

TRANSMUTATION

A Novel about Eternal Love

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CHAPTER 1

“Congratulations Mr. Eagle! You are the youngest chairman our company has ever had. I hope you are going to infuse new blood into good old IFI!”

René Eagle nodded, smiling. He had heard this a thousand times since the end of the *International Financial Institution*'s board meeting earlier this morning, during which he had been elected Chairman of the Board.

René Eagle was thirty nine years of age, a Harvard Business School graduate and a brilliant young man whose revolutionary ideas in the field of international finance had gained him an extraordinary reputation in the world of “big business”. René was not modest; he knew his worth and felt powerful. He was acutely aware of his superiority to the many prestigious men who surrounded him, flattered him and hated him. He was proud of being part of this super-powerful elite who led the world. René Eagle wanted to go even further, even higher, while remaining behind the scenes. Oh no! He wasn't a bit interested in becoming President of the United States. He would leave that job to those who still believed in the elusive power of that office. René Eagle wanted the real power: money. He accepted the fact that he was born gifted and that his enormous success was the result of quasi supra-normal abilities which made him perceive things before they were formulated. This ability also extended to people: he *saw* through them, he *knew* what they had in mind and what they were going to do. It was an extraordinary strength which helped him more than once to either avoid a disaster or to engineer a spectacular deal. Of course, there was a downside to this gift, as he could also spot his enemies in a blink. This had made him very suspicious and consequently, he did not trust anybody. As long as he could remember, he had isolated himself from others, and no one on earth could guess what he was thinking. This mental solitude did not bother him: he despised humans too deeply to have the desire to communicate with them intimately; he was self-sufficient and others were here only to serve him.

Nevertheless, he knew how to make himself loved, even idolized, by those who were on his side. He knew better than anyone how to stimulate his *men* and to take advantage of what they did best. He was much more than a *boss* to them; he was the *master*, the one who knows. There were no soft feelings towards René Eagle, one either adored him or hated him. As far as he himself was concerned, René Eagle had no feelings; he would either stimulate you or eliminate you. Everybody knew he was tough, but he was also fascinating even to his enemies who could only admire his genius.

With these thoughts in his mind he felt a great joy, as he shook hands, thanked and joked with all these people who were here to celebrate his election to the top of one of the most powerful financial institutions in the world. Oh, it had not been an easy win.

The fight had been hard and many heads had fallen, but he had won and he knew he was up to the job.

That same evening a reception in his honor was planned and he wanted to go home to rest for awhile. The day had been stressful. He also wanted to savor his victory. His wife would be home, but that did not bother him since she had learned, during the ten years of their marriage, when not to disturb him.

Ten years ago he had married Barbara because she was pretty, came from a prominent family and added to his social status. Furthermore, she had understood very quickly that his ambitions would always come first. For him, marriage was a necessity. He intended to keep his sexual freedom, but his wife would be the shield that would protect him from pushy women. In fact, he favored married women, particularly the wives of his associates: that was another way to dominate them. Did Barbara know about his extra-marital affairs? Probably, but she never mentioned anything. She knew that the best way to keep a man like René Eagle was to allow him complete freedom.

Their marriage had been rather smooth during these ten years. Also, he traveled so extensively that he always returned to her with pleasure. They had an adorable little girl who gave him pure joy when his *business* allowed him time to spend with his family.

While driving his new Mercedes to his townhouse on Sutton Place he thought what a happy and lucky man he was.

As soon as he opened the door to his house, he enjoyed its particular smell, a mixture of waxed wood and flowers. He loved his home, even though he never spent much time in it, but he had always wanted it to be luxurious, filled with all the modern gadgets that money could buy.

As he had guessed, Barbara was there, watching television in the den. Their daughter, Lisa, was at her grandmother's in California. Barbara was going to meet her in two days and would stay at her mother's for the rest of the summer. She was looking forward to going there; she did not like New York because she was alone most of the time in the big house which she found too impersonal.

"Hi darling! How was the meeting?"

"As usual, boring! I had to put up with everybody's fake enthusiasm and it made me tired. So, if you don't mind, I'm going to take a nap before the reception." He headed directly to his bedroom, leaving Barbara with her TV and her solitude.

The *Cotillion Room* of the Pierre Hotel was sparkling like a jewel and so was the crowd assembled there to celebrate René's promotion. When René Eagle and his wife appeared, they all applauded enthusiastically. Barbara looked stunning in a long and simple black dress which enhanced her slim figure and her blond hair, making even brighter the diamond necklace she wore around her neck. René, elegant and handsome in his black tuxedo, with a triumphant smile on his face, walked with natural ease toward his colleagues. He was assaulted with hand shakes, congratulations, jokes, a whirl of lights and words which made him feel dizzy. But that was the price to pay for success. He knew it and he played the game. He was also scheduled to give a little speech which he neglected to prepare, trusting his gift for improvisation. He was led toward a podium and found himself in front of a microphone. There he was! He had to deliver... no time to think...

“Ladies and Gentlemen, we are here by the will of the people... and we shall not leave except by the power of the bayonet...”

Silence

“Don’t get me wrong. This quotation is not mine. It was pronounced on June 23, 1789 and it started the French Revolution...”

Timid laughs from the crowd.

“However, even though my mother is French, I have no blood link to Mirabeau and I don’t intend to lead a revolution, but rather a rebirth...”

Applause.

“For the past 30 years our company has operated on structures that have proven successful but which are now outdated. The company’s rebirth which had been entrusted to me means a complete internal re-organization as well as a different approach to international business. Our modern world is in constant transformation, nothing remains static and we must adapt to this ever changing world. That which is static cannot progress, and our administration’s goal is surely to progress. That’s why I am counting on you all to help me conquer the world; we will make it because we have a fantastic vehicle, IFI. It’s up to us, the drivers to take advantage of its powerful engine and drive it on a race track. No more peaceful little rides on country roads! The time for speed and excitement has come! I hope you will like my program! Thank you again for your trust in me. You won’t regret it!”

Everybody applauded this aggressive and unusual speech.

“They want new blood? They’ll get it” René told himself.

He left the podium and headed toward the bar. He needed a double scotch to unwind. He was about to order when a small hand presented him with a glass of scotch on the rocks. He turned to see whose hand it was and he discovered a lovely brunette wearing a pink evening dress.

“How did you know what I wanted?” he asked, amused.

“I asked Mr. Norwick who seems to know your habits.” She was smiling at him, her big brown eyes filled with joy.

“What is your name, “*jolie demoiselle*?”

“Patricia Norwick, “*pour vous servir, cher Monsieur*”.

Steve Norwick was one of the biggest shareholders of IFI. He was feared and respected and René shared these feelings with everybody else. He knew Norwick had a daughter but he had never met her. He was flattered that she took interest in him, but his suspicious mind told him to watch out. He looked in her eyes and what he saw shocked him: he read such intense desire that he thought he could make love to her right there, in front of the crowd. René Eagle could not resist such a call. His response was immediate: he felt an overwhelming tension and an almost uncontrollable urge to release it. Did she understand that he was receptive to her call? She took his hand and started to walk toward the front door. He did not know what was happening. He followed her without seeing the curious looks on the guests’ faces. They left the *Cotillion Room* and walked through long corridors. Finally, she stopped in front of a door, took a key from her purse and he followed her into the hotel room.

As soon as the door was closed, Patricia came to him and proceeded to undress him nervously, while she slipped out of her dress under which she wore nothing at all.

She pushed him on the bed, leaped on him and started to “ride” him like a Valkyrie, moaning and screaming. He responded to her passion with an equal passion and together they reached a rapturous orgasm.

Out of breath, he still could not believe what had just happened. Now she was resting next to him, without touching him.

“I wanted you as soon as I saw you” she said calmly. ‘You know, I can’t resist when it happens, and it usually never goes any further. I was told I am a nymphomaniac. So, I wish to forget what just happened. We won’t mention it anymore. So long!’”

She rushed to the bathroom and closed the door. He was astonished with her reaction but he did not try to understand. Women had always been an enigma to him and even when he thought he understood them, he had to admit: he was often wrong. He was able to manipulate the toughest businessmen but when it came to women, he was lost. Therefore, he had chosen to dominate them with no attempt to understand them. He could not live without women but he did not feel any particular sympathy for them. He used them. That’s all. Except that tonight, he felt that he was the one who had been used! He did not mind. For once, it was a delightful change.

Back in the *Cotillion Room* he saw Barbara rushing toward him.

“Where were you? Everybody was looking for you! You seem to... you look like you...”

“What? What do I look like? Leave me alone!”

He turned his back and walked toward a group of men talking.

The evening ended with no more incident and the Eagles returned home without exchanging a word. Barbara looked sad, but he thought she would get over it. Women are always jealous and he accepted it as a curse he had to live with.