

while he snapped our pictures
in his apartment taking hours
touching here and there
wiping his balding brow sweating
from the hot lights and his libido

and it was rumored that you
only got photos of yourself for yourself
if you went to bed with him although
all the girls denied it, said, What?
Go to bed with that old fart?
Yet Bunni, Wendi, Suzie Q and Delilah
got portfolios, Barbie 50 8 x 10s
she sold for \$20 each to all
her boyfriends and sugar daddies
while all I ever got after coffee
at Denny's with the Silver Fox
was one copy for the boss's office
which he tacked near the trashcan
and every day during the 2 years
I worked there I watched my face,
cleavage, smile and hairdo
become fly-specked, cigarette ash-dusty,
beer-, coffee- and spit-stained,
as the strange wallpaper of myself
became a ruin in my own lifetime,
a squalid impertinence
of inestimable unimportance.

DANCING IN THE FRYING PAN

Richard, my agent, was always calling me
about my go-go gigs from some phone booth
off some L.A. freeway or highway,
cars, motorcycles and trucks roaring by
as he yelled into the receiver at me.
"Hey baby!" he yelled at me the very last
time he called me. "I can't book you no more
at no place! No place wants you back!" (Roar)
"Joe's Bar & Grill in Pomona says
you're a shitty dancer! You kicked over
some Mexican dude's beer!" (Roar)

"He was reaching for my ankle...."

"And the Bullpen says you blow
your nose all the time!" (Roar)

"I had the flu...."

"And the Blue Bunny says all the guys
walked out when you came on!" (Roar)

"I came on after that 6-foot-tall
48-inch-boobed Vegas showgirl...."

"And the Amber Inn says all you could dance
was the bassa nova and the jitterbug!" (Roar)

"All the old guys kept playing Sinatra
and Glenn Miller on the jukebox...."

"Excuses! Excuses!" he yelled, and while
some car, motorcycle or truck backfired
Richard, even though he personally
thought me okay and cute, he yelled,
fired me from a job (Roar) I never wanted
in the first place, a job that
had caused me to break out in hives

and for the rest of the summer
I lay in the sun 8 hours a day
dreaming about my future
until my tan peeled off
and leaves on the trees began to fall,
stupid me never dreaming for one minute
that working for Richard's freelance dance agency
would not be
the worst job I'd ever have.

THE FRIENDS YOU LOSE ALONG THE WAY

Patty in 8th grade didn't want to be
my friend anymore because I didn't
have breasts and she did. She
called me a baby and dumb because I
didn't understand her dirty jokes
about Jergen's hand lotion.

Jan, when we were 19 and just married,
said we couldn't be close friends anymore
because our main loyalties now should be
to our husbands.

Marlene stopped being friends with me
when she started having an affair
and got afraid I'd tell her husband.

Ruthie stopped speaking to me after she
told me about her new job as a "Foxy
Lady," an out-call masseuse, and I
wouldn't come to work for her. She
said I was stupid for turning down
such an easy job that paid so much money.