

CAMBRIDGE

'You and your bloody jazz! No. Don't tell me, Chet Baker again?'

Marsha stood over me, buxom and beautiful, but with an air of "matron" about her. Her blue satin dress flowed symmetrically with her luscious long golden hair. Marsha could be so loving one minute and completely ruthless the next. She could cut a man in two with words of one syllable. We were chalk and cheese. That's why I loved her.

'Cigarette?'

'John, you know I detest your smoking. All that side dragging; squinting of your eyes as the smoke becomes too much, and that glance of yours at the fag stuck between your fingers like a trophy.'

'They were here you know. In this flat'

Marsha stared at me with her deep enquiring eyes.

'You've told me a thousand times. By the way, how is the book going?'

I loosened my bow tie and it fell draping both sides of my dress shirt like a stage curtain.

'Bourbon?' she said walking over to my well stocked bar.

'It was easier for them you know. They knew exactly what they were doing.'

'And you think by telling their stories you can change the world's view of them? After all these years, and does anyone really care? Does it really matter? All those involved are pushing up the daisies now.'

'It was Blunt I felt sorry for. He was even close to the Queen! Which is probably why he was likely to be the worst of the bunch. You know, the quiet retiring one. The classical one. No one suspected him.'

'My father said Philby was the worst. Philby confessed. MI6 tried to abduct him in Lebanon. Got a one-way ticket to Moscow. John Le Mesurier was a dead ringer for Philby,' said Marsha laughing.

'27th of October 1953,' I said as the glow of the tiffany table lamp illuminated the record player in a myriad of colours.

'You've lost me now John'

'It's an office block now. 8712 West 3rd Street, Los Angeles. I went there once. Pacific Studios. He only wanted to play his trumpet and ended up singing!'

'I thought we were discussing your book on the Cambridge Five?'

'The two are connected.'

'How so?'

'It's a film noir. Like a Hopper painting. I'm handing over an envelope in the cinema and you're the bored usherette in the foyer. The Five probably listened to jazz as well. It was easier for them. The establishment would never believe a lot of undergrads could do so much, so they were left to their own devices.'

‘You’re obsessed.’

‘Listen! Just listen to the song. The answer is in the song.’

Marsha dramatically crashed into the settee with the ice in her bourbon chinking against the crystal tumbler. Right on queue, she sang the line perfectly.

‘Cos I’ve been fooled in the past.’

I adored Marsha. My true love. My only love. My soulmate.

‘Afternoon John. You playing Chet Baker again? That’s nice. The doctor says it’s time for your medication.’

I Fall in Love Too Easily was recorded by Chet Baker on 27th October 1953 at Pacific Jazz Studios, 8712 West 3rd Street, Los Angeles.