



Menthe

Jeff Hayes

Menthe

Discovery of what was always there

EXCERPT
JEFF
HAYES



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Dedicated to the lessons of life
and those shared with.

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CHAPTER I

HANGING AT BRANDY'S

A longhair blond guy came in. He stopped and stood just aside the doorway. Two girls came in after, talking loudly. They were also longhairs. The guy stared at them in passing. They played at a chatty conversation, not paying attention to him, but the nearer watched in peripheral, communicating the obvious. She turned back and blew him a kiss before merging into the crowd of movement in the direction of the dance floor. The guy didn't respond. He remained there, out of sorts. The dejection he brought out tonight stood beside him.

I waved to catch his attention, "Hi Mark!" He nodded and went to the bar.

Before the words traveled across the floor, I regretted this meet. The look on his face foretold of the hours ahead, a buddy needed to unload through the Saturday night. Well that's fine, I thought behind my smiling greeting. He is a friend. We're up

for it. And the last time, we were up for it then too. And the time before that as well.

“Hi Mike,” he said, climbing aboard a stool.

The little table gained a second bottle. The waitress was immediately there. Giving the table a quick wipe, the bottle was replaced on a mat proper and her smile was shined across us.

“You boys good for now?”

“Sure, Linda. Later?” I asked.

“In your dreams, lover.”

“And such nice dreams, my dear.”

“Do I even want to know?” She winked at Mark and was off before I got the next volley out.

“So sweet. Hey, Mark, what’s up with you tonight. Some kind of funk mood?”

He remained distracted by the waitress's extra wiggle she performed departing from us. He had yet to return to Earth.

Trying again, “Hello?” I bounced the bottom of my bottle off the top of his. Foam rushed out, down the bottle and onto the table.

“Hey!” he said swiping the bottle off the table and dripping onto his pants.

“Dude. Ground Control to Major Mark.”

He leaned forward, “She wants you, man. How come you never went for that?”

“Linda? She’s a bud, man.”

“Yeah, but she’s so fine. I would do her for sure.”

“I bet you would. And maybe she’d be into it too, ‘specially if you offered Michelle along.”

I had his full attention now.

“What do you mean?”

“That fine wife of yours. Excellent hard body. Wonderful curves. Linda would be into her in an instant.”

“Ah...” Mark drawled. “She’s—”

“Nah. Plays for both teams.”

We both turned at that moment, catching Linda discretely watching us. I was grinning ear to ear. She smiled and shook her head and began to move towards us. But before she could get a couple of steps in, a Suit caught at her arm. He made some involved request of her. Turning, she rolled her eyes and gave us a kissy face before disappearing into the back.

“She’s so out of your league,” he said, pushing the spilled beer to the other side of the table with the mat.

“I told you, she’s a bud. Bud with benefits.”

“Man...” he drew out.

“So, tell me what’s up with you. Why the living vicariously through me when wifey is such the stone cold fox?”

I wasn’t exaggerating the compliment about Michelle. She was a stunning lady. Always classy with a flirtation tease since Mark first introduced me. That was her style of friendliness; I

thought nothing further of it. The three of us would have these late into the night conversations over pasta and flowing wine. I mean, a friend's wife without leave, right? A guy's gotta have some rules to keep the self respect. Ethics.

The last couple of times over though the tone had changed. Mark was distracted. Of late, he seemed like that a lot when I've seen them together. Michelle, she had become openly aggressive, dressing him down in front of me. He kept quiet through it all, just stewing. I heard all about it later; the sympathetic ear, that's my role for him.

There was this time I was over recently, it was late in the evening. She with her wine, he with TV and beer, sulking in the recliner. They weren't talking to each other. The atmosphere was heavy when I arrived and I told them so.

They both insisted I stay. Mark said, "We had made plans. We'll stick with them."

A rendezvous with Linda had been planned after she finished up at Brandy's. The plan was to meet up at her place and drive together to a weekend cabin party with people we hung out with. The cabin was in a different region in the mountains from where I lived. Driving there directly wasn't practical. A direct route would involve some excellently extreme off-road trailing. I do get into that, but not for this night. Linda lived near Mark so it seemed like a good idea at the time, drive down early to hang out with the M & M's.

Settling in for the few hours wait, trying not to be obvious about checking the time, was the plan. Mark had recorded a recent motorcycle race. It all would have been so easy, but for Michelle. Since arriving she kept at the talkative flirt with me, sitting close and being touchy. Way beyond the usual. I got up. Michelle followed me into the kitchen and came up behind while I was leaning into the fridge reaching in back for a beer. I didn't realize she was there until I felt a hand rubbing my ass. I'm like, "Ah?" and then she gave it a sound slap. Really connected strong. That stung. I spun around with my mouth wide open. She looked at me laughing, then turned trailing her long brown hair across my face, and left the kitchen. I stayed and fiddled around in the drawers trying to convince myself I was looking for a bottle opener. All the while I was waiting for my enormous erection to subside. It was that obvious.

When I made it back to the living room, Mark was still on the recliner zoned out. The MX race was blaring on the TV. Michelle was sitting away from him, fingers flying across her phone. She looked up briefly and smiled like a fox with a chicken feather hanging out of her mouth. Then it was back to the phone, the smile remained while the fingers danced. I sat back, trying to disappear into the couch.

The race kept on through the heats; the finals were next. I had hoped he wouldn't, but on cue, Mark got up for a pee break during the lead-up announcement. Before he was out of the room, Michelle's eyes were on me. I kept mine directed at

the TV, trying to pretend I hadn't noticed what she was doing. Her legs were apart. A hand had slid up the leg of the short pants. It took no imagination what the fingers under the material were busy with. The stare was burning the side of my face, but to maintain what little self control was left, I could not allow myself to look at her. She knew I was struggling; it was making her hot. Her other hand was at work on a nipple. They were straining to be released from the top. She liked being braless around the house and otherwise. Her breasts were so firm hard they really didn't need any support to shape them. She knew that and enjoyed showing their couture. The time Mark was gone was short, less than a couple of minutes, but it slowed down into forever. There was a gasp and a deep breath drawn in. I willed my eyes only to see the TV, but damn that peripheral vision; I had seen it all. She said my name quietly, "Mike." I couldn't look away until Mark returned. He had brought two fresh beers and a wine refill for Michelle, who was back at her phone. She acknowledged him with a nod.

The race finally was over. I looked to my phone and told them it was time. Mark carried some empties to the kitchen. I picked up the remainder.

Michelle was off the couch and caught at me. A hand found my ass through the pocket and gripped while she whispered, "I watched you Mike; you were so into it. That is why I came so fast, if you only knew how strong it was. I am really good at hiding it. You are going to fuck your girlfriend so hard tonight.

She will be wondering why, what is with the stronger enthusiasm then you usually give her. All the while you will be thinking about me, how I would fuck your brains out. That is no fantasy. I would. That will be in your head when you are giving it to her tonight. Try to keep it together and not come too fast. Be on your 'A' game, recite the capitals, or something. I do not want to be the cause of you getting the reputation as a preemie, like Mark. Your girlfriend would be mad if the performance was short. I know I would be."

She laughed and was out of the room.

And you know what? Michelle was so Nostradamus about the entire weekend, but not exactly as she predicted. I had told Linda all about what had gone on. I started before she had the car door closed and was buckled up. We began the drive out of town and up into the mountains. The words flowed out in a jumble of confusion.

During a pause in my monologue, she said, "Oh you poor guy. You must be really backed up."

"I am"

"That's not healthy, you know."

"So I've heard."

"Pull over here," she indicated the dirt sideroad coming up.

I did as I was told, safely pulling off the road. The lights were shining into the trees.

"Stop the motor."

Again, as I was told, the lights were put out as well.

“Your story of Michelle, you know what that’s done to me? This whole weekend, you know what’s gonna be on my mind?”

I wasn’t quite sure where she was going with this, but I had a hunch.

“I am so fucking wet right now,” she said, undoing the belt and opening my pants. I took it from there while she got out of hers. Sliding over to each other, in a single movement she straddled me, directing my tingling cock into herself and slammed into me, grinding our pubic bones together.

“Fuck me, Mike. I want you to fuck me with all of your beautiful cock.”

Well, what could I do? Beautiful Linda ramming herself onto me. I did as I was told, naturally.

Our friends at the cabin commented that Linda and I were extra energetic over the weekend. Nostradamus had spoken true.

The next M & M visit was at my place. I had invited a friend over but she canceled just before, sending her regrets and wanting to reschedule for later in the evening. We did BBQ out back. It was sunny, hot. Perfect day to cook outside. We all dressed coolly. As usual, Michelle was wearing a lot of skin. She kept herself well tanned, remaining tanline-less year round; it was her thing. And that ass length hair of hers. Amazing, and she knew it.

Chicken was on the menu tonight. I'm into spicy BBQ sauce, the hotter the better. Mark, however, likes it mild. He had forgotten to bring his special sauce along. That wasn't unusual for him. Unfortunately, the bottle he left here last time was nearly empty. I suggested we mix it with mine to stretch it out; however, he wouldn't go for that, insisting on having his sauce. There was a store out here, but it wasn't very near. He drove off and left me alone with Michelle. Not so strangely, I was nervous. I fidgeted with cleaning the BBQ grill.

"Well, finally," she said, coming up behind. Her arms encircled me squeezing that wonderful body of hers firmly against my back.

I was light headed. "What are you doing, Michelle?"

"You are shaking. Do you like me?" She slid her hand down. "Why, yes. I think you do."

"We can't. Mark," I stammered.

"He will not mind."

I turned away out of her arms and spoke to the ground, "Why are you doing this?"

"Why not?"

"Mark is my friend. You are my friend. We can't."

"Mark has told me about some of your special friends. Friends with benefits. Maybe I want that from you too."

I took a breath realizing I hadn't for what seemed like minutes, but it could only have been a few seconds.

“Michelle, Mark and you don’t have an open relationship or do polyamory. I know that. We’ve talked. He said you both aren’t doing that, or are you?”

“I do not know. He said you are poly and I am curious. Does it matter?”

“To me, yes. We can’t, I can’t, do this to him.”

Caressing herself she said, “You do not know what you are missing. Look at you. I know you are as wet right now as I am.” She sat in a chair with her legs uncrossed. No pretense, I was staring at her definition apparent.

“I waxed it smooth last night. I did it thinking about you. Mark told me all about how much you like that. ‘Vulvas are beautiful, it’s a shame to hide them.’ You said that, right?”

I took another deep breath before saying, “Yes. They are. Yours is especially.”

“Think about mine, dripping wet for you now. Maybe my vulva and I will visit, make an appearance in your dreams. What would we do with you?”

She laughed, continuing, “Look at you, Mike. Here is a guy that will masturbate to me first chance he gets alone”—the smile grew wider—“you know, it would be hotter if you would rather do that in front of me now. I would really enjoy that if you did. Would you like me to help you get started?”

I said, weakly, “Please, Michelle, No.”

“Oh well. Missed opportunity. Suit yourself.” The phone was back. The fingers began to dance.

It was all too much. I sought refuge in the house, heading straight to the fridge, and not to touch myself, though I desperately needed to. Reaching for a beer, I anticipated an ass slap, but that didn't occur. In my state I would have ejaculated from her slightest attention.

"Control," I chanted. My mind needed to be somewhere else. Better to wait for my friend later, recite capitals in the meantime. I hoped she would not cancel again. This energy needed to be worked out.

"Hello, Mike? You the one spacing out now?"

"Huh. Oh, I was just remembering."

"Bet you were. That Linda is hot for you, mate."

I shifted my seat on the stool, requiring a discreet adjustment—my cock had grown uncomfortably tight in the pants.

"Could be."

"You play it cool, dude, but look at you, the state you're in. It's plain to see you are hot and bothered for her too."

"Mmpfh," I mumbled, taking a pull on the beer.

"You do it with other girls with her, like together?"

I coughed into my arm. The banter with Mark had gotten out of balance. I was feeling guilty for where the blood had decided to concentrate. From my inattention, Mark had finally gotten distracted and was scanning the crowd for skirt. He

turned to talk with a guy. I didn't know him. Released from social niceties, I escaped back into my dreaming.

The moment was about to change. Everything was about to change and I was totally naive of the significance of it.

I had been innocently tracing a finger along the table grain when another beer bottle was placed into my tunnel vision view. The label snapped into focus and I looked up startled. There was a woman standing there, connected to the bottle. I must have had some look on my face. She said something in reaction. The music was loud. I couldn't hear her, but I had floated back to myself, reorienting to the quasi-reality of Brandy's Bar. We stared at each other, both instantly recognizing the other's look of, "Let's play."

"I'm sorry. What was that?" I asked.

She spoke, but again I couldn't understand. The words were there, but they wouldn't flow together.

She reached out for my shoulder and spoke close to my ear. Her breath was warm and wet. I could almost feel her tongue inside me. Slowly she said, enunciating carefully, "I asked if you wouldn't mind me putting my beer on your table."

I had a laugh, no drama here. "Nah, of course not."

"Thank you." She still had a hold of my shoulder.

"It's a bit loud in here at the moment."

"What?" she said.

It was her turn. I spoke into her ear, "Loud here."

MENTHE

“Yes.” She was enjoying our start.

“Your accent is great.”

“What accent?” she teased back.

“Where are you from?”

“Scandinavia.”

I paused realizing she probably gets this line 100 times a night and has prepared responses to the banality of it. I wanted to be clever and that immediately put me at a loss for the banter rhythm. Cleverness flows of its own accord, it balks at being forced.

She heard the break in my thoughts and threw me a life preserver, “You know Scandinavia isn’t a country, right?”

Well, yeah I did know that, and where it was generally on the map. But for naming the countries which make up Scandinavia, I was a victim of my disinterested schooling. I prattled off, “Sweden?”

“No,”

“Norway?”

“No.”

I wasn’t sure, but I asked it anyway, “Finland?”

“Well, Finland isn’t really in Scandinavia, at least some say that.”

Then I had what I thought was a brilliant insight. “Iceland?”

“Ah, Iceland. You know of Iceland? Wonderful place, but no.”

MENTHE

I was stumped. She stood before me, patient. For some reason there was excitement for her to be in a conversation with this silly American guy, perched on a silly American stool, drenched by noise in a silly American bar.

I tried again. This was the last country in the European north I could think of. “Holland?”

She scrunched her face up. A weatherman wasn’t required to forecast there was a deserved tease a-brewin’.

“Holland isn’t in Scandinavia. Did you sleep through the day in class when they taught about geography outside of the U.S.?”

“I’m sorry, I just don’t know.”

“You don’t know? Really?” She comically acted being put out.

“No, really. Have pity.”

“Denmark.”

“Eh?”

“DENMARK!”

Turning back to us from his conversation, Mark helped, “She said, ‘Denmark,’ Mike.”

“Thanks.”

“You don’t know where that is, do you?”

“Ah, no.”

Her hand had remained on my shoulder the entire time.

She leaned back to my ear and said, “You will,” and licked my earlobe.

I hadn't seen them before or maybe they had come in while the geography test was in progress. We seemed to have gained a crowd around us. They were friends of this woman from Denmark. She turned to them and they huddled in conversation—not that I could understand a word even if they were speaking English, and they certainly were not. Their words were melodic, from what I could hear over the music.

The newly discovered Danish woman turned back. She asked, "Do you like me?"

"Yes. I think we might have the start of something going on."

"But?"

"No buts."

"Good. I like you too. You're slow, but maybe you have potential. Have you thought to ask my name?"

"What's your name?"

"Rikke. You are Mike, right? That's what your friend called you."

"Yeah, that's right."

"OK, Mike. Would you want to hang out with us?"

"Sure."

"I got to go pee, but when I come back you will still be here, right? You're not going to run away, are you?"

"I'll be here."

"We are going to a party by a friend's. You can come along, if you want. Do you have a car?"

Mark and I usually drove separately because of my proclivity to wander late into the night.

“I’m good,” I said.

Rikke looked at me quizzically, “Ah, OK?” not understanding the idiom.

“Yep.”

“Back soon. Don’t go away.” She gave my knee a departing squeeze.

The girl standing beside smiled. I smiled back. Looking over the group, they were all smiling, but that wasn’t only because of my newly found potential friend. They were all smiley at each other and were chatting away loudly. It was their disposition. My first observation of Danish, it seems.

Another girl said, “You like Rikke, don’t you?”

I got off the stool to speak better with her.

Before I could say anything, Rikke was back. She stood close, leaning in. The other backed off a little.

“Ready?” she asked.

“For you? Naturally.”

The Right answer rewarded me a bump on the shoulder.

She spoke loudly to the group in sing-song.

They cheered back in the same.

The other woman spoke to Rikke briefly, then Rikke turned to me, “How many can your car take?”

“I have a truck. Three or maybe four in the front if we squeeze in cozy.”

The woman said, “You have a Pick-up Truck? That’s so American. I want to ride with you.”

“Can you take us?”

“Sure, sure. What do you think, Mark?”

He had been standing across the table with his friend. They had been gawking at this group bound to assimilate me. His face said it before he did. “Nah, looks too late for me. We’ll hang out here for a while,”

“Really?”

“Yeah, but I want details tomorrow.”

“Hah, if they let me off their space ship.”

“Dude,” the other said, “watch out for the anal probe. Space aliens are into that, man.”

“You don’t know Mike, he’s probably into that too.”

That left him with his mouth open.

“See you guys. Details later.”

The group had begun moving towards the door.

Linda was watching from the bar end. She blew a kiss. I volleyed it back to her.

Rikke was waiting for me outside. We loaded up and were off down the road, my truck full of Scandinavians. There were a couple in back too. The caravan headed out across town tending towards the direction of the expensive part, on the other side of the tracks.

Musing about the situation, I had a giggle, “Danish like trucks,” a variation, but just as true.

The babble continued on loudly, totally incomprehensible to me. I tried to get a word in.

“So how is it you-all are here?”

Switching to English, Rikke’s friend answered simply, “We’re au pairs,”

“Au what?”

“Nannies,” Rikke said.

“Aha,” I said.

“What does that mean?” the friend asked, “ah-ha?”

I found out later her name was Lærke. Rikke helped me with the pronunciation.

Me in the cab with three women close quarters focused on my next answer. I took a moment and chose my words carefully.

These were my safe words, “Au pairs are like nannies, right? I did not know that.”

“Like Denmark was in Scandinavia?”

“Or where Denmark was?” the third said.

“Yeah, like that,” I said meekly. The awkwardness warning light began a dim illumination of the dash.

“Not to worry, we’ll teach you all about that too.” That got a laugh.

“School’s in session, and Rikke’s good with sharing her lessons,” Lærke said.

“Eh?” I managed

The third added, “Ha-ha, you’ll find out.”

They laughed mysteriously, with a few words spoken between.

“Maybe you’ll like it.”

“If you survive the night.”

“Lærke, you got the anal probe with you?”

“Sure do.”

“You didn’t bring the little one this time?”

“No, I remember what happened with the last specimen. I brought the proper sized one tonight.”

“Chilled to perfection?”

“Of course.”

Their laughter got the attention of the ones’ in back. They all jabbered through the open slider. I could only guess the words explaining what the laugh had been about. There was a second of a confused look before they too joined in the laughter. There we were, rolling through a sleepy neighborhood, a truckload of laughing Scandinavians and me. I was looking forward to this.

The neighborhoods ended in rolling hills. A short distance on, the caravan pulled into a driveway before a house set back off the street. It was a warm, starry night, much warmer than at my place up in the mountains. Late Spring tended to be like that. This group had a lot of energy. It was contagious. Rikke had taken my hand since leaving the truck. A couple more cars pulled in. I didn’t recognize the people who got out. They

hadn't been at the bar. Greetings were shouted. They spoke differently.

Rikke said quietly, "Germans."

The house was big and open inside. The surrounding land was big and open as well. A rowdy-polite party spontaneously commenced. Beers began to be drunk, cigarettes began to be smoked.

I found myself in the kitchen with a little group grilling me about local hiking spots and off-roading opportunities. Lærke and the third woman from the truck were among them.

Had I been to this National Park, or that?

Was Lake Tahoe water really so clear?

Would it be too cold still at Yellowstone?

How are earthquakes? Have I been through any and aren't they scary?

Some were Germans, the rest Danish, or so I thought. I found out later there were a couple of Swedes, they were the ones who had ridden in back of my truck. And a Norwegian as well, she was the third passenger in the cab. It was a little disappointing that Iceland was not represented. But as was explained to me, they aren't allowed to travel quite so much. If too many are abroad at once, Denmark would try to reclaim Iceland as an abandoned colony. I didn't get the humor at the time, but it sounded fun anyway.

Rikke appeared at my side, rescuing me from the grilling, and Lærke's clutches, whose hand had explored its way into my back pocket. The material was thin to the touch, her nail scratches tingled.

Rikke, "Come on. Let's walk out to the pond."

"Oh ho-ho," the Norwegian said.

"Not to worry. We'll have the probe nicely iced down, ready for you later," Lærke said, squeezing my ass before withdrawing her hand.

Michelle flashed into my thoughts, bringing more tingle down south. I spoke quickly to distract myself before the bulge became apparent, "Thanks, I'm sure you both would take good care of me."

I leaned over to kiss her on the cheek. She turned and kissed me on the lips, licking her tongue.

She said, "Lesson, how we do it in Denmark."

"Don't forget us in Norway," and I got a kiss from her too. "Lærke and I like to do things together. We share."

"I see. You know, I'm a slow study. I might need to practice, a lot." That caught them a second.

Before they could respond, Rikke had her arm around my waist and tugged, "Come along, you."

"Bye. I'll hold you both to that promise, ready for me, for later."

Lærke blew me a kiss, then we were out the big doors and into the starry night.

Rikke's hand slipped down onto my ass and gave a squeeze, followed by a slap.

I jokingly protested, "Hey!"

"You are a naughty boy, Mike."

"Are you taking me out behind the wood shed for my discipline lesson, Mistress?"

"Is that what you'd like?"

That was so Rikke, and the rest of her crew. They were excellent with the banter prattle. I loved it.

She continued, "Lærke is into that. You should let her know."

"And you? What are you into?" I asked, pulling her in front of me. Our first kiss. The wind blew our hair around, tickling. A Postcard moment.

"Let's see how the pages of that book read." She caressed my face and we continued our way to the pond.

The grass was soft by the water edge. There were some reeds nearby the breeze played wind song with.

We laid back. The Moon was just below the horizon. The stars were in our eyes and chit chat words were in our mouths. At the same impulse moment we turned to each other meeting together in tongue play. Slow licks and tickles was the dance. This continued for a while until Rikke had enough. She pushed me over at the shoulder and rolled on top, straddling me. Grinding began slowly back and forth, the moon rise was visible though her hair. Her amazing white blond hair.

“Come,” she laughed, pulling me up behind her. “Take me to your house.”

“And leave the party?”

“Would you rather stay here or have me? It’s a bit too chilly to do both.”

We kissed lightly. “Let’s go,” I said.

“Good decision, boy. I have needs.”

“As you wish, we’ll see to those, girl.”

We made our way through the party gauntlet. Parting words and kisses were exchanged. There was a tall stunningly beautiful woman with huge blond hair. She had been staring at me earlier all the while during the grilling circle. Though we hadn’t exchanged a word, she had studied me with deep looks. On the way out I caught her eye. We watched each other briefly until she turned away with a pout.

“Come on, you,” Rikke tugged at me. “That’s Stefi. Not to worry, you’ll see her around again. She’s German.”

We found my truck parked under the moon glow and climbed aboard.

“Where are you living?”

“I have a house in the mountains, near Auburn. It’s out in the forest.”

“A cabin in the woods?”

“Yeah, something like that.”

“Should I be afraid?”

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“If you wish.”

“Hmm... I don’t have to be back until Monday morning.”

“Plans for tomorrow, then?”

“Entertain me.” Her head found my shoulder.

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CHAPTER II

Home at the Heart

The dogs were waiting on the deck when we arrived. Four large dogs surrounded us, giving Rikke the smell over. She hadn't seen them in the dark until they were upon her, noses at work.

"Hey guys, easy now." I turned to Rikke, "Guess I should have warned you. Not a worry. You're with me so they'll behave like sweet teddy bears."

More dog noses circled around.

"Learning your smell, that's how they accept new people."

One was getting too fresh, "Hey, stop that Arnie," who had his nose buried in her crotch. "That's my job."

She stepped back and Arnie stepped forward.

"Just give him a push with your knee. He's excited is all, forgotten the boundaries."

"Was that advice against the dog or you?"

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CHAPTER III

Movement of the Mind



Why was I subjecting myself to this again? Expectations gave me blurred vision all the way down the hill. I had decided the bike ride would be the escape distraction I needed to calm my mind. The bikes had been parked through the snow season and the residual black ice on the wooden bridge river crossing. That way remained icy until late after the cold season passed. The crossing was deep in a ravine which seemed to have about 15 minutes of sun a day down there this early in the year. Recently, I had checked the condition carefully, even got out of the truck and walked the bridge.

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CHAPTER IV
Settling In

 Michelle gave a gasp, “I want to try that.” I pushed the chrome toy over to her. She looked at it, curved and globed at the ends. The weight had heft, it was solid. Wheels were turning inside her head. Those tasty juices of hers would be flowing; however, a little something distracted her.

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CHAPTER V

Conversation in a Redwood Grove

 ikke had made the arrangements, as was her predilection, organizing those around her. It is best to relax with the inevitable. That she is easy to flow with, made this not an unpleasant experience.

Here's the set up.

Rikke was busy with her host family the next days and expressed sympathy for the possibility of me being alone. Maybe the worry was a concern being separated from the Danish magick the enrapturing spell might diminish—perhaps I would get distracted and forget them?

Lærke volunteered as available to stand watch, so to speak. I was to pick her up for a bike ride tomorrow morning after her host family left for their trip. She was driving them to the airport for an early flight and would be back mid-morning.

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The plan was scheduled. All parties were in agreement. Rikke was happy.

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CHAPTER VI

Arrange Like With Like

ærke flowed with me like a shadow, anticipating the movements of the bike, gripping when needed, releasing when she didn't. Her arms remained either around my waist or hands at hips, joining us as one. Fingers exploring the outline of leathers kept in mind our day in the valley.

I thought: Worked in a nice tan, continued a good start at a base today. Julie would have approved how we spent our day, natural, in glorious nudity. How could this lovely place be celebrated otherwise?

We rolled up to the house and into the garage. Linda was already there. I touched the car hood; it was still hot. Lærke pulled off her helmet. Her blond hair spilled large across the dark leathers. Smiling at my stare, she came around the bike and pressed her whole body in kiss.

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“Linda’s here. Come. I want you to meet her.”

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CHAPTER VII

Cup Event

Tonight would be a night off, per the schedule. Me time, alone on the hill with the four legged critters. I hung around the barn after feeding the horses. A cold bag of beer had been toted along. My favorite rock boulder seat was near the barn, in the pasture. The horses were munching down. There were just the two at this time. Their sounds echoed out the open stalls.

Over the winters, Julie, the horsie buddy primary, kept her three horses here. She lives way up there on the hill, year round with her high mountain family. It is quite the story how the arrangement came to be, the Julie hook-up. Zoey and I had met her at an Endurance Ride event years ago. This was shortly after Cathy had moved away from us. She had been our primary and my number one regular horse riding buddy.

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CHAPTER VIII

Like Minds

 It was after the Cup event. Julie and I were sunning the morning away on a mat outside my tent, relaxing from our exertion at the truck. There were a few clouds drifting lazily across our view of the deep blue sky. Julie was suddenly up, moving to sit cross legged. She looked serious.

“Mike, I’ve made a mistake. It’s just that I get energetic being out with Jake with all the physical exertion. It gets me so horny. Please don’t think I’d just fuck anyone. Seeing you when I pulled in though, I knew there would be chemistry. Tried to be coy about it, maybe you noticed?”

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CHAPTER IX

Partner Discovery

 Julie's story.

My teen years were spent in awkwardness. Books were my friends. We would disappear together into wonderful adventures. They remained true to me when boys were so childish. The girls were worse though. Naive fashion soldiers in boot camp training.

Paul came into my life when I was nineteen, after I went off to college. I was still a virgin then, at least man-partner wise. With fantasy-partners, I was a huge slut. Books, my old friends, got me started, but my imagination left them behind. They were so parochial.

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CHAPTER X

Philosophical Understanding

 ulie's story continues.

Pulled into the driveway. Another car was there, parked crooked. There was enough space for my little car. I parked beside it. Walking past the front, I felt the hood. It was cool but for the sun heating the paint. The house looked quiet; the curtains were drawn in the front room. I rang the doorbell and waited.

It wasn't that I was early, but I wasn't late either. My being here at this time was all Tabby's fault. I was nervous, waiting at this front door, again.

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CHAPTER XI

Horse Barn Maintenance

The end of summer brought change. Our climate doesn't really observe the arbitrary official day, regardless of scientific certainty to back up the transition. The days remain hot and dry—not much change. It's the need of our cultural world that requires passage.

Lærke and Rikke had finished their au pair term in May. Their replacements were quickly assimilated by the respective host families, a changing of the guard, so to speak. Before the solstice, we lost Rikke. She returned to Denmark's advantages, to continue her studies. Our vanguard saw her off at the airport. Linda, Lærke, and I watched her plane push off and taxi out. The special memories of her in our lives were fresh on our lips, while the plane progressed forward. The moment came when it turned onto the runway, engines powering up

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full. Lærke's head was on my shoulder; we shared an arm around each other's waist. Linda's hand held my other. We were silent, staring. The plane accelerated. I held my breath as the wheels lost contact with land and the plane flung itself up with a roar, punching into the sky, climbing higher and higher. The wings dipped with a bank turning side-long, appearing frozen in the sky until the turn was complete. The course headed straight away from us. Bye-bye, Rikke.

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CHAPTER XII

Lærke and Benny

y phone was flashing, its demands required satisfaction. Picking it up off the kitchen counter, I swiped it alive. There were a couple texts.

Jules and Paul were rummaging in the fridge. Tabby sat heavily on the bar stool, leaning into me. My free arm found her. We squeezed each other in sidelong hug.

“Text from Lærke. She’s enjoying the day down in flatland. Wishes to be outside. Lunch of Americanized sushi that was ‘curious.’”

Jules pulled her head out of the fridge. “How old is this potato salad?”

“Fresh, from yesterday.”

Paul had meat and cheese out and had already begun slicing the bread rolls.

“OK, this other one says they all keep a short Friday. She’ll be headed back up in the early afternoon. Benny was curious from hearing her gush on about the property. Would it be OK if he came up as well?”

I joked, “‘Gush on.’ ‘Came.’ Is that code?”

A yawn from Tabby and a stare from Jules.

“Well, it is already early afternoon so the answer would be foregone. I’ll text her back anyway, just after I read what Linda had to say.”

Paul asked, after slicing the rolls, “One each is good?”

Tabby said sleepily, “I just want a half.”

Jules, “I’ll share with you. I only want a half as well. Backwards not to ask before doing the slicing, Paul.”

“That’s me, isn’t it?”

“Sometimes, dear. Sometimes. You have a foot in both planes—”

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CHAPTER XIII

Consummation



merging from the toilet, Benny's legs were shaking. His face was dry—the sobbing had ended as suddenly as it had started. The moisture had flowed out in a culmination of joy as the strokes subsided. The shared knowledge with Tabitha of his need and her instruction to seek satisfaction had been all consuming. The words still rattled around in his head. Equally, the flash image of her cooz remained burned into the back of his retina.

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ABOUT JEFF HAYES

Jeff Hayes has been working for many years as a Software Engineering Consultant- not to be confused with his evil-twin, of no relation. Now located in Switzerland as an employee with a financial firm, he has found several hours free in his daily commute. Daydreaming out the carriage window on the green Swiss countryside, the idea came to him to consider the train commute as renting a public space office. Balancing the distraction of the fellow passengers with life within office space cube walls, thus began Jeff's side work realizing his thoughts into words.

Though many pets and a few horses have graced Jeff's life, he presently finds himself pet free, for the short term.

CONNECT WITH JEFF HAYES

Jeff enjoys talking with his readers for reflections words can bring. Their impressions can be fascinating and unexpected.

He can be reached at his website, depli.com



Summary

[Menthe](#) is a French word pronounced “Mont”. It is a lovely aromatic herb complementing hot and cold beverages, and many foodstuffs. It enjoys a mysticism concerning its base oil and properties. This is a hardy plant which seeks to spread itself among us, in our gardens and beyond.

Concerning this novel, [Menthe](#) is a journey of directed encounters flowing in the moment of connection. Vignettes of detail unfold when opportunity presents itself. Rising to claim courage of awareness defines a traveler of life encounters. [Menthe](#) surrounds us, asking only of one to embrace a simple want: Claim yourself. Seek out others who follow a similar path of unburdened cultural distraction. Rally in the shared glow.

Topics of polyamory and philosophic discussions are explored in the practical. Personal ethics are thrown contrasted

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briefly against the morality dogma bleeding from cultural posturing.

Please be on notice. This book contains passages of deeply explicit, open encounters. Encounters known on occasion to blister the thin skin of the stubbornly prudish. Sensual detail is communicated in sexuality, at length and at leisure. Words here are not suitable to the religious encumbered, unless such folk are not so burdened.

Minors in thought, regardless of your age, the text contained within is not appropriate for you.

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