

Whimsytown, USA

by Melissa Ann Chadburn

Today I live in a town that is chock full of whimsy. In fact its name is Whimsytown, USA. My place is in an old Brownstone above two storefronts, a bakery/café and a bookstore. The bookstore has French windows that overlook the street where a fluffy cat named *Boomer* can be spotted napping at all hours of the day.

My apartment fills with the smell of fresh baked bread and the small chime of a brass bell attached to the door of the bookstore.

The blocks in Whimsytown are really short and the sidewalks are really big so they can house trees and bicycles and friendly golden retrievers.

There are four trees on my small town block. I've named them, Nina, Pinta, Santa Maria, and Ethel.

They have cherry blossoms on them in the spring. In fact the whole town is topped with the small white pink swirls of cherry blossoms in the spring.

For winter solstice the streets of the town are shut down so we can have a white winter celebration. The people that live here sip mulled wine and warm apple cider drizzled with caramel and rock salt, and have horse and carriage rides throughout the town. All the shopkeepers dress up in Victorian costumes and hand out free baked goods like cookies and bread pudding. The bakery below me makes the best bread pudding. They take all the day old goods and blend them together with plump warm raisins and cinnamon and it melts so good in my mouth I never want winter to end.

But then there's summer and fall. In the summer time the kids get together and make fresh lemonade and sell it on the corner and the honeysuckle is in full bloom and the town smells just like honey and there are the woods nearby where I like to go and take a hike then dip in the creek with my happy dog, Friend. Afterwards we go home and I buy a summer classic book that I can fall all the way into

and read laying down with my legs dangling out the window of my apartment.

Fall is fall, fall is my favorite fashion season, the fall here is where you get to put on boots and scarves and stay out a little later in the dark and we have a festival with music and movies outside and there's a scary night in October all the stores in town make a big haunted house with a maze and a treasure hunt and sometimes Boomer has on a small witch hat and the air smells cool and breezy. We call Halloween *All Saints Day* and decorate our windows with sugar skulls and build altars for all the people we love who have moved on to other places but there is a moment in this town on that night where we all close our eyes and pray and wish together where the town is silent and lit only by candles and it makes my hair stand on end just thinking of it now because in that moment all the people that live here are thinking good thoughts and like a breeze it whips through you. The fresh ping of goodness. To me it sounds like the ding I used to hear as a child that indicated when I should turn the page. It's something of a reward for doing the right thing. And I was able to always do the right thing in this lovely amazing town until one day. When she came.

I was downstairs helping out in the bookstore with the owner's daughter Carla, she was home from school for the winter. I remember it was winter because of all the seasons in Whimsytown that is my most favorite. Remember, before I moved here I too was stuffed full of whimsy. It hit the hardest during the holidays. It began slowly like a San Francisco Cable car creeping in on Thanksgiving and then was fully enflamed by the end of Christmas. I was left plump with drunkenness New Years Eve so I could somehow fuck away the dull clots in my spirit. In California I sat exposed, my arms hoarding a box of buttered popcorn, watching snow covered scenes of East Coast sidewalks, false ice frosted windows of storefronts selling books, plush toys, and sophisticated outfits. I painted my nails a deep warm red and donned black leather boots, sometimes a scarf to celebrate like those people in the movie were celebrating. I watched commercials that featured fluffy puppies jumping out of

shiny boxes donning Santa hats. I drank hot apple cider, and ate all things Yuletide packing on an extra winter layer. I did this wholly, as if I had sliced open my own wrists, ripped out my veins, only to create more room for nutmeg and cardamom. It's completely masochistic as I'm sure you know that one cannot replace their veins with winter spices!

But I didn't know or maybe I did because I had done it the year before and the year before that and the results were the same. The evenings of Christmas in those days were always the same for me. It was the loudest silent night there was. It was at this time that I gave up any desire to see anything red, green, or white. I remember my first Christmas in L.A. riding the bus with my mother in search of Santa Claus. Santa Monica Blvd. draped with Christmas lights, or what I thought were Christmas lights but it turned out they were simply non-denominational holiday lights, white bells, and red berries, green holly leaves. My mother turned to me apologetically and said, "I'm sorry honey there is no Santa in Beverly Hills. Everyone is Jewish." But it was still Christmas and we were still broke and hungry so we ended up taking the bus to Culver City and danced with the Hari Krisnas in exchange for an elaborate vegetarian feast. This makes me smile.

Because now I have it all I have everything! I have everything and I love love love it! The snow, the winter clothing, the chafed skin, the chapped lips, the runny nose, the special Kleenex with the lotion in it.

I sat stacking books with Carla the storeowner's daughter. She was very homely in lots of ways, she never wore primary colors and she was doughy and born toe-headed and drank many 2-liter bottles of diet Pepsi a day. She watched daytime drama, and had rosacea and her only splurge was make-up. She only bought the best brands of make-up and carried with her in her back pack or fanny pack or cheap knock off purse at least two hundred dollars worth of NARS and Bobby Brown make-up and brushes. Unfortunately she always looked the same, like a Whimsytown girl.

The thing about her that nobody knew is that she had one tattoo. It was on her back of a frog holding a picket sign. She got it one afternoon when she was drunk and away at college. She spent two weeks reading Steinbeck novels and got her hands on a copy of Leontiev's *Political Economy* and the combination of that and the Pabst Blue Ribbon blew her mind. Her perception of the world changed. Suddenly she loved workers and frogs and she loved them both enough to be tattooed on her body forever. The other thing about Carla is that she is not very accessible. She doesn't like to be touched much and her friends here in Whimsytown liked to call her "hula-hoop" because we all have our different hula-hoops of space but hers seemed larger than others. So the idea of Carla sitting in a tattoo parlor with a bunch of guys, wearing a tank top and getting a tattoo on her back would never cross anyone's mind. But it happened, and while it happened she developed a tick where she plucked the air like plucking a harp, which is what she did right at that very moment.

The moment The Lady Dressed Like a Whore came to town. You see, being one of the few transplants to Whimsytown I had an advantage. Being from a big city I had access to a certain brand of vanity that others did not. Women from all over town turned to me as an authority on dating and fashion. They thought I knew things they did not. In return I settled into their lifestyle. I stopped counting carbohydrates and calories, I wore the same thing more than once in a week. I added plaid and flannel to my wardrobe. I let myself settle into a couple pairs of flats. And then finally after much prodding and pleading I too, like every other member of this town stopped resisting and developed my own signature casserole dish. I called it 'Black Feminist Casserole' and included in it fried chicken and goat cheese and often served it flambé style beneath a burning bra.

I remember the first time I served it, Jacques the bakery owner (who was not French but his mom spelled his name that way so as to sound French) plucked the tag off the bra and exclaimed with a misplaced sense of pride, "34C That's good! That's the one everyone

wants! I think that's the one Susie got." He was not referring to a real person he knew but a competitor on American Idol that got a boob job every time she won. My famous 'Black Feminist Casserole' was soon renamed '34C casserole'.

The Woman Dressed Like A Whore swept through the store and picked up several items and put them down. She had on black pumps and fishnet stockings and I don't need to tell you the rest.

Every couple of seconds she would exclaim, "Es Todo" with a flair of the wrist and look around. She did this to fit in with the Spanish speakers but there weren't any.

"What is she saying?" Carla asked

"She's from L.A." I said.

The Lady Dressed Like A Whore must have heard me because her eyes got large and she zeroed in on me with sharp black pupils and perfectly waxed arched eyebrows and asked, "Es todo?"

Her black eyes flickered with a brief moment of disgust at my flannel shirt. And it felt like a wind full of sand slapped my face.

"Yes this is all." I looked at Carla apologetically, "Hey I gotta go home and do some stuff." I quickly ran up to my apartment to change.

Just below my window I saw her walking by. She walked down the street with ease and grace a small crowd forming around her. My dog, Friend, got excited at the sound of her chirp, "Es todo?" and ran downstairs to join her. Friend immediately did what all the other people had been fantasizing about. He jumped up and humped her calf. She did not notice as she wandered into the bakery and was embraced in all the sweet smells of baked goods and carbohydrates in a way that she hadn't been since she was in grade school. Jacques handed her a chocolate croissant,, she took one bite and gasped she got doe-eyed and teary, her skin flush like someone that just had an orgasm, then poof she exhaled a long sweet sultry moan, the most satisfied moan. I could hear her moan in my apartment. She moaned in unison with Friend. They both sounded satiated for the first time. The moment before she passed out in fully satiated glee her long mascaraed eye lashes fluttered and she

whispered, "todo." *Friend* quickly crumpled at her feet and then took three big slobbery laps at her face. And this is how it came to be that the town suddenly thought my dog was named "Toto".

And just like that the town was hit with new person fever. I noticed it most the next day when I went to the town diner for lunch. I heard the girls at the booth opposite mine ordering, "I'll have a cheeseburger protein style." And the other girl said, "I'll have a cheeseburger animal style." The waitress asked "Would you like anything else?" and the girls responded in unison, "Es todo." *Animal style*? I knew those words sounded familiar and then I noticed something else as I looked around the diner. The buns! Where were they? They were missing! No one was eating bread or French fries!

UGH! I stormed out of the diner and bumped into the Lady Dressed Like a Whore on my way out.

"Let's fuck." She said.

"What?"

"Let's rub pussies together."

"Why?"

"Who cares? I'm curious is why."

"Ummmm." I did not know how to respond to this. I decided to ignore her and just let her follow me to my place.

I walked a couple paces then turned back to check if she was there and she kept on being there... so I kept on thinking shewantstofuckshewantstofuckshewantstofuck

When we got to my place she followed me up the whole way. Once inside her hair was all over. Her hair filled all the rooms and I never had a woman prettier than me in my place. I never had a woman that had all that hair but I began to fill with the thrill of it running all over me. Her hair was in the living room and the bathroom and the kitchen and falling out the windows....

She was tall and thin and everything about her was dainty her skin was like toasted almonds and her eyes were wide and as she began to undress I thought about how pretty she was and how again I don't like to fuck people that are pretty in this way. That maybe

when I was younger I harbored fantasies for naughty naughty women. Big busted blonde women in Playboy that looked at me longingly even then even at seven years old hammering up against the soft creased edge of a mattress I did it partially out of malice. I wanted to say and do the dirtiest things to them and had no guilt or shame because they were them with their white guilt and their big pink pussies and their daddy's and mommies and big lollipops. I defiled them with my little girl bucking movements and little girl fantasies and now here she was Dressed Like A Whore albeit but also elegant and pretty and getting more and more naked and I was getting intimidated and this was making me wet.

I ran to my bedroom, that already had her hair draped all over it. I gently moved her hair off the bed and lay there naked. She came to me.

“Touch yourself. While I tell you something.”

Nervous, hesitant. I moved toward my pussy. I was disappointed. I do not like touching myself but I did not want to tell her. Now snap! Like a fantasy it was over I was pretending for her now. That I liked this thing when I didn't.

I sort of fluffed with my hair a little bit.

“What? You do not like to do that?”

I perked up. Shook my head no.

She walked closer. “Here let me.”

She let her long fingertips slowly graze up and down. It was a tease. It was a good good tease.

“Do you know why I'm here?”

I shook my head no. Let out a moan.

“They were about to change the name of this town. Do you know what to?”

I let out a moan she was going deeper with her fingers, exploring the insides.

“O.K. Plateau Place. Do you know what it is? An okay plateau?”

She plunged her hand in deep. It was an explosion it was fireworks there was hair and unicorns and rainbow and the most amazing thick tough soft fingers finding the gold pushing in deep I

was exploding in a way that made me embarrassed in a way that I hadn't done in so long. My fingers found my clit I lost control I was hammering away with her. I screamed I screamed I screamed

“OKAY OKAY OKAY.”

She whispered “No. Not okay. An okay plateau is when you get to a place where you are comfortable and you stop. The OK plateau is what most people reach, even after considerable work to acquire a new skill”

I tried to pay attention to what she was saying but everything was too sensitive.

“Michael Jordan?” I asked.

“Yes, he left when he was at the top because he knew he had reached his own personal OK plateau and the only place for him to go was down.”

I felt a sudden urge to pee. “No.” I whimpered it meant *Yes*.

“Hold on now. Have you read a novel from a famous novelist that has already reached the top of their game, like Morrison's *A Mercy*?”

This got my attention. I love Morrison but she was right... *A Mercy* was okay.

“There are tons of examples here honey, writers, painters, architects, typists, engineers, chefs, receptionists, and towns...whole towns can reach OK plateaus.”

Her hand went deeper. She found it she found the golden point. She stuffed her face between my thighs and licked and sucked and kissed. I was pleading whimpering it was too much I wanted her to stop until another wave hit I came, and squirted and screamed “FUCCKKKKKKKK! YES! YES! YES!” “O----BA----MA! OBAMA OBAMA” I was shaking and crying and laughing and shaking.

“THAT'S RIGHT GO BIG! GO MAJOR!”

She left shortly after that. The town returned to whimsy my dog is called *Friend*, the diners and bakery serve carbs, and all the people are floating around town on little content clouds, not just “Okay” content “Obama” content.

