

Chapter 7 of *The Debate* by B. Douglas Robbins

douglas@medialawgroup.net
d Robbins@owrlaw.com

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Going to Denise's sorority filled me with nameless dread. Just a block south of the football stadium Ωπ resided in a beautiful red brick house with limestone quoins and elegant plaster sculptures in the pediments over the doors. Collin's girlfriend, Allison, lived down the hall from Denise.

Allison was athletic, to the point of being hard. Her androgyny aroused me. The whole idea was that you could fuck her and she'd look like a little boy. "Sick and Twisted is coming," she said.

"I know," I lied on Allison's white down comforter, looking through her *Vogue*. The women there were hard and stark.

Melissa passed the open door, "Oh hi, Richard!" she stopped and hung on the door post. She wore a thick blue towel with a bear claw embroidered to the front. She had combed her wet hair back perfectly, like a beetle black sculpture, shiny, hard.

"Hey, Melissa," I replied. The woman in *Vogue's* RL ad wore a pinstripe suit with hair pulled back, and batted down.

"How's debate, sweetie? Where's my trophy?" I promised her a debate trophy and she pestered me about it whenever she could. Melissa collected male artifacts like an anthropologist. It was a study, done more for the obsessive grace of order and category, than for sentiment. On her walls were other boy's high school graduation tassels, varsity letters, Greek pins, crew shoes, and one ice-hockey goalie mask.

"We're going to Cal Poly this week-end. I'll bring you back a speaker award."

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“Oooohh!” she squealed and pressed harder against the door frame, bursting flesh. It was collateral on the bargain.

Denise stood in front of me, obstructing Melissa’s swelling, and bulging, and berated the new Lancôme girl, “Gawd! She’s a fucking stick! Why isn’t Sally Struthers doing something about this?”

“Because she’s too busy pushing her new diet,” I murmured.

“Really?” Denise looked at me, “What is it?”

I squinted, as if to ask how dumb is dumb. Denise smacked my shoulder, bounced on and off the bed.

“Did Collin tell you about the latest round with Pyre?”

“Again?” Allison pulled her head from her closet, “I swear! He’s going to kill his GPA this semester . . .”

Denise closed the door after Melissa blew me a kiss and skipped away. Denise moved beside Allison and thumbed through the powder pink and satin blue hangers.

I stood and watched them through the mirror over Allison’s bedside table, across the room, and reached for the keys. Allison spun her head and hair twirled like a skirt. I began grooming in front of the mirror.

She asked: “You’re not really going to give Melissa a trophy are you?”

“Speaker award. Sure. Why not?”

“Cause she’s a fucking bitch, maybe?” Allison extracted a tartan scarf and asked, “How’s this?”

I extended an arm to the keys, watching the girls’ eyes.

“Too *Braveheart*,” said Denise and they both laughed because Melissa had an obsession with Mel Gibson and specifically Mel Gibson in *Braveheart*. Allison said Melissa watched *Braveheart* all last week-end in order to work on her Scottish accent.

“It makes no Scotts,” I mumbled.

“Whaaaaat?” sung Allison.

“Scotch. If you spill it, it makes yellow spots. Can’t get them out.”

“Whatever.”

“As if Mel Gibson was Scottish,” Denise whined, and glanced my through the reflection, “You look beautiful sweetheart, even with that god-awful eye.”

“What happened?” asked Allison.

“Christian happened,” I answered.

Denise explained that Christian had badmouthed her and that I defender her, “. . . Then Christian attacked Richard. I guess he was really drunk or something, but Richard socked him in the stomach so bad he couldn’t breathe!” and she smiled as if eating pie.

“Christian’s a good guy,” I outlined the bruise with a bashful finger, “and a good hook, but I don’t take that kind of bullshit about Denise.” I wryly watched them through the mirror. Backwards. Left to right. But not up to down. Allison and Denise looked at each other with heads tilted. I clutched the keys. They looked my way in the mirror and the keys jolted over the side, and before they hit the floor, I laughed as loud as I could and bounced hard on the bed. Strong creaking and wheezing from the mattress.

Denise and Allison squinted at me as if inspecting a diseased animal. I laughed boldly and yelled, “You can take my eye, but you CAN’T TAKE MY FREEDOM!” and jumped on the bed like a fool; they smiled. More pie. I ran over to Denise, heaved her over my shoulder and threw her on the bed. She yelled for me to stop between shrieks of laughter, which meant in girl-speak, more, more. Women don’t speak the English language.

“Get off me!” she pushed little girl pushes on my chest. I checked behind. Allison ran though the wardrobe, pre-occupied. I yelled the battle cry again:

“YOU CAN’T TAKE MY FREEDOM!” I held both of Denise’s wrists in one hand, bit her neck while she struggled and screamed; I fished around between the headboard and the night stand with the other hand, found the keys and jammed them in my pocket.

“Let’s wrestle in my room,” Denise whispered in my ear.

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Denise's room was very orderly. One poster depicted a couple fleeing dark sadness under each other's protection. A collage of photographs from parties, and formals, adorned the cork-board over her bed. At the pine headboard, a stuffed polar bear.

I sat next to Denise on her bed. She kissed my neck and began to unbuckle my belt. I wondered how much life underground I had left. I counted them in my mind. She took off her shirt and put my hands on her breasts. For a moment I wondered what she wanted me to do with them, but then I remembered. I imagined Christian touching these breasts and suckling them. I put my mouth where Christian had once put his. I swirled the nipple around and around, as it stiffened up. Predictable. I wondered what the fuck you had to do to make something new happen.

"Do you ever miss Christian?" I asked. A string of saliva connected us, and snapped.

"I love you," she responded.

"I know," I'd heard it before, "but do you ever think about him?"

"No."

"So you won't think about me when I'm gone."

"What are you taking about?"

"I barely know you, and I've been Christian's partner for over three years. So . . ."

"So what?" she really had no idea. "Richard, you can't stop love. It's bigger than us," she got up on her knees and straddled me, "You can get over guilt," she reached for my hand, "but, you never get over regret. I know." I tried to remember if I'd read something like that in one of the *Vogue* ads.

"Did you read that somewhere?"

She smiled, as if I were making a joke, "You haven't done anything wrong," and I was supposed to feel forgiven. She thought she could forgive me, and that I was forgivable. She had no idea.

We kissed until her Levi's were off, and my shirt was off, "Do you know what I could do to you?" I sneered softly.

“Show me,” sleepy eyes.

I threw her down, face first, and sat on her back, and began working the scented oil from her bed side table into her spine. She cooed and murmured. I pulled of my khakis. My cock stiffened and poked through the boxer’s leghole. I slid the bulging head slid around Denise’s white ass. I rubbed her back into a slick slate, and crept a hand into her panties. I yanked off my boxers, and humped her ass, and slipped my cock under the flimsy panties, running it up and into the crack. My balls drew tighter because they wanted to come. Those bastards always want to come and nothing else. They have no imagination, my balls.

I peeled off the greasy panties and Denise breathed strongly, head to one side, eyes closed. I lubed up my fingers and pushed one into her wet slit, and rubbed her little anus with my thumb. It heaved and burbled like a sea anemone. A little more oil, and I pushed my thumb into her ass and she jerked as if suddenly fed household current. Electricity and surprise. Same thing. Denise moaned as her little ass suckled my thumb greedily.

I rubbed by stiff cock over the white moon surface of her ass. I was captivated by the idea that she needed me to rub my cock all over her body, because she loved my cock more than she loved anything. More than she loved me. That it was entirely involuntary. That she was forced, in a way, by the very nature of breathing, to be in love with my hard dick, and simultaneously repulsed and sickened, but even so, unable to help it.

I slipped on a red, polyurethane condom and spread her anxious legs. She arched her spine in preparation. I glided the head of my dick along the ridge of her button, and then pushed it into her. Denise sucked air as if surprised, and whined little expressions of want. She raised herself to her knees with face still burrowed into the pillow, and rocked back and forth. The polar bear watched.

I grabbed her hips as if driving a bus and began fucking her harder; she hissed *yes, yes* (You see, she was in total agreement by all outward manifestations. Second males may presume consent where there is little resistance. I’m beating this cold); and with each jolt. I rammed her further into the head board, and I fucked

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her until her head hit the board, like a battering ram—the bear is watching at all times, mind you—and she bent her neck to one side to release the force, but I fucked her further up that head board, and her shoulder hammed there, head bent to the side, ass in the air, and moaning. I pushed my thumb back into the warm hiding place and snapped her button around with the other hand, and she shuddered and grabbed the board as if being charged with more electricity, and then dropped lifeless. I banged her from behind for a while as she laid there like a corpse, twitching and flitting on occasion. The stuff would not come, and I was getting softer and softer, and soon I'd have nothing; so I acted as if stuff did come out of me: "Ohhhhh! Oh God!" I could sound pretty fucking convincing when I have to, and no one ever suspects the male orgasm can be faked. Wrong. Wherever there is trust, there can be deception. All natural forces understood this: the life underground, the fire in the belly, speed and time.

I yanked the rubber off as she lay face down, pulled a volume from the shelf and bookmarked the middle.

Down the hall, Melissa studied calculus. I offered to help, and as I explained how to manipulate the tangent I put a hand down her pants.

"Why are you so oily?" she asked.

For reasons unclear to me, Melissa always knew how to make the stuff come out.