

Blind date

John made her feel secure. She'd go anywhere with him. Just close her eyes and follow. Sometimes the excitement tore her guts, flittered them away in merry go rounds of sheer terror. She danced to attention, laughed with the pleasure of challenges just out of bounds.

John had a steadiness, a lingering security that kept her feet on the ground, eyes firmly closed to all around. She'd stroke his neck gently, let him lead her on, take her over new horizons. The smile on her face never faded when John was showing the way.

Without him she would be blind. A black hole of lost desire, unfound hope. John was her alternative to doing nothing at all, to surrendering like a maggot squeezed between fingers before being trawled out as bait in the hope a desperate fish might be lured into collusion.

She ruffled his hair. His tail wagged in compliance, the joy of leading her astray. Eyes closed she followed him everywhere, let him take her where no guide dog had gone before. He smelt of shampoo and dog lice. Her nose wrinkled in awe. He licked his lips, panted, looked back to check she was there, heard the tone and took her across the traffic lights without pausing for a second thought.

"Good dog," she mouthed.

"Thank you," he whistled.

"You're the best."

"You're the only one."

Head eying the sky, left hand loosely but firmly holding the harness, she walked forward defiantly.

They spend their days wandering. Her parents seemed to approve. Or said nothing to the contrary.

"Had a good walk love?"

"Out with John again?"

"He'll take care of you."

Yes he would. She twirled extra long hair into a pony tail. Closed her eyes and let him run free.

Funny little creature that girl.

She is, isn't she?

Lovely sweet thing.

But she does wander.

Don't know what her parents are thinking of.

Out on the streets at all hours.

Always smiling though.

Yes she is. Lovely creature.

Just think she should be at home a bit more.

And she has that funny way of walking as if her eyes were closed

I know, keeps bumping into things.

Then John made a mistake. It should never happen. They were trained too well. But he miss judged the traffic light tone and was run over by a number 16 bus. She opened her eyes just in time and crawled back to the curb.

Would you look at that!

Wandering around, lids shuttered, mind lost in oblivion won't get you very far.

With John gone she did indeed have to keep her eyes open more often. She wasn't sure she liked what she was seeing. Her parents kept coming into focus, her teachers, a world of responsibilities. Everybody seemed to be angry, arguing, not seeing each other. Not to worry. She'd find another John soon.