuperselai had a boyfriend in the village whom she did not want to leave, but she did not dare disobey her father, and she left with Mr. Flynn for the tobacco plantation. On the other hand, she had no intention of being friendly with this man, from whom she expected the worst kind of treatment.

In the first few days, Tuperselai missed her village terribly, and felt nervous and out of sorts. But Mr. Flynn was polite, and talked in a soothing voice. She began to relax, and since he kept his distance, she decided it was safe to approach him. His white skin was tasty to the mosquitoes, so she began to wash him every night with scented bush herbs to keep them away. Soon she had a thought: Mr. Flynn was lonely, and wanted a companion. That was why he had bought her. At night he usually read; instead, she began to entertain him by singing and dancing. Sometimes he tried to communicate in words and gestures, struggling in pidgin. She had no idea what he was trying to say, but he made her laugh. And one day she did understand something: the word "swim." He was inviting her to go swimming with him in the Laloki River. She was happy to go along, but the river was full of crocodiles, so she brought along her spear just in case.

At the sight of the river, Mr. Flynn seemed to come alive—he tore off his clothes and dove in. She followed and swam after him. He put his arms around her and kissed her. They drifted downstream, and she clung to him. She had forgotten about the crocodiles; she had also forgotten about her father, her boyfriend, her village, and everything else there was to forget. Around a bend of the river, he picked her up and carried her to a secluded grove near the river's edge. It all happened rather suddenly, which was fine with Tuperselai. From then on this was a daily ritual—the river, the grove—until the time came when the tobacco plantation was no longer doing so well, and Mr. Flynn left New Guinea.

One day some ten years later, a young girl named Blanca Rosa Welter went to a party at the Ritz Hotel in Mexico City. As she wandered through the bar, looking for her friends, a tall older man blocked her path and said in a charming accent, "You must be Blanca Rosa." He did not have to introduce himself—he was the famous Hollywood actor Errol Flynn. His face was plastered on posters everywhere, and he was friends of the party's hosts, the Davises, and had heard them praise the beauty of Blanca Rosa, who was turning eighteen the following day. He led her to a table in the corner. His manner was graceful and confident, and listening to him talk, she forgot about her friends. He spoke of her beauty, repeated her name, said he could make her a star. Before she knew what was happening, he had invited her to join him in Acapulco, where he was vacationing. The Davises, their mutual friends, could come along as chaperones. That would be wonderful, she said, but her mother would never agree. Don't worry

about that, Flynn replied; and the following day he showed up at their house with a beautiful gift for Blanca, a ring with her birthstone. Melting under his charming smile, Blanca's mother agreed to his plan. Later that day, Blanca found herself on a plane to Acapulco. It was all like a dream.

The Davises, under orders from Blanca's mother, tried not to let her out of their sight, so Flynn put her on a raft and they drifted out into the ocean, far from the shore. His flattering words filled her ears, and she let him hold her hand and kiss her cheek. That night they danced together, and when the evening was over he escorted her to her room and serenaded her with a song as they finally parted. It was the end of a perfect day. In the middle of the night, she woke up to hear him calling her name, from her hotel-room balcony. How had he gotten there? His room was a floor above; he must have somehow jumped or swung down, a dangerous maneuver. She approached, not at all afraid, but curious. He pulled her gently into his arms and kissed her. Her body convulsed; overwhelmed with new sensations, totally at sea, she began to cry—out of happiness, she said. Flynn comforted her with a kiss and returned to his room above, in the same inexplicable way he had arrived. Now Blanca was hopelessly in love with him and would do anything he asked of her. A few weeks later, in fact, she followed him to Hollywood, where she went on to become a successful actress, known as Linda Christian.

In 1942, an eighteen-year-old girl named Nora Eddington had a temporary job selling cigarettes at the Los Angeles County courthouse. The place was a madhouse at the time, teeming with tabloid journalists: two young girls had charged Errol Flynn with rape. Nora of course noticed Flynn, a tall, dashing man who occasionally bought cigarettes from her, but her thoughts were with her boyfriend, a young Marine. A few weeks later Flynn was acquitted, the trial ended, and the place settled down. A man she had met during the trial called her up one day: he was Flynn's right-hand man, and on Flynn's behalf, he wanted to invite her up to the actor's house on Mulholland Drive. Nora had no interest in Flynn, and in fact she was a little afraid of him, but a girlfriend who was dying to meet him talked her into going and bringing her along. What did she have to lose? Nora agreed to go. On the day, Flynn's friend showed up and drove them to a splendid house on top of a hill. When they arrived, Flynn was standing shirtless by his swimming pool. He came to greet her and her girlfriend, moving so gracefully—like a lithe cat—and his manner so relaxed, she felt her jitters melt away. He gave them a tour of the house, which was full of artifacts of his various sea voyages. He talked so delightfully of his love of adventure that she wished she had had adventures of her own. He was the perfect gentleman, and even let her talk about her boyfriend without the slightest sign of jealousy.

Nora had a visit from her boyfriend the next day. Somehow he didn't seem so interesting anymore; they had a fight and broke up on the spot. That night, Flynn took her out on the town, to the famous Mocambo nightclub. He was drinking and joking, and she fell into the spirit, and hap-

physical female. Nothing more than that. When you get hold of that—hang on to it, for a short while."

—EARL CONRAD,

ERROL FLYNN: A MEMOIR

A sweet disorder in the dress \ Kindles in clothes a wantonness: \ A lawn about the shoulders thrown \ Into a fine distraction: \ An erring lace, which here and there \ Enthralls the crimson stomacher: \ A cuff neglectful, and thereby \ Ribbands to flow confusedly: \ A winning wave (deserving note) \ In the tempestuous petticoat: \ A careless shoestring, in whose tie \ I see a wild civility: \ Do more bewitch me, than when art \ Is too precise in every part.

—ROBERT HERRICK, "DELIGHT IN DISORDER," QUOTED IN PETER WASHINGTON, ED., *EROTIC POEMS*

Satni, the son of Pharaoh Usimares, saw a very beautiful woman on the plain-stones of the temple. He called his page, and said, "Go and tell her that I, Pharaoh's son, shall give her ten pieces of gold to spend an hour with me." "I am a Pure One, I am not a low person," answers the Lady Thubuit. "If you wish to have your pleasure with me, you will come to my house at Bubastis. Everything will be ready there." Satni went to Bubastis by boat. "By my life," said Thubuit, "come upstairs with me." On the upper floor, sanded with dust of lapis lazuli and turquoise, Satni saw several beds covered with royal linen and many gold

bowls on a table. "Please take your meal," said Thubuit. "That is not what I have come to do," answered Satni, while the slaves put aromatic wood on the fire and scattered scent about. "Do that for which we have come here," Satni repeated. "First you will make out a deed for my maintenance," Thubuit replied, "and you will establish a dowry for me of all the things and goods which belong to you, in writing." Satni acquiesced, saying, "Bring me the scribe of the school." • When he had done what she asked, Thubuit rose and dressed herself in a robe of fine linen, through which Satni could see all her limbs. His passion increased, but she said, "If it is true that you desire to have your pleasure of me, you will make your children subscribe to my deed, that they may not seek a quarrel with my children." Satni sent for his children. "If it is true that you desire to have your pleasure of me, you will cause your children to be killed, that they may not seek a quarrel with my children." Satni consented again: "Let any crime be done to them which your heart desires." "Go into that room," said Thubuit; and while the little corpses were thrown out to the stray dogs and cats, Satni at last lay on a bed of ivory and ebony, that his love might be rewarded, and Thubuit lay down at his side. "Then," the texts modestly say, "magic and the god Amen did much." • The charms of the Divine Women must have been irresistible, if even "the wisest men" were

pily let him touch her hand. Then suddenly she panicked. "I'm a Catholic and a virgin," she blurted out, "and some day I'm going to walk down the church aisle wearing a veil—and if you think you're going to sleep with me, you're mistaken." Totally calm and unruffled, Flynn said she had nothing to fear. He simply liked being with her. She relaxed, and politely asked him to put his hand back. Over the next few weeks she saw him almost every day. She became his secretary. Soon she was spending weekend nights as his house guest. He took her on skiing and boating trips. He remained the perfect gentleman, but when he looked at her or touched her hand, she felt overwhelmed by an exhilarating sensation, a tingling on her skin that she compared to stepping into a cold-needle shower on a red-hot day. Soon she was going to church less often, drifting away from the life she had known. Although outwardly nothing had changed between them, inwardly all semblance of resistance to him had melted away. One night, after a party, she succumbed. She and Flynn eventually engaged in a stormy marriage that lasted seven years.

Interpretation. The women who became involved with Errol Flynn (and by the end of his life they numbered in the thousands) had every reason in the world to feel suspicious of him: he was real life's closest thing to a Don Juan. (In fact he had played the legendary seducer in a film.) He was constantly surrounded by women, who knew that no involvement with him could last. And then there were the rumors of his temper, and his love of danger and adventure. No woman had greater reason to resist him than Nora Eddington: when she met him he stood accused of rape; she was involved with another man; she was a God-fearing Catholic. Yet she fell under his spell, just like all the rest. Some seducers—D. H. Lawrence for instance—operate mostly on the mind, creating fascination, stirring up the need to possess them. Flynn operated on the body. His cool, nonchalant manner infected women, lowering their resistance. This happened almost the minute they met him, like a drug: he was at ease around women, graceful and confident. They fell into this spirit, drifting along on a current he created, leaving the world and its heaviness behind—it was only you and him. Then—perhaps that same day, perhaps a few weeks later—there would come a touch of his hand, a certain look, that would make them feel a tingling, a vibration, a dangerously physical excitement. They would betray that moment in their eyes, a blush, a nervous laugh, and he would swoop in for the kill. No one moved faster than Errol Flynn.

The greatest obstacle to the physical part of the seduction is the target's education, the degree to which he or she has been civilized and socialized. Such education conspires to constrain the body, dull the senses, fill the mind with doubts and worries. Flynn had the ability to return a woman to a more natural state, in which desire, pleasure, and sex had nothing negative attached to them. He lured women into adventure not with arguments but

with an open, unrestrained attitude that infected their minds. Understand: it all starts from you. When the time comes to make the seduction physical, train yourself to let go of your own inhibitions, your doubts, your lingering feelings of guilt and anxiety. Your confidence and ease will have more power to intoxicate the victim than all the alcohol you could apply. Exhibit a lightness of spirit—nothing bothers you, nothing daunts you, you take nothing personally. You are inviting your targets to shed the burdens of civilization, to follow your lead and drift. Do not talk of work, duty, marriage, the past or future. Plenty of other people will do that. Instead, offer the rare thrill of losing oneself in the moment, where the senses come dive and the mind is left behind.

When he kissed me, it evoked a response I had never known or imagined before, a giddying of all my senses. It was instinctive joy, against which no warning, reasoning monitor within me availed. It was new and irresistible and finally overpowering. Seduction—the word implies being led—and so gently, so tenderly.

—LINDA CHRISTIAN

Keys to Seduction

Now more than ever, our minds are in a state of constant distraction, barraged with endless information, pulled in every direction. Many of us recognize the problem: articles are written, studies are completed, but they simply become more information to digest. It is almost impossible to turn off an overactive mind; the attempt simply triggers more thoughts—an inescapable hall of mirrors. Perhaps we turn to alcohol, to drugs, to physical activity—anything to help us slow the mind, be more present in the moment. Our discontent presents the crafty seducer with infinite opportunity. The waters around you are teeming with people seeking some kind of release from mental overstimulation. The lure of unencumbered physical pleasure will make them take your bait, but as you prowl the waters, understand: the only way to relax a distracted mind is to make it focus on one thing. A hypnotist asks the patient to focus on a watch swinging back and forth. Once the patient focuses, the mind relaxes, the senses awaken, the body becomes prone to all kinds of novel sensations and suggestions. As a seducer, you are a hypnotist, and what you are making the target focus on is you.

Throughout the seductive process you have been filling the target's mind. Letters, mementos, shared experiences keep you constantly present, even when you are not there. Now, as you shift to the physical part of the seduction, you must see your targets more often. Your attention must become more intense. Errol Flynn was a master at this game. When he

ready to do anything in their desire to abandon themselves, even for a few moments, to their trained embraces.

—G. R.TABOUIS, *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF TUTANKHAMEN*, TRANSLATED BY M.R.DOBIE

CÉLIE: What is the moment, and how do you define it? Because I must say in all good honesty that I do not understand you. • THE DUKE: A certain disposition of the senses, as unexpected as it is involuntary, which a woman can conceal, but which, should it be perceived or sensed by someone who might profit from it, puts her in the greatest danger of being a little more willing than she thought she ever should or could be.

—CRÉBILLON FILS, *LE HASARD AU COIN DU FEU*, QUOTED IN MICHEL FEHER, ED., *THE LIBERTINE READER*

When, on an autumn evening, with closed eyes, \ I breathe the warm dark fragrance of your breast, \ Before me blissful shores unfold, caressed \ By dazzling fires from blue unchanging skies. \ And there, upon that calm and drowsing isle, \ Grow luscious fruits amid fantastic trees: \ There, men are lithe: the women of those seas \ Amaze one with their gaze that knows no guile. \ Your perfume wafts me thither like a wind: \ I see a harbor thronged with masts and sails \ Still weary from the tumult of the gales; \ And

with the sailors' song that
drifts to me \ Are mingled
odors of the tamarind, \
—And all my soul is scent
and melody.

—CHARLES BAUDELAIRE,
"EXOTIC PERFUME,"
THE FLOWERS OF EVIL,
TRANSLATED BY ALAN CONDER

honed in on a victim, he dropped everything else. The woman was made to feel that everything came second to her—his career, his friends, everything. Then he would take her on a little trip, preferably with water around. Slowly the rest of the world would fade into the background, and Flynn would take center stage. The more your targets think of you, the less they are distracted by thoughts of work and duty. When the mind focuses on one thing it relaxes, and when the mind relaxes, all the little paranoid thoughts that we are prone to—do you really like me, am I intelligent or beautiful enough, what does the future hold—vanish from the surface. Remember: it all starts with you. Be undistracted, present in the moment, and the target will follow suit. The intense gaze of the hypnotist creates a similar reaction in the patient.

Once the target's overactive mind starts to slow down, their senses will come to life, and your physical lures will have double their power. Now a heated glance will give them flush. You will have a tendency to employ physical lures that work primarily on the eyes, the sense we most rely on in our culture. Physical appearances are critical, but you are after a general agitation of the senses. La Belle Otero made sure men noticed her breasts, her figure, her perfume, her walk; no part was allowed to predominate. The senses are interconnected—an appeal to smell will trigger touch, an appeal to touch will trigger vision: casual or "accidental" contact—better a brushing of the skin than something more forceful right now—will create a jolt and activate the eyes. Subtly modulate the voice, make it slower and deeper. Living senses will crowd out rational thought.

In the eighteenth-century libertine novel *The Wayward Head and Heart*, by Crébillon fils, Madame de Lursay is trying to seduce a younger man, Meilcour. Her weapons are several. One night at a party she is hosting, she wears a revealing gown; her hair is slightly tousled; she throws him heated glances; her voice trembles a bit. When they are alone, she innocently gets him to sit close to her, and talks more slowly; at one point she starts to cry. Meilcour has many reasons to resist her; he has fallen in love with a girl his own age, and he has heard rumors about Madame de Lursay that should make him distrust her. But the clothes, the looks, the perfume, the voice, the closeness of her body, the tears—it all begins to overwhelm him. "An indescribable agitation stirred my senses." Meilcour succumbs.

The French libertines of the eighteenth century called this "the moment." The seducer leads the victim to a point where he or she reveals involuntary signs of physical excitation that can be read in various symptoms. Once those signs are detected, the seducer must work quickly, applying pressure on the target to get lost in the moment—the past, the future, all moral scruples vanishing in air. Once your victims lose themselves in the moment, it is all over—their mind, their conscience, no longer holds them back. The body gives in to pleasure. Madame de Lursay lures Meilcour into the moment by creating a generalized disorder of the senses, rendering him incapable of thinking straight.

In leading your victims into the moment, remember a few things. First,

a disordered look (Madame de Lursay's tousled hair, her ruffled dress) has more effect on the senses than a neat appearance. It suggests the bedroom. Second, be alert to the signs of physical excitation. Blushing, trembling of the voice, tears, unusually forceful laughter, relaxing movements of the body (any kind of involuntary mirroring, their gestures imitating yours), a revealing slip of the tongue—these are signs that the victim is slipping into the moment and pressure is to be applied.

In 1934, a Chinese football player named Li met a young actress named Lan Ping in Shanghai. He began to see her often at his matches, cheering him on. They would meet at public affairs, and he would notice her glancing at him with her "strange, yearning eyes," then looking away. One evening he found her seated next to him at a reception. Her leg brushed up against his. They chatted, and she asked him to see a movie with her at a nearby cinema. Once they were there, her head found its way onto his shoulder; she whispered into his ear, something about the film. Later they strolled the streets, and she put her arm around his waist. She brought him to a restaurant where they drank some wine. Li took her to his hotel room, and there he found himself overwhelmed by caresses and sweet words. She gave him no room to retreat, no time to cool down. Three years later Lan Ping—soon to be renamed Jiang Qing—played a similar game on Mao Zedong. She was to become Mao's wife—the infamous Madame Mao, leader of the Gang of Four.

Seduction, like warfare, is often a game of distance and closeness. At first you track your enemy from a distance. Your main weapons are your eyes, and a mysterious manner. Byron had his famous underlook, Madame Mao her yearning eyes. The key is to make the look short and to the point, then look away, like a rapier glancing the flesh. Make your eyes reveal desire, and keep the rest of the face still. (A smile will spoil the effect.) Once the victim is heated up, you quickly bridge the distance, turning to hand-to-hand combat in which you give the enemy no room to withdraw, no time to think or to consider the position in which you have placed him or her. To take the element of fear out of this, use flattery, make the target feel more masculine or feminine, praise their charms. It is *their* fault that you have become so physical and aggressive. There is no greater physical lure than to make the target feel alluring. Remember: the girdle of Aphrodite, which gave her untold seductive powers, included that of sweet flattery.

Shared physical activity is always an excellent lure. The Russian mystic Rasputin would begin his seductions with a spiritual lure—the promise of a shared religious experience. But then his eyes would bore into his target at a party, and inevitably he would lead her in a dance, which would become more and more suggestive as he moved closer to her. Hundreds of women succumbed to this technique. For Flynn it was swimming or sailing. In such physical activity, the mind turns off and the body operates according to its own laws. The target's body will follow your lead, will mirror your moves, as far as you want it to go.

In the moment, all moral considerations fade away, and the body re-

turns to a state of innocence. You can partly create that feeling through a devil-may-care attitude. You do not worry about the world, or what people think of you; you do not judge your target in any way. Part of Flynn's appeal was his total acceptance of a woman. He was not interested in a particular body type, a woman's race, her level of education, her political beliefs. He was in love with her feminine presence. He was luring her into an adventure, free of society's strictures and moral judgments. With him she could act out a fantasy—which, for many, was the chance to be aggressive or transgressive, to experience danger. So empty yourself of your tendency to moralize and judge. You have lured your targets into a momentary world of pleasure—soft and accommodating, all rules and taboos thrown out the window.

Symbol: *The Raft. Floating out to sea, drifting with the current. Soon the shoreline disappears from sight, and the two of you are alone. The water invites you to forget all cares and worries, to submerge yourself. Without anchor or direction, cut off from the past, you give in to the drifting sensation and slowly lose all restraint.*

Reversal

Some people panic when they sense they are falling into the moment. Often, using spiritual lures will help disguise the increasingly physical nature of the seduction. That is how the lesbian seductress Natalie Barney operated. In her heyday, at the turn of the twentieth century, lesbian sex was immensely transgressive, and women new to it often felt a sense of shame or dirtiness. Barney led them into the physical, but so enveloped it in poetry and mysticism that they relaxed and felt purified by the experience. Today, few people feel repulsed by their sexual nature, but many are uncomfortable with their bodies. A purely physical approach will frighten and disturb them. Instead, make it seem a spiritual, mystical union, and they will take less notice of your physical manipulations.

23

Master the Art of the Bold Move

*A moment has
arrived: your victim clearly desires you,
but is not ready to admit it openly, let alone act on it.
This is the time to throw aside chivalry, kindness, and coquetry
and to overwhelm with a bold move. Don't give the victim time to consider
the consequences; create conflict, stir up tension, so that the bold move comes as
a great release. Showing hesitation or awkwardness means you are thinking of
yourself, as opposed to being overwhelmed by the victim's charms. Never hold
back or meet the target halfway, under the belief that you are being
correct and considerate; you must be seductive now, not
political. One person must go on the of-
fensive, and it is you.*

The Perfect Climax

Through a campaign of deception—the misleading appearance of a transformation into goodness—the rake Valmont laid siege to the virtuous young Présidente de Tourvel until the day came when, disturbed by his confession of love for her, she insisted he leave the château where both of them were staying as guests. He complied. From Paris, however, he flooded her with letters, describing his love for her in the most intense terms; she begged him to stop, and once again he complied. Then, several weeks later, he paid a surprise visit to the château. In his company Tourvel was flushed and jumpy, and kept her eyes averted—all signs of his effect on her. Again she asked him to leave. What have you to fear? he replied, I have always done what you have asked, I have never forced myself on you. He kept his distance and she slowly relaxed. She no longer left the room when he entered, and she could look at him directly. When he offered to accompany her on a walk, she did not refuse. They were friends, she said. She even put her arm in his as they strolled, a friendly gesture.

One rainy day they could not take their usual walk. He met her in the hallway as she was entering her room; for the first time, she invited him in. She seemed relaxed, and Valmont sat near her on a sofa. He talked of his love for her. She gave the faintest protest. He took her hand; she left it there and leaned against his arm. Her voice trembled. She looked at him, and he felt his heart flutter—it was a tender, loving look. She started to speak—"Well! yes, I . . ."—then suddenly collapsed into his arms, crying. It was a moment of weakness, yet Valmont held himself back. Her crying became convulsive; she begged him to help her, to leave the room before something terrible happened. He did so. The following morning he awoke to some surprising news: in the middle of the night, claiming she was feeling ill, Tourvel had suddenly left the château and returned home.

Valmont did not follow her to Paris. Instead he began staying up late, and using no powder to hide the peaked looks that soon ensued. He went to the chapel every day, and dragged himself despondently around the château. He knew that his hostess would be writing to the Présidente, who would hear of his sad state. Next he wrote to a church father in Paris, and asked him to pass along a message to Tourvel: he was ready to change his life for good. He wanted one last meeting, to say goodbye and to return the letters she had written him over the last few months. The father arranged a

It afforded, moreover, another advantage: that of observing at my leisure her charming face, more beautiful than ever, as it proffered the powerful enticement of tears. My blood was on fire, and I was so little in control of myself that I was tempted to make the most of the occasion. • How weak we must be, how strong the dominion of circumstance, if even I, without a thought for my plans, could risk losing all the charm of a prolonged struggle, all the fascination of a laboriously administered defeat, by concluding a premature victory; if distracted by the most puerile of desires, I could be willing that the conqueror of Madame de Tourvel should take nothing for the fruit of his labors but the tasteless distinction of having added one more name to the roll. Ah, let her surrender, but let her fight! Let her be too weak to prevail but strong enough to resist; let her savor the knowledge of her weakness at her leisure, but let her be unwilling to admit defeat. Leave the

*humble poacher to kill the
stag where he has surprised
it in its hiding place;
the true hunter will
bring it to bay.*

—VICOMTE DE VALMONT,
IN CHODERLOS DE LACLOS,
DANGEROUS LIAISONS,
TRANSLATED BY P.W.K. STONE,
IN MICHEL FEHER, ED.,
THE LIBERTINE READER

*Don't you know that
however willing, however
eager we are to give
ourselves, we must
nevertheless have an
excuse? And is there any
more convenient than an
appearance of yielding to
force? As for me, I shall
admit that one thing that
most flatters me is a lively
and well-executed attack,
when everything happens
in quick but orderly
succession; which never
puts us in the painfully
embarrassing position of
having to cover up some
blunder of which, on the
contrary, we ought to be
taking advantage; which
keeps up an appearance of
taking by storm even that
which we are quite
prepared to surrender; and
adroitly flatters our two
favorite passions—the
pride of defense and the
pleasure of defeat.*

—MARQUISE DE MERTEUIL IN
CHODERLOS DE LACLOS,
DANGEROUS LIAISONS,
TRANSLATED BY P.W.K. STONE
IN MICHEL FEHER, ED.,
THE LIBERTINE READER

*What sensible man will
not intersperse his coaxing \
With kisses? Even if she
doesn't kiss back, \ Still
force on regardless! She
may struggle, cry
"Naughty!" \ Yet she
wants to be overcome. Just*

meeting, and so, one late afternoon in Paris, Valmont found himself once again alone with Tourvel, in a room in her house.

The Présidente was clearly on edge; she could not look him in the eye. They exchanged pleasantries, but then Valmont turned harsh: she had treated him cruelly, had apparently been determined to make him unhappy. Well, this was the end, they were separating for good, since that was how she wanted it. Tourvel argued back: she was a married woman, she had no choice. Valmont softened his tone and apologized: he was unused to having such strong feelings, he said, and could not control himself. Still, he would never trouble her again. Then he laid on a table the letters he had come to return.

Tourvel came closer: the sight of her letters, and the memory of all the turmoil they represented, affected her powerfully. She had thought his decision to renounce his libertine way of life was voluntary, she said—with a touch of bitterness in her voice, as if she resented being abandoned. No, it was not voluntary, he replied, it was because she had spurned him. Then he suddenly stepped closer and took her in his arms. She did not resist. "Adorable woman!" he cried. "You have no idea of the love you inspire. You will never know how I have worshipped you, how much dearer my feelings have been to me than life! . . . May [your days] be blessed with all of the happiness of which you have deprived me!" Then he let her go and turned to leave.

Tourvel suddenly snapped. "You shall listen to me. I insist," she said, and grabbed his arm. He turned around and they embraced. This time he waited no longer, picking her up, carrying her to an ottoman, overwhelming her with kisses and sweet words of the happiness he now felt. Before this sudden flood of caresses, all her resistance gave way. "From this moment on I am yours," she said, "and you will hear neither refusals nor regrets from my lips." Tourvel was true to her word, and Valmont's suspicions were to prove correct: the pleasures he won from her were far greater than with any other woman he had seduced.

Interpretation. Valmont—a character in Choderlos de Laclos's eighteenth-century novel *Dangerous Liaisons*—can sense several things about the Présidente at first glance. She is timid and nervous. Her husband almost certainly treats her with respect—probably too much of it. Beneath her interest in God, religion, and virtue is a passionate woman, vulnerable to the lure of a romance and to the flattering attention of an ardent suitor. No one, not even her husband, has given her this feeling, because they have all been so daunted by her prudish exterior.

Valmont begins his seduction, then, by being indirect. He knows Tourvel is secretly fascinated with his bad reputation. By acting as if he is contemplating a change in his life, he can make her want to reform him—a desire that is unconsciously a desire to love him. Once she has opened up even so slightly to his influence, he strikes at her vanity: she has never felt

desired as a woman, and on some level cannot help but enjoy his love for her. Of course she struggles and resists, but that is only a sign that her emotions are engaged. (Indifference is the single most effective deterrent to seduction.) By taking his time, by making no bold moves even when he has the opportunity for them, he instills in her a false sense of security and proves himself by being patient. On what he pretends is his last visit to her, however, he can sense she is ready—weak, confused, more afraid of losing the addictive feeling of being desired than of suffering the consequences of adultery. He deliberately makes her emotional, dramatically displays her letters, creates some tension by playing a game of push-and-pull, and when she takes his arm, he knows it is the time to strike. Now he moves quickly, allowing her no time for doubts or second thoughts. But his move seems to arise out of love, not lust. After so much resistance and tension, what a pleasure to finally surrender. The climax now comes as a great release.

Never underestimate the role of vanity in love and seduction. If you seem impatient, champing at the bit for sex, you signal that it is all about libido, and that it has little to do with the target's own charms. That is why you must defer the climax. A lengthier courtship will feed the target's vanity, and will make the effect of your bold move all the more powerful and enduring. Wait *too* long, though—showing desire, but then proving too timid to make your move—and you will stir up a different kind of insecurity: "You found me desirable, but you are not acting on your desires; maybe you're not so interested." Doubts like these affront your target's vanity (if you're not interested, maybe I'm not so interesting), and are fatal in the latter stages of seduction; awkwardness and misunderstandings will spring up everywhere. Once you read in your targets' gestures that they are ready and open—a look in the eye, mirroring behavior, a strange nervousness in your presence—you must go on the offensive, make them feel that their charms have unhinged you and pushed you into the bold move. They will then have the ultimate pleasure: physical surrender and a psychological boost to their vanity.

The more timidity a lover shows with us the more it concerns our pride to goad him on; the more respect he has for our resistance, the more respect we demand of him. We would willingly say to you men: "Ah, in pity's name do not suppose us to be so very virtuous; you are forcing us to have too much of it."

—NINON DE L'ENCLOS

Keys to Seduction

Think of seduction as a world you enter, a world that is separate and distinct from the real world. The rules are different here; what works in daily life can have the opposite effect in seduction. The real world fea-

*take care \ Not to bruise
her tender lips with such
hard-snatched kisses, \
Don't give her a chance to
protest \ You're too rough.
Those who grab their
kisses, but not what
follows, \ Deserve to lose
all they've gained. How
short were you \ Of the
ultimate goal after all your
kissing? That was \
Gaucheness, not modesty,
I'm afraid . . .*

—OVID, *THE ART OF LOVE*,
TRANSLATED BY PETER GREEN

*I have tested all manner of
pleasures, and known every
variety of joy; and I have
found that neither intimacy
with princes, nor wealth
acquired, nor finding after
lacking, nor returning after
long absence, nor security
after fear and repose in a
safe refuge—none of these
things so powerfully affects
the soul as union with the
beloved, especially if it
come after long denial and
continual banishment. For
then the flame of passion
waxes exceeding hot, and
the furnace of yearning
blazes up, and the fire of
eager hope rages ever more
fiercely.*

—IBN HAZM, *THE RING OF
THE DOVE: A TREATISE ON THE
ART AND PRACTICE OF ARAB
LOVE*, TRANSLATED BY A.J.
ARBERRY

*I knew once two great
lords, brothers, both of
them highly bred and
highly accomplished
gentlemen which did love
two ladies, but the one of
these was of much higher
quality and more account
than the other in all
respects. Now being entered
both into the chamber of*

this great lady, who for the time being was keeping her bed, each did withdraw apart for to entertain his mistress. The one did converse with the high-born dame with every possible respect and humble salutation and kissing of hands, with words of honor and stately compliment, without making ever an attempt to come near and try to force the place. The other brother, without any ceremony of words or fine phrases, did take his fair one to a recessed window, and incontinently making free with her (for he was very strong), he did soon show her 'twas not his way to love à l'espagnole, with eyes and tricks of face and words, but in the genuine fashion and proper mode every true lover should desire. Presently having finished his task, he doth quit the chamber; but as he goes, saith to his brother, loud enough for his lady to hear the words: "Do you as I have done, brother mine; else you do naught at all. Be you as brave and hardy as you will elsewhere, yet if you show not your hardihood here and now, you are disgraced; for here is no place of ceremony and respect, but one where you do see your lady before you, which doth but wait your attack." So with this he did leave his brother, which yet for that while did refrain him and put it off to another time. But for this the lady did by no means esteem him more highly, whether it was she did put it down to an overchilliness in love, or a lack of courage, or a defect of bodily vigor.

—SEIGNEUR DE BRANTÔME,
LIVES OF FAIR & GALLANT
LADIES, TRANSLATED BY A. R.
ALLINSON

tures a democratizing, leveling impulse, in which everything has to seem at least something like equal. An overt imbalance of power, an overt desire for power, will stir envy and resentment; we learn to be kind and polite, at least on the surface. Even those who have power generally try to act humble and modest—they do not want to offend. In seduction, on the other hand, you can throw all of that out, revel in your dark side, inflict a little pain—in some ways be more yourself. Your naturalness in this respect will prove seductive in itself. The problem is that after years of living in the real world, we lose the ability to be ourselves. We become timid, humble, overpolite. Your task is to regain some of your childhood qualities, to root out all this false humility. And the most important quality to recapture is boldness.

No one is born timid; timidity is a protection we develop. If we never stick our necks out, if we never try, we will never have to suffer the consequences of failure or success. If we are kind and unobtrusive, no one will be offended—in fact we will seem saintly and likable. In truth, timid people are often self-absorbed, obsessed with the way people see them, and not at all saintly. And humility may have its social uses, but it is deadly in seduction. You need to be able to play the humble saint at times; it is a mask you wear. But in seduction, take it off. Boldness is bracing, erotic, and absolutely necessary to bring the seduction to its conclusion. Done right, it tells your targets that they have made you lose your normal restraint, and gives them license to do so as well. People are yearning to have a chance to play out the repressed sides of their personality. At the final stage of a seduction, boldness eliminates any awkwardness or doubts. In a dance, two people cannot lead. One takes over, sweeping the other along. Seduction is not egalitarian; it is not a harmonic convergence. Holding back at the end out of fear of offending, or thinking it correct to share the power, is a recipe for disaster. This is an arena not for politics but for pleasure. It can be by the man or woman, but a bold move is required. If you are so concerned about the other person, console yourself with the thought that the pleasure of the one who surrenders is often greater than that of the aggressor.

As a young man, the actor Errol Flynn was uncontrollably bold. This often got him into trouble; he became too aggressive around desirable women. Then, while traveling through the Far East, he became interested in the Asian practice of tantric sex, in which the male must train himself not to ejaculate, preserving his potency and heightening both partners' pleasure in the process. Flynn later applied this principle to his seductions as well, teaching himself to restrain his natural boldness and delay the end of the seduction as long as possible. So, while boldness can work wonders, uncontrollable boldness is not seductive but frightening; you need to be able to turn it on and off at will, know when to use it. As in Tantrism, you can create more pleasure by delaying the inevitable.

In the 1720s, the Duc de Richelieu developed an infatuation with a certain duchess. The woman was exceptionally beautiful, and was desired by one and all, but she was far too virtuous to take a lover, although she

could be quite coquettish. Richelieu bided his time. He befriended her, charming her with the wit that had made him the favorite of the ladies. One night a group of such women, including the duchess, decided to play a practical joke on him, in which he was to be forced naked out of his room at the palace of Versailles. The joke worked to perfection, the ladies all got to see him in his native glory, and had a good chuckle watching him run away. There were many places Richelieu could have hidden; the place he chose was the duchess's bedroom. Minutes later he watched her enter and undress, and once the candles were extinguished, he crept into bed with her. She protested, tried to scream. He covered her mouth with kisses, and she eventually and happily relented. Richelieu had decided to make his bold move then for several reasons. First, the duchess had come to like him, and even to harbor a secret desire for him. She would never act upon it or admit it, but he was certain it existed. Second, she had seen him naked, and could not help but be impressed. Third, she would feel a touch of pity for his predicament, and for the joke played on him. Richelieu, a consummate seducer, would find no more perfect moment.

The bold move should come as a pleasant surprise, but not too much of a surprise. Learn to read the signs that the target is falling for you. His or her manner toward you will have changed—it will be more pliant, with more words and gestures mirroring yours—yet there will still be a touch of nervousness and uncertainty. Inwardly they have given in to you, but they do not expect a bold move. This is the time to strike. If you wait too long, to the point where they consciously desire and expect you to make a move, it loses the piquancy of coming as a surprise. You want a degree of tension and ambivalence, so that the move represents a great release. Their surrender will relieve tension like a long-awaited summer storm. Don't plan your bold move in advance; it cannot seem calculated. Wait for the opportune moment, as Richelieu did. Be attentive to favorable circumstances. This will give you room to improvise and go with the moment, which will heighten the impression you want to create of being suddenly overwhelmed by desire. If you ever sense that the victim is expecting the bold move, take a step back, lull them into a false sense of security, then strike.

Sometime in the fifteenth century, the writer Bandello relates, a young Venetian widow had a sudden lust for a handsome nobleman. She had her father invite him to their palace to discuss business, but during the meeting the father had to leave, and she offered to give the young man a tour of the place. His curiosity was piqued by her bedroom, which she described as the most splendid room in the palace, but which she also passed by without letting him enter. He begged to be shown the room, and she granted his wish. He was spellbound: the velvets, the rare *objets*, the suggestive paintings, the delicate white candles. A beguiling scent filled the room. The widow put out all of the candles but one, then led the man to the bed, which had been heated with a warming pan. He quickly succumbed to her caresses. Follow the widow's example: your bold move should have a theatrical quality to it. That will make it memorable, and make your aggressiveness seem pleasant,

A man should proceed to enjoy any woman when she gives him an opportunity and makes her own love manifest to him by the following signs: she calls out to a man without first being addressed by him; she shows herself to him in secret places; she speaks to him tremblingly and inarticulately; her face blooms with delight and her fingers or toes perspire; and sometimes she remains with both hands placed on his body as if she had been surprised by something, or as if overcome with fatigue.

• *After a woman has manifested her love to him by outward signs, and by the motions of her body, the man should make every possible attempt to conquer her. There should be no indecision or hesitancy: if an opening is found the man should make the most of it. The woman, indeed, becomes disgusted with the man if he is timid about his chances and throws them away. Boldness is the rule, for everything is to be gained, and nothing lost.*

—THE HINDU ART OF LOVE,
COLLECTED AND EDITED BY
EDWARD WINDSOR

part of the drama. The theatricality can come from the setting—an exotic or sensual location. It can also come from your actions. The widow piqued her victim's curiosity by creating the suspense about her bedroom. An element of fear—someone might find you, say—will heighten the tension. Remember: you are creating a moment that must stand out from the sameness of daily life.

Keeping your targets emotional will both weaken them and heighten the drama of the moment. And the best way to keep them at an emotional pitch is by infecting them with emotions of your own. When Valmont wanted the Presidents to become calm, angry, or tender, he showed that emotion first, and she mirrored it. People are very susceptible to the moods of those around them; this is particularly acute at the latter stages of a seduction, when resistance is low and the target has fallen under your spell. At the point of the bold move, learn to infect your target with whatever emotional mood you require, as opposed to suggesting the mood with words. You want access to the target's unconscious, which is best obtained by infecting them with emotions, bypassing their conscious ability to resist.

It may seem expected for the male to make the bold move, but history is full of successfully bold females. There are two main forms of feminine boldness. In the first, more traditional form, the coquettish woman stirs male desire, is completely in control, then at the last minute, after bringing her victim to a boil, steps back and lets him make the bold move. She sets it up, then signals with her eyes, her gestures, that she is ready for him. Courtesans have used this method throughout history; it is how Cleopatra worked on Antony, how Josephine seduced Napoleon, how La Belle Otero amassed a fortune during the Belle Époque. It lets the man maintain his masculine illusions, although the woman is really the aggressor.

The second form of feminine boldness does not bother with such illusions: the woman simply takes charge, initiates the first kiss, pounces on her victim. This is how Marguerite de Valois, Lou Andreas-Salomé, and Madame Mao operated, and many men find it not emasculating at all but very exciting. It all depends on the insecurities and proclivities of the victim. This kind of feminine boldness has its allure because it is more rare than the first kind, but then all boldness is somewhat rare. A bold move will always stand out compared to the usual treatment afforded by the tepid husband, the timid lover, the hesitant suitor. That is how you want it. If everyone were bold, boldness would quickly lose its allure.

Symbol: *The Summer Storm. The hot days follow one another, with no end in sight. The earth is parched and dry. Then there comes a stillness in the air, thick and oppressive—the calm before the storm. Suddenly gusts of wind arrive, and flashes of lightning, exciting and frightening. Allowing no time to react or run for shelter, the rain comes, and brings with it a sense of release. At last.*

Reversal

If two people come together by mutual consent, that is not a seduction.
There is no reversal.

24

Beware the Aftereffects

*Danger follows
in the aftermath of a successful seduction. After emotions have reached a pitch, they often swing in the opposite direction—toward lassitude, distrust, disappointment. Beware of the long, drawn-out goodbye; insecure, the victim will cling and claw, and both sides will suffer. If you are to part, make the sacrifice swift and sudden. If necessary, deliberately break the spell you have created. If you are to stay in a relationship, beware a flagging of energy, a creeping familiarity that will spoil the fantasy. If the game is to go on, a second seduction is required. Never let the other person take you for granted—use absence, create pain and conflict, to keep the seduced on tenterhooks.*

Disenchantment

Seduction is a kind of spell, an *enchantment*. When you seduce, you are not quite your normal self; your presence is heightened, you are playing more than one role, you are strategically concealing your tics and insecurities. You have deliberately created mystery and suspense to make the victim experience a real-life drama. Under your spell, the seduced gets to feel transported away from the world of work and responsibility.

You will keep this going for as long as you want or can, heightening the tension, stirring the emotions, until the time finally comes to complete the seduction. After that, *disenchantment* almost inevitably sets in. The release of tension is followed by a letdown—of excitement, of energy—that can even materialize as a kind of disgust directed at you by your victim, even though what is happening is really a natural emotional course. It is as if a drug were wearing off, allowing the target to see you as you are—and being disappointed by the flaws that are inevitably there. On your side, you too have probably tended to idealize your targets somewhat, and once your desire is satisfied, you may see them as weak. (After all, they have given in to you.) You too may feel disappointed. *Even* in the best of circumstances, you are dealing now with the reality rather than the fantasy, and the flames will slowly die down—unless you start up a second seduction.

You may think that if the victim is to be sacrificed, none of this matters. But sometimes your effort to break off the relationship will inadvertently revive the spell for the other person, causing him or her to cling to you tenaciously. No, in either direction—sacrifice, or the integration of the two of you into a couple—you must take disenchantment into account. There is an art to the post-seduction as well.

Master the following tactics to avoid undesired aftereffects.

Fight against inertia. The sense that you are trying less hard is often enough to disenchant your victims. Reflecting back on what you did during the seduction, they will see you as manipulative: you wanted something then, and so you worked at it, but now you are taking them for granted. After the first seduction is over, then, show that it isn't really over—that you want to keep proving yourself, focusing your attention on them, luring them. That is often enough to keep them enchanted. Fight the tendency to let things settle into comfort and routine. Stir the pot, even if that means a

In a word, woe to the woman of too monotonous a temperament; her monotony satiates and disgusts. She is always the same statue, with her a man is always right. She is so good, so gentle, that she takes away from people the privilege of quarreling with her, and this is often such a great pleasure! Put in her place a vivacious woman, capricious, decided, to a certain limit, however, and things assume a different aspect. The lover will find in the same person the pleasure of variety. Temper is the salt, the quality which prevents it from becoming stale.

Restlessness, jealousy, quarrels, making friends again, spitefulness, all are the food of love. Enchanting variety? . . . Too constant a peace is productive of a deadly ennui. Uniformity kills love, for as soon as the spirit of method mingles in an affair of the heart, the passion disappears, languor supervenes, weariness begins to wear, and disgust ends the chapter.

—NINON DEL'ENCLOS,
LIFE, LETTERS AND EPICUREAN
PHILOSOPHY OF NINON DE
L'ENCLOS

Age cannot wither her, nor
 custom stale \ Her infinite
 variety: other women cloy \
 The appetites they feed;
 but she makes hungry \
 Where most she satisfies.

—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,
 ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

Cry hurrah, and hurrah
 again, for a splendid
 triumph— \ The quarry I
 sought has fallen into my
 toils. . . . \ Why hurry,
 young man? Your ship's
 still in mid-passage, \ And
 the harbor I seek is far
 away \ Through my verses,
 it's true, you may have
 acquired a mistress, \ But
 that's not enough. If my
 art \ Caught her, my art
 must keep her. To guard a
 conquest's \ As tricky as
 making it. There was luck
 in the chase, \ But this task
 will call for skill. If ever I
 needed support from \
 Venus and Son, and
 Erato—the Muse \ Erotic
 by name—it's now, for my
 too-ambitious project \ To
 relate some techniques that
 might restrain \ That fickle
 young globetrotter,
 Love. . . . \ To be loved
 you must show yourself
 lovable— \ Something
 good looks alone \ Can
 never achieve. You may be
 handsome as Homer's
 Nireus, \ Or young Hylas,
 snatched by those bad \
 Naiads; but all the same,
 to avoid a surprise
 desertion \ And keep your
 girl, it's best you have gifts
 of mind \ In addition to
 physical charms. Beauty's
 fragile, the passing \ Years
 diminish its substance, eat
 it away. \ Violets and
 bell-mouthed lilies do not
 bloom for ever, \ Hard
 thorns are all that's left of
 the blown rose. \ So with
 you, my handsome youth:

return to inflicting pain and pulling back. Never rely on your physical charms; even beauty loses its appeal with repeated exposure. Only strategy and effort will fight off inertia.

Maintain mystery. Familiarity is the death of seduction. If the target knows everything about you, the relationship gains a level of comfort but loses the elements of fantasy and anxiety. Without anxiety and a touch of fear, the erotic tension is dissolved. Remember: reality is not seductive. Keep some dark corners in your character, flout expectations, use absences to fragment the clinging, possessive pull that allows familiarity to creep in. Maintain some mystery or be taken for granted. You will have only yourself to blame for what follows.

Maintain lightness. Seduction is a game, not a matter of life and death. There will be a tendency in the "post" phase to take things more seriously and personally, and to whine about behavior that does not please you. Fight this as much as possible, for it will create exactly the effect you do not want. You cannot control the other person by nagging and complaining; it will make them defensive, exacerbating the problem. You will have more control if you maintain the proper spirit. Your playfulness, the little ruses you employ to please and delight them, your indulgence of their faults, will make your victims compliant and easy to handle. Never try to change your victims; instead, induce them to follow your lead.

Avoid the slow burnout. Often, one person becomes disenchanted but lacks the courage to make the break. Instead, he or she withdraws inside. As an absence, this psychological step back may inadvertently reignite the other person's desire, and a frustrating cycle begins of pursuit and retreat. Everything unravels, slowly. Once you feel disenchanted and know it is over, end it quickly, without apology. That would only insult the other person. A quick separation is often easier to get over—it is as if you had a problem being faithful, as opposed to your feeling that the seduced was no longer being desirable. Once you are truly disenchanted, there is no going back, so don't hang on out of false pity. It is more compassionate to make a clean break. If that seems inappropriate or too ugly, then deliberately disenchant the victim with anti-seductive behavior.

Examples of Sacrifice and Integration

1. In the 1770s, the handsome Chevalier de Belleruche began an affair with an older woman, the Marquise de Merteuil. He saw a lot of her, but soon she began to pick quarrels with him. Entranced by her unpredictable

moods, he worked hard to please her, showering her with attention and tenderness. Eventually the quarreling stopped, and as the days went by, de Belleruche felt confident that Merteuil loved him—until one day, when he came to visit, and found that she was not at home. Her footman greeted him at the door, and said he would take the chevalier to a secret house of Merteuil's outside Paris. There the marquise was waiting for him, in a renewed mood of coquettishness: she acted as if this were their first tryst. The chevalier had never seen her so ardent. He left at daybreak more in love than ever, but a few days later they quarreled again. The marquise seemed cold after that, and he saw her flirt with another man at a party. He felt horribly jealous, but as before, his solution was to become more attentive and loving. This, he thought, was the way to appease a difficult woman.

Now Merteuil had to spend a few weeks at her country home to handle some business there. She invited de Belleruche to join her for an extended stay, and he happily agreed, remembering the new life an earlier stay there had brought to their affair. Once again she surprised him: her affection and desire to please him were rejuvenated. This time, though, he did not have to leave the next morning. Days went by, and she refused to entertain any guests. The world would not intrude on them. And this time there was no coldness or quarreling, only good cheer and love. Yet now de Belleruche began to grow a little tired of the marquise. He thought of Paris and the balls he was missing; a week later he cut short his stay on some business pretext and hurried back to the city. Somehow the marquise did not seem so charming anymore.

Interpretation. The Marquise de Merteuil, a character in Choderlos de Laclos's novel *Dangerous Liaisons*, is a practiced seductress who never lets her affairs drag on too long. De Belleruche is young and handsome but that is all. As her interest in him wanes, she decides to bring him to the secret house to try to inject some novelty into the affair. This works for a while, but it isn't enough. The chevalier must be gotten rid of. She tries coldness, anger (hoping to start a fight), even a show of interest in another man. All this only intensifies his attachment. She can't just leave him—he might become vengeful, or try even harder to win her back. The solution: she deliberately breaks the spell by overwhelming him with attention. Abandoning the pattern of alternating warmth with coldness, she acts hopelessly in love. Alone with her day after day, with no space to fantasize, he no longer sees her as enchanting and breaks off the affair. This was her goal all along.

If a break with the victim is too messy or difficult (or you lack the nerve), then do the next best thing: deliberately break the spell that ties him or her to you. Aloofness or anger will only stir the other person's insecurity, producing a clinging horror. Instead, try suffocating them with love and attention: be clinging and possessive yourself, moon over the lover's every action and character trait, create the sense that this monotonous affection will

soon wrinkles will furrow \ Your body; soon, too soon, your hair turn gray. \ Then build an enduring mind, add that to your beauty: \ It alone will last till the flames \ Consume you. Keep your wits sharp, explore the liberal Arts, win mastery over Greek \ As well as Latin. Ulysses was eloquent, not handsome— \ Yet he filled sea-goddesses' hearts \ With aching passion. . . . \ Nothing works on a mood like tactful tolerance: harshness \ Provokes hatred, makes nasty rows. \ We detest the hawk and the wolf, those natural hunters, \ Always preying on timid flocks; \ But the gentle swallow goes safe from man's snares, we fashion \ Little turreted houses for doves. \ Keep clear of all quarrels, sharp-tongued recriminations— \ Love's sensitive, needs to be fed \ With gentle words. Leave nagging to wives and husbands, \ Let them, if they want, think it a natural law, \ A permanent state of feud. Wives thrive on wrangling, \ That's their dowry. A mistress should always hear \ What she wants to be told. . . . \ Use tender blandishments, language that caresses \ The ear, make her glad you came.

—OVID, *THE ART OF LOVE*,
TRANSLATED BY PETER GREEN

In Paris the band played a concert at the Palais Chaleux. They played the first half, and then there was an hour interval—intermission, we call it—during which there was a fabulous buffet on a great long table laden with delicious foods and cognac,

champagne, wine and that
rarity in Paris . . . Scotch.
The people, aristocrats and
servants, some on their
hands and knees, were
busily searching for
something on the floor. A
duchess, who was one of
the hostesses, had lost one
of her larger diamonds. . . .

The duchess finally got
bored seeing people looking
all over the floor for the
ring. She looked around
haughtily, then took Duke
by the arm, saying, "It
doesn't mean anything. I
can always get diamonds,
but how often can I get a
man like Duke
Ellington?" • She
disappeared with Duke.

The band started the
second half by themselves,
and eventually Duke
smilingly reappeared to
finish the concert.

—DON GEORGE, SWEET MAN:
THE REAL DUKE ELLINGTON

I do know, however, that
men become bigger-hearted
and better lovers once they
get the suspicion that their
mistresses care less about
them. When a man
believes himself to be the
one and only lover in a
woman's life, he'll whistle
and go his way. • I ought
to know; I have followed
this profession for the last
twenty years. If you want
me to, I will tell you what
happened to me a few years
ago. • At that time I had a
steady lover, a certain
Demophantos, a usurer
living near Poikile. He had
never given me more than
five drachmas and he
pretended to be my man.
But his love was only
superficial, Chrysis. He
never sighed, he never shed
tears for me and he never
spent the night waiting at

go on forever. No more mystery, no more coquetry, no more retreats—just endless love. Few can endure such a threat. A few weeks of it and they will be gone.

2. King Charles II of England was a devoted libertine. He kept a stable of lovers: there was always a favorite mistress from the aristocracy, and countless other less important women. He craved variety. One evening in 1668, the king spent an evening at the theater, where he conceived a sudden desire for a young actress called Nell Gwyn. She was pretty and innocent looking (only eighteen at the time), with a girlish glow in her cheeks, but the lines she recited onstage were so impudent and saucy. Deeply excited, the king decided he had to have her. After the performance he took her out for a night of drinking and merriment, then led her to his royal bed.

Nell was the daughter of a fishmonger, and had begun by selling oranges in the theater. She rose to the status of actress by sleeping with writers and other theater men. She had no shame about this. (When a footman of hers got into a fight with someone who said he worked for a whore, she broke it up by saying, "I am a whore. Find something better to fight about.") Nell's humor and sass amused the king greatly, but she was low-born, and an actress, and he could hardly make her a favorite. After several nights with "pretty, witty Nell," he returned to his principal mistress, Louise Keroualle, a well-born Frenchwoman.

Keroualle was a clever seductress. She played hard to get, and made it clear she would not give the king her virginity until he had promised her a title. It was the kind of chase Charles enjoyed, and he made her the Duchess of Portsmouth. But soon her greed and difficultness began to wear on his nerves. To divert himself, he turned back to Nell. Whenever he visited her, he was royally entertained with food, drink, and her great good humor. The king was bored or melancholy? She took him drinking or gambling, or out to the country, where she taught him to fish. She always had a pleasant surprise up her sleeve. What he loved most of all was her wit, the way she mocked the pretentious Keroualle. The duchess had the habit of going into mourning whenever a nobleman of another country died, as if he were a relation. Nell, too, would show up at the palace on these occasions dressed in black, and would sorrowfully say that she was mourning for the "Cham of Tartary" or the "Boog of Oronooko"—grand relatives of her own. To her face, she called the duchess "Squintabella" and the "Weeping Willow," because of her simpering manners and melancholic airs. Soon the king was spending more time with Nell than with the duchess. By the time Keroualle fell out of favor, Nell had in essence become the king's favorite, which she remained until his death, in 1685.

Interpretation. Nell Gwyn was ambitious. She wanted power and fame, but in the seventeenth century the only way a woman could get those

things was through a man—and who better than the king? But to get involved with Charles was a dangerous game. A man like him, easily bored and in need of variety, would use her for a fling, then find someone else.

Nell's strategy for the problem was simple: she let the king have his other girls, and never complained. Every time he saw her, though, she made sure he was entertained and diverted. She filled his senses with pleasure, acting as if his position had nothing to do with her love for him. Variety in women could wear on the nerves, tiring a busy king. They all made so many demands. If one woman could provide the same variety (and Nell, as an actress, knew how to play different roles), she had a big advantage. Nell never asked for money, so Charles plied her with wealth. She never asked to be the favorite—how could she? She was a commoner—but he elevated her to the position.

Many of your targets will be like kings and queens, particularly those who are easily bored. Once the seduction is over they will not only have trouble idealizing you, they may also turn to another man or woman whose unfamiliarity seems exciting and poetic. Needing other people to divert them, they often satisfy this need through variety. Do not play into the hands of these bored royals by complaining, becoming self-pitying, or demanding privileges. That would only further their natural disenchantment once the seduction is over. Instead, make them see that you are not the person they thought you were. Make it a delightful game to play new roles, to surprise them, to be an endless source of entertainment. It is almost impossible to resist a person who provides pleasure with no strings attached. When they are with you, keep the spirit light and playful. Play up the parts of your character they find delightful, but never let them feel they know you too well. In the end you will control the dynamic, and a haughty king or queen will become your abject slave.

my door. One day he came to see me, knocked at my door, but I did not open it. You see, I had the painter, Callides, in my room; Callides had given me ten drachmas. Demophantos swore and beat his fists on the door and left cursing me. Several days passed without my sending for him; Callides was still in my house. Thereupon Demophantos, who was already quite excited, went wild. He broke open my door, wept, pulled me about, threatened to kill me, tore my tunic, and did everything, in fact, that a jealous man would do, and finally presented me with six thousand drachmas. In consideration of this sum, I was his for a period of eight months. His wife used to say that I had bewitched him with some powder. That bewitching powder, to be sure, was jealousy. That is why, Chrysis, I advise you to act likewise with Corgi as.

—LUCIAN, *DIALOGUES OF THE COURTESANS*, TRANSLATED BY A. L. H.

3. When the great jazz composer Duke Ellington came to town, he and his band were always a big attraction, but especially so for the ladies of the area. They came to hear his music, of course, but once there they were mesmerized by "the Duke" himself. Onstage, Ellington was relaxed and elegant, and seemed to be having such a good time. His face was very handsome, and his bedroom eyes were infamous. (He slept very little, and his eyes had permanent pouches under them.) After the performance, some woman would inevitably invite him to her table, another would sneak into his dressing room, yet another would approach him on his way out. Duke made a point of being accessible, and when he kissed a woman's hand, his eyes and hers would meet for a moment. Sometimes she would signal an interest in him, and his glance in return would say he was more than ready. Sometimes his eyes were the first to speak; few women could resist that look, even the most happily married.

With the night's music still ringing in her ears, the woman would show up at Ellington's hotel room. He would be dressed in a stylish suit—he

"A wife is someone on whom one gazes all one's life; yet it is just as well if she be not beautiful"—so spake Jinta of the Gion. I'll is may be the flippant saying of a go-between, but it is not to be dismissed too lightly. . . . Besides, it is with beautiful women as with beautiful views: if one is forever looking at them, one soon tires of their charm. This I can judge from my own experience. One year I went to Matsushima, and, though at first I was moved by the beauty of the place and clapped my hands with

admiration, saying to myself, "Oh, if only I could bring some poet here to show him this great wonder!"—yet, after I had been gazing at the scene from morning until night, the myriad islands began to smell unpleasantly of seaweed, the waves that beat on Matsuyama Point became obstreperous; before I knew it I had let all the cherry blossoms at Shiogama scatter; in the morning I overslept and missed the dawn snow on Mount Kinka; nor was I much impressed by the evening moon at Nagané or Oshima; and in the end I picked up a few white and black pebbles on the cove and became engrossed in a game of Six Musashi with some children.

—IHARA SAIKAKU, *THE LIFE OF AN AMOROUS WOMAN*,
TRANSLATED BY IVAN MORRIS

Men despise women who love too much and unwisely.

—LUCIAN, *DIALOGUES OF THE COURTESANS*,
TRANSLATED BY A. L. H.

I shall endeavor briefly to outline to you how a love when gained can be deepened. They say it can be increased in particular by making it an infrequent and difficult business for lovers to set eyes on each other, for the greater the difficulty of offering and receiving shared consolations, the greater become the desire for, and feeling of love. Love also grows if one of the lovers shows anger to the other, for a lover is at once sorely afraid that a partner's

loved good clothes—and the room would be full of flowers; there would be a piano in the corner. He would play some music. His playing, and his elegant, nonchalant manner, would come across to the woman as pure theater, a pleasant continuation of the performance she had just witnessed. And when it was over, and Ellington had to leave town, he would give her a thoughtful gift. He would make it seem that the only thing taking him away from her was his touring. A few weeks later, the woman might hear a new Ellington song on the radio, with lyrics suggesting that she had inspired it. If ever he passed through the area again, she would find a way to be there, and Ellington would often renew the affair, if only for a night.

Sometime in the 1940s, two young women from Alabama came to Chicago to attend a debutante ball. Ellington and his band were the entertainment. He was the women's favorite musician, and after the show, they asked him for an autograph. He was so charming and engaging that one of the girls found herself asking what hotel he was staying at. He told them, with a big grin. The girls switched hotels, and later that day they called up Ellington and invited him to their room for a drink. He accepted. They wore beautiful negligees that they had just bought. When Ellington arrived, he acted completely naturally, as if the warm greeting they gave him were completely usual. The three of them ended up in the bedroom, when one of the young women had an idea: her mother adored Ellington. She had to call her now and put Ellington on the phone. Not at all put out by the suggestion, Ellington played along. For several minutes he talked to the mother on the telephone, lavishing her with compliments on the charming daughter she had raised, and telling her not to worry—he was taking good care of the girl. The daughter got back on the phone and said, "We're fine because we're with Mr. Ellington and he's such a perfect gentleman." As soon as she hung up, the three of them resumed the naughtiness they had started. To the two girls, it later seemed an innocent but unforgettable night of pleasure.

Sometimes several of these far-flung mistresses would show up at the same concert. Ellington would go up and kiss each of them four times (a habit of his designed for just this dilemma). And each of the ladies would assume she was the one with whom the kisses really mattered.

Interpretation. Duke Ellington had two passions: music and women. The two were interrelated. His endless affairs were a constant inspiration for his music; he also treated them as if they were theater, a work of art in themselves. When it came time to separate, he always managed it with a theatrical touch. A clever remark and a gift would make it seem that for him the affair was hardly over. Song lyrics referring to their night together would keep up the aesthetic atmosphere long after he had left town. No wonder women kept coming back for more. This was not a sexual affair, a tawdry one-nighter, but a heightened moment in the woman's life. And his carefree attitude made it impossible to feel guilty; thoughts of one's mother or

husband would not spoil the illusion. Ellington was never defensive or apologetic about his appetite for women; it was his nature and never the fault of the woman that he was unfaithful. And if he could not help his desires, how could she hold him responsible? It was impossible to hold a grudge against such a man or complain about his behavior.

Ellington was an Aesthetic Rake, a type whose obsession with women can only be satisfied by endless variety. A normal man's tomcatting will eventually land him in hot water, but the Aesthetic Rake rarely stirs up ugly emotions. After he seduces a woman, there is neither an integration nor a sacrifice. He keeps them hanging and hoping. The spell is not broken the next day, because the Aesthetic Rake makes the separation a pleasant, even elegant experience. The spell Ellington cast on a woman never went away.

The lesson is simple: keep the moments after the seduction and the separation in the same key as before, heightened, aesthetic, and pleasant. If you do not act guilty for your feckless behavior, it is hard for the other person to feel angry or resentful. Seduction is a lighthearted game, in which you invest all of your energy in the moment. The separation should be lighthearted and stylish as well: it is work, travel, some dreaded responsibility that calls you away. Create a memorable experience and then move on, and your victim will most likely remember the delightful seduction, not the separation. You will have made no enemies, and will have a lifelong harem of lovers to whom you can always return when you feel so inclined.

4. In 1899, twenty-year-old Baroness Frieda von Richthofen married an Englishman named Ernest Weekley, a professor at the University of Nottingham, and soon settled into the role of the professor's wife. Weekley treated her well, but she grew bored with their quiet life and his tepid love-making. On trips home to Germany she had a few love affairs, but this wasn't what she wanted either, and so she returned to being faithful and caring for their three children.

One day in 1912, a former student of Weekley's, David Herbert Lawrence, paid a visit to the couple's house. A struggling writer, Lawrence wanted the professor's professional advice. He was not home yet so Frieda entertained him. She had never met such an intense young man. He talked of his impoverished youth, his inability to understand women. And he listened attentively to her own complaints. He even scolded her for the bad tea she had made him—somehow, even though she was a baroness, this excited her.

Lawrence returned for later visits, but now to see Frieda, not Weekley. One day he confessed to her that he had fallen deeply in love with her. She admitted to similar feelings, and proposed they find a trysting spot. Instead Lawrence had a proposal of his own: Leave your husband tomorrow—leave him for me. What about the children? Frieda asked. If the children are more important than our love, Lawrence replied, then stay with them. But if you don't run away with me within a few days, you will never see me

*wrath when roused may
harden indefinitely. Love
again experiences increase
when genuine jealousy
preoccupies one of the
lovers, for jealousy is called
the nurturer of love. In fact
even if the lover is
oppressed not by genuine
jealousy but by base
suspicion, love always
increases because of it, and
becomes more powerful by
its own strength.*

—ANDREAS CAPELLANUS
ON LOVE, TRANSLATED
BY P. G. WALSH

*You've seen the fire that
smolders \ Down to
nothing, grows a crown of
pale ash \ Over its hidden
embers (yet a sprinkling of
sulphur \ Will suffice to
rekindle the flame)? \ So
with the heart. It grows
torpid from lack of worry, \
Needs a sharp stimulus to
elicit love. \ Get her
anxious about you, reheat
her tepid passions, \ Tell
her your guilty secrets,
watch her blanch. \ Thrice
fortunate that man, lucky
past calculation, \ Who can
make some poor injured
girl \ Torture herself over
him, lose voice, go pale,
pass out when \ The
unwelcome news reaches
her. Ah, may I \ Be the
one whose hair she tears
out in her fury, the one
whose \ Soft cheeks she rips
with her nails, \ Whom she
sees, eyes glaring, through
a rain of tears; without
whom, \ Try as she will,
she cannot live! \ How long
(you may ask) should you
leave her lamenting her
wrong? A little \ While
only, lest rage gather
strength \ Through
procrastination. By then
you should have her
sobbing \ All over your*

*chest, your arms tight
around her neck. \ You
want peace? Give her
kisses, make love to the girl
while she's crying— *
*That's the only way to
melt her angry mood.*

—OVID, *THE ART OF LOVE*,
TRANSLATED BY PETER GREEN

again. To Frieda the choice was horrific. She did not care at all about her husband, but the children were what she lived for. Even so, a few days later, she succumbed to Lawrence's proposal. How could she resist a man who was willing to ask for so much, to take such a gamble? If she refused she would always wonder, for such a man only passes once through your life.

The couple left England and headed for Germany. Frieda would mention sometimes how much she missed her children, but Lawrence had no patience with her: You are free to go back to them at any moment, he would say, but if you stay, don't look back. He took her on an arduous mountaineering trip in the Alps. A baroness, she had never experienced such hardship, but Lawrence was firm: if two people are in love, why should comfort matter?

In 1914, Frieda and Lawrence were married, but over the following years the same pattern repeated. He would scold her for her laziness, the nostalgia for her children, her abysmal housekeeping. He would take her on trips around the world, on very little money, never letting her settle down, although it was her fondest wish. They fought and fought. Once in New Mexico, in front of friends, he yelled at her, "Take that dirty cigarette out of your mouth! And stop sticking out that fat belly of yours!" "You'd better stop that talk or I'll tell about *your* things," she yelled back. (She had learned to give him a taste of his own medicine.) They both went outside. Their friends watched, worried it might turn violent. They disappeared from sight only to reappear moments later, arm in arm, laughing and mooning over one another. That was the most disconcerting thing about the Lawrences: married for years, they often behaved like infatuated newlyweds.

Interpretation. When Lawrence first met Frieda, he could sense right away what her weakness was: she felt trapped, in a stultifying relationship and a pampered life. Her husband, like so many husbands, was kind, but never paid enough attention to her. She craved drama and adventure, but was too lazy to get it on her own. Drama and adventure were just what Lawrence would provide. Instead of feeling trapped, she had the freedom to leave him at any moment. Instead of ignoring her, he criticized her constantly—at least he was paying attention, never taking her for granted. Instead of comfort and boredom, he gave her adventure and romance. The fights he picked with ritualistic frequency also ensured nonstop drama and the space for a powerful reconciliation. He inspired a touch of fear in her, which kept her off balance, never quite sure of him. As a result, the relationship never grew stale. It kept renewing itself.

If it is integration you are after, seduction must never stop. Otherwise boredom will creep in. And the best way to keep the process going is often to inject intermittent drama. This can be painful—opening old wounds, stirring up jealousy, withdrawing a little. (Do not confuse this behavior with nagging or carping criticism—this pain is strategic, designed to break up rigid patterns.) On the other hand it can also be pleasant: think about

proving yourself all over again, paying attention to nice little details, creating new temptations. In fact you should mix the two aspects, for too much pain or pleasure will not prove seductive. You are not repeating the first seduction, for the target has already surrendered. You are simply supplying little jolts, little wake-up calls that show two things: you have not stopped trying, and they cannot take you for granted. The little jolt will stir up the old poison, stoke the embers, bring you temporarily back to the beginning, when your involvement had a most pleasant freshness and tension.

Remember: comfort and security are the death of seduction. A shared journey with a little bit of hardship will do more to create a deep bond than will expensive gifts and luxuries. The young are right to not care about comfort in matters of love, and when you return to that sentiment, a youthful spark will reignite.

5. In 1652, the famous French courtesan Ninon de l'Enclos met and fell in love with the Marquis de Villarceaux. Ninon was a libertine; philosophy and pleasure were more important to her than love. But the marquis inspired new sensations: he was so bold, so impetuous, that for once in her life she let herself lose a little control. The marquis was possessive, a trait she normally abhorred. But in him it seemed natural, almost charming: he simply could not help himself. And so Ninon accepted his conditions: there were to be no other men in her life. For her part she told him that she would accept no money or gifts from him. This was to be about love, nothing else.

She rented a house opposite his in Paris, and they saw each other daily. One afternoon the marquis suddenly burst in and accused her of having another lover. His suspicions were unfounded, his accusations absurd, and she told him so. This did not satisfy him, and he stormed out. The next day Ninon received news that he had fallen quite ill. She was deeply concerned. As a desperate recourse, a sign of her love and submission, she decided to cut off her beautiful long hair, for which she was famous, and send it to him. The gesture worked, the marquis recovered, and they resumed their affair still more passionately. Friends and former lovers complained of her sudden transformation into the devoted woman, but she did not care—she was happy.

Now Ninon suggested that they go away together. The marquis, a married man, could not take her to his château, but a friend offered his own in the country as a refuge for the lovers. Weeks became months, and their little stay turned into a prolonged honeymoon. Slowly, though, Ninon had the feeling that something was wrong: the marquis was acting more like a husband. Although he was as passionate as before, he seemed so confident, as if he had certain rights and privileges that no other man could expect. The possessiveness that once had charmed her began to seem oppressive. Nor did he stimulate her mind. She could get other men, and equally handsome ones, to satisfy her physically without all that jealousy.

Once this realization set in, Ninon wasted no time. She told the marquis that she was returning to Paris, and that it was over for good. He begged and pleaded his case with much emotion—how could she be so heartless? Although moved, Ninon was firm. Explanations would only make it worse. She returned to Paris and resumed the life of a courtesan. Her abrupt departure apparently shook up the marquis, but apparently not too badly, for a few months later word reached her that he had fallen in love with another woman.

Interpretation. A woman often spends months pondering the subtle changes in her lover's behavior. She might complain or grow angry; she might even blame herself. Under the weight of her complaints, the man may change for a while, but an ugly dynamic and endless misunderstandings will ensue. What is the point of all of this? Once you are disenchanted it is really too late. Ninon could have tried to figure out what had disenchanted her—the good looks that now bored her, the lack of mental stimulation, the feeling of being taken for granted. But why waste time figuring it out? The spell was broken, so she moved on. She did not bother to explain, to worry about de Villarceaux's feelings, to make it all soft and easy for him. She simply left. The person who seems so considerate of the other, who tries to mend things or make excuses, is really just timid. Being kind in such matters can be rather cruel. The marquis was able to blame everything on his mistress's heartless, fickle nature. His vanity and pride intact, he could easily move on to another affair and put her behind him.

Not only does the long, lingering death of a relationship cause your partner needless pain, it will have long-term consequences for you as well, making you more skittish in the future, and weighing you down with guilt. Never feel guilty, even if you were both the seducer and the one who now feels disenchanted. It is not your fault. Nothing can last forever. You have created pleasure for your victims, stirring them out of their rut. If you make a clean quick break, in the long run they will appreciate it. The more you apologize, the more you insult their pride, stirring up negative feelings that will reverberate for years. Spare them the disingenuous explanations that only complicate matters. The victim should be sacrificed, not tortured.

6. After fifteen years under the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte, the French were exhausted. Too many wars, too much drama. When Napoleon was defeated in 1814, and was imprisoned on the island of Elba, the French were more than ready for peace and quiet. The Bourbons—the royal family deposed by the revolution of 1789—returned to power. The king was Louis XVIII; he was fat, boring, and pompous, but at least there would be peace.

Then, in February of 1815, news reached France of Napoleon's dramatic escape from Elba, with seven small ships and a thousand men. He

could head for America, start all over, but instead he was just crazy enough to land at Cannes. What was he thinking? A thousand men against all the armies of France? He set off toward Grenoble with his ragtag army. One at least had to admire his courage, his insatiable love of glory and of France.

Then, too, the French peasantry were spellbound at the sight of their former emperor. This man, after all, had redistributed a great deal of land to them, which the new king was trying to take back. They swooned at the sight of his famous eagle standards, revivals of symbols from the revolution. They left their fields and joined his march. Outside Grenoble, the first of the troops that the king sent to stop Napoleon caught up with him. Napoleon dismounted and walked on foot toward them. "Soldiers of the Fifth Army Corps!" he cried out. "Don't you know me? If there is one among you who wishes to kill his emperor, let him come forward and do so. Here I am!" He threw open his gray cloak, inviting them to take aim. There was a moment of silence, and then, from all sides, cries rang out of "Vive l'Empereur!" In one stroke, Napoleon's army had doubled in size.

The march continued. More soldiers, remembering the glory he had given them, changed sides. The city of Lyons fell without a battle. Generals with larger armies were dispatched to stop him, but the sight of Napoleon at the head of his troops was an overwhelmingly emotional experience for them, and they switched allegiance. King Louis fled France, abdicating in the process. On March 20, Napoleon reentered Paris and returned to the palace he had left only thirteen months before—all without having had to fire a single shot.

The peasantry and the soldiers had embraced Napoleon, but Parisians were less enthusiastic, particularly those who had served in his government. They feared the storms he would bring. Napoleon ruled the country for one hundred days, until the allies and his enemies from within defeated him. This time he was shipped off to the remote island of St. Helena, where he was to die.

Interpretation. Napoleon always thought of France, and his army, as a target to be wooed and seduced. As General de Ségur wrote of Napoleon: "In moments of sublime power, he no longer commands like a man, but seduces like a woman." In the case of his escape from Elba, he planned a bold, surprising gesture that would titillate a bored nation. He began his return to France among the people who would be most receptive to him: the peasantry who had revered him. He revived the symbols—the revolutionary colors, the eagle standards—that would stir up the old sentiments. He placed himself at the head of his army, daring his former soldiers to fire on him. The march on Paris that brought him back to power was pure theater, calculated for emotional effect every step of the way. What a contrast this former amour presented to the dolt of a king who now ruled them.

Napoleon's second seduction of France was not a classical seduction, following the usual steps, but a re-seduction. It was built on old emotions

and revived an old love. Once you have seduced a person (or a nation) there is almost always a lull, a slight letdown, which sometimes leads to a separation; it is surprisingly easy, though, to re-seduce the same target. The old feelings never go away, they lie dormant, and in a flash you can take your target by surprise.

It is a rare pleasure to be able to relive the past, and one's youth—to feel the old emotions. Like Napoleon, add a dramatic flair to your re-seduction: revive the old images, the symbols, the expressions that will stir memory. Like the French, your targets will tend to forget the ugliness of the separation and will remember only the good things. You should make this second seduction bold and quick, giving your targets no time to reflect or wonder. Like Napoleon, play on the contrast to their current lover, making his or her behavior seem timid and stodgy by comparison.

Not everyone will be receptive to a re-seduction, and some moments will be inappropriate. When Napoleon came back from Elba, the Parisians were too sophisticated for him, and could see right through him. Unlike the peasants of the South, they already knew him well; and his reentry came too soon, they were too worn out by him. If you want to re-seduce someone, choose one who does not know you so well, whose memories of you are cleaner, who is less suspicious by nature, and who is dissatisfied with present circumstances. Also, you might want to let some time pass. Time will restore your luster and make your faults fade away. Never see a separation or sacrifice as final. With a little drama and planning, a victim can be retaken in no time.

Symbol: *Embers*

bers, the remains of the fire on the morning after. Left to themselves, the embers will slowly die out. Do not leave the fire to chance and to the elements. To put it out, douse it, suffocate it, give it nothing to feed on. To bring it back to life, fan it, stoke it, until it blazes anew. Only your constant attention and vigilance will keep it burning.

Reversal

To keep a person enchanted, you will have to re-seduce them constantly. But you can allow a little familiarity to creep in. The target wants to feel that he or she is getting to know you. Too much mystery will create doubt. It will also be tiring for you, who will have to sustain it. The point is not to remain completely unfamiliar but rather, on occasion, to jolt victims out of their complacency, surprising them as you surprised them in the past. Do this right and they will have the delightful feeling that they are constantly getting to know more about you—but never too much.