

Mendes
Wood
DM

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3 novels



Love creates plots which in turn define the destinies of its subjects, both courting and displeasing those who become involved in it.

Life is the arena for these love stories, a play staged outdoors.

3 NOVELS amplifies fictional stories that grew out of the narrator's love-life with three of his lovers ____ Sean, Javier and Jonas.

In the exhibition room, three panels with collages introduce these characters' profiles. An interplay of drawings and embroidering are placed on different surfaces and media.

The themes that most appear in these rooms are rife with erotic gestures, androerotic gestures, those concerned with addressing everyone and anyone who lives and breathes the male body in their veins, pulsating with erotic radiation and heat. Hence wanting it. And, from time to time, loving it.

All the rest... are stories.

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What follows are selected passages unveiled through these novels-- passages that are inconclusive since love itself never composes plot-lines with the same premise, a single answer or way out.

sean ___ the writer

___ we met in galway when I was traveling to work at the mayo institute and he was visiting his parents in ballyvaughan. sean is from this region, the youngest of seven brothers in a devoutly Catholic family, with a father who went to mass everyday while harvesting national memories of weeding the fields, famine and forced immigration, a scenario which his family, and indeed the entire country of Ireland, experienced in a not too distant past

___ we were happy to learn that we both live in London, something which would allow us to see one another frequently. sean worked for a publishing house that specialized in trips to all regions of rural Britain and, as such, he had to travel for long periods of time to detail each one of these journeys, photographing them and getting to know all local aspects in order to use this information as writing material

___ he could never deal with the fact that we lived in two different houses in London and his greatest joy came when we went to his little cottage in Lamberhurst, a peaceful locale southeast of London that was perfect for him to gather work material-- a place which he could return to without having to actually enter London. His enormous religious sensibility, fondness for cohabitation and need to be more together on a day-to-day basis made sean the kind of guy who loves sharing the same tube of toothpaste and clothes in his wardrobe with his companion

___ when the absences grew longer he would write me crumpled letters from his big sleeping bag, where he would sleep when the long distances or bad weather prevented him from returning

___ I ended up designing and dedicating a profile image of a man entirely covered in trees and tree branches since I saw sean as this noble thinker and nature lover

___ whether at his house in London or Lamberhurst, sean made sure to stress that those homes were mine as well, and anyone who happened to visit them would have no doubt about it, since in the master bedroom and all throughout the other rooms they would find numerous photos of us happy together, alongside images of his favorite places. Contrary to all this eagerness and affection, at that time, my soul was filled with vertigo, unable to look anywhere else but inward, a soul comprised of confused and selfish engineering

___ we had lots of fun together, we laughed for no reason whatsoever, we walked together endlessly, we read and didn't mind spending entire days at home without leaving the house, whenever we got such an opportunity

___ sean was gorgeous. He had an adonis-like, emblematic beauty, a captivating smile, a sweet personality and an extremely tender and caring way of making love. On windy days in those big glasses he used to wear, he had the air of an owl or a playful bird

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___ maybe... it was the fact that I brought him roses right away in the first weeks after we met, since he had never received roses from another man, which made him so fond of me and I believe that he really did love me...and this is the real reason...he was unable to believe that I would ever leave him later on...after all, who could ever leave a man like him? Tell me...who? Only a somber temperament like mine, and an astrological chart corrupted with self-sabotage could make such a thing possible

___ still, I knew inside that I was acting with a cleverness that would lead him on paths where he could get hurt. He, in turn, when he was at my place, among my books and the stone figurines that I collected, remarked that he felt invaded by a strange sensation of unreality...a premonition of his...

___ between my announcement that I was leaving him and the day we had scheduled for this to occur, there was lots of crying and sadness, remembering a prayer that I used to say before going to sleep as a child which described a place called the 'valley of tears'

___ and only long after I had come to understand that when I met him sean was an immaculate Sagittarius: a direct son of jupiter/zeus whose biggest aspiration in life was the endless search for a spirit transcending destination and death. At that point in his life, sean was one of those Sagittariuses who make a maniacal effort to be happy and have fun. I was the first person to wound him deeply, thus awakening his Chiron side, the mythical centaur and prophetic image of his zodiac sign. I was the one to wound him with the arrow treated with the blood of the hydra, a deadly poison which Chiron had to live with, along with his condition as an immortal

javier__ the architect

___ we met in Chicago, where we both lived

___ javier comes from a Cuban family, with intellectual grandparents, a family of fugitive, persecuted architects and poets. javier himself left Cuba in hiding with his aunt and uncle when he was seven. javier remembers the Havana cafes where his acquaintances spoke in hushed, quiet voices, leaning on the tables of terraces. Many of them knew that they would end up in jail, if not that day, the next one or the next week. As such, they were delicate and attentive with one another; they took off their hats and asked about their friends' families and...there and under those circumstances... serious literary misunderstandings that had lasted years were forgotten

___ knowing that I was against situations of great euphoria and noise, javier perhaps started to like me...when I suggested he come by my place some night, to cheer me up from my solitude. javier is 10 years younger than me and used to laugh when we began hanging out together, at what he called the conservative and old-fashioned ways and approaches that I took towards, for instance, conceiving a loving relationship or having sex...but...contrary to the conventional, he really liked the fact that I always seemed available and willing to make love in the most inhospitable locales, public places-- places that greatly interested him

___ though not at all religious, javier was very attuned to omens and premonitions. He used to hide a shrine to a saint in one of his home closets, and he would kneel and pray before systematically, insisting that no one watch him.

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___ his best friend was an Italian-Canadian, Gian Piero, who made his living as a gigolo. In addition to being a well-known and adept escort to men in high social positions [bankers and businessmen], men who turned to him for romantic rendezvous during ‘work hours’ when they could escape from their families, gian piero also made a living as a model for photographers.

___ the presence of the death of his friend and the political struggle in the u.s. at the time made javier a dedicated but serene activist for more wide-ranging public healthcare policies, in addition to, and, of course, the fight against discrimination against people of any sexual orientation

___ javier cared for and accompanied his friend until he closed his eyes, something which came as a relief to both of them. Meanwhile, I, and from another angle of knowledge, knew that gian piero had, inscribed in his astrological birth chart, a good series of psychic impulses and tensions, marked by aspects of the planet mars and pluto, which gave potential to the penalization and exterior violence to which he was later subjected.

___ javier got irritated with the superficial manner by which I approached political situations, as if I were talking about religion with conventional melancholy, he complained, as if political situations were something “unreal” but... overcoming our differences, we continued to enjoy the best of one another, between one another. I had my own personal visions and reservations with the nascent hedonism in the world in that decade...a hedonism that might overshadow the struggles that seem to be most vital to gay people, those most directly connected to civil rights and the transparency of the life of two men or two women when living together and part of the social fabric, especially when these subjects were fathers and mothers, constituting a new and ‘strange family’ with partners of the same sex.

___ javier was an aesthete in all senses, a lover of ornamental and convoluted forms, and his greatest architectural passions were the capitals of columns and gothic arches that utilized the jawbones of sperm whales

___ he had an architectural firm with a few partners, but javier also complemented his income by technically designing objects

___ javier never thought that it would be possible for us to live in the same house: for him, the subtle details involved in decorating and taking care of a home were an obsession, while for me this was a path that I had left behind. Javier is one of those men who are truly invested in a penthouse lifestyle, fueled by daquiris, negronis and bloody maries

___ we broke up without offending each other, and, to this day, we use make use of our time and our attention so that we what we receive from one another never ends or loses its beauty

jonas ___ the photographer

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___ a few minutes after we started talking in a piazza in Naples, jonas took me in his arms and led me to the hotel where he was staying. We spent a few days and nights there, talking with our eyes and fucking with kindness and affection

___ jonas was a photographer who specialized in aerial photos, both of nearly inaccessible natural locales and urban and industrial spaces. His normal life routine consisted of renting temporary studios around the world, being a professional known for accepting dangerous, difficult and distant assignments. He piloted small airplanes and was able to fly over desolate, deserted places, without any need for help from an assistant: and he had an exceptional capacity for concentration and abstraction in producing images.

___ a solitary character, a scholar, a traveler and a polyglot, jonas abhorred any task that linked to him to an ordinary daily routine or any activity that removes his anonymity

___ as such, and for all these reasons, he proposed and produced extravagant encounters and simply asked that I accompany him in silence. jonas carefully searched for spacious rooms in forgotten cities for us, and invariably brought with him a small sound system. He would select and play romantic songs of different origins and...invite me to dance with him. Tears often came to his eyes when we allowed ourselves to become emotional and taken by the heat of our bodies... and the music

___ a pure Gemini, jonas made it clear and understood how difficult it was for him to learn that which he was subjected to: the negotiation of his opposite realities, his duality, a struggle from which he never fled. He is an exemplary representative of Hermes, the archetype of his zodiac sign, a Hermes without one designated place, since the only place possible for him is the frontier, the path, the journey and the crossroads, where the casualties of suicides, hangings and criminals are buried.

___ he grew impatient with people who didn't narrate or comment on their own misery or degrees of madness

___ when on land, jonas loved and studied wild horses and chrysalises

___ he liked extreme tattoos and his body had plenty of tattoos, leaving part of it free to in the future engrave a poem which he had been preparing little by little all his life

___ until the day when, with no specific sign, and taking advantage of the pretense of me going to buy some specific bread at the best bakery in the village, while he prepared another one of our famous and passionate breakfasts in bed, jonas left me. It was early one morning and we were in a hotel room in the desert in Chile. When I got back, I found the room as empty and cold as the landscape outside. The only thing he left in the hotel room was a heavy coat of his with some unrelated objects in the pockets, and no word at all.

___ I coped by imagining that I had provoked some ecstatic energy in his heart. And that he, in his prince-like soul, would have the need to renovate this heartbeat. Furthermore, I took it upon myself to return home with the abandoned coat and paint a tree on the back in order for all that had occurred between us to take root in my heart and memory

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___ jonas used to say that of the philosophies in his knowledge, nowadays it was the maxims of philip marlowe, raymond chandler's fictional private investigator, that he considered most fitting and direct for a reading of the modern human condition and...taking out a small notebook that he always carried with him fired off * we can't escape ourselves *weapons never solve anything ___ they're just an evil curtain for a second evil action * and, of all the maxims that he wrote down, he constantly repeated the one he considered brilliant when looking into another man's soul and considering the nature of masculinity in our time. the maxim said: * if I weren't hard, I wouldn't be alive. If I could never be tender, I wouldn't deserve to be alive

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