

**US FIRST: THE CHRONICLE OF A LOVE STORY, Part 1**, by  
Jean-Marie Avril

*"The Chronicle of a Love Story" is set in contemporary England, amidst the everyday tragedies and comical bits of two people struggling against the odds of a hostile environment, their own blunders and trials, their psychological up and downs and their search for healing. A story of both hope and despair... and miracle!*

I met her first at the Playhouse Theatre in Cheltenham, England. I was part of a small amateur theatre group specializing in experimental performances. I had finished the same year my degree in Women's Studies and Religious Studies, was working in the WHSmith storeroom and my best mate was an eccentric artist from Brittany, Cyril Borsalinec, living with me in my flat waiting to get his own accommodation through; he had just moved from London to Cheltenham in July 2002 after living 10 years in Hackney. My name is Yann Vari Ebrel and I'm from Nantes, Brittany, born in 1967 and I moved to London in late June 1991, squatting in 2, Hackney Road for 11 months before moving to Newport in May 1992. I moved to Cheltenham in September 1999 to commence my degree after completing my Access to Social Sciences certificate; and I won't present myself further as it would take us away from the main topic of this writing, which is my relationship with Jean Kelly. Well yeah from the start, that's what it's going to be: another piece on relationship, but I believe this one is special because I'm involved. So I met her that one evening we had to do some performance workshop. My being part of this group was something to do, a bit of socializing and hoping to get the opportunity to meet someone of the fair sex for either sex, an affair, a relationship or the whole

bloody lot. We were sometime in the Autumn. So I saw her and she had this long dark blue coat. She appeared stern to start with and I thought she was some kind of social worker, feminist and/or politically correct. Well, I wasn't too far off as she was working in a café kept by Saint Thomas, some Anglican organization looking after learning disability fellows, and she was preparing sandwiches and coffee, as it was a café. She also taught the Down syndrome people teaching skills and did craft workshops with them. By the way, they weren't all Down syndrome but for the sake of simplified writing, I'll probably use that expression, for learning disability guys is a bit long to use. So she was there in our group as a new member recruited by one of the other members, Nicholas Papaflovsky. His surname indicated some Polish origins. So I'm not sure now what the workshop was then about but it gave me the excuse to do a silly performance, which was to produce animal noises impersonating some kind of leprechraun or whatever. Well, you've got the idea. I felt she thought I was weird, but did I try to leave any other impressions? I don't think so. Life was partly a pain in the bum at the time with the job at WHSmith that I started to hate, unless I just hated it full stop. With the chaos accompanying the build up to Christmas 2003, the non-stop merchandise coming every day but Sunday and I wasn't working on the weekend. Thanks God for that. But basically, save for a few moments, it was shit and that's it. I had been off the dole for a few years, four years precisely, ending my other job at Littlewoods as a kitchen assistant as the one in WHSmith was becoming full time—I was normally working only 30 hours a week—for the build up to Christmas. The place and the people and the WHSmith logo were all getting on my nerves. In the evening before going to bed, I was doing my Kali puja, or devotional practice to Mother Kali. I hated getting up at 5.30 am or 6 am and having to go to WHSmith. I just hated it. I

would have been happy if I had a job as a library assistant. But working a shit job is exhausting enough and, on top of that, if you have to fill goddamn application forms for other jobs, it just isn't a life, it's only slave survival. I was also playing some Dungeon and Dragon type games on Borsalinec's computer.

I'm not sure the second time I met her. I think it was at the Weatherspoons, our theatre group having a meal there. So she was there and I started talking to her and the conversation started to flow all right. She bought me a few pints of beer and I was taken aback, neither positively nor negatively, just taken aback when she enthusiastically said: "I love shagging." So that kind of brings down the image of a female stern social worker I had in mind. The political correctness was kicked up in the arse, out of the mental picture so to speak. And I may have done Women's Studies, it didn't mean I got on with political correctness and my feminism was more a form of devotion to the Goddess. I was also hoping to find a partner during my studies. I didn't find one except for Clara Frypan. She was/is an excellent writer with unfortunately a few mental health problems. I believe that night she was talking to Jean. Clara and I weren't a couple anymore after a few months of break ups, getting back, arguments and only one sex session which was all right actually. So the two women were chatting together. Also present must have been Nicholas Papaflovsky, Daniel Brainy and Helena Crow, the brains of the operation so to speak, the operation being our theatre group. The two of them as well as Nicholas had degrees of a kind and Daniel was working on his PhD; he was an expert in French postmodernism, Derrida, Foucault and the like. As I was influenced by the philosophy of Rene Guenon, occultism, religions, the Goddess and other shits, therefore I found this postmodernist thing quite alien to me to say the least. The end of the monolithic Enlightenment discourse. To me we're in the start

of the end of the Kali Yuga, as said by Alain Danielou, and that was it for me concerning the meaning of life. I saw her again at the Playhouse. We talked about God and psychic abilities, and probably other things. At the time, my picture of Jean was encompassing the Aphrodite aspect ("I love shagging"), the God worshipper and the psychic aspects. Was I starting to fall in love? I don't know, but I know that her presence was increasingly growing within me, if I may speak that way. I saw her briefly at the, I believe, Christmas party of and at the Playhouse. Apparently, she was going to kiss me but I turned the kiss down. I don't know why. My shyness perhaps. I believe it's the same night I saw her, nicely clad in her dress, going away with Stephen and Christian, seemingly tipsy. My eye lingered on her. Did I long for her? That same night, Adelaide, helping with the dressing at the Playhouse, Clara Frypan and I went to the Kandisky nightclub. On the way back, Adelaide went home and Clara asked me if she could stay at mine. The following isn't hard to imagine. We kind of made love. I even didn't make the first move. Clara did. She was on top of me and my penis was bleeding afterwards. How the hell did that happen? I don't know. That it was embarrassing enough, but no more - shit happens - is also true. At one time, I had a conversation with Jean in which she revealed she was a single mum. For some reasons I had fondness and respect for single mums, and I made them the topic of my Social Science Access Certificate Course 'Dissertation' back in Newport before I came to Cheltenham for my degree. Jean read it later and told me it wasn't very good. Never mind. I remember around this late 2002-early 2003 an evening in which Jenny put her arms around mine as we strolled towards the bus stop and she was another member of our experimental theatre group. Jean walked with us. Jenny is a lovely girl, but my mind and eye were on Jean. And, unless I got it all wrong, I think Jenny wanted me, but I wanted

Jean. In early January, I went home to Brittany for a week of rest and reading at my parents' flat in St-Brevin-Les-Pins, after the chaos of WHSmith that left me exhausted. I got two Saturdays of life modeling at Stroud and it was nice to have a good cash in hand sum of money. On the 18th or 19th of January 2003, a Saturday, it was Nicholas Papaflovsky's birthday and the whole theatre group was there in this vegetarian and costly restaurant, that is to say: Daniel, Helena, Jenny, Nicholas, Cyril Borsalinec, Clara, Jean and I. I was next door to Jean, to her right hand side in fact, and Clara was sitting opposite me. For some reasons, Clara wanted to resume her relationship with me. The sex we had prior to Christmas was nice but inconsequential as far as I was concerned, but not to her. She was doing my head in for it was clear in my mind I didn't want a committed relationship with her, except on a friendship and occasional sex level. My mind was focused on Jean and, strangely enough, I wasn't panicky for, usually, when my eyes are on a woman, I start to panic and the whole thing usually backfires. So much for the English cliché of the French lover. Sorry buddy, but I don't fit the stereotype and, anyway, I'm from Brittany so I'm not truly French.

Following the meal at the restaurant, we all went to the TWO PIGS rock nightclub. Clara was pissed off with me as I refused her advances. Daniel had to calm her down and then she was pissed off with him. Jean tried to talk with her and then reported to me: "She's hard work." Then I remember the gallant lover coming to the rescue of sulky Clara for, behind her, was Holly, an alternative rock music guy I knew a little and it happened we played together once in the previous year Autumn with a Welsh fellow stage-named Marionette Friday. Anyway, Clara was sulky and Holly came to her rescue, putting the smile back on her face. I saw it happening and was pleased enough for her, and relieved as far as my situation was

concerned. No more dissonant vibes. I danced with Jean on Blondie's HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE. She invited me back to hers for some joints and listening to some psychedelic rock. So we went back to hers by taxi, a bit tipsy but not unbearably drunk. We talked, smoked some joints, talked and went to bed. It was cool for me. I hope it was the same for her too. We were partly dressed. I was lying to her left hand side. I started caressing her, gently, and then she jumped on me. Sensual caresses followed in unashamed nakedness and then, BANG, she demanded: "Fuck me!" So I fucked her, missionary position style and that was her choice. And that was a great night for me. And I know she enjoyed it too. The day after, Sunday to be precise, sometime between 10 am and noon, Jacky Boy, her 8-year-old youngest son, came to the bedroom. That was my first introduction to him. We later had breakfast and she invited me to stay for Sunday dinner. Harry, her older son and the one between Gertrude, her daughter then aged 16, and Jacky Boy, came back from some expedition with his mates to find some wild cat somewhere in the Costwolds. He saw me and I reckoned he thought: "Who's this weirdo?" The weirdo being me of course. Never mind. Harry was 12 years old at that time. And I stayed on and she didn't mind me staying over again. She granted me permission to have a bath. We watched some film, talked, smoked some dope and made love again. The morning after, I took the bus with her as she was going to work and I was going back to my apartment, as I didn't work on Monday, having back my 30 hours week after the full time pandemonium at WHSmith before Christmas. Borsalinec had left a while ago having found his own accommodation and she texted me as I was on my own in my flat, asking me to meet her on Tuesday at the Yates after work. Here I must concentrate on Jean's life story so to speak. She was born on 21 April 1970 in Harlow, Essex, at 3 or 3.30 AM. That gives her an

Aquarius rising sign, the Sun, Mercury, Venus and Saturn in Taurus. Jupiter is in Scorpio opposite the Sun. She has Mars in Gemini opposite Neptune in Sagittarius and her Moon in Libra is opposite my Sun in Aries, while her Saturn is conjunct both my North Node and Moon in Taurus. As far as I recall what she told me, she was depressed at the age of four. Her parents were foster parents for other kids and she was the first born of her three sisters and one brother. Her mum, Margaret Kelly, was eighteen or nineteen when Jean was born. As the age of nine she tried to drink bleach. Her life seemed to have been marred by psychological tragedies and a possible series of abuses inflicted on her when she was a child. Yet she had a relatively surprising amount of freedom during her teens, journeying to London to see Siouxsie and the Banshees. She had sex around twelve or thirteen and, after the deflowering, said something like: "I like that", and that was the start of her Aphrodite career so to speak, some three hundred lovers in about twenty years. She became pregnant with Gertrude when she was fifteen. The father, a slightly older lad named Keith, was maybe the first significant relationship in Jean's life. Her nonplussed mum confronted her with a dilemma: either him or the family. So she chose the family instead of her boyfriend, and this wasn't the last of her mum's interference in Jean's love life. The terrible mother-in-law was a reality as far as Jean's partners, except the worst one, was concerned. She eventually had to live with Gertrude in single-mother fashion outside the family home and she met Christopher. He was and is a sound engineer working for dub and reggae bands. He is the father of Harry who was born in 1990. Prior to his birth, Jean suffered a mental breakdown with an attempted suicide triggered by Christopher having an affair with a lesbian. Christopher, when he was confronted by Jean's anger, said something like: "But you had plenty of affairs behind my back!" He

arrived at the right time to prevent her suicide to be brought to completion. In the hospital, Jean one day read a Maya Angelou book and that triggered her to put her depression behind her and start anew.

Jean's parents and paternal grandparents, the Irish connection, moved from Harlow to Cheltenham in either the late 80s or the early 90s. And she who was to become my lover followed suit. So she came to Cheltenham, wearing a short skirt and some Punk-style tights, with Gertrude and Harry. And she met Jonas. One day the washing machine was broken or something, she had to give a phone call for a plumber and Jonas turned up. They became lovers and got married. Now Jonas is the worst of her past partners and the father of Jacky Boy, her youngest. Jonas seemed to have been favored by Margaret, Jean's mum. In her eyes, he was a proper lad, hardworking and manual, not one of those hippie-punk lazy gits, high on dope and so un-English. Jonas was also a control freak, a typical case of the "Charming Man Syndrome". Jean's life and past was repressed and in parts eradicated. Her rare vinyl were one day sold by the control freak. He destroyed a lot of the poetry she wrote as a teenager. Things had to be done on time and no other times. A bit like, but much worst than, the husband of this female character, Valentine I believe, portrayed in this UK film in which she leaves the time-exactitude obsessed git for Greece and has a love affair with one of the Mediterranean locals. Jonas the cook one day threw the dish into his wife's face when she displeased him by cooking him a vegetarian meal. He basically sounds like a Hebrew or Arab patriarch of the worst kind. Conversations between Jean and her kids were sort of prohibited by the plumber. Welcome back to the time of the Roman Republic patriarch who had power of life and death over his wife and kids. If Jean was going to watch the telly or read while her husband intended something different for



her, he would come and interrupt what Jean was doing and the conversation would drag on and on to resolve the situation in Jonas' eyes, but of course not in her eyes. The cook was to commit further atrocities by sexually abusing Gertrude and emotionally, possibly sexually, abusing Harry. He never abused his own son, justified in this way to Jean: "He (Jacky Boy) is my own son. The others are only step-kids." Jonas used to photograph Jean at the most inappropriate time and he photographed, in a voyeuristic fashion, couples snogging in their cars or bedrooms.

The Peartree home—such was the patronymic of Jean family now—was to her and her kids what Egypt had been to the Hebrews, to say the least. He crossed the line in such a way that it appeared like he never crossed it. Jean is convinced Jonas planned everything from the start to, among other things, get to the kids. He had a form of diabolical charm which even disarmed Harry's father one night in the Two Pigs nightclub. The latter, even knowing the evil done by Jonas, bought him a pint of beer as the cook's demonic charm was that strong. Another singularity of Jonas was to beat up lesbians as they weren't proper women in his distorted view. While this domestic dictatorship went on, Jean was working at the Marlow, looking after trouble and troubled teenagers. She ended up having an affair with a seventeen years old boy while she was in her mid twenties. In the enthusiasm of the moment, she wrote a note to Jonas telling him she was leaving him. Once the fire of enthusiasm abated, she went back to the totalitarian family unit. Jonas meanwhile reported it to Jean's mum. Another incident was Jonas kicking Jean's belly while she was pregnant with Jacky Boy. She thought, looking at his eyes' expression, that he was going to kill her. According to her, he was on his way to kill one of his best mates one day with whom, incidentally, she had had an affair. It's not even sure if the outburst of violence directed against her and his

supposedly good friend were linked with the affair. From what I believe she told me, she seemed to imply it was some form of psychosis. Jonas was addicted to gambling too and the domestic budget suffered a lot due to the addiction. Jonas being underhanded with the family money got him to be evicted by Jean. Her mind was made up and he knew it, as he left, but he returned now and again, staring at the family behind the window, somehow reminding me of the psychotic character in the film Halloween. A divorce ensued and he got away, but still was ordered not to interfere with Jacky Boy. Jonas's demonic subtlety allowed him to go legally unpunished for the abuse of Gertrude and Harry. The house at Whitman's Brook was now the property of Jean who had to contend with the psychological damage left in Gertrude and Harry. Her daughter was unruly for a while, getting into trouble and threatening a part-time lover her mum was seeing on a regular and part-time basis. Gertrude left the family home when she was around 15 or 16, finding a boyfriend in the person of Dubby John, a tough lad from Gloucester. Harry threw bricks through the window and dropped out of 'normal' school. Jean did some studies, getting a Certificate in Social Science and acquired a NVQ 3 at her new workplace, the café in which she looked after learning disability people by teaching, among other things, social skills. She was Mormon for a period of six or nine months in 2002, after having been more or less following Hare Krishna, apart from her baptism in the Anglican Church sometimes during her marriage, as her parents were sending her to the Hindu deity temple when she was in her teens. So this roughly was Jean's life and I'm sure I've left many elements that might actually intrude in our story as it unfolds.

Let's return to that first Tuesday at the Yates that became the first in a series of—Tuesday I believe—meetings at the Yates. Here the newspaper fell off my carrier bag and she was amused by it. Here

we deepened our knowledge of one another and dived further into love. We drank real ales and coffees. I returned every weekend to hers and, one of those first weekends, I went along with her to get some electric tokens for her meter and she had the distinct feeling that her mum was disapproving of her relationship with me. I have not even met the bloody woman. Margaret the future mother in law equally disapproved of me having a degree in Women's Studies—I had no idea if she disapproved of me having the other half of my degree in Religious Studies. Jean's mum was an actual challenge to my intellectual feminism. Jean and I made love every weekend, and I found it harder to live so to speak on my own in me flat during the week. Jean also directed me and the others of the experimental theatre group for AN EVENING WITH PINTER performed at the Playhouse in March 2003. I spent a few 'illegal'—from the point of view of WHSmith—evenings at hers during the week and either went back to work the day after or pretended to be sick. My mood was changing as our relationship deepened, becoming—I don't know if that's the right word to use but hopefully it conveys something of my feelings then—somewhat melancholy. The open heart is, feels vulnerable. We attended the Mirror-organized big demonstration (one million five hundred thousands roughly according to the Mail on Sunday) against the Bush–Blair planned invasion of Iraq, and she told me later that she knew during that day that she was falling in love with me. Partly as a result of doing her first demonstration for the last fifteen or twenty years, something she couldn't have done while living with the tyrant that was her first husband. We held each other's hand and the demonstration had a party atmosphere, it was musical and violence-free. I had my misgivings when a Moslem woman gave me an Islamist leaflet, me being at the time an overt worshipper of Mother Kali. As far as I can remember, we saw Christopher, father of Harry, the second of Jean. I remember seeing

also Christopher at Jean's house one weekend. She told me more of her life, the bizarre and the anecdotal, the comical and the tragic, the tormented and the sexual. She was definitely at that time an Aphrodite, a sexual goddess operating a sexual and feelings-based revolution in my life at that time. I started to gravitate around her and, I think, she around me. I took a week off in early March 2003 to look for other jobs as the one in WHSmith was still doing my head in. The Sunday on the eve of the Monday starting my week off, we were stoned—I was—and listening to some New Age electronic music CD I gave her. I started to panic as no hard on was on the way. It just was flat on. So I panicked and so did she. I was mentally confused and wondered what the hell was happening. She didn't like it much when I told her she was helping me with my own evolution, though I partly said that to reassure her, and the other reason being that indeed, willingly or unwillingly, she was contributing to my own evolution. I'm not sure what came eventually in my mind but I at least reassured myself a bit, and maybe her too. The morning after though, she felt depressed, hurt at my flat on and the panicky questioning of our relationship. But once in my flat, I just realized I was in love with her. I texted her that, mentioning I was being scared of it as well. She responded, with love, supporting my 'discovery' and that was one of the loveliest texts she ever sent me. I started my Kali-addressed devotional practices at Jean's after asking her and she even set a simple shrine on a round table in her bedroom as a display of love to me. I was sure melting down. I was introduced to her family and the Black Widow, i.e. her mum. She was mentioning her family anecdotes, notably Chantal who was suffering from heroin addiction and had personally experienced a bad car accident and prostitution to, I believe, finance her addiction. Harry was adamantly anti-drugs and Jean and I were making sure none of the two boys knew what we

were up to with the joints. She one day gave me a ring on which was inscribed: "Beauty is Truth." I felt moved by her giving me this ring as it was a further and marking proof of our deepening love. I was getting increasingly anxious at her taking a fortnight holiday in Crete. One day, she told me she was thinking about applying for a job in Stroud. I dreaded that prospect and must admit I was relieved when she told me she dropped the idea. According to her, it is I who first mentioned the option of living together seven days a week in the same home. So we were now willing to share our everyday lives. Alongside it, Daniel, from the experimental theatre group, was arranging for his play THE KING IN YELLOW to be staged at the Playhouse. Jean didn't like the reading of this play, to my slight disappointment as I thought it was piece of genius. She thought it put women down. I was assigned the role of the tramp in the play. I moved in at Jean's around the time of my 12th of April-dated birthday. Gradually, I was moving bits and pieces from my flat to her house: CDs, books, videos, etc. I can't really recall whether I moved exactly a little before or after my birthday, arranging with her next door neighbor to get the rest of my stuff removed to hers. On the Saturday closest to my birthday, unless it was the day of it, my mates from Newport David Bailiff, Kenneth Barnwood, Mark Jones-Jones, Gregory Williams and Johnny Devereux came to see me and were introduced to Jean and her home. Those were the guys I spent my last two years in Newport with. They were/are a bunch of artists, poets, weed lovers, astrology enthusiasts (etc.) that were/are among my best mates. Jean got funny with them coming in her house and I took notice but said nothing. My mates spoke to her kids no problem and went back to Newport, South Wales, apart from Johnny and Gregory who attended my birthday gathering at my flat the same Saturday evening. Presents also were Clara and her boyfriend, Nicholas and

Borsalinec. Jean joined us later. She felt depressed and suicidal before making up her mind to join me at the flat. She did have a good time with Clara, giggling and laughing as only women do when they're together. Jean's funny mood was among the first of many that I would come to know. She did buy me a book on fairies and some fairies cards and I was pleased. I was also playing the guitar in her house, putting to music the devotional poems dedicated to Mother Kali. By the way, this Deity caused the hostility of all her family towards her holiness. I recall the Black Widow called her "the god of death and destruction. She—she is a goddess not a god—destroys the psychological crap within us that prevents us seeing God. But that was useless to try telling them any of that. I bought, I remember, Jean a CD of Siouxsie, her first Banshees since she stopped buying their vinyl. She was happy and may have mentioned I was bringing her former self back to her, the one before Jonas. We were getting closer to the time when she had to leave England for Crete for a whole fortnight. Her family turned up, at her birthday I think, giving her presents, all more or less related to her holidays. Clothes, hat and other holiday stuff, etc. I was anxious, that I remember. The feeling of discomfort was getting stronger. I also eventually moved in hers and we had a discussion with the kids. Jacky Boy objected to my living with them. Harry didn't say much but didn't contradict his brother either. Their mum reaffirmed her authority over the choice made by her and I, and they seemed reluctantly to get on with it. To be honest, it was really weird for me too and I didn't feel much comfort in that situation. I wanted to move in her house to live with my love and, now that was done and I was filled with worries. I felt I was entering the kids' territory and that I had to tread carefully, which is easier said than done when it comes to me, especially when you're used to being the elephant in the china shop. So, even though I spent most of the

weekends of the last three months with her in her house, now that I have moved, emptied the old flat of my stuff and given notice, I was feeling uneasy and apprehensive. I don't know which night exactly but it was in the very early days of my living at Jean's, but one night I awoke screaming coming out of, more than likely, a nightmare. And, even though I didn't recall the contents of the nightmare, I thought it was to do with me living here and something bad happening, or some crap of the kind.

The fact that it was the first time I was doing something like this didn't add to the much-needed confidence that was absent.

The house was located in Whitman's Brook, on 47 Linwell Road. It was not a detached, or a semi-detached house. The front was located in what should have been the back and vice versa. The back of the house was therefore the front of the house as far as getting in and out was concerned. The house had a garden and a shade.

Planks and mattresses were outside by the kitchen window. Past the kitchen and you were in the living room. Then you went up the stairs and, to the right of the ascending steps was Jacky Boy's bedroom. Opposite the stairs, slightly to the right hand side was Harry's bedroom, the biggest of all. Directly opposite the stairs was Jean' bedroom, and to the left of them was the bathroom. The outer walls were gray, concrete-style. Inside the house were some framed pictures representing Klimt's paintings and 1930s, 1940s and 1950s old adverts. My books were spread between the living room, the closet under the stairs and Jean's bedroom. I was getting much earlier than in my flat for I started working at seven in the morning at WHSmith. So I was getting up earlier and she was sleeping. I was preparing myself, doing my devotional practice, eating my breakfast and walking half an hour from the housing estate to the workplace. And it's something I did for three or four months, until my working hours were completely re-arranged. Now and again, I

noticed a couple walking towards the town center, a, sorry to say, quite fat, or let's say far from thin-sized lady holding the hands of a blind man, and the two halves of the couple, especially the female one, will enter our story later on. I didn't like walking, apart from a few rare occasions, to my workplace. So here I was with an aspiration seemingly being fulfilled, and still I was moaning about the walking distance and the early day light aspect of the situation. Some people are hard to please. Meanwhile, the mother of my Newport mate, Johnny Devereux, passed away suddenly and I was to attend the funeral that was to take place in the first week Jean and her kids were away in Crete. The last Monday before my beloved's departure, I met with Jo with whom I used to work at Giardino Café in the Beechwood Arcade while I was a student. She's unfortunately alcoholic and I had a few drinks with her, chatting about life and ourselves and I returned later to Jean's. My beloved was a bit taken aback by my absence and re-assured when I got back to my new home. The 31st of April 2003, i.e. on the eve of her departure, was Beltane and was also the period of the sun transiting in Taurus crossing her natal Saturn, a little after my North Node and a little before my natal Moon, and so we celebrated Beltane by a handfasting - the neo-pagan marriage for a year and a day - and so we handfasted ourselves. She was later to take a dislike of neo-paganism, not because she thought it inherently wrong but because of the coming associations that were turning out to be sour. The handfasting was really intimate and love-based. Again, some of my lingering was concretized and so she departed the day after with Jacky Boy and Harry to Crete, leaving me a lovely note and the care-taking of the house for a fortnight and I was anxious. Harry's dad was also with them.

I then for a fortnight woke up everyday at about 5 or 5.30 AM and walked the half-an-hour between Jean's housing estate and WHSmith



on the high street in the town center. I also spent the fortnight cleaning the old flat and emptying the remaining contents with Borsalinec. I had in my possession some mushrooms given me a while back by an acquaintance from the university, unless I had gotten them from Newport. So the first weekend she and the kids were away in Crete, I took the mushrooms, smoked some hash, did a devotional practice to Mother Kali, played some devotional songs on the guitar and meditated on the fairy cards Jean offered me. So I was hoping for some high with the mushrooms to help create the right atmosphere for some 'spiritual work'. Instead came sadness, fear and anxiety over her being away and things not turning out well. The Monday after the mushrooms, I went down to Newport as I had to attend the funeral of my mate Johnny's mum. My mood was real worried and my concerns interfered with the funeral mood. The funeral over, I returned to Newport having been struck by Johnny and his dad Bobby together shedding tears as the coffin was moved into the church, unless we were all within the place of worship while they wept. My mood was anxious but gradually calmed down as the cleaning up and restoration of the old flat was getting near resolution. Jean and I spoke everyday. During one of the first conversations, she told she was missing me and was near willing to take a plane back to England. I insisted she did so. So over this fortnight she told me her holidays anecdotes of seeing a splendid sunset and the moon over Crete, of her meeting an English woman in the hotel, of how ashamed she was of some of the Brits' behavior in Crete, of how she one night had a ride on a motorbike driven by a Cretan guy was texting or executing another function of his mobile phone, of how she hold a gun one evening, of the bus driver taking them to a Greek wedding and driving back while drunk along narrow roads meandering round the mountain and how she had an experience of the Goddess via some sea cave while on a short boat

trip. I played Vigilante 8 often on the kids' Playstation and managed to get the day off for the Friday that was the day just after her return. Now I was getting impatient and eager rather than anxious. And in the evening of her return, I drank a bit but kind of moderately, played some Vigilante 8 and eventually she returned with Johnny, now brown before her. She too was sun-tanned. I told the kids I didn't want any disturbance that night and the morning after. While going up the stairs with her, I gently slapped her bum and she protested while, so it seemed, enjoying it. I pull downed her jeans skirt and realized she had no knickers on. Quite an agreeable surprise. I remembered her smiling in sexual anticipation over me pulling down the skirt and being astonished sighting a lack of female underwear. We made love, drank some Greek or Cretan spirit she brought back with her, talked for a while, got drunk and eventually went to sleep. She gave me a few holiday gifts from Crete. The last thing to mention is my putting up images of Kali, fairies and the Goddess over the house's walls following Jean's recommendation that I should make this house my territory as well. Those images were going to be meeting with disapproval from Jean's family, and especially from Harry to start with. It was nice to have the day off as I had probably had a bit of a hangover in any case. The day after the day off, that is to say the first Saturday after Jean's return from Crete, was Daniel's birthday, and again a party ensued that included most of the experimental theatre group, except for Jean. I took half an ecstasy and had a good time. Daniel's girlfriend was drunk and doing her usual drunken flirting with every male except her very boyfriend whose birthday it was. She wanted to kiss me, but I refused and gently pushed her away. Clara and her other half were going back to their place and I took the taxi with them. Inside the vehicle, Clara deplored the amorous advances of Daniel's girlfriend, feeling sorry for him. I walked fifteen minutes

past the home-returning couple's house and went back home finding Jean drumming some conga or African drum she had previously acquired through her workplace. She herself was drunk and, if I got that right, went moody after I left and so drunk some wine and started beating her drum to take her mind off the sulky feeling. We were OK after but it did leave a bit of something in my mind.

Another 'sign' occurred during Clara's house warming party which may well have occurred a week after Daniel's birthday gathering. Jean had decided to put a long purple-ish dress and no knickers on. The garden was narrow and Clara's parents were organizing the barbecue. Friends of Clara's boyfriend turned up as well as Borsalinec, as far as I can remember. But Jean didn't feel at ease and so we left relatively early. Bu this was maybe an 'omen' of what was to come later. I remember, on the more positive hand, us walking in the lower high street and meeting with Catherine, Jean's working-class mate. We bought some drink and ended up in Catherine's garden, drinking, talking and smoking joints until quite late in the evening. I was stoned and was looking with both admiration and adoration at beautiful and sexy Jean with her sun-tanned skin and her jeans skirt. Another evening, Jean, Jacky Boy and I were at the Haymaker pub in Jean's housing estate. And Jacky Boy related us a dream, real or untrue, in which I behaved inappropriately with the kids. Jean told him never to say such things and I mentioned to him honestly what my feelings were for his mum. Jacky Boy seemed satisfied with it. I also had a dream in which I had the choice, so to speak, between Jean and her kids and a Sharon Stone type woman. I was distressed in the dream to leave Jean and her kids behind, seeing them gathered and smiling. The first week after Jean's return from Crete—it could have been a Monday when I was off work— she came back from work and told me an incident had occurred in which Harry was involved. He had

removed the Kali pictures and other images I put on the walls of the house. Jean and I were sitting in the living room listening to Harry's problems with the pictures. Jean kind of asked me what was my wish and I answered I wanted the pictures back on the wall but that Harry should decide which one should be displayed. Harry seemed happy enough with that compromise. But that wasn't the end of the 'controversy' surrounding those pictures. One day Jean's parents came to see her and the kids and, as they were deciding to return home, Jean's dad sneered at one of my books on druids and some of the Kali pictures, invoking, to substantiate his disapproval, the INDIANA JONES film in which Kali is depicted as a goddess enjoying the sacrifices of 'innocents' by blood-thirsty cultists. To question the 'claims' of the film by stating that she inspired one of the greatest of modern India's saints, Sri Ramakrishna who lived and died in the 19th Century, and was, among other things, the spiritual father of Swami Vivekananda, and that Aldous Huxley wrote the preface of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, was a waste of time. Another incident involved the kids. We were at a family gathering for the house warming party of Jean's youngest sister's new flat which she started to share with her brother Mike - this was the heroin-addicted female sibling - and we were smoking joints after Jean's parents and grandparents left the apartment. I was kind of surveying the situation and watching Harry who saw his mum, oblivious of the situation, having a drag of the joint and I noticed the fact to her, and she said something like: "Oh shit". Back at her house, Harry lectured us both on drugs and the morning after, both him and Jacky Boy wanted to be placed in a foster home until they calmed down when their sister, alerted on the phone that their mum had done something 'bad', told them: "Is that all?" She was kind of smoking herself, although quite moderately, as the full time consumer of dope was her boyfriend. Harry and Jacky Boy were

spending some time on weekend with Jean's youngest sister, Chantal, and my beloved started suspecting she was telling them things about her and I which was turning the kids against us. One of the 'problems' of me moving in was that Jean promised in front of her family, sometimes after the ending of her first marriage, that she would never co-habitate with a man after what happened with Jonas, Jacky Boy's dad.

So we had those few children-free weekends in which we explored erotica and deepened our love for one another. One of those, which took place before I moved in, involved us watching MOLL FLANDERS. I was naked and she was dressed and the whole experience was profoundly erotic. It was during those weekends that I probably cross-dressed, one of my 'hobbies' which I told Jean pretty much from the start, as part of my Goddess-worshipping experience, and Jean seemed to go along with that, although she wasn't too sure about God as a Mother. She was also critical of the feminism that I studied while doing my Women's Studies, and she did say she thought my investigation of single mothers wasn't really what they experience, in her opinion. I'm not sure when our 'soft' sado-masochism started, but she told me that, one evening—Friday or Saturday, she stripped naked in front of males and they weren't expecting it and she was kind of directing them. She told me also she had sex with God one day. She was masturbating and 'something' took over and she experienced what she describes as having sex with God. The way she told me that and the candor in which it was expressed left no reason to doubt her experience and, to this day, I still reckon she had experienced a form of 'numinous' sex. But the sex was going to be problematic for us for a while.

I had some 'trouble' with my manhood and, one morning, we were going to the sex clinic in the General Hospital, after having agreed to an appointment. I remember Jean being sexy in her jeans skirt

and her light blue light top revealing her sensual breasts. So we went to the hospital and, I believe, she went first to the sex clinic. Then it was my turn, and I lay on a table surrounded by female nurses and students looking at and 'manipulating' my genitalia. Later on, Jean spoke to me alarmed that I was the source, according to the hospital, of the 'trouble' suggesting I had gotten the inconvenience from somebody else. This news may have sown in Jean's mind doubt as to my faithfulness to her. But faithful I remained and I thought the 'trouble' may have come from Clara, but the latter denied it. So, that created a bit of potential for misunderstanding between us, and the rehearsal for the KING IN YELLOW continued. I communicated to Jean the desire of Daniel to get a few more extras for the play, however I kind of discouraged Jean from doing so on account of her not liking the play. The thing was, she got suspicious as to why I didn't especially want her in the play. I just let it go and that was it, but a further doubt was in her mind. One Thursday evening we went to the Playhouse and Jean told Harry she would phone him at 10 or 10.30. She was in a jolly mood fuelled by a few drinks and I then looked at my watch—or my mobile—to check the time—it was around or past 10.30 PM—and told Jean who uttered an "Oh shit!" She eventually phoned him. On the way back, she wanted to stop at Borsalinek for further drinks, which I was opposed to, as she had to work the day after, and so did I. She gave in to my insistence and we went back home. Maybe some will accuse me of a paternalistic patriarchal attitude, but she thanked me the day after for not giving in to her wish for further drinks as the time was late and she, as previously said, had to work the morning after. At another evening at the Playhouse she saw in a rather more 'twat' attitude. She was enjoying herself and socializing and she was there for the audition for the autumn music hall. I was on bar duty and had a few drinks. I told her not to

speak to guys in a flirting manner, or whatever other shit I told her. She told me "not to give her any bollocking." I was being insecure and I did feel kind of the like in the house that, in June of this year, 2003, I felt compelled to resume my TARA practice for, before the intervention of Mother Kali, I was kind of Mahayanist, practicing the "praises and requests to the 21 TARAs". My spiritual mentor even told me that it was not really appropriate to adore Tara in the evening and Kali in the morning as it really should have been the other way round, and that to adore two goddesses from two different traditions was a silly idea anyway.

A good instance of the positive moments in our relationship was me putting one of her poems into music, as a song. The poem was composed in a single blow so to speak during an afternoon while she was in her workplace. The verses read as follows:

"I sat and drew my name in the sand I left my name so that you could read It and know that I had been there. Did you read my name before the tide Came in and washed my name away? I heard your name in the crashing of the waves. You left your name so that I could hear It and know that you had been there. I heard your name before the tide went Out and took your name away."

It's funny but, apart from the going to Daniel's house for the rehearsal of the KING IN YELLOW, the two devotional practices done the wrong way round, my guitar playing and so on, July 2003 appears dim in terms of the recollection of my relationship with Jean. I remember feeling insecure but that's about it. It may have been in this period that Harry knew I was cross-dressing, although due to his lack of reaction, we thought nothing more of it. The end of July is better recollected with the date of the KING IN YELLOW performance getting closer. I don't know the exact time happening of the incident to be mentioned, but it was during one of the last

rehearsals of the play. Jean was in Playhouse's room 4 with most of the cast, including myself, when Jenny—the one who seemingly wanted me in late 2002— turned up in an old fashioned but pretty dress and she did look pretty in this attire. But Jean's eyes noticed my admiring Jenny's look a first time and my beloved went downstairs to the Playhouse bar. I followed her, concerned, and she told me she was all right, just a bit down. A second time happened and this time she did ask me angry what the hell I was up to, and I was bewildered till she told me she noticed my eyes sparkling when noticing Jenny's look. I had no intention at all of going any further with Jenny and this was the first big-time manifestation of Jean's jealousy who has four planets in Taurus and one in Scorpio. So, astrologically, the jealousy is real. The day after, we had trouble mending our relationship and she was clearly upset. It was tough for me to reassure her. I had no designs at all towards Jenny but, with the 'trouble' on the manhood I had not long, that was a new piece of 'evidence' against me so to speak. The KING IN YELLOW was performed three times. Before that, we spent an entire Sunday afternoon for the dress rehearsal and that was claustrophobic enough. I was getting impatient and Jean was getting clearly distressed and my impatience increased seeing her in this state. The last of the performances was the last straw for me. One of the girls, Amanda, took a picture of Jenny who happened to sit unexpectedly besides me. I got panicky due to Jean's feelings and thought of warning her so that there wouldn't be any misunderstandings. But as soon as I mentioned Jenny's name, Jean said something like: "I don't wanna know." So I got really frustrated and angry trying to mend something and making things worse. I got drunk and despondent, crying my distress after the end of the performance. People congratulated me after the performance but I didn't give a fuck. This was really a bad evening for me. I ended up at Jean's,



drunk and agonizing, and she thought of finishing with me when, all of a sudden, the moaning subsided and the smile returned to my face when I realized we were home. I hardly had any recollection of going home and the continuation of my drunken protest. All this was related to me by Jean. The day after was spent, as far as I was concerned, in recovery from both a bad hangover and the trauma that the previous evening situation has brought upon me.

Fortunately, I was on holiday for I could never have gone to work in the state I was (I hate alcohol). We later went to a video shop to choose a film to watch later and we both at the same moment selected the same movie, which was an example of the telepathy between us. The movie was about an Indian passing himself for a sex guru to the citizens of a US city so that he could get a comfortable living. I was still into 'Kali' and Jean was still into 'Krishna'. We, I believe, performed another handfasting for the day after I was going to go away for 9 days, to the Goddess Conference in Glastonbury, which was going to be my third attendance at the event. I booked the event slightly prior to 'mating' with Jean. I remember the Saturday, the day after 'recovery day', I went to Glastonbury, leaving by taxi and tears were welling up in Jean's eyes and she gave me a 'come-back-soon' goodbye. That was and is still moving. I stopped at my Bristol-living astrologer friend Mark Jones-Jones before taking the coach for Glastonbury. I remember him telling me there was a lot of jealousy in Jean when I told him about her four planets in Taurus. I also told him her love to me was more direct, less filtered than mine to her. He answered me that's often the case with guys.

So we had started our relationship in the second half of January 2003, deepening our mutual love by my staying at her during weekends and my going to see her finish work on Friday, among the learning disability folks and the rest of the staff, or in sitting at the

Yates drinking beer or coffee. We've done together the demonstration against the war, explored bits and pieces of erotica for ourselves, combined our talents when I turned one of her poems into a song and performed our handfasting on the eve of her moving away to Crete for a fortnight. I moved into her house around the time of my birthday and my moving in was the end of the 'honeymoon' of our romance for things were getting serious now. Her kids weren't too happy to start with, and continued not to be too happy about it. I felt kind of vulnerable having left behind the 'security' of living single. After she came back from Crete, there was some 'trouble' with my manhood, which seemed to cast suspicious light on my faithfulness. We nearly split up during the performance of the KING IN YELLOW over me finding Jenny pretty in her theatre attire, even though I did not dream of have anything to do with her, apart from the acquaintanceship developed in the theatre group in which both Jean and I were members. The KING IN YELLOW created tension between Borsalinec and Nicholas as well, and Jean never wanted anything to do again with "heavy" experimental theatre. Now I was going to the Goddess Conference in the partial hope of refreshing myself after the drastic developments in my everyday life. As a matter of fact, our relationship was going to be even more seriously challenged a little while after my return from the Goddess Conference. The Goddess Conference did provide a needed break, and it was more a pilgrimage than a holiday. I did not have to buy the ticket as I got it instead by doing voluntary work at the Conference. I had now and against to look after Monique Shoe, one of the main guests and speakers. She was, in my mind, one of the 'gurus' of pagan feminism and we had exciting intellectual exchanges. One needed to look after her as she was unfortunately suffering from a terminal disease. To this day, it still has been an honor and a privilege to

attend to her needs, however inadequately I may have done the job. A pre-funeral or healing ceremony was performed to help her in her illness. Raethelia Baeth, a modern witch, gave a far-reaching talk on fairies which enabled me to compare them with the Dakinis of Tibetan tradition. The lore saying that fairies dislike dishonest fellows hit a chord within me that I haven't quite managed to understand, however real even though not quite articulated the feeling was and is. I also phoned Jean everyday and sent her, also everyday, a poem I would write for her, maybe influenced by the mood of the Goddess Conference. Here they are, simple things, although not in a chronological order:

HOW BEAUTIFUL When I see you Sleeping Trances takes  
our Remaining Transfigured When I see you Sleeping I sigh I  
sigh "How Beautiful" Loving you for ever

MEETING Dearest one Your hand on me heart Me hand on your  
heart Feel the pulse Feel the pulse My heart is melting While the  
pulse Boom boom boom Melting big time Melting big big  
time Melting big big big time I love you I miss you I adore you May  
our love Be a prayer to the lady And her consort SURRENDER The  
sound of the Twilight zone The voice of clouds Veiling the sky The  
waves stating Their ruthlessness The earth devouring Countless  
existences But you appear But you are here But you take me But you  
kiss me But you love me And I love you Surrender SENSUAL AND  
NAUGHTY GAMES She is so sensual Naughty games Affectionate  
naughty games Loving naughty games My beloved loves me And I  
love her Naughty games Spanking and vibrators I melt like an ice  
cube In the middle of Australia Because it's hot Hot with love, sex,  
caresses Kisses, spanking, vibrators Wow But love under the  
stars What a nice, lovely, wicked Piece I miss you. I love you I  
miss you. I love you

VERY SOON I soon should be back Very soon to offer You my  
love Very soon to caress Your princess skin Very soon to  
amuse You when I am A naked dancer Very soon to inflame Your  
heart as mines Is burning for you Very soon to plunge Into your  
eyes And kiss your soul I love you

There were lots of goddess paintings and artworks, and among these was the drawing of this woman holding a spiral maze in her hands while cross-legged. For some reason, this drawn woman—whom I would definitely describe as 'Taurus' and 'Venus' like, was also representing Jean as well. It's as if the female artist has connected with a goddess archetype that was also alive in Jean. Or maybe the female illustrator connected in a 'telepathic' and 'unconscious' way to Jean and myself and, as a result, had drawn this picture.

Probably too far-fetched! The Friday evening of the Conference—which was due to finish the Sunday right after—saw me agitated within. It was maybe due to the fact that Jean told me she was going out with Jenny to the Fish and Fiddle nightclub after their rehearsal for the coming autumn music hall. The day after, Jean told me she brought Jenny back to the house with two unknown guys met in the club. I wasn't pleased with that and had to call her stating my displeasure. She said she wasn't pleased either to have brought two guys and a woman in the intimate sanctuary that was our bedroom. From a guy who was attending a feminist conference, this may seem to be a case of patriarchal hypocrisy, but the point was I suffered enough of the suspicion over my manhood's 'trouble' and the unreal intentions that Jean thought I had towards Jenny, that it seemed she wasn't being very faithful-like by inviting two unknown guys back to the place in which we were both sleeping, talking, making love and worshipping—although, concerning the last, I was the one doing most of the job, at least externally through a ritual practice. In both her case and my case, we were both

'innocent'. At least, her doing the blunder was felt by me as some kind of balancing thing. I was suspicious, but so was she also. Contrary to me when I felt depressed at the start of her holiday in Crete and increasingly more on form as the date of her return was getting closer, for her it was the other way round. She felt better at the start and, as my return was getting closer, she felt more downhill not, as could be thought though there may be some unconscious truth especially when viewed in the light of what was to come after, by her dreading my return but it was due to her dreading my prolonged absence. At least that was what she told me. Some could say she lied to please me. But I've seen the proof of her statement, and the evidence was in the tears welling up in her eyes as I was leaving for the railway station by taxi. I had cross-dressed for the duration of the Goddess Conference and it might have been a daring idea the previous year, but the 'practice' was now becoming more serious and devoid of fun, 'fundamentalist' in a sort of way, and the red-neck hostility to it was more apparent and I was feeling perhaps more insecure. I bought a black skirt in Glastonbury and wore it, I believe, the following Saturday—or the one following—after my return from Glastonbury. I thought it might have been an interesting idea wearing it in Cheltenham High Street on our way to see Borsalinek. But that was a terrible mistake. Jean and I thought the kids would have been OK with this, but Harry, seeing me strolling in the skirt, called me a "dickhead". In the High Street, some hoodies threw a bottle at me calling me a "faggot". I did not repeat the experiment in this context. Right after the Goddess Conference, my working hours at WHSmith had changed and I was working 5 PM to 10 PM Monday to Friday. It must have been the Tuesday after Harry being upset by me wearing the skirt, and I was trying to reason with Harry—he was tuning his guitar—on why he was so annoyed with me wearing the skirt. That

made matters worse and Harry had a definitely potentially aggressive attitude, if not overtly intimidating. I phoned Jean announcing to her what had just taken place and she advised me to leave the house for now. I did as instructed and, in a pub, I told her I felt unsafe at home and she was upset because of it. Back at the house, Harry was packing his stuff. Jean tried to reason with him but he beat her up. I hold him panicky and annoyed, after he came down the stairs and I thought he was going to jump at me, saying something like: "Leave her alone! I love her!" and he didn't expect that. Jackie Boy was weeping and Harry left saying: "See you Jacky" before adding a "dickhead" addressed to me. He found accommodation at one of his mate's, and I was feeling like shit. I'm not sure what was going on in Jean's mind but, the day or two days after the incident, she texted me saying she was crying because "one of her babies (was) going away", and to Harlow in the case of Harry who was going to move with his dad. That same evening, I came back to the house, still feeling like shit, finding Jean weeping and frustrated over the video tape of her wedding eaten by the video player. I thought it had a symbolic value, as though it was saying an era was definitely over in Jean's life, for good and/or bad. And in a way it was, but the first stages of that were going to be tough in her inner and outer life. So that same fateful evening I got drunk and she thought of finishing the relationship but did not do so. I must have in the night flushed badly the toilets for the water was still kind of running the morning after. I didn't have to work for I was granted some compassionate leave by my boss for the stress brought upon by Harry's departure, and I was still feeling like shit. Before going to work, Jean told me to sort out the flushing. I tried to do so, but the toilets came off the wall into my hands and that was the last straw as far as I was concerned. Naked, I ran down the stairs screaming. The neighborhood thought someone was being

murdered and the cops and firemen were called. They saw a naked man crying and in evident distress. They phoned Jean who came right away to find the kitchen inundated with the water from the bathroom above pouring down through the wooden floor. She probably was too shocked to be shocked, but she didn't press charges as asked by the copper. They eventually stopped the water and Jean got me organized to start clearing up the mess. She phoned her dad in the meantime who came to fix the plumbing, shocked to see in me a French Frank Spencer. Certainly I was driving Jean's second kid away and wrecking the toilet plumbing. The day after, it was Saturday, we went out to see her parents and youngest sister to their local pub. Jean's sister didn't stay long on account of me being there. At least that was what Jean reckoned at the time. We went after to the Fish and Fiddle, which may appear inappropriate by some considering the gravity of the events, but we were so on edge we needed an outlet for our eventful week. And we found this outlet in a few drinks and dancing. Back home, Jean instantaneously became a dominatrix without the leather and that was perhaps the best 'Sado-Masochist' session ever occurring to me. That week had been an odd mixture of 'bad' and 'good' things. But I wasn't feeling wonderful about what had happened to Harry. As I was feeling fed up that this family was breaking down, I suggested to Jean that we went to see her daughter Gertrude, then aged 17, in Gloucester, as both the mum and the daughter were not on really good terms. Jean more or less kicked Gertrude out of the family home a little before the start of our relationship. The fact was that Gertrude processed the sexual abuse done to her by Jonas through anger and rebellion. Both Jean and Gertrude agreed on the idea of us seeing her in Gloucester, accompanied by Jacky Boy. We had a trip on the canal boat and later Jean told me that I helped in the mending of her relationship with her daughter. Another day, we

went to see Jean's daughter again but the mood was a little more miserable and, because I mentioned I had seen lately a 'person' I used to work with in the past, Jean started getting funny over the use of the word 'person' as she suspected the person to be female. It was true and it turned out that this person was a young woman who used to be part of the staff in the Littlewoods restaurant I was working in from 2001 to 2002 when I was a third year student. My anger at Jean's exaggerated suspicion calmed her down and she apologized quickly and behaved as if nothing happened. But I was a bit pissed off with it and, when I mentioned that later to her, not in a nasty way but in a civilized and, by then, much less angry manner, Jean became depressed and I had, as far as I recall, to comfort her. Another time, Borsalinec, Jacky Boy, Jean and I had a stroll around Stroud. The regretted departure of Harry changed some of the dynamics in the home. I was still insecure but now I wasn't so passive and cautious but more aggressive and, if it may be said, manly. To an extent, Harry had challenged my masculinity and I used to believe—wrongly or rightly—that I was a lesbian trapped in a man's body just a year earlier. I also was frustrated with the job, leading me nowhere and leaving me angry. Jean was afraid when she was seeing me pissed off, as she was thinking that I might leave her. Jean started to take pills against anxiety in September 2003 and she was continuing the rehearsal of her part in the music hall to be scheduled for late October 2003. I was often accompanying her to pick up Jacky Boy from his school before going to work. After work, I would go to the Playhouse to fetch Jean when she was rehearsing. I was insecure of her being among the theatre men. I also insisted to go the birthday party of her boss and friend Cecilia. To those manifestations of my insecurity, she responded with both a bit of annoyance and a lot of relief for she could also keep an eye on me as well. It is now clear that the honeymoon of our



relationship was now finished and we both had misgivings about it all—at least that's how it may sound now—and yet we both wanted to continue our relationship. The drink didn't improve our moods. One evening, I slapped her in the toilets after she told me she was expecting a kind of father-role from me as she was returning from her sexual adventures, and I just mentioned that in those circumstances I could have some sexual fun with others, and she stormed off hearing that. I then lost patience and my anger did the rest, although not as bad as what would happen nearly two years later. She was weeping after the slapping, screaming: "It's over Yann-Vari! It's over!" I then felt like shit and had a dream in which we were separated and I was continuing my shit job in WHSmith. I told her about the dream when we woke up the morning after and she told me that maybe it meant that I was going to leave WHSmith for good. At the time, after my disappointment for not securing a new job more of my taste at the newly open Ottokar, I started to do agency washing up and was enjoying being away from WHSmith. So I left the company and got a job at Early Learning Centre for the remaining November and December of 2003. I got the job because Jean told her mate who was then the local Early Learning Center manageress who hired me then pretty much right away. This was one of the many of Jean's interventions in my favor, and I still debate within me whether I have returned the favor to her with an exact 'amount' of fairness. I remember one time when I repaid her badly. Sometime in October, a Saturday night, unless it was a Friday evening, we went to her workplace Windows. In there she changed and put on a velvet red dress, stopping slightly above her tights-enveloped knees. She had no knickers on. From there, we went to the Fish and Fiddle, and she was real sexy, making me think of a '50s American young woman, a kind of Hollywood starlet at the very least. She was kind of speaking girlish and sensuously

and using the words "fuck" and "fucking" quite a few times. She made a real effort and I paid her back by drinking beer and too much whisky, having a go at her for being in the toilets for a long time talking with Susannah, a lesbian friend of mine I met in early 2001 and whose girlfriend used to be Jean's kids' baby sitter which was quite a 'synchronicity' surprise when I learned the fact later on. "It's a small world". Leaving the Fish and Fiddle, I managed to trip and fall and she had trouble getting me on my feet. I was walking with difficulty and slowly while still having a go at her. She did her best, while weeping, to rescue me from my many falls until, eventually, I went off wandering and she went back home alone, worried about me but eventually falling asleep. For my part, I forgot where I was and what had happened. It was freezing cold and I didn't know where I was going. I tried to sleep on some front door step, went panicky and hit the door yelling at the occupiers of the house to let me in as it was really cold. I managed to break the little window located in the top half of the door and walked off, until I recognized the housing estate and headed home. It must have been seven or eight in the morning and her youngest Jacky Boy was up a bit surprised to see his step dad in such a state in the morning. He asked me what happened. I answered: "I'm drunk" or "wrong" and headed upstairs. In the process, I lost my ID card and the charity shop-found £1-costing black leather coat I had, but this is nothing compared to what I estimate was the wrong done to her. She didn't seem much bothered by it. But I was feeling like crap and, to try to cool down, I started the translation of an unpublished occult novel sent to me by my French spiritual mentor who was the writer of the manuscript.