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## Howls and whispers

I Dreamed I Was A Dazzlingly Outrageous Lesbian by David Paul Larousse guest contributor

I will never forget the day I met Judy Jaffraty, because when I met her I got hit with the thunderbolt so hard that I walked around in a stupor for the next three days...I swear to god!

Eventually, I pulled myself together and asked her out on a date. I wouldn't say she did back-flips over my offer to take her out, but she agreed — or at least she didn't turn me down. Being brand new to Baghdad-bythe-Bay (the late Herb Caen's nickname for San Francisco) and not knowing the neighborhoods, I later figured out that she chose the very tacky tourist area of the city as the venue for our date. Thus it wasn't long before I realized that she had placed me into the "just-another-dumb-tourist-passing-throughon-your-way-to-somewhere-else" category, which was as clear an indication that she had absolutely no interest in me in any way, shape or form.

Of course, it occurred to me that she might be gay, not only because she clearly held enormous disdain for straight men, but also owing to a very vagabondish lifestyle. She was in fact, residing in a dilapidated and abandoned residence on Potrero Hill, with two dogs — one blind, the other threelegged, whose names were Increase and Whatever — and that pretty much put the nail in the coffin of that ain't-gonna-happenin-this-lifetime romance. So, I thanked her for the tour of Fisherman's Wharf and went on with my life.

Some months later, I got hit with the thunderbolt again, though this time it had a zillion more volts than the previous hit. Kai was hanging out at Enrico's in North Beach one night - Enrico Balducci being the legendary impresario who had started the careers of dozens of notable comedians and musicians — including the Kingston Trio, Woody Allen, Lenny Bruce, Mort Sahl and Barbra Streisand, just to mention a few. She was seated at a table with Bill Cosby, Professor Erwin Corey and a smattering of local musicians and characters and I could feel a charisma that just zapped me right down to my very soul. It was, once again, quite intense.

I met up with Kai some days later, for lunch, confessed my attraction, whereupon she informed me that she was quite gay and lived with a domineering woman from Latvia who was possessed of a very wild and controlling personality. She also informed me that the chance of me cultivating a friendship with her was something in the realm of zero-to-none and that if "Lats" even thought I was interested in her woman, she would not hesitate to kick my ass from the old Barbary Coast all the way to the Golden Gate Bridge. This did not frighten me, but it gave me enough pause for thought to chalk up another thunderbolt zap and once again carry on with my life.

Now, I must clarify that the culture of San Francisco is quite different from any I had ever come across, which is to say that homosexuality was hardly considered aberrant behavior,