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It required a measured approach. I watched her for a full ten minutes before I could move at all. I was mesmerized. She was dressed in dark wool against the cold, alternately weighing her coffee—a little less each time as she sipped its warmth away—and the words in her book. I studied her closely...so closely that I can still remember the title of the book; *Seven Lies*, it was called. It struck me as ironic. How many lies would I tell?

Then I honked the horn. She started, but she didn't look up straight away. She read for a moment or two, or at least pretended to, and then satisfied her curiosity by feigning a gentle sweep of the neighbourhood. But I could tell that it was me she was looking at. Me she was wondering about. So I waited until she turned back to the book and then honked again.

This time she didn't jump. Instead she moved her chair slightly, almost imperceptibly, towards the café door. A little more of her back towards me. The brush off. But I wasn't going to take the brush off—I couldn't. It only made things more urgent, more necessary. And it was her...no-one else...

So I casually opened the car door, closed it as quietly as possible, and strode the ten metres from my parking space to the café door. Not for one moment did I even glance in her direction. I focussed on the sign on the door—'Tirer'. It was my guide, literally and metaphorically.

Still resisting the urge to sneak a look over my shoulder, I bought an espresso and then leaned on the zinc to look around. There were mirrors...there are always mirrors. And I found one that allowed me to see that she was buried even deeper in her book. I watched for a few minutes more. Such a long investment of time on a short day...Finally, she called for her bill. The money appeared with a minimum of fuss from her bag, the receipt became a bookmark, and the book was stowed away. She ventured one quick glance in my direction, but to all intents and purposes I was studying the form guide in the detritus of a tabloid that someone had left on the bar. And then she walked away.

I calculated how long it would take for her to reach the corner.... Closed my eyes and visualized each step, counting them under my breath and dying a little. And then I tossed ten francs into the saucer and returned to the cold.

Ten minutes later I returned the car, as instructed. About seven p.m....well before the car hire office closed. And then I waited on the windswept platform for forty-five minutes, each minute hoping that by some quirk of fate she would show up with an overnight bag just like mine...

This being Switzerland, the train was on time, the first class carriage was warm and carpeted, and my sleeper was sterile and prim. This being Switzerland, my daydream was just a daydream...

My night-dreams however, as the train swept through the mountains and on into central Europe, were more powerful than me. I dreamt that I had not allowed my embarrassment and my scruples to hold me back. I dreamt that my pride and my will were powerful enough to overwhelm her fears.

In my dream I walked to her table and asked her 'how much?' She blanched and then blushed...and then, with a shiver and a shrug she gave me a figure...About six week's wages. A very polite brush off...

I, of course, didn't blink...just reached for my wallet, withdrew a pile of large notes and tucked them into the pocket of her coat, and then—an afterthought—slipped a small addition, more than enough to cover her coffee, under the sugar dispenser.

She was a little slow to stand—perhaps adjusting to the reality of her surrender to the fates. By the time she reached the car I was waiting for her, holding the passenger door open. I closed it silently, as she buckled her belt.

Neither of us spoke as we drove out of Geneva towards the mountains of Jura.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Christopher de Bono.