

Exit the Queen

She had been sick for a long time now; ten years since the tremors had begun, five since her first of two heart seizures, about the same time, she found out she had some immune deficiency, along with three kaposi sarcomas blocking her throat, drooping her left eyelid and one defacing the left side of her penis. To say she was angry or even “wickedly depressed,” as one among her army of kamikaze doctors diagnosed, would be way late on the chain. The fact that she had been a type two diabetic with chronic bronchitis for god knows how long meant nothing to her. The miraculous rebounds she’d made over the last half decade... praying away tumors, regaining the use of her right arm and fingers with therapeutic oils, getting back to supporting herself (there, by the grace of God, a handful of good friends and her dad) didn’t impress her either; but the gnawing fact that she was no longer considered cute, except for her age, was driving Queen Lillian mad as a March hare. Yes, she did have a penis and yes, like it or not, she was a queen.

Just to catch you up to speed, in a nutshell, Queen Lil’s entire lot up to this low point in her life, had always placed her as the centerpiece at any occasion; be it one- on-one or gala... social or intimate. According to her and all of her charts, this Leo-Aquarius Rising-Six Life Path, nothing mattered nearly as much as the latter... the intimate. Naturally. She loved love – being in it and having it be in her – either way... as long as she believed either was so, she purred like Simba. Actually, she had to believe both were true all the time or she’d act worse than a cross between Lucy and Lon Cheney.

To stave off ever increasing lapses of despair, she’d dredge up and embellish some old memory or story of a happier time when she had it all, and knew best. This would lull her long enough to become who she thought she needed to be to do what she thought she had to do to have what she thought she needed... to reach her only true goal... spiritual enlightenment. At present she was teetering between jobs as an ad sales rep for a gay newspaper in Indiana, writing flattering restaurant reviews for free food. She never wrote anything critical; only about what she liked: food. At the same time she’d completed applications for returning to substitute teaching... the very thing that led to her first heart attack, which to this day, brings a ping to her chest at the slightest suggestion of anything close to third grade... nevertheless, she was considering it, just in case.

Truth be known, although she’d been a royal with potent powers since conception, her time track had been torn...tattered between not wanting to be a queen and missing it... wanting it all but not wanting to know or have it all so easily... wishing her satisfactions would come, rather, as gifts that she’d feel she’d somehow earned via her inner and outer beauty – payback for apparent lifetimes of suffering and service.

For the last 50 years, give or take trillions, she’d lowered herself into virtual debauchery and poverty. Now here she sat, confused, crying like... oh, Lucy Cheney... relocated bedside and dependant upon a devastatingly handsome young prince, who hailed from another royal line in deepest darkest South Africa ...a white guy... with a thick, gentry accent and a dick and a dowry to go with it... a kind soul with a wandering heart – just like Lil’s. She was desperately in love and insane...insane because she and her dashing

hero had star-crossed addictions: his -- sex and raw vegan food... hers -- gourmet meals, cigarettes with cocktails, banter, sex and, admittedly, him.

Despite the fact that she sacrificed the fags and alcohol (almost) and granted, she tried the raw diet... even said so-long to the two hustlers she'd kept gainfully employed while single...her dilemma was now manifold: his attraction to her was waning, his heart and hard-on were still wandering and she didn't know what to do with her libido – especially now that the medicos were toying with it. Not only was she grasping at straws as to how to live, where and why... who'd have her in this condition? Again, why? Such a stew!

Fully aware that she created and was continuing to create the mess she was in, her first stab at rehab was to devote her new chapter to art... to rehabilitate artists like herself... so, she set up a class to teach improvisational theatre.

The first class was a phenomenon that would have pleased her strongest critics... same for the second, though smaller. Still, she couldn't savor the joy and laughter she and her graduates brought to scores of adoring fans they'd amassed. She was still heartbroken and getting sicker with each thought.

She dove into self-help books, pried her lover for answers, poured her heart out on her sleeve... still, no peace. She wasn't getting it. She'd forgotten who she was and was fighting tooth and nail against a feared future of nothingness and her lover's and her books' recommendation that she learn to love what is... now.

What made her so afraid? The only logical answer is that she did. That scared her even more. She felt like she was heading for an abyss and didn't know how to stop the suction. Going back through all the advice, she tried paying attention to her breathing, calling a friend in need, taking a walk outdoors, looking at things near and far away... composing poems, calling friends... then, another piece of advice crossed her mind. It was a line from one of Neal Donald Walsh's books, *Tomorrow's God*: "There's nothing you have to do..." Wait a minute...another line from L. Ron Hubbard: "Life is a game..." She was passing the responsibility. No, the problem was, she was thinking. Oh, what a stew!

"What if the best is yet to come?" a voice in her head whispered. "Enter Me," he thought.