

and Sharpe being even antiquer and in no mood or physical condition to dally with anything more sexual than an overstuffed pillow, I took the risk. If the old dear wanted to see my room, what the hell. We went upstairs, I in some trepidation, and she with difficulty (whisky has that effect) and entered my abode. Swaying in the doorway she looked at the books and papers on the second bed, the typewriter and more papers, the pens, ink and paraphernalia, and said, "My God, you *do* write." She slumped into a chair and spotted my CDs. "Have you got Mozart's

23rd Piano Concerto?" she asked with surprising percipience. I had. Would I play it? I would and did. She sat and wept. Her lover had died a few months before and the 23rd was his favourite. Through cigarette after cigarette she sat and mourned his death and told me her story. I won't repeat it. Instead I listened to that concerto more attentively than I had ever listened to it before. The next night she sat and wept to it again until 4 a.m. She was a delightful antique and I, an insensitive one, remember her fondly and occasionally weep when I hear it now.



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