

Kweenasheba

“Murder me,” Ada said.

“The reception began at eight.” John set his second bourbon glass down on his newspaper blotting Herb Caen’s Tuesday, August 15, 1972, column. “It’s now eleven-thirty, precisely. Time is not your forté, my darling. Must you always run on your own clock?”

“Don’t tick me off,” Ada said. She was chilled from the San Francisco night. Her coat hung from her shoulders. “I hate when you play daddy. Next you’ll be into spanking.”

“We’ve never tried that.”

“Keep it that way.” She stood her ground across the tiny cocktail table.

He smiled under his thick black moustache. “Let me help with your coat.”

John Vicary rose to his full height. Ada watched him grow taller than she, and she was tall enough to be striking. Her coat rode like a cape across her shoulders. He lifted it and dropped its smartly tailored lines across the chair he intended for her.

She sat.

A waiter stepped from the piano bar. He looked up at John who said something Ada could not hear. John sat down.

“I asked you to murder me,” she said.

“Don’t change the subject.” John lit a cigarette. “I never do anything uncivilized.” He handed it to her.

“I’ve stopped again.”

“Start again,” he said. “You prefer yourself with vices.”

She took the fresh cigarette and held it. “God, I hate this place. All of San Francisco and here we sit.” She tugged at the