

PALO ALTO ODYSSEY

Seducing the billionaire was easy

MIRANDA was sitting on the sunny patio of a Ramona Street coffee shop, talking with her niece Christi about Christi's upcoming marriage to a young tech billionaire, whom Christi admitted she did not love.

Marriage would be a big change for Christi, who received an undergrad degree from Stanford and also an MBA.

"You're the only person I've told this to, Aunt Miranda," said Christi. "But I don't love him. But he's a billionaire, so it's a once in a lifetime chance for me to have that kind of wealth; and I think I should take it."

"That's ridiculous," said Miranda. "You can't go against your heart."

"That's a very sweet thing for you to say, Aunt Miranda," said Christi. "But we both know that marriages

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are economic pacts, political as well as economic, from time immemorial."



CHRISTI

"You're a Stanford grad. You studied history and literature," Christi continued. "You know that kings, queens and business giants for centuries have made economic and political alliances by marriage. And romance has nothing to do with it. That's the kind of situation I feel I'm in now with Jared. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity."

"Does he know you feel this way?" asked Miranda.

"Of course not," said Christi. "I'm not a fool. Look. I met him up at the Rosewood. He's clueless with women. He was sitting at the bar. When I realized who he was, I struck up a conversation. It was easy to seduce him."

"I gave him my full attention. I pretended I was interested in what he was talking about. Some kind of programming thing for robots. He rocked back and forth on his bar stool, with that slightly autistic movement that some of the tech guys have."

"Did you sleep with him that night?" asked Miranda.

"I did," said Christi. Then she added, "Oh come on, don't look at me like that. I went up there for some fun. Look, Aunt Miranda. It's a different era. We women are empowered. The feminists from your generation led the way. And now we women, my age, if we want something, we take it. No judgment. It's a different world."

The two sat in silence for a moment.

Then Christi continued, "You're jealous, aren't you?"

Miranda had to admit it. Yes, she was a little jealous.

"Just be careful," Miranda said.

"Oh I take all the appropriate precautions," replied Christi. "I'm not a fool."

More tomorrow.



MIRANDA