

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Photographs and Lyrics
by

SIGURD OLIVIER

For André & Toni

Also by Sigurd Olivier (with Mark Swift)

“Gentlewoman”

Published in South Africa by

Don Nelson

International edition published by

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MAGIC MIRROR

CARL ROGERS, RENOWNED PSYCHOLOGIST
AND NOBEL PEACE PRIZE NOMINEE, WROTE
OF THE BOOK “TOUCH LOVE”

“In beautiful photographs and poetic words, this book celebrates the tender and delicate, and the strong and powerful aspects of sexual love. It is an appreciation of the wonder of loving flesh touching loving flesh. It is done with both sensitivity and passion. Those who have been put off by books on sexual techniques, described in almost mechanical fashion, will find here the richly sensuous beauty of our sexual nature. ‘Touch Love’ makes a significant contribution to our living and loving.”

“Immaculate Conception” uses all the photographs from “Touch Love”. The original poetry, however, has been replaced with the lyrics of the song “Immaculate Conception”, a CD of which comes with this book.

FOREWORD

Images of humankind's most basic need, the need to touch and be touched, to love and be loved, are presented in this book through photographs and words of great gentleness, sensitivity and caring.

Over the years many books have been written on love and sex. This work is not about sex as such. It is about the physical expression of our yearning for intimacy, to know and be known to another as we truly are. James Hillman, one of the world's foremost depth psychologists, stresses that it is "Reveal thyself" and not "Know thyself" which is of the greatest importance. For it is only when we experience being known and accepted as we really are, naked, without frills, literally and figuratively, that we truly come to grips with the full extent of what it means to be human.

In bringing forth ever so gently how intimate and important touch can be, this book fulfills an urgent need. It calls for a response to one's love partner which is filled with tenderness, respect and understanding of the other's needs and fears and hesitations. It conveys the importance of establishing a climate in which each partner can flourish to the full extent of his or her potential for physical and emotional intimacy.

For what is touch
but a wordless exploration
an expression of feeling by feeling
an unspoken explanation.

How can you be in touch without touching?

How can you have feeling if you don't feel?

'I love you' is easy to say.

How about telling me you love me

by touching me and letting me touch you?

is the way a young woman in a third year psychology class captured the magic power of touch.

At times, I have experienced the need for physical contact so strongly that,

I woke up at three o'clock in the morning

with a lump in my throat,

crying out to be held, to be hugged,

to be nourished, to be cherished, to be loved,

to be touched,

to be touched by other people

to be touched by their fingers, their hands, their bodies.

To touch, to be touched, to hold, to be held,

To care, to be cared for, to love, to be loved, to hug, to be hugged.

to hold, to be held-

to hold, to be held-

to hold, to be held-

sing it as a song

I will write the score if you compose the music-

to hold, to be held,

a melody, a melody,
a melody of one of life's secret and hidden things
one of life's easiest things
one of life's gentlest things
one of life's strangest things
one of life's most difficult things.
If I touch you and you touch me
a moment or two, a day or two
a week or two, a year or two
a memory, a memory
a memory that will always be
that will always be with me, with you, with you and me.

The magic and sensual power of touch is demonstrated in many forms in this book - the light touch of a fingertip, the pressure of a hand, the caress of a foot. How expressive and sensual can the intertwining of two feet not be? How wondrous the brush of a woman's hair, the hardness of a man's body? Poets throughout the ages have sung about the power of the human body. e.e. cummings is one such poet who rejoiced in physical love and could openly say:

i like my body when it is with your
body. It is so quite new a thing.
Muscles better and nerves more.
i like your body. i like what it does,
i like its hows. i like to feel the spine

of your body and its bones, and the trembling
- firm - smoothness and which i will
again and again and again
kiss, i like kissing this and that of you,
i like, slowly stroking the, shocking fuzz
of your electric fur, and what-is-it comes
over parting flesh And eyes big love-crumbs,
and possibly i like the thrill
of under me you so quite new.

This book certainly fulfills an essential function in highlighting the forgotten power of our sense of touch. It is difficult to understand how it has come about that we have strayed so far from attributing to touch the central place it deserves in our lives. The images presented here portray that when we touch sensuously we touch with care. When we touch with respect we touch sexually. We affirm each other in the depth of our being in the way we touch.

Not only poets, but clinical psychologists and scientists have realised the importance of expressing our love for each other by touching each other. We know that children grow when they are touched. When they are deprived of touch, their growth is stunted. To be touched and held, to be caressed and rocked, are not luxuries for the infant, but as essential for development as food and drink.

It is not only physical, but also emotional growth that is at stake, and not only among children, but also adults. What is more, the same is true in the animal world. The most dramatic series of experiments demonstrating the life-giving nature of touch, of physical contact, has been

that conducted at the University of Wisconsin under the guidance of Harry Harlow.

Depriving infant rhesus monkeys of the contact of their mother and peers soon after birth causes great emotional and learning disabilities if continued for an extended duration of time. Several decades of research, with primates and other animal species, have demonstrated how important it is for all living organisms to have physical contact with each other.

The healing and therapeutic value of touch has been demonstrated again and again in both the animal and human world. If, after an extended period of contact deprivation, monkeys are allowed free contact with their peers for only a limited time each day, they grow up to become relatively fine monkey beings.

Nurturant touch also forms part of different approaches to psychotherapy. It features prominently in many encounter groups, whereas some therapies make extensive use of regression to early infancy. While the individual is held in the protective enclosure of the therapist's arms, he or she is allowed to re-experience the trauma associated with parental deprivation in the early years.

Just how far Western civilization has moved along the road of de-emphasizing interpersonal tenderness can be depicted in the laws governing touch. In 1978, the then Minister of Health, stated explicitly in a speech to the South African Psychological Associations that "procedures which involve physical contact between therapist and patient will not be tolerated".

In contrast is the attitude expressed by A. Montagu, in "Touching: The human significance of the skin" (1978). He writes: To a very significant extent a measure of the individual's development as a human being is the extent to which he or she is freely able to embrace another and enjoy the embraces of others. (p. 228) "I hunger for your touch" may have been

sung countless times, yet it expresses an eternal truth, with magical nurturing properties.

It is important, as the words and visual images in this book convey, to be in touch inwardly as well. It is imperative that we become fully aware of the happenings experienced within our skins. These ongoing psycho-physiological processes, and not the opinions of other people, are the guidelines by which we are to direct our behaviour. In order to become fully whole, to own all of ourselves, we need to be aware of and congruent with the continuous play of sensations and emotions going on inside us. It is important to listen to the rhythm of our bodily functioning, the beat of our heart, the sweat of our pulse. In order to express oneself truthfully and also to have a satisfactory sexual experience one needs to be in tune with one's body - its signals and responses. If you practise experiencing all your senses in relation to sex it becomes an exhilarating experience.

It is no small wonder, therefore, that touch is perhaps the first stepping stone into our search for soul. Touch does so much. It says so much. It makes us whole. It unites us with our other self, the male in the female, the female in the male. In combining so many aspects of touch - the nurturing, the celebratory, the sexual, the receptive and the assertive - the images in this book transport us to a plane of being which is so much more than we usually are. It raises our expectations of intimacy and imbues our interpersonal relationships with infinite meaning. It is indeed a welcome celebration of a gift we are quite ignorant of possessing. For a more human future I hope the message of this book is heard by millions of people.

- Len Holdstock, Ph.D.

Reader in Neuropsychology, University of the Witwatersrand.







Here we are a hundred
Lovers down the line
Yet it's always new
Each and ev'ry time.
Thus with a blush we say:
"Show me yours, I'll show you mine."
This is how we start to
Worship at the shrine
Seeking with the other
All that is divine.

Seeking to uncover
The beauty in the other
Seeking with the other
That which is
Divine...









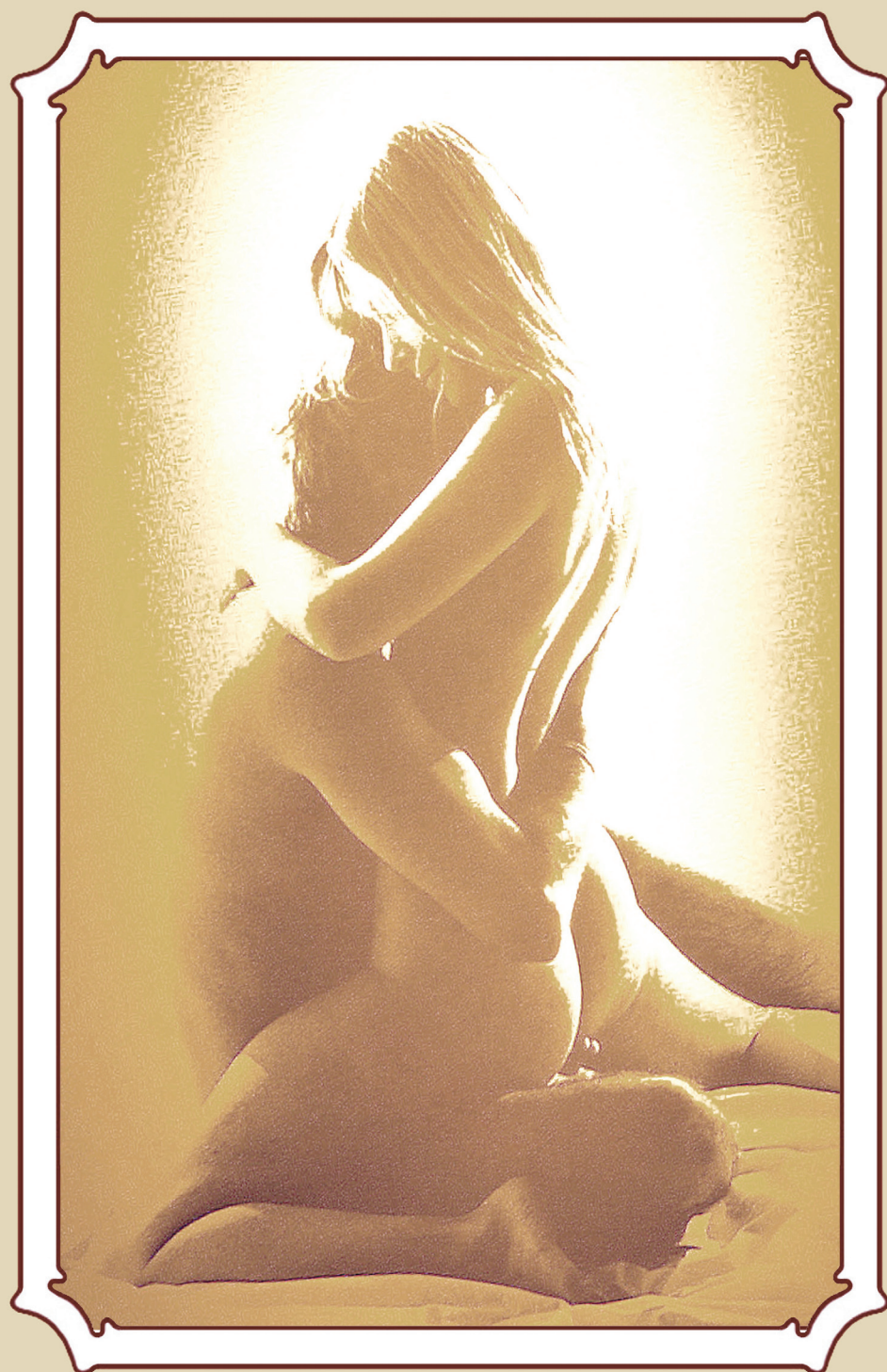
My Pregnant Mother





In my teens, I had dreams
With languid and erotic scenes
Of a lover who'd explore
Secret places to adore
Warm breath in my undergrowth
Hidden treasure for us both.
Play with me, I am the toy
Wired to bring awesome joy.
Turn me on, I'm all aglow
Amat amas amo....

Wriggle, writhe, wring & wrestle
Furry coves where you may nestle
Tumble tangle seraphim
We..... are inter -
-Twined...



Woman with baby



John and Jane Doe





Yeah though I walk through the
Valley of Death
I shall fear
No evil
For my rod and staff
They shall comfort me
And lead me
To pastures green
Where I shall dream
Of you my queen.

With your fragrant allure
And your taste so pure
You are my
Lorelei... of the
Rhine...



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Hands clasped together



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There are wise men who dare to say
Making love is more a play
Than a serious affair
Now you can let down your hair
Ignore what censors say
And enter the fray
We'll titillate and captivate
Delectate and jubilate
At leisure....
Purring pleasure....

God forgive those who throw
His gift away, for they do not know
These pearls of thine
Have been cast... before
Swine...



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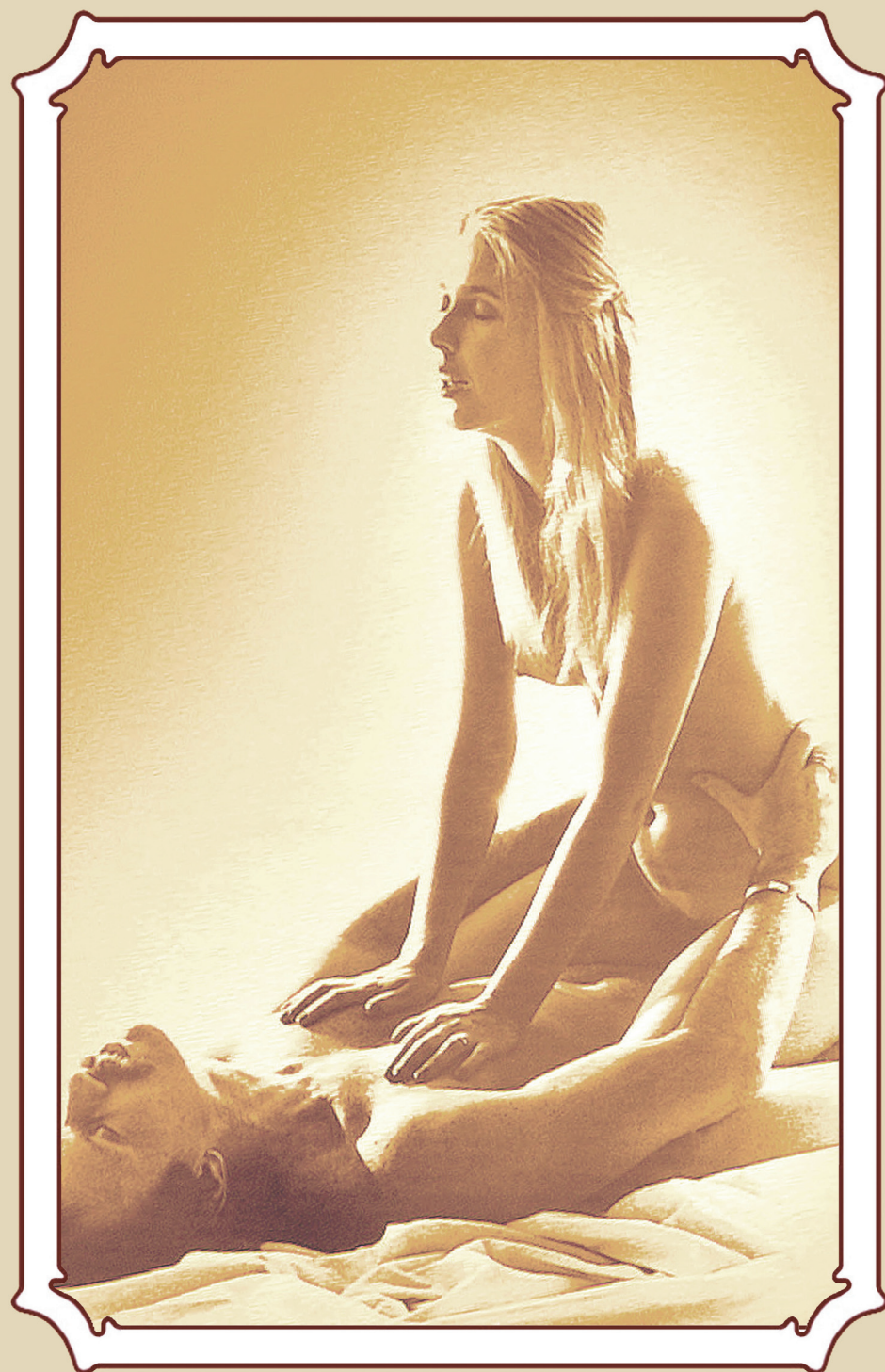


1900-1910

1910-1920







Relaxing Massage

Down the rabbit hole we slide
To a space where time has died
Nature's need is that we breed
Procreate by mixing seed
Yet there are more
Dimensions to explore
Through you my dear, my lightning rod
Leads the way to my god.

*La folie de deux
Dans les bras de Dieu.*

Which am I? The butterfly
Dreaming he is me? Oh my!
Or he.... who's inner
Light....
Doth shine...



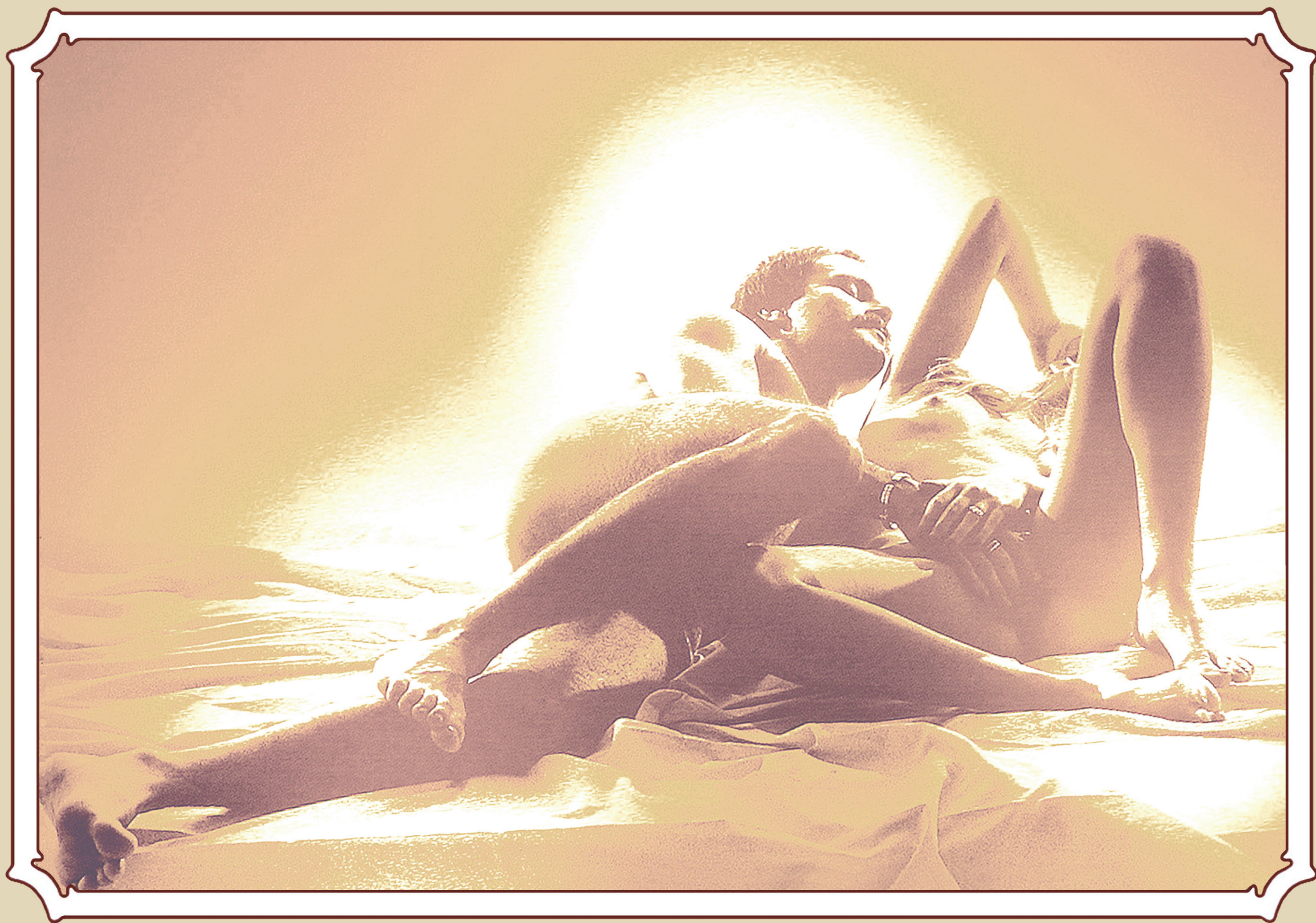
1911-1912

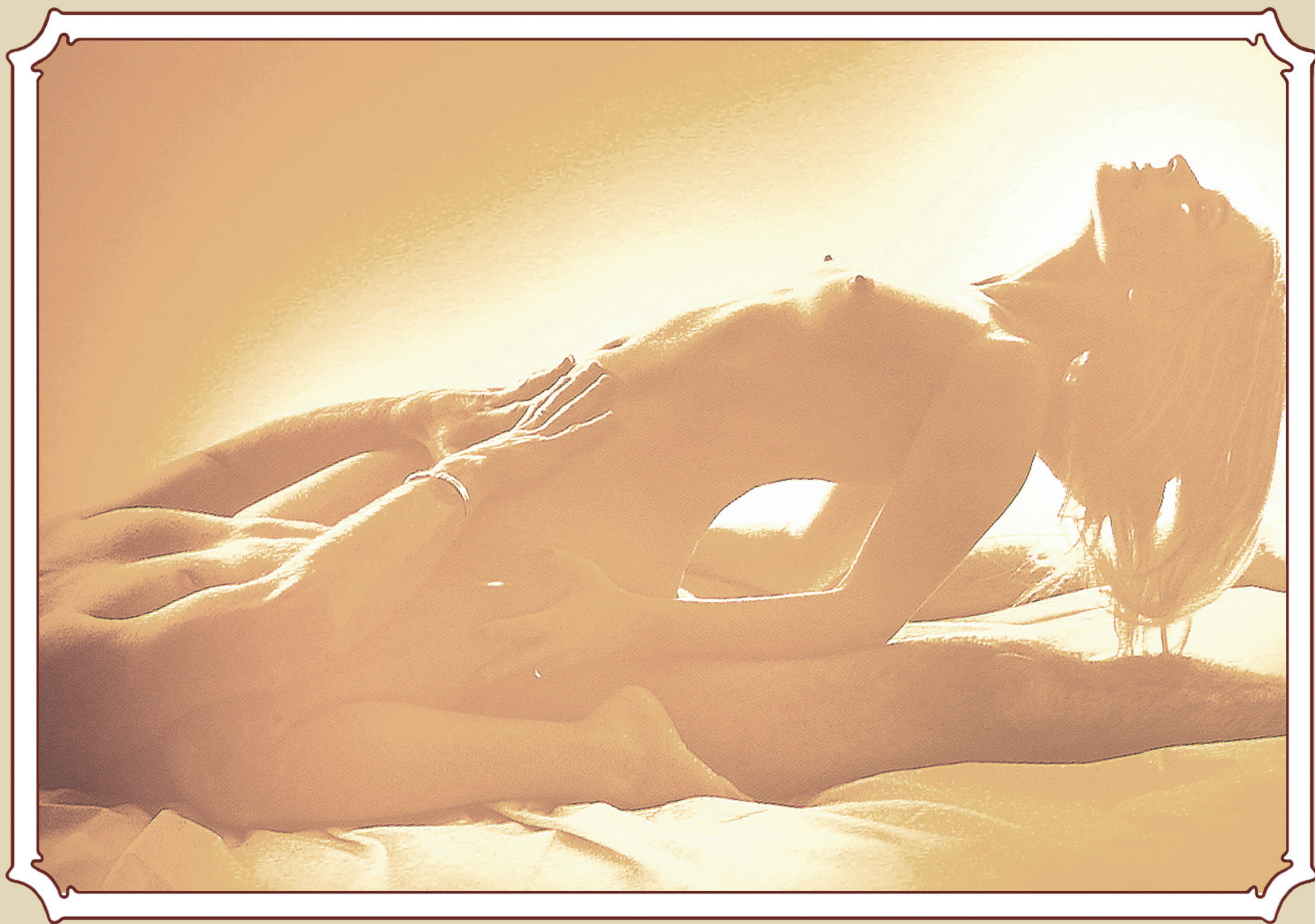
1911-1912



Love is a feeling

that you can't see







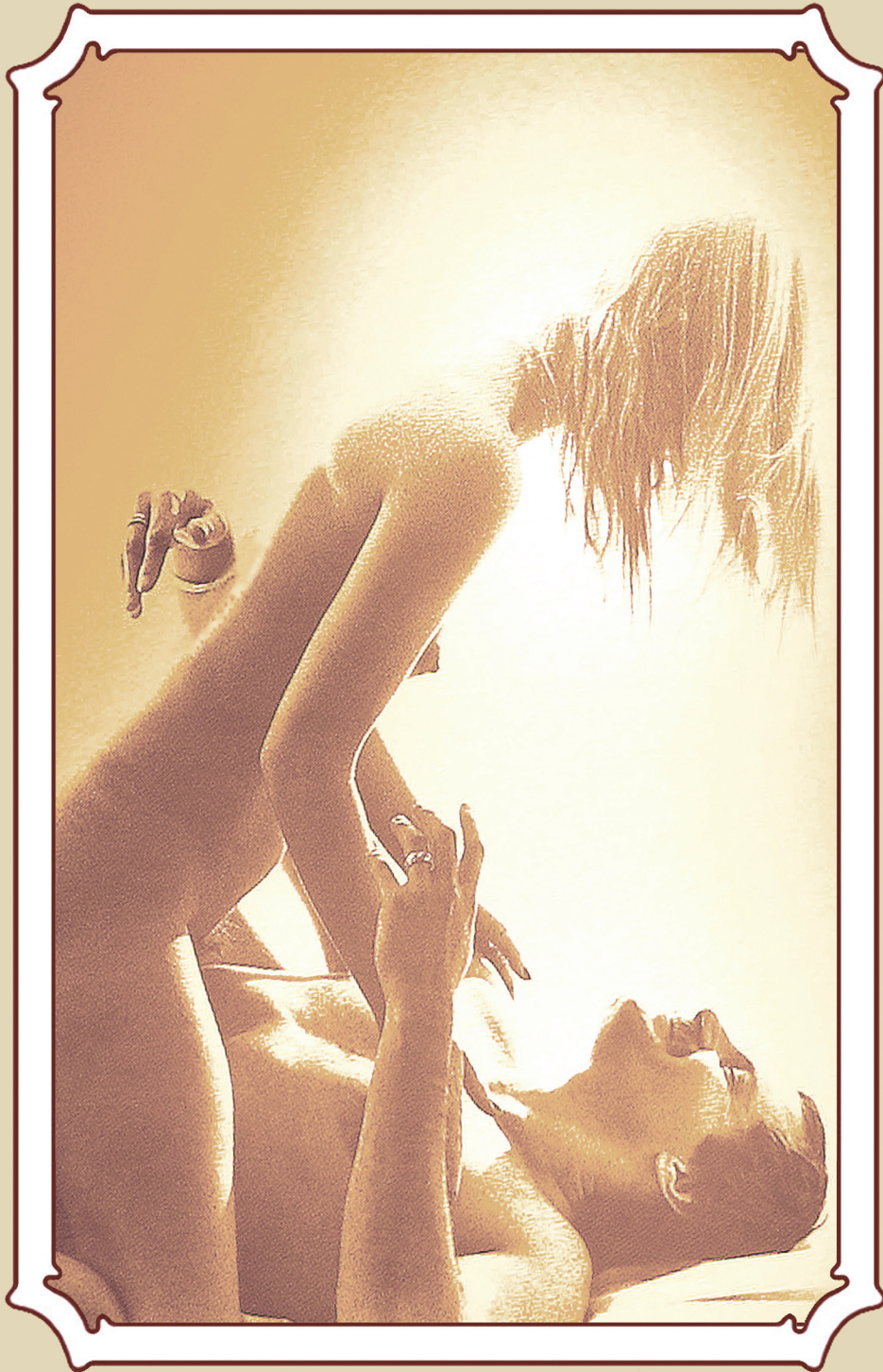


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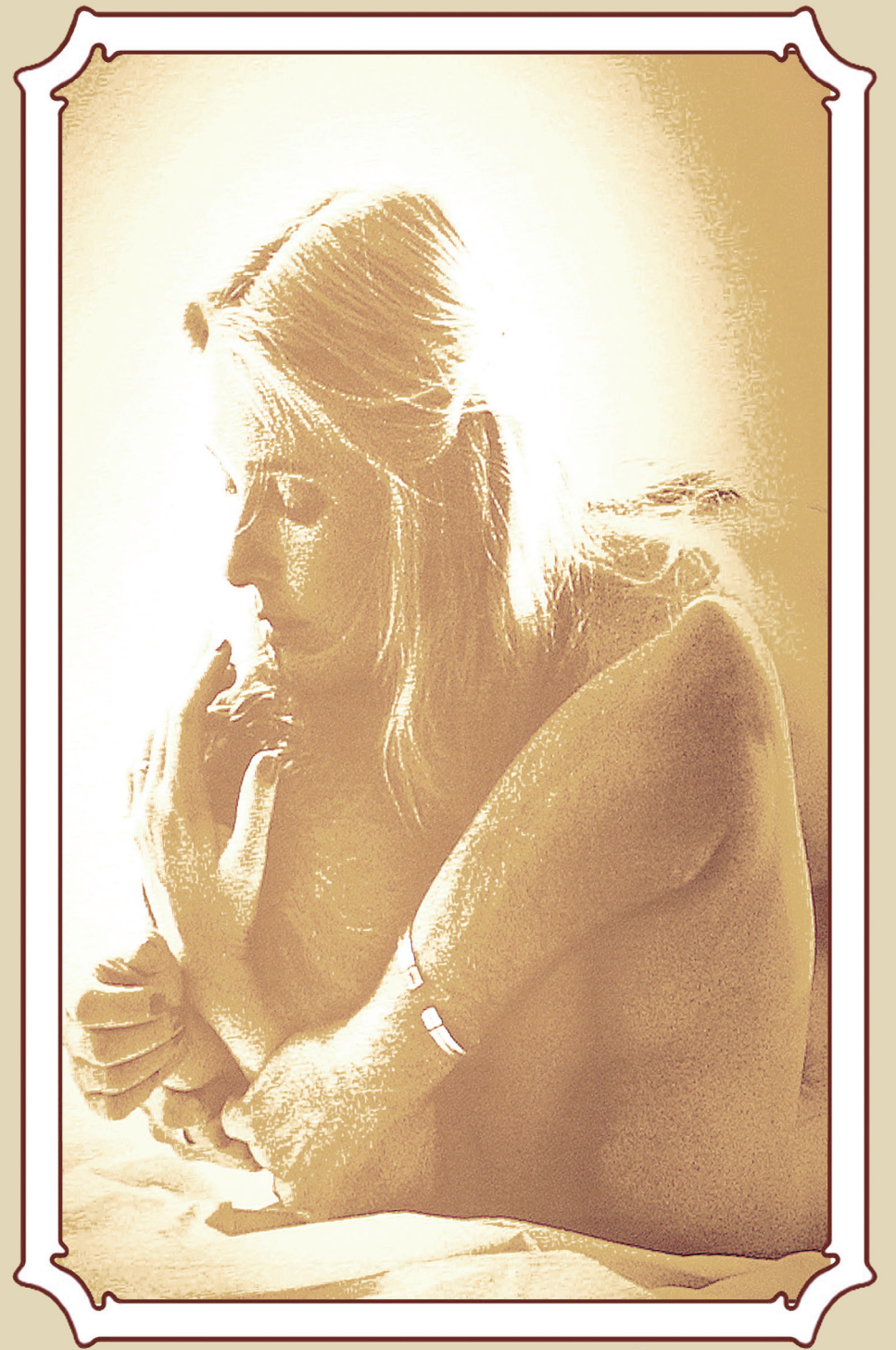
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Slowly slowly
Gossamer light
Carefully kindle
Till I'm burning bright.
Now, my rooster
Ignite my booster
Then hang on tight
For astral flight
Stars, you and me
Of our Galaxy.

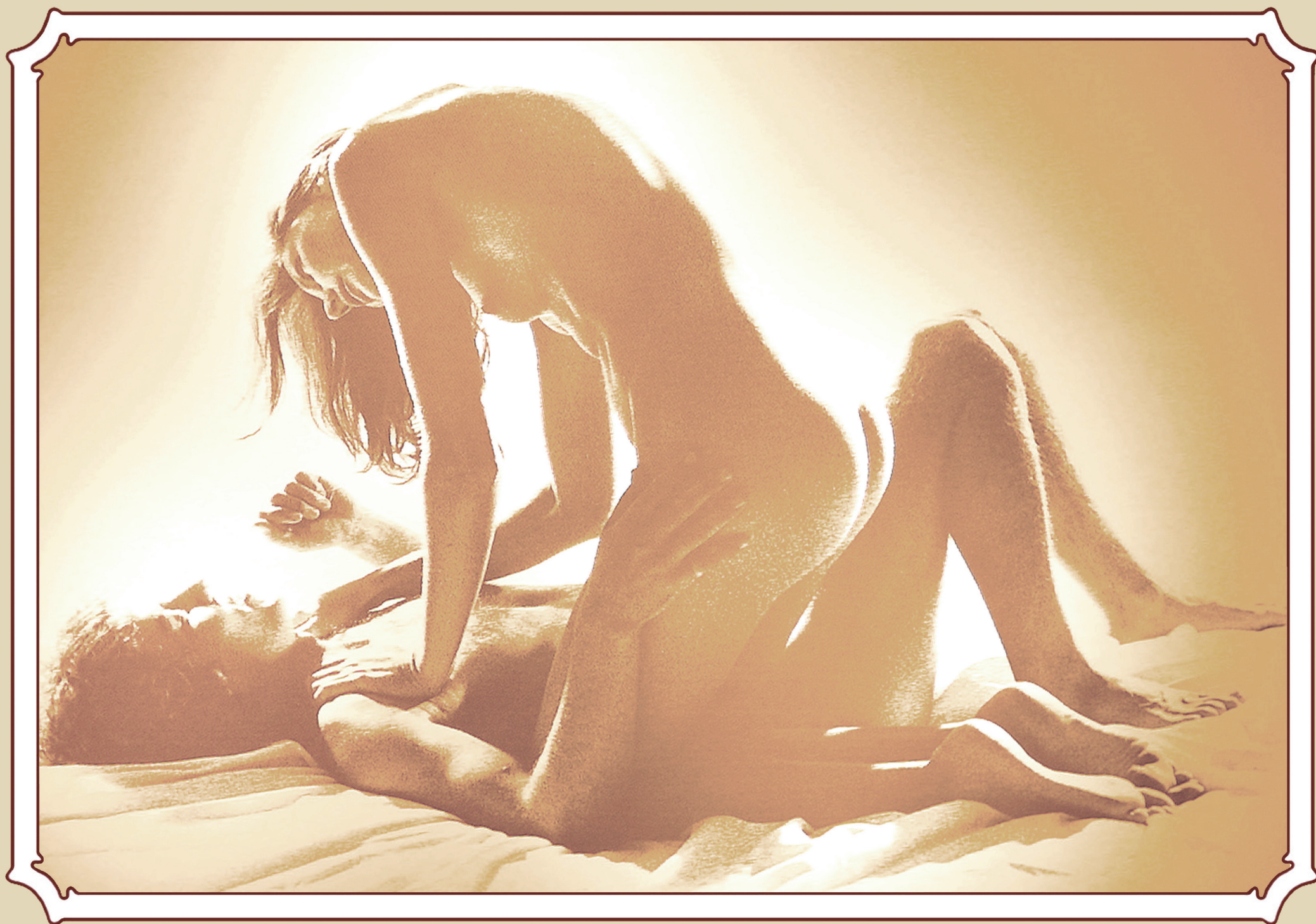
*“Two smitten lovers
Are going on a journey,”
Is what it predicts for my
Astrological
Sign...*



Woman applying cream to man's chest







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Shirley and John

1944-1945

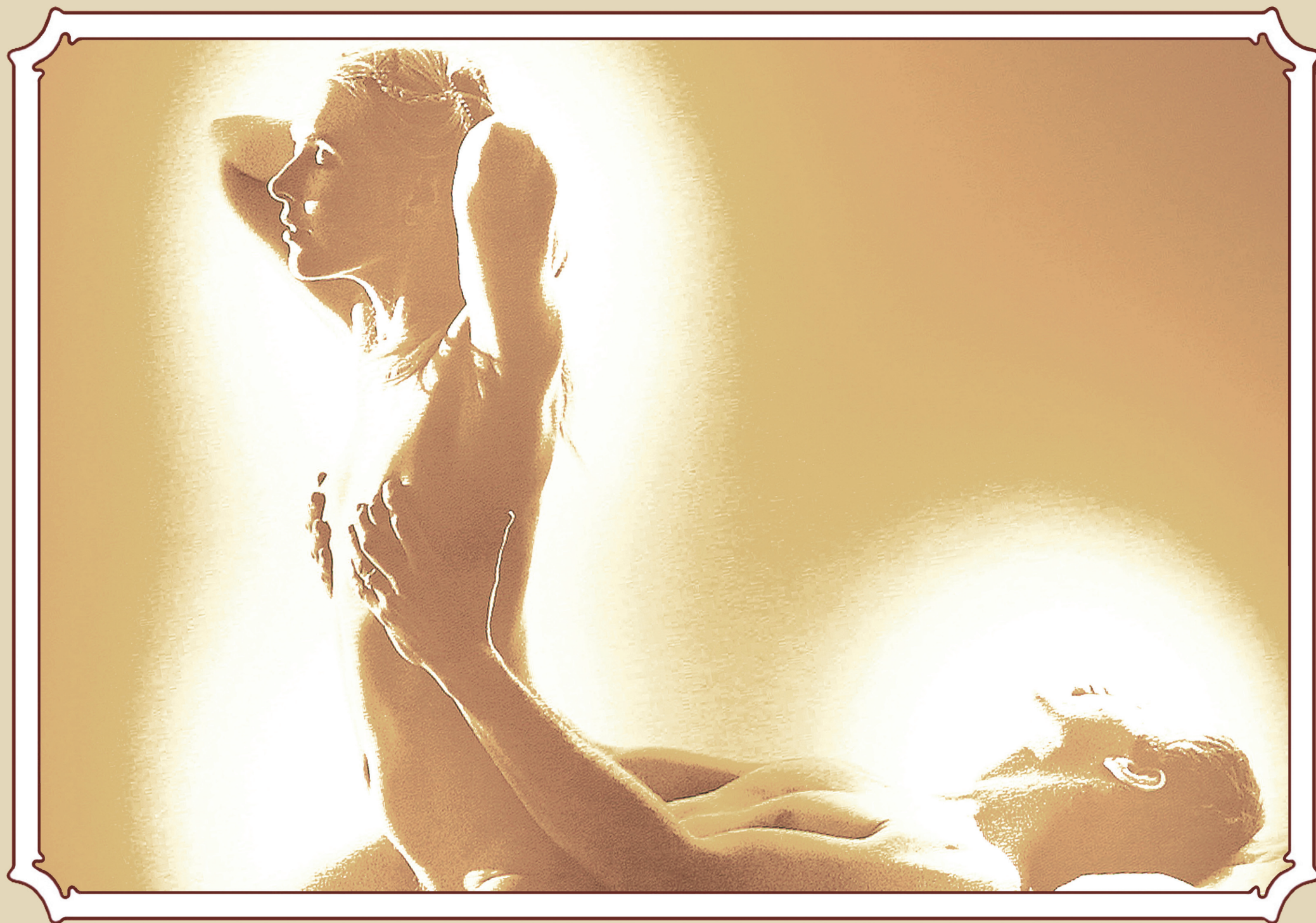


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How, my love, my lovely
Can I tell them truly
Of your loveliness
Heady juiciness?
There he lies
In a valley of thighs
And on the crest
Of each firm breast
A peak to pique
A button to tweak.

Through emerald eyes
I enter Paradise
To merge and be one
With... mine concu-
Bine...



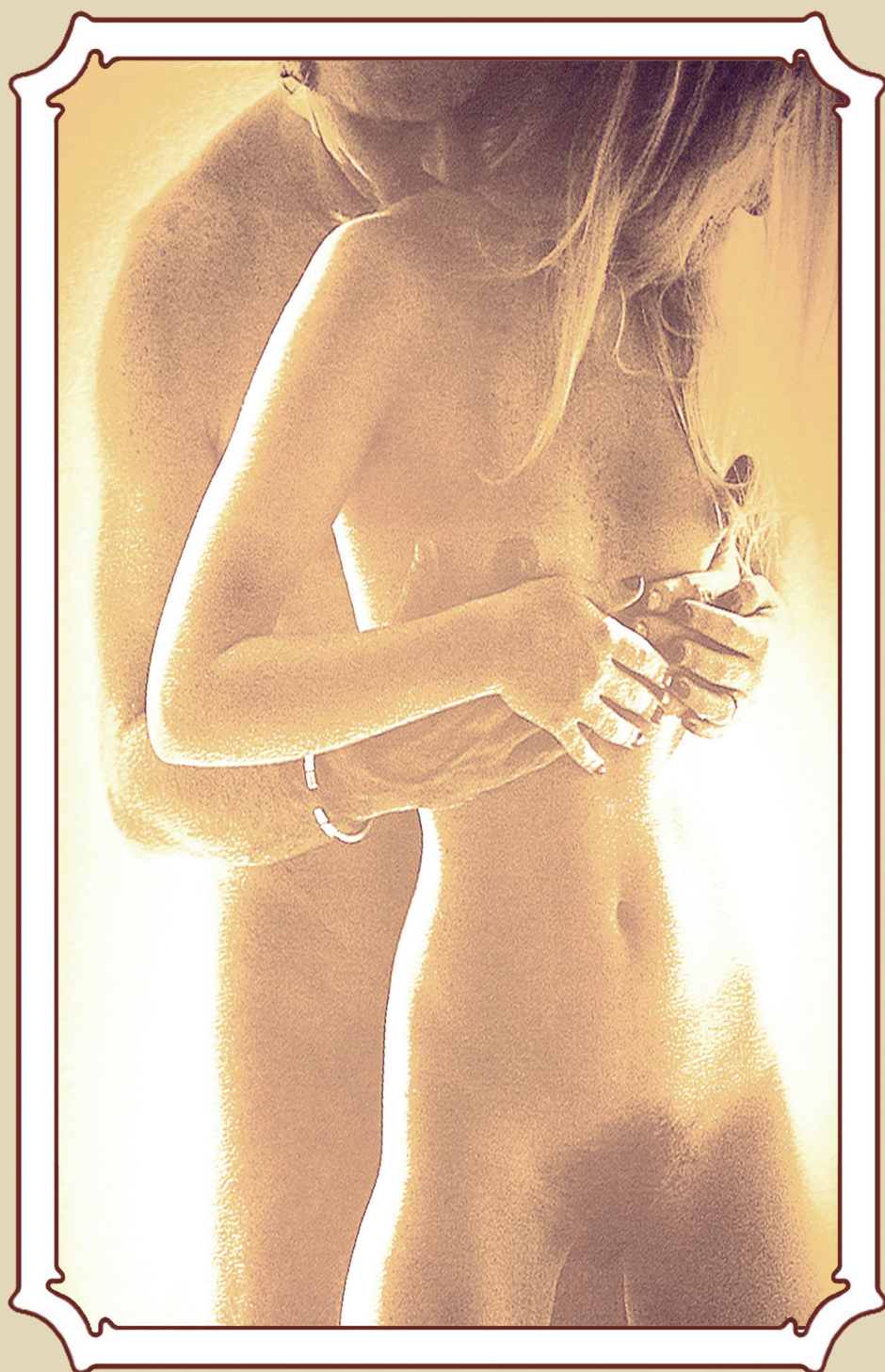
1900s - 1910s

1920s - 1930s

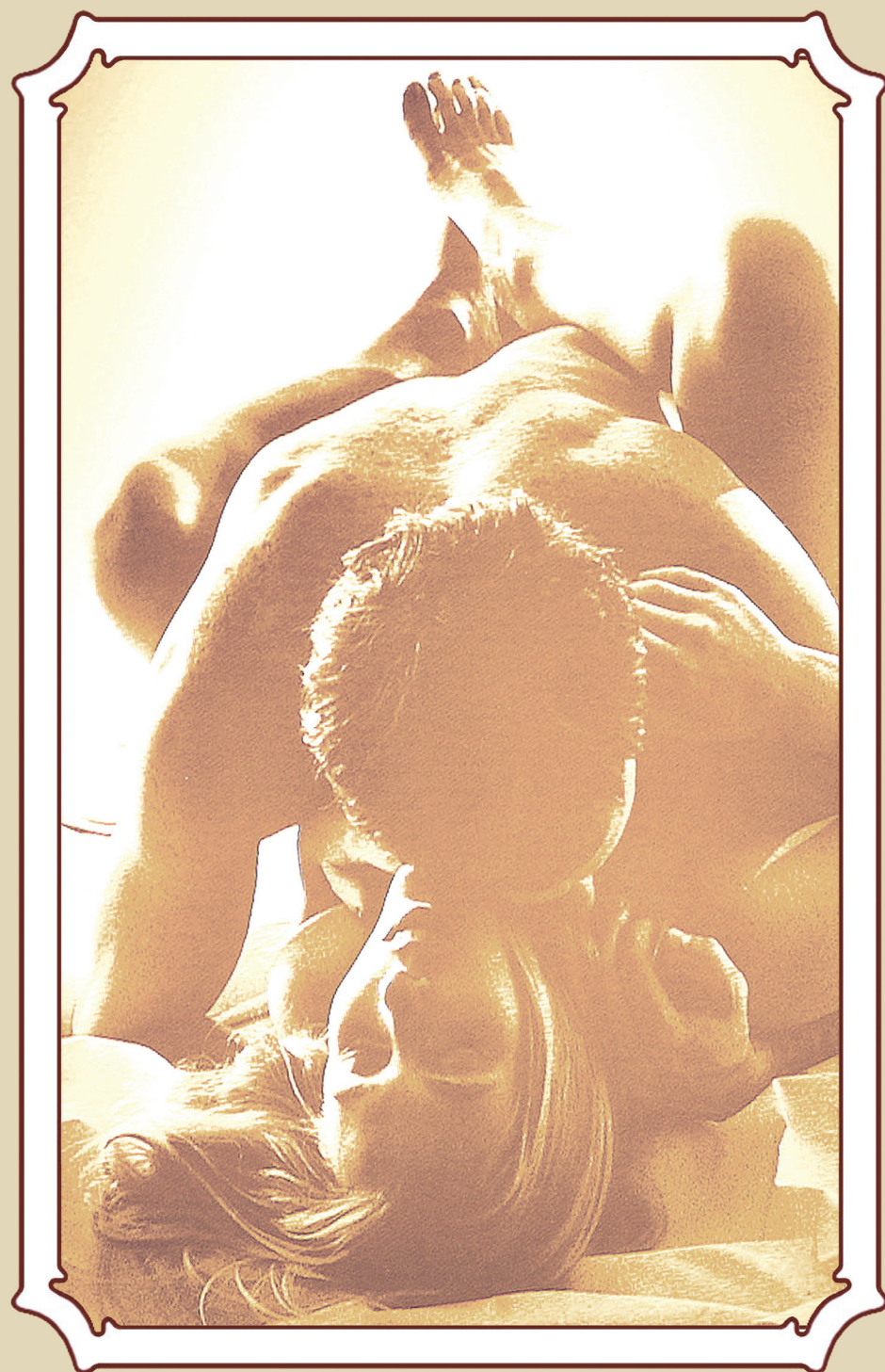


1900s - 1910s

1900s - 1910s



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My wife and I, 1950s





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Listen well my darling
(She whispered in my ear)
Be most attentive when
Moment Supreme is near.
Balance on that knife-edge
Do not cross the line
The longer it lasts
The higher up we climb in a
World of synaesthesia
A space without time.

Tantric phantasm
Valley Orgasm
The longer it lasts
The higher... up...
We climb...



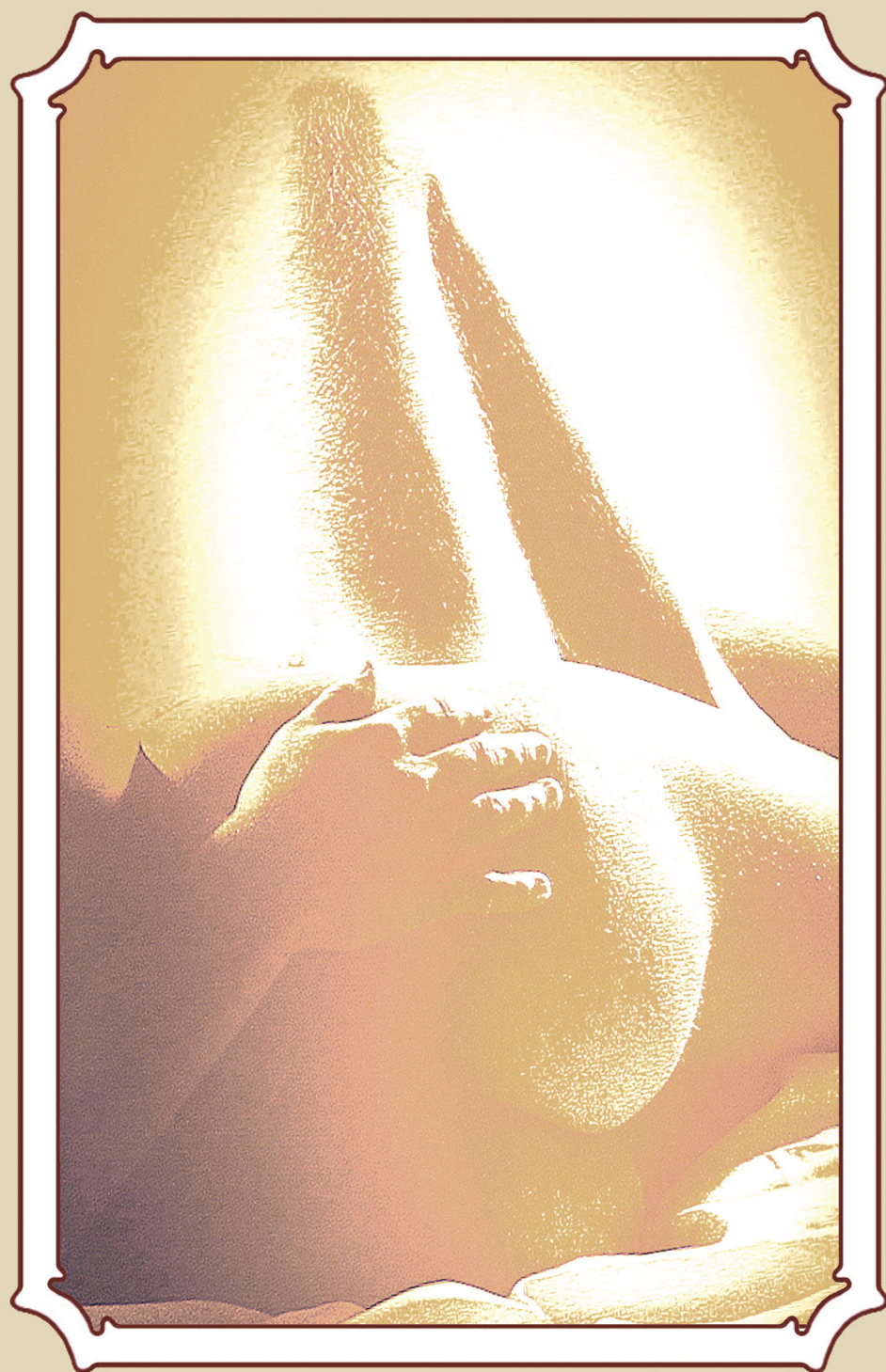
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1920s - 1930s

1940s - 1950s



© 1900-1910



Relaxation Therapy

Relaxation therapy is a type of psychotherapy that helps people to relax and reduce stress. It is often used to treat anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions.

There are many different techniques used in relaxation therapy, including deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery.

Relaxation therapy can be done individually or in a group setting. It is often used as a complementary therapy alongside other treatments.

Relaxation therapy can help people to feel more in control of their lives and to manage their stress more effectively.

Relaxation therapy is a safe and effective way to improve your mental health and well-being.





1900s - 1910s

1900s - 1910s

Now we move from *Mudra*
To *Mahamudra*
From merging with another
To fusing with the whole
A silence so almighty
Yet so frail that a
Too-sharp exhalation
Just that rush of breath
This indeed would be enough
To cause its death.

Immaculate conception
No canon of deception
This yes this
Is what... we will...
Enshrine...



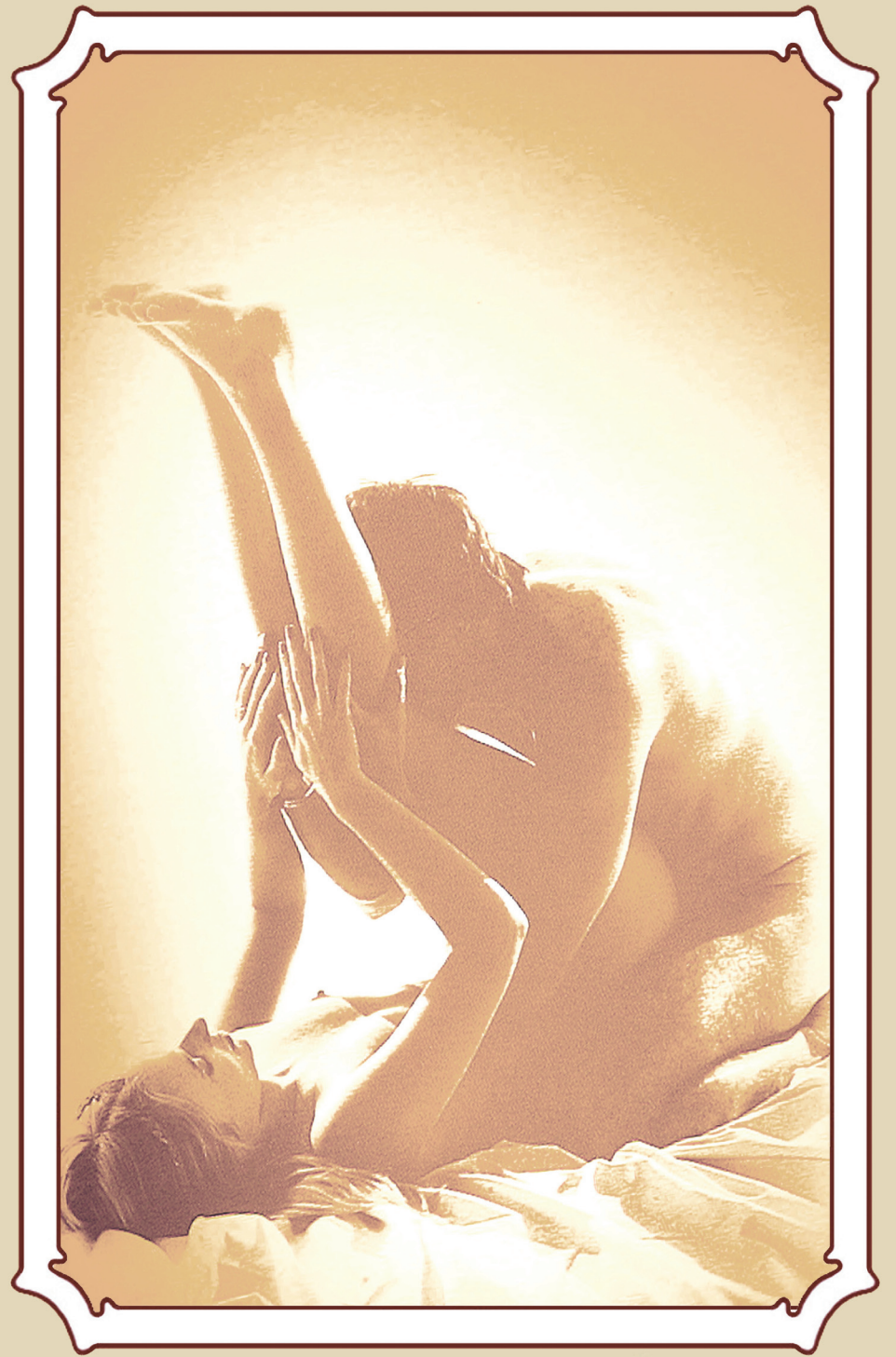


1911-1912

1911-1912



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1890s. 1890s.

1890s. 1890s.



G. B. 1874

G. B. 1874

I've come to the end of a
Good life
It's time to say farewell
And thanks, it was swell
I choose to die
Where I now lie
With grateful sighs
Between your thighs
Re-enter the womb
My perfect tomb.

Going home
Going home
By going home
We close... the circle
Line...



1890s - 1900s

1890s - 1900s



1890s - 1900s

1890s - 1900s

PUBLISH AND BE DAMNED

Publishing a book on lovemaking under South Africa's ultra-conservative apartheid regime in 1982 was a risky affair. Here is an account of the book's battle against the odds.

A tape measure came with the job of swimming pool superintendent in Bloemfontein, unofficial bible belt capital under South Africa's apartheid regime. The city council, you see, had passed a by-law prohibiting people of opposite sex to lie closer than 30 cm from one another while wearing bathing suits. This to discourage any hanky-panky.

Everything reminded these theological fascists of sex and they could not be vigilant enough lest the beast rear its ugly head. A photograph I took showing fingers tenderly entwining was deemed by the prosecutor in the censorship courts to represent sexual penetration, and therefore ruled undesirable.

Sexual repression was engraved in the statute books. Censorship of the media was rigorously enforced by special courts, and I had the dubious distinction

of having two of my books dragged before them on nine separate occasions - bannings, appeals, unbannings, counter appeals, bannings...

My first photo book, entitled "Gentlewoman" (later published by a large New York publisher) was even discussed in the senate, my cause having been taken up by a few sympathetic senators. While doddering fossils on the back benches were glad of the titillating diversion from humdrum legislating, the end result of the debate was never seriously in doubt. The public had to be protected from enjoying themselves and thereby incurring the Wrath of God. They weren't yet into ordering a hundred lashes for riding pillion, but they were working towards it.

Well now, to publish a photographic book on lovemaking in that climate was tantamount to putting your head in the lion's mouth. And yet I was convinced I could do it if I planned the operation skilfully.

But why was I bothering? Because I was convinced God had made no mistake when designing us in such a way that we could experience great pleasure copulating. He must have realised that in order to procreate (that being the sole function of nature) He had to make sex really delicious, otherwise who would bother with all that puffing and panting?

Yet sex is more than a mere tool of nature: for thousands of years tantrists have known that by riding the wave of sexual energy with great awareness, explor-

ing the mysterious depths of six-hour valley orgasms, they could rise to another level of consciousness and be in touch with their spiritual nature. Yes, Sex is a Sacrament, and I wanted to portray it poetically, not scientifically or medically or pornographically.

The renowned psychologist (and Nobel peace prize nominee) Carl Rogers, wrote later when endorsing my book “Touch Love”: “In beautiful photographs and poetic words, this book celebrates the tender and delicate, and the strong and powerful aspects of sexual love. It is an appreciation of the wonder of loving flesh touching loving flesh. It is done with both sensitivity and passion. Those who have been put off by books on sexual techniques, described in almost mechanical fashion, will find here the richly sensuous beauty of our sexual nature. ‘Touch Love’ makes a significant contribution to our living and loving.”

So, to work on my book “Touch Love”. I knew what I was taking on because of the trouble “Gentlewoman” had run into - and by comparison to “Touch Love” it had been mild, a tender accolade of the femininity in women. The most “undesirable” thing I had portrayed there was a pregnant woman, naked.

What I regarded as far less desirable was something the guardians of our morals had done to my cover girl. They removed her and her baby from their hotel room, to prevent these people of mixed race from sleeping in the same space

as a pure White man who happened to be husband and father of the child. Cathy Whiting was a famous international model, her beauty given an extra tang by being one-eighth American “Red Indian” (her daughter therefore only one-sixteenth “Red Indian”, but it was sufficient to stir their bile.). Her husband was Leonard Whiting, the actor who had played Romeo in Franco Zeffirelli’s film, and who was doing a poetry-reading tour of South Africa at the time.

“Gentlewoman” was still embroiled with the censors when I started work on “Touch Love”. If I published the book myself and sold sufficient copies clandestinely to cover my costs, I would at least elude the bailiff. I had offered the book to the South African publisher of “Gentlewoman”, but, predictably, he had declined it. I decided to distribute “Touch Love” through a large mail order firm operating just within the law, selling saucy books. I had reconciled myself to the realisation that most of my readers would be buying the book for the wrong reasons: with “Playboy” and “Penthouse” never getting past Customs, my book would be the raunchiest available. Though to be honest, it’s not a one-handed book at all.

I gave a guarantee to the mail order company that they would not have to pay for any unsold copies, should the authorities get wind of our scheme and pounce. Immediately prior to printing, they would send a circular to customers on their mailing list, notifying them that they could now place their orders.

The printers, open-minded immigrants from Europe, had recently launched their company and were open to any business they could get. They had also guaranteed me an unheard-of turn-around time of eight days, meaning that if we were on the point of selling out the first printing, they would have the second ready and bound only eight days after receiving the go-ahead. (That was the closest we got to print-on-demand in 1982.)

There was to be no advertising or promotion of the book until we had saturated the mail order firm's clientele. Of the 10,000 members, around 2000 bought "Touch Love". Now to get on the rooftops and shout...

The English-language press were eager allies, only too willing to cock a snook at their arch enemy, the Apartheid regime. I was counting on the wheels of bureaucracy grinding at their usual snail's pace, to allow me to sell lots and lots of copies before the sluice was shut. In the event we lasted three months, printing three times. We sold 5500 copies, and had 1500 in stock. For a coffee-table book in that tiny market (few "non-Whites" had the money to buy luxury goods) "Touch Love" was a runaway best-seller and we were ecstatic.

Then came the hangover: the Censor Board hearings. My two key witnesses were an eminent medically-trained sex therapist; and the man who had written the foreword to the book, Professor Len Holdstock, Reader in Neuropsychology at the

University of the Witwatersrand (he later moved to the Free University in Amsterdam). And who was on the bench? Of the seven judges (yes, seven), one turned out to be the former headmaster of my old Alma Mater, Pretoria Boys' High School. He had found a stimulating alternative to sitting out his retirement behind the geraniums. The main thing I remembered him for was getting missionary minstrels from an organisation he belonged to called The Moral Rearmament Movement, to serenade us little sinners in the school hall:

*“When you point a finger at the other,
remember there are three
pointing back at thee...”*

As he sat there pointing his accusing finger at me (figuratively), I thought to remind him of this, but in the interests of my cause I kept my mouth shut. Before the hearing started he ushered me proudly into the office of the Chairman of the Censorship Board who held out a hand and said: “So, Abernethy, this is a former pupil of yours.” To be fair to my former headmaster, I have a sneaking suspicion he was one of those on my side, because the verdict was split 4-3 against me.

The exact sequence of events is lost in the fog of my ageing memory. I think

we appealed and lost again, because to the best of my knowledge “Touch Love” is banned to this day. What I do remember clearly is that they had left me a tiny loophole which turned out to be larger, much larger than they had foreseen: if a doctor ordered the book for medical or therapeutic purposes, only then was I permitted to sell him/her a copy. But advertising was *verboden*!

There were 14,000 doctors on the South African medical register at the time, and there was no law forbidding me from informing them by letter of their right to buy “Touch Love” - for medical reasons, of course. But 14,000 hand-written letters? No way. So I photocopied a master letter 14,000 times and posted them. Who would have guessed how conscientious the doctors were in their application of sexual therapy. Bless them. In one month I sold a further 1,000 copies. Then the telephone rang...

I stood on the carpet in the large office of this senior government bullfrog as he inflated before my eyes in a fit of almost apoplectic rage.

“Do you realise,” he squeezed out of his clenched jaw, “that since the banning of your book, you have sold as many copies as the average poet sells of a volume in his entire life! Do you? Do you!”

I did, and had celebrated the fact. But standing there on the carpet, I did my best to look surprised.

“Really? My goodness gracious me. Who would have believed-”

“And you advertised! You know we can lock you up for that-”

“Adver- Advertised? No. Never.”

“You did you did you did!”

“I only wrote a letter-”

“That was no letter. That was an advertising brochure. A slick advertising leaflet.”

“I have a copy right here. Look, it says “Dear Sir/Madame, I hereby would like to bring to your attention your right to purchase-”

“I know what the bl- What the so-called letter says. The point is it says it 14,000 times! That makes it a brochure.”

“You mean that if I write the same letter to two doctors, I have to word them differently? By law?”

He could not trust himself to speak any more, apart from hissing “you’ll be hearing from us” as he shooed me out of his office.

I was concerned. He knew more of what had happened in the past month than I had told him, so was I being watched? I know our telephone had been tapped in the past when my children were involved in a campaign calling for equal education for all races.

So far I had encountered my former headmaster on this rocky path, now it was the turn of a former head pupil of the school. He was, after all, a Progressive Party Member of Parliament. I told him what had transpired with the bullfrog and he promised to keep an eye on things while I was overseas for two months, seeking new markets for my book.

But one thing led to another, and another, and I have never been back.
