for the most part it seems a plausible tale, something that could actually have happened.

AND THAT BRINGS US BACK to Pascal Politano, who during the time that he lived in Tokyo in 1958 met a Japanese woman at Suehiro, a famous downtown restaurant.

"A Japanese friend introduced us," he said. "She wasn't a streetwalker. She came from a good family."

They kept company and enjoyed intimate relations for a brief time, and then Politano had to return to the United States. Unlike Pinkerton, he made no promises about returning to Japan, but he did give his girlfriend the address of an aunt of his in New Jersey, whom he knew he would be visiting on his trip back home.

"When I returned," he said, "my aunt said, 'You know, there's a letter for you.' I walked around for a long time without opening it because I was afraid of what might be in it. Asian women are not my cup of tea somehow. They have some fine qualities. I treated [my Japanese girlfriend] like a lady. I didn't treat her any differently than I treated any lady; except for the fact that I abandoned her, I treated her the same as my wife. I opened the door for her, stuff like that. This girl had tremendous self-respect, a serene dignity. She had integrity, Goddamn it, I find myself wishing that I had been more attracted. I would have been proud to have her on my arm in any environment."

Politano hesitated for a second as he told his story in his rural cabin, and his eyes misted slightly. He is both a literary man and a moral one, and he understands the resonance of his story, its primordial quality and its sadness.

"She only hinted at the child," he said. "That's the kind of woman she was. Somebody else would have written, 'Goddamn you, I'm having a child.' But she said, 'I honor you.' "

" 'I honor you,' " Politano repeated. "I destroyed the letter. I just couldn't keep it."

Richard Bernstein, *The East, The West and Sex: A History* (NY: Vintage, 2009)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

"I Souvenir. You Boom-Boom."

THE FIRST MARINES officially assigned to combat duty in Vietnam waded onto the beach in Danang on March 8, 1965, thereby beginning the process by which the war turned from a mostly Vietnamese matter into an almost entirely American one. Until units of the Ninth Marine Expeditionary Brigade appeared on that muggy afternoon, the U.S. military advisers, by then twenty-three thousand of them, had theoretically only advised the South Vietnamese military as it strove to deal with a growing North Vietnam–supported Communist insurgency. But to the teeth-gnashing frustration of the Americans, the South Vietnamese had been fighting badly, often refusing to fight altogether, and by the year of that first marine landing in Danang, eighty thousand Vietcong regulars controlled some 40 percent of South Vietnam.

Later studies of the war have shown that the South Vietnamese leadership, under the American-installed president Ngo Dinh Diem, hadn't wanted to risk casualties by attacking the Vietcong insurgents, who were skilled and aggressive. Instead, Diem's government wanted to use its loyal forces to quell other opponents of this capricious dictatorship—Buddhists demonstrating against their tyrannical ways, for example—and to deter would-be plotters of coups among rival South Vietnamese cliques. Diem and his various secretive, duplicitous, and dictatorial relatives figured in any case that the Americans would eventually get directly into the fight against the Vietcong and take care of the Communist insurgency for them. In the early years of the war, until 1965, as the number of U.S. advisers increased, Americans did fire their guns at Vietcong forces—and in February 1965 fighter jets based

on offshore carriers had bombed Vietcong positions. When the Ninth Marines arrived in Danang and the Americans embarked on an open, direct, and ever-escalating war, Diem and his supporters had already been overthrown by exactly the sort of coup they had feared; still, in a way, they had posthumously gotten their wish.

The move did not go unnoticed by the enemy, of course, whose propaganda machinery quickly leaped into action to brandish reports of the havoc and suffering that, the insurgents said, American combat troops were causing. There were land appropriations, house evictions, and the theft of food from ordinary people, the Vietcong's Liberation Radio informed its listeners. The American troops were "exterminating our compatriots in a very cruel way." And along with the indiscriminate bombings and the killing of civilians that were laid at the feet of the United States, the propaganda soon began stressing another element in the picture. As a clandestine broadcast in November 1965, monitored by American intelligence, put it, "The depraved, obscene U.S. cowboy culture has spread widely, poisoning the minds of our youths. Prostitution has become a humiliating scourge. Cases of vagrancy and rape have taken place in Saigon daily. The U.S. aggressors have seriously upset our good customs and have trampled on our national traditional morality and on our human dignity."

It was a theme that the North Vietnamese would harp on continuously during the war and afterward, with the Communists' triumph in 1975, as well. "It was the U.S. puppet clique's joint policy of promoting prostitution that forced numerous innocent and chaste women to become prostitutes," Radio Hanoi said in July 1975. "Prostitution became the Saigon puppet cliques' open business from which it made huge profits every year."

The toll was enormous, Hanoi claimed: half a million mixed-blood children, the offspring of American fathers and Vietnamese prostitute mothers, some 3 million cases of syphilis in South Vietnam, 130,000 drug addicts, and associated problems of "robbery, theft, blackmailing and other evils left behind by the U.S. puppet clique."

Very likely that figure of 3 million syphilitics in a total population of 50 million in 1975 is exaggerated (the disease that seems to have rampaged through the American ranks, in any case, was gonorrhea, not syphilis). Moreover, the argument here is not that Vietnamese propaganda had a serious effect on South Vietnamese public opinion. Indeed, there are no clear signs that the alleged depravity of the Americans and their "puppets," as Hanoi put it, particularly bothered a substantial part of the local population.

Still, the propaganda machinery was certainly right on its main point: those hundreds of thousands of American troops and other Americans did produce an explosion of prostitution in South Vietnam. And that suggests in turn the way in which the Vietnam War was not just a tragic misadventure but also a weird misadventure. It was weird in the way innocence and corruption were inherent in the relationship between half a million Americans, most of them young and inexperienced, and the Vietnamese, whose ancient culture the Americans experienced mostly through their interactions with bar girls, mistresses, and the purveyors of sex. If the war was weird in the contrast it presented between a sort of heedless American do-goodism and the shadowy, corrupt, and ruthless world of Vietnamese politics, that weirdness presented itself to the ordinary GI as an intermingling of mortal danger and erotic pleasure.

For the American troops who were in noncombat roles—the clerks, the supply officers, the members of medical teams and intelligence groups, the technicians, motor pool drivers, the truck and helicopter repairmen—as well as the thousands of civilian contractors who built the barracks, the bases, and the airfields, the mortal-danger half of that equation was diminished and the erotic-pleasure half was more accessible and of a higher quality than each half was for the combat troops. "American men in South Vietnam became sexually privileged males," wrote Neil Sheehan, who was a young reporter there in the early 1960s. "Claiming that a mistress was a housekeeper . . . or bringing a woman to one's quarters in the evening, or carrying on after hours with the Vietnamese secretaries from the office (the women had no choice but to submit it they wished to retain their jobs), was considered perfectly normal." But even for the men who patrolled in Vietnam's mountains, jungles, and paddy fields, the sexual possibilities were everywhere. As the authors of one book highly critical of U.S. policy put this phenomenon, service in Vietnam might have cost many American mothers sleepless nights of worry, but for the young soldiers who went there, a hitch in the army was "a chance for protracted debauchery."

"There's a lot of plain and fancy screwing going on around here, but I suppose it's all in the interest of the war effort," the U.S. ambassador in Saigon, Ellsworth Bunker, said at one point in the conflict, thereby adding his confirmation to the Communists' propaganda claim. David Lamb, a veteran American journalist at the *Los Angeles Times* who was in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970, said in an interview: "Half the American servicemen of that young age must have lost their virginity in Vietnam."

Sex and combat, like rape and pillage, have always accompanied each other in war—or, as *Time* magazine put it in 1966 in an article aimed at downplaying the importance of sex in Vietnam, "Strumpets trailed the trumpets of Joshua at Jericho." That's probably true, and yet it was the sheer scale of sexual opportunity and the frequency with which it was exploited—and the fact that it came in the twentieth century A.D., not the twelfth century B.C.—that made the Vietnam War different. Never before had wartime sex been so much a part of the scene. It was there in Saigon, it was there in the field, even in dangerous combat zones, where the girls on motorbikes beckoned to GIs from just beyond the perimeter, and it was there in the several Asian destinations—Thailand, Taiwan, the Philippines—where troops were sent for "rest and recreation" ("gin and sin," as the GIs themselves called it). Of course, not every soldier, diplomat, and journalist indulged; none of them went to Vietnam for the purpose of engaging in "debauchery," but for an extremely large number of Americans who served in Indochina (including Laos), sex was a standard part of life, like eating in the mess hall or drinking a few beers in the NCO club.

The rate of venereal disease provides proof of this assertion. In no other U.S. conflict did VD reach anywhere near the levels recorded in Vietnam. According to army statistics, in World War II there were 82 cases of venereal disease per year for every 1,000 men. In Korea, the rate went up to 146. In Vietnam, it was 325 cases per 1,000 men. It's worth dwelling on that number: it means that in any given year, one third of the American forces who served in Vietnam contracted a sexually transmitted disease. And if one third of the military personnel got the clap or something else, the percentage of American soldiers visiting prostitutes must have been higher, since, obviously, many men who saw prostitutes and actually obeyed the widespread injunction to use condoms, or who were lucky enough to have relations with uninfected prostitutes, did not come down with any infection.

According to the Department of Defense, 2,719,908 American soldiers served in Vietnam, which means that some 900,000 of them contracted a sexually transmitted disease at one time or another during the war. A lot of plain and fancy screwing is right, a phenomenon that was inscribed in GI jargon. American soldiers talked about their "pussy cutoff date," or PCOD, meaning the last day on which a soldier whose tour of duty was coming to an end could have sex with a local girl (or, in the common parlance, an LBFM, a little brown fucking machine) and still have time to be treated for VD before his return home. And, for those willing to live dangerously, there was the more risky APCOD—absolute pussy cutoff date.

"Because you were on your way home and didn't want to catch anything you couldn't get rid of," explained Frank Maguire, who served three tours of duty in Vietnam, mostly as an adviser to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), the South Vietnamese army. But not everybody met the PCOD, Maguire, who was interviewed at his home in Connecticut, added: "One of the marines who was on our team in 1965 was a good soldier, an absolute straight arrow. I don't know if he got it on R and R or if they took him to Saigon because he needed to relax and he had a girl, but he got himself a case of gonorrhea that was almost incurable. And he was supposed to be going to Honolulu to meet his wife. I think his CO [commanding officer] wrote a message saying that his presence was required here."

IN INDOCHINA MORE THAN ANY OTHER PLACE in the East where thousands of U.S. and other soldiers were stationed between the end of World War II and the end of the Vietnam War, casual, or not so casual, relations with local women were an element of a larger culture, a louche exotic, and intensified version of what became the sex, drugs, and rock and roll culture back home, which, paradoxically, accompanied the anti-war movement. So many soldiers in Vietnam were nineteen or twenty years old. Sex was cheap and easy. Drugs were everywhere. There was an attitude of moral distance from official policy, a skepticism about the supposed purpose of this risky, life-

threatening gesture that intensified among the troops as the years of costly and indeterminate conflict passed by and that was intimately related to the moral dissolution represented by the sex and the drugs. You carried a rifle and, if you were in combat, you used it to kill the enemy, and you could be killed; or you jumped from a helicopter into a jungle clearing, taking deadly fire from guerrillas hidden in the nearby tree line, and then you were evacuated to base camp, just outside of which you could go for a little boom-boom, as the bar girls put it, some weed, maybe even a visit to a full-fledged, traditional Asian opium den. It was as detached as life can get from the strictures and prohibitions of home without leading to arrest.

"Asia was very romantic, and Indochina was the most romantic place in Asia," said Richard C. Holbrooke, who served in Vietnam as a young foreign service officer from 1963 to 1965, before going on to a brilliant and distinguished career in diplomacy and finance. "The place was absolute heaven. It was a world of war, drama, politics, and sex. What could be better?"

Holbrooke, speaking in an interview was, of course, being partly tongue in cheek about Vietnam, but only partly. The exotic adventure that was Vietnam for many American men, the way of life that became possible during the war, Vietnam's status as a scene of youthful wild times—all of those elements retained a hold on the minds of many veterans.

One aspect of recreational sex and romance in Vietnam was that it took place throughout the ranks. The grunts got theirs in the field or found girls in the bars on Tu Do Street or got fellated at one of the many massage parlor steam baths that catered to foreign soldiers, which they called blow-bath steam-job places. For a time, the Diem government had tried to impose a regime of sexual puritanism on Vietnam, going so far as to ban social dancing, though it didn't seem to have had much effect on relations between soldiers and bar girls. Still, out of deference to Diem's sensibilities, the commanding U.S. general, Paul D. Harkins, forbade soldiers to kiss their Vietnamese girlfriends good-bye at the airport.

But there were different social levels. The grunts were mostly limited to the Tu Do Street bar girls. Officers, diplomats, journalists, and civilian contractors often found steady girlfriends from good families,

young women of the sort who wouldn't have been caught dead anywhere near Tu Do, though the higher-ranking, more upper-class American men in Vietnam went to the bars and massage parlors also. A lot of the men in this latter category, men for whom Vietnam was a stage in a promising career in diplomacy or business, lived in colonial-style villas that might once have belonged to a French planter or a senior administrator, with a car, a driver, servants, and a local girlfriend to keep them company.

It wasn't just the girls that made Vietnam special, important as they were as a sort of lifestyle accessory; it was the whole somewhat decadent and even luxuriant atmosphere, especially in the first few years, when Saigon was a pretty safe place. You could have your morning café au lait with croissants as good as you'd get in Paris while poring over your *Saigon Post* in the garden of the Hotel Continental and watching peacocks wandering among the tables. In the afternoon, you might play tennis at the Cercle Sportif, another leftover from the days of the French. And then you could wind up the day collecting gossip and drinking French wine at La Cigale in the Cholon district or perhaps at the Tu Do Day and Night Club, which advertised "captivating starlets" in the very *Saigon Post* you'd read in the morning.

The story is told that when David Halberstam, the famed *New York Times* reporter, first arrived in Saigon, in 1962, when the war was still young and the total U.S. troop commitment was about ten thousand or so advisers to the ARVN, one of the first things he noted was that a beautiful Vietnamese woman accompanied almost every American journalist. Halberstam, as it turned out, arrived just in time for the going-away party for François Sully, the French correspondent for *Newsweek,* whom the Diem government had ordered to leave the country. The beautiful Vietnamese women Halberstam saw that night were very far from bar girls, most of whom came from Vietnam's poor countryside, had little education, and certainly no social standing. The women who accompanied the reporters, as well as the diplomats and higher-station personnel in Vietnam, were middle-class women attracted to the glamour and adventure of dating a smart and swanky young American.

Vietnam in this sense illustrated the status often enjoyed by foreigners in Asia merely by dint of being foreign. Saigon, in particular, had

only recently emerged from French colonial rule, one of the characteristics of which was a good deal of mingling at the upper social reaches. Now, as the French were leaving and the Americans were taking over, almost everything associated with the United States glowed with a special excitement—the money, the cosmetics from the PX, the fast and exciting life, the Kennedys, the power, and the fearless young men in khaki safari suits who covered the war during the day and went to fashionable clubs and restaurants at night.

"All the Young Turks had beautiful Vietnamese girlfriends," wrote William Prochnau, who chronicled the lives and adventures of the band of American reporters who covered Vietnam in the early stages of the war. The reporter who was to become Halberstam's closest friend in Saigon, Neil Sheehan, then a handsome Harvard graduate working for United Press International, was famously attached to a fashionable young woman known as Blue Lotus, "a stunning *Saigonnaisse* whose every curve seemed to have been sewn tightly into an expensive Parisian party dress," as Prochnau described her. Blue Lotus was soon to introduce Halberstam to one Ricki, an already-married schoolteacher whom Halberstam dated for a year or so, risking the rage of her jealous and sometimes gun-toting husband. "You vill love zis place, David. It iss VUN-derful!" Horst Faas, a German photographer, said to Halberstam at Sully's going-away party, nodding in Blue Lotus's direction. Sheehan's main professional rival, Malcolm Browne, the Associated Press bureau chief, was about the only reporter at the party not accompanied by a local woman, but that was only because his girlfriend, Le Lieu, who had quit her job as deputy director of information in the South Vietnamese government in order to be with him, was temporarily out of town. Browne and Le Lieu married—and remain married, living in New York, to this day.

All the reporters were in a way outdone by the swashbuckling American soldier who turned out to be their best source. This was Lieutenant Colonel John Paul Vann, the legendary military adviser to the ARVN Seventh Division, who used to talk late into the night at his headquarters in the Mekong Delta, telling Sheehan and Halberstam that the Vietcong were gaining the upper hand over the corrupt South Vietnamese, who were often unwilling to fight. Vann was a man of medium physical stature but larger-than-life character, and he had

utterly prodigious sexual appetites. He had a wife and family back home, two steady and serious girlfriends in Saigon, each set up by him in their own house and each ignorant of the existence of the other. Vann went through a marriage ceremony of sorts with each of them, largely to satisfy their families. But they weren't enough for him. According to Sheehan, who wrote a book on Vann, it was not unusual for him to have sex with both of his kept women and one or two bar girls on Tu Do Street all on the same day.

Certainly such a life would have been impossible back home. On a visit to Saigon in 2002, by which time many American ex-servicemen had returned to the country to work or just to visit, I met one veteran who boasted that he'd had two wives living with him in the same house, sleeping with him in the same bed. He was proud that when the evacuation came, on the eve of the Communist victory in 1975, he was able to get both his "wives" on military airplanes leaving the country and that he had continued to live with them in the United States, having children—all of whom he sent to college—with both of them.

Vann was different from most, not only in the clarity of his analysis of the shortcomings of the Saigon regime but also in his awareness of the impression—and it was not a good one—that such "fraternization" made on the Vietnamese. He told Halberstam that whenever he visited one of the district chiefs in the area patrolled by the Seventh Division, he would be offered a woman for the night. It was just standard Asian hospitality. But, Vann said, he always turned down the offer. "It lowers our prestige in their eyes," he said. "They're trying to get something they can hold over you. Too damn many Americans in this country are sleeping with Vietnamese women. It's bad for our image. The Vietnamese don't like it. It arouses their resentment." And, of course, it created a sense of corruptibility, putting the Americans in the same category as many of the very corrupt Vietnamese officers, where they didn't want to be.

Clearly Vann's opinion on this matter is remarkable given that he slept with innumerable Vietnamese women, though apparently not in the districts where he worked and built his relationships with local people. Vann was one of the few to see that the South Vietnamese government, with so many corrupt officials looking out above all for their own interests, was going to be no match for its hard, clean, and dedi-

cated enemy. "We're going to lose because of the moral degeneration in South Vietnam coupled with the excellent discipline of the VC," he wrote to a friend back home. And part of that moral degeneration was sexual. Vann learned of one American aid official who had allowed a Vietnamese contractor to steal U.S. Operations Mission building materials in exchange for women, one of whom was the contractor's wife. Sex didn't cause South Vietnam and the United States to lose the war, but it was nonetheless symptomatic of the larger demoralization of the society that the Americans were fighting to save. It's hard to win a very tough war and be devoted to erotic entertainment at the same time.

"Just next to the UPI office was the Melody Bar, which became kind of a journalist hangout," recalled David Lamb. He was speaking of a later time in the war, after the departure of Sheehan and Halberstam, when the number of troops and reporters had skyrocketed, and, therefore, so had the amount of plain and fancy screwing. "A lot of the guys from UPI had steady girlfriends from the bar that they lived with. When I called sometimes, the phone would ring and ring and ring because they were all next door with the ladies.

"There was no place in America where you could get a girl as easily," Lamb continued. "It was exciting living in another landscape that you didn't know existed."

"It was a very sad experience, but for me it was wonderful," Frank Maguire said, explaining the reason somebody like him, a bachelor in his thirties at the time, would want to do three tours of duty in a war that was nonetheless a tragedy for the United States and Vietnam both. "I sometimes get a guilty conscience because I enjoyed it so much. People laugh when I say I kept going back because of the girls and the food, but that's not too much of a lie."

THE ACTION TOOK PLACE at China Beach, the real China Beach, where American soldiers and others went for some seaside relaxation during the Vietnam War, but it wasn't the sort of action likely to make it into the later television series of that name. Eliseo Perez-Montalvo, an air force sergeant who conducted technical debriefings with pilots at

Danang Air Base, remembered one scene that sheds light on several aspects of the Vietnam sex circus.

"Over at China Beach, there was a serpentine wire that separated our beach from a Vietnamese beach," he said. "And there were some scraggly pine trees that grew higher up above the water line." Perez-Montalvo was speaking in 2003 to an interviewer for the Oral History Project at the Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech University. "And what the Vietnamese ladies would do, I guess the GIs, the Marines, this is an R and R center for the Marines. They would go there and rent a cot, a bunk, and they could buy a beer. They had a little PX there for them.

"And the enterprising Vietnam ladies would take sheets that the GIs would bring them from the barracks and tie them like a little barrier about three or four [feet] high from the pine trees that formed a little quadrangle and this was their house.

"And you would see the Marines, they wouldn't even take their boots off or their pants off all the way. You'd see their feet sticking out from underneath the sheets."

So far, it is a scene that illustrates nothing more than young men willing to take their pleasure where and under what conditions it is offered, and in Vietnam pleasure was offered under many different conditions. It was what happened after the sex in Perez-Montalvo's account that evokes the poignancy of the situation for the Vietnamese.

"Then they would throw the condoms away," he said, "and you would see small Vietnamese boys, they would pick up the condoms and take them to the ocean and rinse them in seawater and roll them up again and insert them in the little containers and try to resell them."

The interviewer asked if anybody bought them, unlikely as that seemed, given how cheap they were and how easy it was for GIs to get them at the PX. You would think that marines who had the forethought to bring sheets with them to the beach would also bring condoms, but maybe some of them would forget that little necessity and, rather than postpone their joust with the lady, would take what the Vietnamese boys provided.

"I imagine so," Perez-Montalvo said. "I imagine they did. I don't know. The Marines were crazy. I don't blame them. They had a very

tough job, a lot tougher than ours. And when they came back to town, they enjoyed themselves as much as possible because they had no assurance of what it was going to be like tomorrow."

I don't blame them either. I was young once, and I understand the power of the urge. The globe didn't acquire its more than 6 billion inhabitants via caution, restraint, and morality-induced abstinence. It produced them in the same way that the Vietnam War produced those half a million mixed-blood children spoken of by the Communist propaganda machine. The theoretical position of the U.S. Army and the American government on this matter was to discourage what it rather insipidly called fraternization, which normally translated to sex with prostitutes. The rules were not much enforced.

"The town was off-limits to us but nobody checked," Perez-Montalvo said. "It was easy. You just walk out the gate. Our PX was outside the gate. So you just go [to] the PX and then keep going, get lost in the crowd, hitch a ride."

Once, he remembered, he was in Danang. Near the market, he saw a television crew from one of the news services, its camera running, and he turned away until it had passed.

"I didn't want to get in trouble," he said. "We'd then go to the Da Nang Hotel where they had a massage parlor and a steam bath and I would take a steam bath and afterwards I would have mamason rub me and do fellatio on me for money"—about $4 or $5, as he remembered it. Once, he said, he came down with a venereal disease from an encounter at the same hotel and had to lie about where he'd caught it so as not to admit he'd been in town. He told the NCO orderly who treated him (who "wanted to hang me") that his exposure had taken place in one of the bunkers of the enlisted-men's club with one of the girls who worked there, and the the story's credence is a sign of how ubiquitous the sexual opportunities were.

Many other stories from the front lines of Vietnam confirm this. One of the best-known places in war-era Vietnam was one that GIs called Sin City, a circle of bars in the town of An Khe, in Binh Dinh Province, the nearest town to the sprawling Camp Radcliff, home to a rotating group of military units, including the celebrated First Cavalry Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and the First Battalion of the Fiftieth Infantry (Mechanized). In 1966, *Time* reported on Sin City in

an article called "Disneyland East." Initially, after the First Cavalry had moved into Camp Radcliff, what *Time* called "the uncontrolled squalor and rapacity of the riffraff" was hurting the American soldiers, mainly by causing a rapid increase in venereal disease. So the First Cavalry's commanding officer, General Harry W. O. Kinnard, declared An Khe off-limits. Not surprisingly, the troops were unhappy. They were fighting bloody battles in the jungle for weeks at a time, and when they got back to their base, they "had little to come home to." A group of Vietnamese elders then approached Kinnard with a solution: the army would build a brothel quarter to be staffed by Vietnamese women—they were given the euphemistic official designation "entertainers" and had a card identifying them as such—who were required to get preventive penicillin shots and weekly exams.

Eventually some forty concrete blocks surrounded by concertina wire, known to the GIs as boom-boom parlors, were built in a rough circle, in the middle of which was a clinic. The blocks were owned by Vietnamese or people from other countries—one GI I spoke to remembered an Indian owning at least one of them—and each had a bar and eight small cubicles in the back, where the carnal hospitality took place. They had names like Caravelle, Paradise, Golden Hind, Hill Billy, and the Moderate Tearoom. The price per girl was $2.50 to

Western man with a Vietnamese bar girl in Saigon, 1966.
Marilyn Silverstone, Magnum Press Images

$5, depending on demand, though *Time* quoted one unnamed GI complaining that the $5 price was exorbitant, a rip-off, an outrageous instance of someone taking advantage of a monopolistic situation, and he suggested that Kinnard set a uniform price of $3 per session. Immediately the incidence of VD plummeted, however, a good result, though American officers still felt morally ambivalent about what they had wrought. "Forced to choose between morality and the morale of their men, the division's officers are clearly troubled by Disneyland," *Time* reported. Not so the men.

"Sin Cities were whorehouses sanctioned by the army," one veteran wrote in an online memoir. "The military police would be stationed outside during the day, and they made sure that you were gone before nightfall. GI's would go there to have a little fun and blow off some stream with the mama-sans. You could buy a beer for around 50 piastres and sex for 300 piastres. The mama-san would say, 'You number 1 GI,' which meant great, number 10 meant you suck, and sex was 'boom boom,' and that usually happened in a small room behind the bar."

An Khe itself was, as Frank Maguire, the ARVN adviser, put it to me, "typical of a small town in the highlands." It was a strip of houses and stores along a winding highway. "Sin City was an appendix stuck on it a little behind everything. It might have been ten, maybe twenty little bars in a circle with places in the back where the girls would go.

"I thought it was a damn good idea," Maguire said. "Young men out in the jungle, three or four days, sometimes longer, and sometimes you're scared out of your wits, and they had no idea where they were. They came back, and they could relieve themselves. It was under government control, with a medic assigned to it, so girls could be checked."

Maguire also remembered what might have been the most attractive aspect of it, which is that, somehow, the women who worked there didn't seem quite like prostitutes. This viewpoint is in contrast to *Time*'s assumption that it was mostly the "rapacity of the riffraff" in Vietnam that created places like Sin City. It seems more than a little high-handed to condemn poor people for doing what they can to get some money from rich outsiders, and even at $2.50 to $5 a shot it's hard

to imagine the women in question getting rich, at least by American standards. In any case, some of the men who experienced Sin City don't remember it as a place of riffraff at all, but one of rather charming women who had genuine feelings for the GIs they got to know.

This is a common observation about the sex trade in Asia. The women seem nicer, fresher, more eager to please, than their Western counterparts. They are more affectionate and don't fit the image of the hardened and cynical purveyors of their own bodies that you would find in, say New York or on the rue Saint-Denis in Paris. They are poor girls with dreams for themselves and sometimes a vulnerable attachment to the American men they meet. In Vietnam, relationships were formed; marriages took place—and often came to an end after the couple moved back to America.

"I never thought of them as prostitutes," Maguire said. "They weren't on the clock, put it that way. You know, 'Okay, that's it, next!' "

Is this merely Western sentimentality, the transposition of the old saw about the whore with the heart of gold to rural Vietnam? There is no doubt some of that at play. It is a quality of young men in general, and American young men in particular, to want to be liked. Either way, there is a real poignancy to Sin City, stemming less from the fact of prostitution itself and more from the transience of the relations formed, the melancholy inherent in the meeting of young men with money to spend and homes to go back to and poor women whose homes were being wrecked by war.

" 'You no have wife-san,' " Maguire remembered one woman telling a soldier in an attempt at persuading him to marry her. " 'You no have baby-san. Who cry for you when you die?' "

"I had the feeling that the Americans didn't look down on the prostitutes," said Nguyen Ngoc Luong, who was a translator and reporter for *The New York Times* Saigon bureau during the final years of the war. "Because you lived far away from home without your family, so you need them. And they are very gentle, and they don't cost you too much."

Luong, whom I interviewed in 2008 in Ho Chi Minh City, used to go with Gloria Emerson, one of several *Times* correspondents he worked for, to the Tan Son Nhat airport to see the GIs boarding flights

for the trip home, many of them taking their Vietnamese wives along. The American consulate in those days did a brisk business in visas for new spouses.

"In Japan, there were few marriages," Luong said, meaning few marriages between U.S. soldiers and their Japanese girlfriends. "In Vietnam, there were many. Why? I don't know."

Perhaps it was because by the time of the Vietnam War, interracial marriage was more acceptable back home than it had been during the occupation of Japan, a generation earlier. Perhaps it had to do with the greater willingness of the Vietnamese to leave their country. Japan had already been defeated and was rebuilding itself, whereas Vietnam, which was poorer than Japan, faced the real possibility of a Communist takeover. Japan had also been an enemy country, whereas South Vietnam was supposedly a friend. In any case, while there was a great deal of raw, vulgar prostitution in Vietnam, deep and even lasting relationships were formed. "I don't think many of the girls became prostitutes in a strict sense," Luong told another interviewer, "but most of them had a small room somewhere nearby where everything was paid for by one specific GI. They had a GI boyfriend and when he died or went home they would have another. They liked the GIs very much. Most American soldiers were very good with girls. Very amiable. You'd have to be there to see it. The girls behaved very warmly with the GIs and the GIs were like children with them. Like babies. The girls took care of them."

MAGUIRE AGREED, though he has a somewhat darker view of the consequences of relationships bound to be temporary. "The girls were nice," he said in my interview with him. "They were dramatic, and they would get involved." Those who want to dismiss the narrative of the whore with the heart of gold need to hear the tale of one woman who worked in a Sin City bar.

"She developed a passion for my executive officer," Maguire said. "She was a very nice girl. Her name was Jackie. I think I have a picture someplace. And we had a party, and I think he was getting ready to go home, and she came to the party, and she said, 'You know how much I love you? I love you this much'—and she took a knife and cut off this digit." Maguire pointed to the first joint of his little finger.

"She said, 'I'd cut off my shoulder for you,' and she meant it."

Sad to say, Maguire's executive officer left on schedule, and Jackie remained in Vietnam. When the Communists took over the south in 1975, one of the first things they did was send thousands of former prostitutes to reeducation camps, where, though the women were treated as victims of the imperialist Americans and their lackeys, discipline was harsh and the stay lasted several months. In 1978, three full years after the end of the war, I was taken on a guided tour of such a center in Ho Chi Minh City, where I saw hundreds of young women sitting on the floor learning crafts like weaving and embroidery. We visitors were not given an opportunity to speak with any of the camp's residents. In any case, I didn't know at the time to look for a woman missing part of her small finger, but it is likely Jackie and the other entertainers of Sin City were there, or in places like it elsewhere in Vietnam.

AROUND THE TIME that *Time* disclosed to its millions of readers the existence of official Vietnamese brothels for American troops, there was a short-lived controversy in the United States about the sexual morality of the war. In a speech at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, William J. Fulbright, who as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was emerging as a leading critic of the administration's policy in Vietnam, famously charged that the "arrogance of power" had led the United States into a war beyond both its capabilities and its interests. One of the elements in the American effort to "create stability where there is chaos . . . and honest government where corruption is almost a way of life" was the moral transformation of Vietnam. But the American presence was in itself a cause of a new sort of immorality.

"Both literally and figuratively," Fulbright said, "Saigon has become an American brothel." Fulbright didn't attribute any of this to Vietnamese culture, in which prostitution and second wives had always been part of the scene, but he attributed it entirely to Vietnamese

poverty and the economic distortions caused by the American presence. The wives and daughters of economically displaced Vietnamese families were willingly peddled to U.S. soldiers to serve as mistresses, to the great shame and humiliation of those families. "It is not unusual to hear a report that a Vietnamese soldier has committed suicide out of shame because his wife has been working as a bar girl," he said.

Fulbright's accusation was cited in articles in the American press, and it drew rebuttals from an embarrassed Johnson administration. A couple of weeks after his Johns Hopkins speech, Fulbright held Senate hearings on Vietnam, during which he asked Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara what he thought of the brothel charge. "I have not been to Saigon since November 30. It was not a brothel then and I do not believe it is today," McNamara replied.

"You do not agree?" Fulbright persisted.

McNamara said, "I think we do a disservice to the Vietnamese and to our own men when we characterize it as such. I do not mean to say there are not prostitutes in Saigon. There are in Washington, and I do not mean to say that civilian and military personnel of our country are not patronizing them. They do."

That indeed was generally the tone of the response to those trying to fend off criticism that the war aimed at saving Vietnam from Communism was destroying it in other ways. Mrs. Oswald B. Lord, an occasional United Nations emissary of President Johnson's, happened to be at the end of a long State Department–sponsored tour of Asia when Fulbright made his comments, and she forthrightly declared that, yes, "some of this goes on," but she quickly added that "it goes on right here in Washington." In any case, mostly American GIs "are not in town with the bar girls," she said. They are doing other things, like helping with orphanages and rehabilitation centers—"that's the way they spend their days off."

The notion that Saigon was no different from anyplace else was a theme developed by *Time* as well in its defense of both American behavior and the war itself. "Not everyone in Fulbright's own Arkansas cities of Little Rock and Hot Springs patronizes prostitutes either," it declared, "though there is an abundance of whores, ranging from massage-parlor employees ($5) to $200-a-night hotel call girls." The article included the phone number (FRANKLIN 4-2181) that airmen

stationed at Little Rock Air Force Base could call to "find out if 'the ice is on.' The price of ice starts at $15 a dish."

Still, to dismiss Fulbright's brothel charge with the argument that Vietnam is no different from Hot Springs is truly to miss the point. To be sure, when American troops invaded France, Germany, and Italy in World War II, there were prostitutes available to them, but nowhere do we find the construction of brothels exclusively for the use of U.S. soldiers, nor were entire central stretches of Paris or Berlin transformed, as veterans often described Saigon's Tu Do Street, into a district of wall-to-wall brothels. More than one GI reflecting in later years on the sexual opportunities of Vietnam used a simple analogy to describe the scene.

"It's like a kid in a candy shop; you just walk in and you can eat anything you want," Michael Harris, a radioman on a river patrol boat, said in an interview for the Vietnam Center and Archive. "Most of us were lured or subjected to that to the point where we got involved, and I admire guys that didn't who were married or had religious beliefs that they didn't become involved. But, the majority did and I believe like myself many came away with sexually transmitted diseases."

The sexual temptation was so widespread even in combat zones that platoon commanders had to decide on a policy to implement. Phil Price, an advertising executive from Lubbock, Texas, remembered how, during his first few days as an infantry platoon leader near Pleiku, his men told him they wanted him to meet somebody. "Her name was Kim," he said, "and she had on black pajamas, and [was] really built well, and she opened it up and said, 'I souvenir. You boom-boom, you let me boom-boom GI's.' " Price told Kim to leave. As he put it, "I would not let my guys do that. Some of the officers when they went in would buy rubbers for their guys and what have you; I didn't. I didn't allow them to fraternize. We just didn't do that. It wasn't a moral issue, it was more of a safety. I figured they [the prostitutes] already knew where all my machine guns were at night and everything else so we just didn't need any more of that. There were a couple of times I would throw smoke grenades to get them out from around us."

Another former officer told me that he noticed his men seemed to be taking his battalion's jeeps to be washed more often than seemed reasonable, so once he went to the car wash to find out why. He learned that the women who worked there were doing boom-boom with the

men. In the Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech, there is a color snapshot of a woman labeled "Viet Nam carwash girl." There is no explanation, no indication of where it was taken or why, only that it comes from the Army Special Photographic Office. In any case, car wash girls weren't the only ones who freelanced as prostitutes when the occasion presented itself.

"My experience was almost exclusively with girls working in the laundries," said another veteran, Eric Larsen, who runs a local Veterans of Foreign Wars post in a bar he owns in Pattaya, Thailand. Larsen, whom I interviewed in Pattaya, was talking about his time in Vietnam, when he was part of an engineering detachment near Chu Lai. "You'd go into the city of Chu Lai, where there were laundries, shacks with corrugated aluminum roofs, and that's where the women were, add-ons to clean clothes."

Another former soldier, Wayne Smith, a combat medic who served with the Ninth Infantry Division, told an interviewer that sex was held up indirectly as an inducement to kill the enemy. "In our unit, guys who got confirmed kills would get a three-day in-country R and R," he said. "Those guys got sent to the beach at Vung Tao," he added, referring to a coastal town north of Saigon that was a center for steam baths, bars, and brothels.

Don Halsey, who did counterintelligence work at Thai Ninh in the Mekong Delta in 1970 and 1971, is one of many Americans who understood the economics of the situation: women from families that earned a few dollars a month would not normally have been prostitutes but did not resist the temptation to make unimaginable sums selling their bodies to the hordes of GIs.

"You'd walk around in Saigon and they'd grab you in an alley," Halsey remembered. "I went into a department store in Saigon, and a prostitute [said], 'Hey GI,' and pulls her dress up. This right in the middle of a department store. In the Vietnamese villages that we were in, we'd be right out in the middle of a jungle and hear this purring, and we'd look and here comes some Honda motor scooters with these ARVNs with a girl on the back trying to sell those girls right out in the field. It was really sad, what you saw in the movie, *Full Metal Jacket,* with ARVN and the girl, it's real typical of it."

The reference is to the film directed by Stanley Kubrick, which

depicts a marine platoon's entire experience of the war from their brutal training in America to deadly combat in Vietnam; in one scene, while the American soldiers are resting near some bomb-ruined buildings, a girl is brought to them on the back of a motorcycle, and they take turns going into a rubble-strewn room to have sex with her.

Wayne Smith remembered the "steam bath" right at the division headquarters in Tan An. "It was a whorehouse, in effect," he said. "These pretty young Vietnamese teenagers were being fucked by American soldiers. At the time I rationalized it by thinking, well, once we kill off the enemy, the Vietnamese will be able to be fully free and there won't be any more prostitution. But this was clearly just exploitation."

On the subject of steam baths, Ron Politano remembered in his interview with me meeting a Korean woman known as Missy Kim who, he said, ran a whole chain of them. Politano hit it off with her, partly because he knew a few words of Korean. Once he visited her in Saigon, and she introduced him to a Vietnamese man whom Politano took to be the boss. The man invited him to lunch.

"There was something about this guy, the way he was looking at me," Politano recalled years afterward. "He asked me if I'd like to see his office. We go in. 'You live in Hawaii,' he says. 'We've only just met, but I like your looks. I'm going to take you into my confidence.' "

The man opened an office safe—"big, like in one of those old Wells Fargo movies, with brass handles and two doors"—in which was stored what Politano took to be the accumulated proceeds of the blow-bath steam-job places. "The door was closed. Missy Kim was out of the picture. And inside the safe were bundles of money—piastres, French francs, Dutch guldens. I saw lots of U.S. dollars. The bundles were literally falling out of the safe. I don't know the exact figure, but he quoted something in the millions."

Politano soon got the drift. The man asked him how many footlockers he would take back home with him when he returned to Hawaii. " 'The Americans are losing the war,' he said. 'Do you know what will happen to me if the big boys come down from Hanoi?' So this guy was going to be hanging from a lamppost if they caught him with all that money.

" 'Let me ask you the obvious question,' " Politano said to him. " 'Why am I doing this?'

" 'You're doing this for half a million dollars,' " the man said.

" 'But then down the road if I get caught, I'd lose everything,' " Politano said. "So I left. Thanks a lot. No hard feelings. I never saw him again, but I do sometimes wonder what happened to all that money."

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL WOMEN became so commonplace that few Americans at any level in Vietnam seem to have bothered to wonder what sort of an effect this aspect of the war would have on Vietnamese attitudes. The matter seems rarely to have climbed the chain of command, though it did, on certain rare occasions, as when Fulbright spoke at Johns Hopkins and *Time* reported on Sin City, enter into the public discourse. In July 1965, a generally upbeat cable from the embassy in Saigon to the secretary of state mentioned "some resentment" at the growing American presence, which was causing higher rents for local people and a scarcity of goods. Also, the cable said, a series of newspaper articles in *Chinh Luan,* a Saigon daily, reprinted in the *Saigon Daily News,* "complained that wide circulation of dollars in Da Nang has debased the piastre, barter of gasoline for local purchases has created serious fire hazards, prostitution, and bars flourishing, etc. All these conditions are ascribed to presence of US personnel." But despite this, the cable continued, "behavior of US personnel appears correct and disciplined to Vietnamese observers."

This rare mention of bars and prostitution came just four months after those first marines landed in Danang, but the issue produced no deep discussion in Washington or at the Pentagon, in part because the increase in prostitution occasioned only the rarest protest in Vietnam itself. Early on, in 1964, the commander of South Vietnamese forces in Danang, Brigadier General Nguyen Chanh Thi, wrote to *The Saigon Post* to say that he'd received three hundred letters from parents complaining of the proximity of bars on Doc Lap Boulevard to schools throughout that area of the city. Nine bars were closed, he said.

And that was that. "We thought it was natural," Nguyen Ngoc Luong said when I asked him what the Vietnamese in Saigon thought of the pursuit of local women by American men. To be sure, the prostitutes were looked down on, but they had been there under the French and were there still under the Americans. Moreover, Vietnamese men

behaved no differently than the foreigners, though the places they went for their pleasure were less conspicuous than those patronized by Americans. The Communist propaganda made a fuss about it, but the South Vietnamese didn't, and in the absence of local complaints the American authorities only warned men about the danger of venereal disease, taking no steps to stop them from "fraternizing."

There was nonetheless a kind of moral corruption in the laissez-faire attitude of the American command. I interviewed one veteran, a marine who had seen action in the deadly battles in the A Shau Valley, which was a major staging area for North Vietnamese forces moving south. "It was bad," he said. "You can't even make people understand, it was that bad." He told me he never took the R&R leaves he was entitled to because he was afraid they would affect his concentration when he had to go back on patrol. "I know guys who got killed because they were dreaming about pussy in Bangkok, weren't paying proper attention," he said.

In fact, it would be hard to argue that dreams about Bangkok massage parlors had a serious military effect in Vietnam. Still, while sex during the Vietnam War was a sidelight of the conflict, it was also reflective of the lavish way in which Americans went to war, with all the advanced heavy military equipment that money can buy and a concerted effort to provide the material comforts and luxuries of the American way of life—overstuffed bureaucracies, massive staffs of non-combat personnel, air-conditioned quarters, Walmart-like PXs, turkeys for Thanksgiving, Bob Hope and Raquel Welch for entertainment, officers' and enlisted-men's clubs, and all-expense-paid vacations for GIs to various "gin & sin" destinations in Southeast Asia. The argument here is not that this was wrong but to point up the tremendous contrast with the way the enemy waged war, fiercely but economically, with ever-more-sophisticated weaponry (much of it captured from the ineffectual ARVN), but with no air power at all, with black pajamas for uniforms and sandals cut from old tires for shoes, and with no brothels, beer, ice buckets, massage parlors, go-go bars, or R&R junkets to Bangkok or Sydney or Kuala Lumpur; with no bedsheet shelters amid pine trees for getting laid on the beach with their boots still on; with no noontime hotel-room trysts with Vietnamese secretaries and no local women kept in small apartments around town by men whose wives

were waiting in Bangkok or Stateside for their husbands' brief visits. The routine of the other side in Vietnam did not include sexual adventures with women. Sex wasn't the reason we lost the war in Vietnam; still, it was part of the way we went to war.

During one of his tours, Frank Maguire was seconded to the State Department to work in JUSPAO, the Joint United States Public Affairs Office, in the Mekong Delta region. Every once in a while, he had to go to Saigon on business, and he always stayed at the same hotel, which was under contract with the State Department. Every time he went, he told me, a Vietnamese woman came with the room, for his pleasure. He didn't ask for a woman; she was just there.

"I was sent there, and all the people in it were State Department people, and for whatever reason I always got the same girl," Maguire said. "She was very sweet. She gave me a chain with a cross on it. She was just one of the amenities. I can't remember if I ever gave her any money. I must have, but it just didn't seem like it was that kind of a proposition."

PETE (AS I CALL HIM; he prefers to remain anonymous) was a pilot during a long career in Indochina, going back to 1956, when he flew C-124 transport planes from Saigon to New Delhi, with stops in Bangkok and Calcutta. After that, he flew planes for Air America, the airline of the CIA during the war in Indochina. He remembered his introduction to the sexual possibilities of Southeast Asia on an early overnight stopover in Bangkok. "The air force rep, who lived in a business hotel that no longer exists, took us out to a place with all these girls behind a glass door, with a number pinned on. They were knitting, because there was no TV." It was an eye-opener, and it was more than that. It was a vision of an alternative erotic world. "It was all so totally different from anything I'd ever seen, being born and raised in Pennsylvania, sex being so open and so readily available."

Pete was a risk taker; his reputation among other veterans is that of a very brave man. He flew spotter planes in Vietnam, sometimes drawing fire in order to locate the enemy in preparation for retaliatory air strikes. He remembered the early days in Saigon. Tu Do Street was already "wall-to-wall bars" in the 1960s, "though there weren't any touts

outside the expat bars trying to get you in. The girls didn't hustle you for drinks in those days.

"I had a couple of girls move in," he said, "since going downtown was getting a little tired. It was cheaper than going downtown every night," he said, "and I was cheap. The first girl I paid $50 a month and had to buy a carton of Winstons for her mother. If things got too serious, I'd just send them on their way, but they were willing to do that," he said.

"I was in Laos in 1970 and 1971," he continued. "It cost the price of a 150-cc Honda motorbike to get rid of a girl you didn't want anymore. I knew one guy who had five Hondas running around Vientiane, and that started the practice for the rest of us. We were making plenty of money. I only had to buy one girl a motorbike."

Pete told his stories of Indochina honestly and frankly, describing his experience of being young with money to burn while living in places where poor village women had survived for centuries selling their charms and their bodies to men. It would be easy to judge his behavior, and that of thousands of others who behaved similarly, as wicked and depraved, but the question of economic and psychological realism has to be factored in to that judgment. What would have been more moral for a pretty young woman from a war-torn village in Vietnam or Laos, where, as a matter of fact, every village had its brothel: to labor in the rice fields, married to a rough peasant man who beat her, got drunk, gambled, and visited the aforementioned brothel, or to have sex for money with men in the city who treated her decently, even giving her money to replace the family's dead water buffalo or to pay her kid brother's school fees? And from the standpoint of your average twenty-two-year-old man with nothing to do of an evening? To be sure, it would have been more moral for him to have stayed in his hooch or his hotel at night reading the New Testament, refusing to go down to Tu Do Street for a couple of beers rather than open the door when he knew that the person knocking on it had long silky hair, smooth nut-brown skin, and a perfume of orange and spice on her breath. How many young men with nothing else to do would have resisted the temptation?

Pete didn't resist. "There were these parties in Vientiane at a hotel, they were called tea dances, on Saturday afternoons," he said. "Young

girls would be there. They weren't in the trade, but if one of them caught your eye, she would be perfectly happy to go off with you. These were girls from the best families in Vientiane.

"And then there was a bar in Vientiane," he said. "The oldest girl in the place was maybe fifteen years old. I don't know how old the youngest one was. It was across the street from the guesthouse where I used to stay.

"A friend and I went in one time. There was just one girl by herself. She got between us and grabbed two handfuls of crotch and said, 'Who's first?' She told me she was eleven years old, and she looked it."

I asked Pete how he felt about that—eleven years old and looking it.

He didn't hesitate to answer. "It didn't bother me," he said. "I knew guys who were shacked up with eleven-year-olds."

INTERLUDE 7

A Room of Her Own

IT WAS ABOUT TWO YEARS after arriving with her husband in Singapore that Amy R's marriage broke up, and it did so in the way that not a few marriages of Westerners break up in Asia. Not that it's much consolation for Amy to have company in matters like this, especially after she had given up a perfectly good career in the United States—she had worked in publishing for thirteen years, including four as the marketing and sales director of a university press—in order to go to Singapore in the first place. Her husband, a Dane, had been sent to Singapore by his employer, a big shipping company, and Amy went with him in 2002.

"In 2004, September, he went on a business trip to Denmark, and he e-mailed me saying basically the marriage was over," she recalled. At the urging of friends, Amy saw a lawyer, who told her that, most likely, her husband was seeing somebody else, but she didn't believe it. Then when her husband came home from his business trip, she saw a digital camera and two airplane tickets on his bed.

"I asked him what they were, but he didn't say anything," she said. "Then I looked at the camera, and there were pictures in a sort of tropical-paradise setting of him and another woman, with the woman's intimate parts in full view. The airplane tickets were to Bali.

"She was Filipina," Amy said of her husband's new paramour. "She was younger, in her thirties, but she had a tough face, figure was not outstanding." Amy found out that her husband's lover wasn't educated either, but evidently there was some attraction between him and what she called "this unlettered woman" that satisfied them both. She saw

Chapter Ten / The Inescapable Courtesy of Japan

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Interlude 6 / The Butterfly Complex

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