

## Love is in the Air

*by Peter Mangiaracina*

Oh! That was wonderful. Mmmmm...

It keeps getting better and better. Ha! I know what you're going to say, "You always say that". But it's true. From the moment that we met in that store on Hollywood Boulevard, and I saw your face, God, that startled expression in your eyes, your mouth hanging open. Even *you* realized it was love at first sight. Well, I'll tell you something I haven't told you before: It was the same for me. And it all happened so quickly. One minute we're in the store, the next I'm strolling along the boulevard with you, and the only thing I could think of was getting you back to my apartment.

I need a cigarette. I think I have a pack in my pants on the floor. No, no. Don't get up. It's on my side of the bed. Just a second. Okay, got them. Ahh! Nothing like a non-filter cigarette after sex. Mind you they're getting harder and harder to find. Don't look at me like that. You do that every time I light up. What are you scared of? Think I'll drop an ash on you or something? Worried about second-hand smoke? That's just one of those myths puritan politicians dream up to have their way with congress.

Now where was I? Oh yeah. I was talking about us. Getting you back to my apartment that first time. Any hopes for privacy were shattered when my wife -- my ex-wife -- showed up at the door with her satanic French poodle in tow. Just when we were all set to consummate our mutual lust. Sorry about your having to hide under the bed. My wife and I had only been separated a few weeks; I didn't want to have a scene. But that damned poodle of hers! Never liked it. There's something demonic about it, the way its teeth kind of stick out past its dog- lips. I told my wife she ought to get braces for the creepy mutt, but she insisted, "There's no such thing as a doggie dentist!" Truth be told, that's one of the reasons I left her. I had a chronic case of gooseflesh living with that pink, curly-haired homo-dog from hell.

It must have been a living hell for you too, my love, hiding there under the bed, swallowing dust bunnies while my wife chattered away endlessly about needing more money and her trip to Bimini and her silly job decorating nails. She does go on. Not like you. You're a good listener. It's what I like most about you. As she droned on, I pictured us together, alone. If I could just get her out of the apartment so we could make love! My loins ached just to think about it.

It wasn't until I heard the barking and snarling that I realized the devil dog was under the bed with you. I could see your toes in his mouth from

where I was sitting. He savagely shook your foot as if he were trying to break a squirrel's neck. It's a wonder you didn't cry out. You are a paragon of self-control. It was all I could do to keep Irma from going into the bedroom to see what her "precious pookie" was doing. I made her sit still and went into the bedroom to pry your foot out of his tenacious maw. After I disengaged him from you, he sank his vampire teeth into my ankle. I wanted to kill that mutt. Mostly for what he did to you.

After Irma left, I thought about taking you to the hospital to have your wound looked at, but I realized that would look a little strange, so I affected the necessary repairs myself. Don't bother to thank me. I did it just as much for me as for you. I hope it didn't hurt much. It mustn't have, because you seemed just as eager to get it on afterwards as I was. Yes. And it keeps on getting better and better.

But you get a little depressed. No, no: Don't try to deny it. I know what makes a woman like you tick. I suppose it's from staying home all day doing nothing. I take you with me when I go on trips, so I guess you shouldn't really complain, my pumpkin. But those depressions. Wow! You sink into yourself. And they are becoming more and more frequent. Look at you. Already you're looking a little sunken-in. Maybe you caught something from the dog? Can rabies from a pink hell-hound cause depression?

At first I tried resuscitating you myself. But that was tough on the lungs. Then I bought the bicycle pump, and that worked better. At least I wasn't too exhausted after blowing you up to give you a good rogering. I'm telling you, darling, if you don't watch your step, I'll go back to that store on Hollywood Boulevard and pick me up another playmate. I hear they have new ones now with real pubic hair. Shaped like a heart.

Now, now. Don't pout. Give us a kiss.