

**KING ARTHUR'S NIGHTS - CHAPTER 8:** BY MOSES DAVID

# **-MARIA'S NIGHTS!**

**BY ARTHUR NEWLOVE**

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1. THEIR AMERICAN ACCENTS sounded harsh and cold, when in fact she was just the opposite. She was so happy and a joy to be with! The warmth exuding from her very presence, her vibrations could be felt so easily in all corners of the room.

2. WHAT A JOY IT WAS TO HAVE PEOPLE LIKE THEM IN THAT DANCE STUDIO! They brought a new life to the place and really put the proud self-assured dancers in their rightful place, for even though these two were not extra good dancers they were in demand more than most people there.

3. THEY WERE FASCINATING! I know from my own part that I tried everything I could to get more information out of them than they gave me. Subtle questioning was met by gentle expert rebuffs which told me absolutely nothing about them apart from what they wanted me to know.

4. I WAS REALLY SURPRISED, my expertise at weeding information out of people was with these two shown up for what it really was: Sheer conceit and an expression of over-compensation for my own shortcomings in my inferiority-complexed mind. This man was an expert at answering my questions with a much better question of his own.

5. I JUST COULD NOT TIE HIM DOWN to anything at all. And all the time he was gentle and smiling, his deep sonorous voice reassuringly truthful in its ambiguity. Ha! Met my match at last, I thought, which of course made him even more of a challenge to my ceaseless inward--and sometimes voiced--curiosity.

6. I REALLY LIKED THEM. They were at the same time, open, frank, truthful and secret, deep and not at all forthcoming. I learned that he was a retired onetime school teacher and college lecturer who did some writing in his spare time.

When I asked what he wrote he was so truthfully evasive it was very frustrating.

7. HE SAID HE HAD HAD SOME THINGS PUBLISHED but would not say who by or what format or section of the market he wrote for. I asked him if he considered himself to be successful, and he said moderately so. He would divulge nothing as to the nature of his writings.

8. DEAR SWEET MARIA WAS EXPLAINED AS BEING HIS WIFE AND STENOGRAPHER whose expertise at her job he remarked on several occasions. How I have laughed over these few remarks since that occasion. Ha! Crafty old fox! He really had me sewn up in my own curiosity.

9. WELL ANYWAY, I HAPPENED TO REMARK I HAD DONE SOME WRITING in my school days, and even though I was an engineer the written word held a fascination for me still. I had been educated in a grammar school and had been reasonably good in the arts subjects as well as science and practical work, but it seemed that from an early age interest in machinery and mechanical things had had a prominent position in my life.

10. MY HUMBLE EARLY LIFE IN A FAMILY OF SIX had really given me an all-'round ability in most fields. So with this piece of information about these fascinating people in the back of my mind I returned to my lonely flat and something inside me made me sit down at 11:30 at night, 'way past my bedtime which usually enabled me to get an early start at the factory, and with pen and paper I just wrote down a poem that came into my head.

11. IT AMAZED ME THAT I HAD ABSORBED SO MUCH ABOUT THEM in so short a time as to be able to write a poem about them as my scribbling turned out to be. It just kept coming to me. These two had really made a work in my life. They were differ-

ent in many ways from the other people. Apart from being foreigners, they were just different. They were certainly odd, even out at that dance studio! (See "The Odd Couple".)

12. WELL, THE NEXT WEEK I AGAIN CORNERED THEM and started my relentless prying into their background. They really must have been fed up with me by now, I thought, but they neither of them showed it. Well, we had a really pleasant evening, and as usual I had some very happy dances with dear Maria and had an interesting chat with David and I was determined to find out more about them!

13. I TOLD THEM THAT I HAD WRITTEN A POEM ABOUT THEM the previous week and they immediately pounced on me. Can we see it, can we see it? I promised to bring it the next week and they seemed really happy. I told them I don't know why I wrote it and how it just came, but I think I was trying to impress him as to my ability with words. Ha! Humble Ram!

14. AT THE END OF THE EVENING I WAITED FOR THEM and offered them a lift home in my fancy motor car. Now, I thought, I will get to know more about them!--And we started for their home. I asked David if he drove a car and he said they had not taken their usual limousine. He said with all seriousness that they normally came in their 20-foot bright red limousine which came complete with chauffeur and liveried footman ...I thought for a second or two and then fell in of course--the big city bus, Ha!

15. HE HAD SUCH A SOFT SENSE OF HUMOUR, not malicious or hurting to anybody. He still did not strike me as being retired and able to live in Europe and keep himself amused and alive mentally without doing some kind of work. He didn't seem the sort of man to be able to just sit around and do nothing, but it seemed that was the case from what he said.

16. I HAD HEARD FROM ONE OF THE OTHER PEOPLE they spoke to at the dance studio, in fact the manager's wife, that Maria had fallen in love with David's son and was unable to marry him but had instead married David, which seemed to explain the situation. His wife was apparently still alive, but I did not feel it my part to ask any really personal questions like that about their private life.

17. WELL, WE GOT TO WITHIN A FEW HUNDRED YARDS of where they lived and I was told that just here would be fine, at the end of their street. It seemed that dear Maria did not want me to know the whereabouts of their house, but David said, "See if you can guess the house we live in". I was amazed! Something told me that they lived on the left hand side of the road! I can't tell you what it was, but I knew they lived on the left! Really a strange feeling!

18. WE DROVE SLOWLY ALONG THE ROAD and then, stop, something told me this was the house. It was so plain and simple compared to all the rest of them in the street, and I stopped. I said, Is this the house? Ha! They were amazed and so was I. It seemed that I had been told to stop there, but not a word had passed their lips! What a funny feeling it was!

19. WE STAYED THERE FOR A CHAT and I learned a little more about them. We chatted about ourselves. I learned a bit more about David, that he had been in musical comedy as a younger man and was always playing the villain parts because of his deep voice. He also played the saxophone, which surprised me. We really had a good chat.

20. THEY WERE FASCINATING PEOPLE and I was hooked on them. They were very interested in astrology and asked me all about myself and my nature, the way I dealt with people at work. Every facet of my nature

was touched on expertly and in a nice innocent way by dear David. They gave me a "Sun Signs" book by Linda Goodman, who it turned out was a personal friend of theirs. They wrote a little note in the back of it. I really treasure that book today.

21. WE PARTED AND I DROVE SADLY HOME. Someone had turned my light out for the day! Alone again with my endless thoughts and meanderings into self pity. I was really no wiser about those two and still hadn't found out what David wrote about. Ha! He was certainly evasive! They both became more interesting to me each time I met them.

22. I INVITED THEM TO DINNER. I was a health food addict at the time and used to frequent a vegetarian restaurant in the city which seemed to interest them. So it was arranged that we meet for dinner. It so happened that we could not arrange a dinner date that week, and so it was ten days before we met for dinner.

23. I WAS SO EXCITED and I really looked forward to the day we were to meet. It was strange: I should not be getting excited about a married couple. I could not explain it. But that's how it was for me.

24. WELL, THE DAY ARRIVED. I had left work late and had not had time to change into a decent suit, but when I arrived they were not too concerned but suggested we eat instead at a little place they knew closer to their home. I was invited into their sitting room to wait while they put on their coats.

25. THERE I WAS INTRODUCED TO A REALLY PRETTY GIRL a few years older than Maria whose name was Becky. She was all glistening eyes and white teeth with a smile from ear to ear. She had that same warmth in her eyes and exuded love with just a look and a handshake. She was apparently a friend of theirs and also American.

26. I NEVER THOUGHT AMERICANS WERE LIKE THESE PEOPLE. The Yanks I knew were all noisy loudmouthed people, flashy dresses, crew cuts and shallow. But these people... well, they were like I felt deep down inside, friendly and warm. It was an atmosphere which rubbed off and was contagious. I was in no time relaxed and chatting, feeling as if I had known them for years.

27. THE HOUSE WAS REALLY CLUTTERED with chairs and was very plain, almost dingy, but it mattered not, because with people like those the surroundings did not even enter into the picture. They were the house and the character of the house. They made it feel warm and friendly. David was dressed again in his tweed coat and shirt and tie, same shoes still highly polished.

28. HOW KIND THEY WERE. They asked me what I had been doing that day and what I felt about the strikes which were in progress then, and I pontificated on the shortcomings of the working people of Europe and their laziness without ever thinking about what I was saying but just spouting my own self-righteous rantings. Ha! I can't remember the comments if any, but I had the feeling that I had put my foot in it in some way or other.

29. THERE WAS A SHORT SILENCE and then we rose to go for our dinner. Ha! I felt I had said something wrong but I didn't know what it was, but you know the feeling you get when that happens sometimes. We said goodbye to Becky and she told us to enjoy ourselves. Maria said to turn off two bars of the heater as soon as we were gone and close the door, to which Becky replied, "Amen". I thought that was a strange thing to say, but I let it pass from my mind.

30. WE CLIMBED INTO THE CAR with Maria again sitting in the front and went to a little Turkish rest-

aurant where the owner and his son knew them. We had a simple meal exchanging pleasantries and chat, and then we took some photographs, which struck me as being strange at the time. These people were so unconcerned with what other people thought of them. They were just free and happy, not offending anybody at all but just happy! What a privilege to get to know them!

31. WE HAD FINISHED OUR MEAL and they had a glass of warm water and myself a coffee to finish off the meal. We drifted into a conversation about faith and religion. I had been in a formal European Church most of my life, being a choirboy and attending church faithfully on Sundays but not really understanding why.

32. DAVID ASKED ME IN A 'ROUND ABOUT WAY MY BELIEFS and where they stemmed from, my mother or my father, and I told him my philosophy of life was to do unto others as you would have others do unto you, which had satisfied me as far as fair dealings with people were concerned. But religion and a belief in God were something I could not quite handle because of the different ways of peoples' beliefs and carrying out their worship.

33. "SHOW ME A GOD AND I WILL BELIEVE IT", I SAID: "I need to see something in the physical before I believe it!" A gentle smile came to his mouth and his eyes glistened. Maria pointed out that she did not feel this was quite the right place to start a conversation like this in the restaurant, but David said, "No, he can switch off--I can see he can." Which really was true.

34. HIS WORDS WERE LIKE SOFT CAJOLING, teasing, informative, instructive observations about me, life, and God, and I really wanted to hear more. He never undermined my pride once, and, boy, was I proud in these days! He sat across the table with his sleeves rolled up baring solidly built arms, his



spectacles were on the table and his eyes were searching deep inside me. He looked much younger right then than he had before. The usual middle aged wrinkles around the eyes and mouth did not seem to be there.

35. HE CONTINUED ABOUT GOD AND WHAT GOD WAS TO HIM, then he said to me the words that really were the start of my changed life: "God is a Spirit!" "God is a Spirit?"-- I reflected on what this meant to me and I was amazed! Never before had I quite understood what a "spirit" was. I had heard of spirits and ghosts and that sort of thing, but I had never associated God with being a Spirit.

36. GOD WAS A SPIRIT! These four words allowed my inner thoughts to burst into a new field. It was like someone had opened the gate and let the restless cattle rush in to eat the lush green grass of the untrodden pastures of my mind.

37. ALL THE THOUGHTS I HAD HAD OF CHURCH, Bible, Christ Jesus, God and all those associated thoughts which in my mind were bunched up together in a corner of my brain and had no real outlet or related position seemed to now jostle one another and align themselves into a

full picture of my Bible knowledge and a true history as I knew it of Jesus Christ and before, an explanation of the Bible that I had seemingly stored without realising it for just such a moment as this!

38. THE KEY HAD TURNED: GOD IS A SPIRIT! He is not physical or touchable, but His presence is here with us right now! He is a Spirit, just as much here as you and I! I must admit a lot of David's words were lost to me for awhile. This realisation had shocked me, and I could feel a sort of fear of the presence of this Spirit God right there in the same room with us!

39. NO WONDER THESE TWO HAD INNER PEACE and outward calm and love. They knew their God was right there with them! Phew!! I really don't recall much more of that conversation, but I know that the few questions I had were answered completely and fully. It seems we were there for hours, but it was just a part of an evening. At around ten o'clock I remember things were drifting back to regular conversation.

40. WITHOUT KNOWING, I HAD BEEN WITNESSED TO ABOUT GOD'S LOVE and given a nice gentle friendly chat about God and the Bible with hardly a verse being quoted! Well, it certainly left its mark on my mind! We chatted for a little while longer and then they invited me to accompany them to a dance to which they had been invited.

41. WE CALLED FOR THE BILL and David paid for our simple meal, thanking the waiter profusely for the service he had given us. The waiter, the owner's son, received a good tip and showed us to the door. What a meal! I think I had eaten most of my dinner without even realising what I was eating!

42. I STILL DID NOT QUITE BELIEVE that these two were married, but then they acted as though they were ... I did not quite understand every-

thing about them, but instead dismissed it from my mind. We climbed into the car and drove a few miles to a dance hall I had never been to before. They were welcomed at the doorway like old friends, and as I was with them I received the same hospitality.

43. THE DANCE WAS A MIXTURE of people from some organisation or other, and I knew quite a few faces there--which was a little embarrassing for me, to be seen with a man and his wife, I was so obviously latching on to this very attractive young girl while her husband sat and watched contentedly from the sidelines.

44. WE HAD A BALL! This gorgeous little dark-haired beauty cavorted and squirmed on the floor with me in a passable modern dance motion lending itself very strongly to a blatant love dance!--Phew! I only just survived! This slinky black-halter-neck-dressed beauty had my system in action!

45. THE PASSION AROSE WITHIN ME to the extent of it becoming embarrassing to hold her close to me! She could not help but be aware of the sap rising within me as a result of her dancing and the touching of her fingertips. I had to bend down to kiss the top of her head, but size is immaterial at a time like this.

46. I REALLY FELT LIKE A HEEL as I looked toward David sitting quietly on the sidelines smiling at everybody, his activities on the floor curtailed as a safeguard against the over-straining of his heart. He waved to us and seemed so happy that dear sweet Maria was enjoying herself.

47. MY STIFF EUROPEAN NATURE did not allow me to show my true feelings. How I wanted to take her to bed! She was the most important person in my life right then and I really wanted to tell her so, but ... she was married! The evening

rolled on into the morning and we left. Dear David was so happy to see Maria and I enjoying ourselves. He had had a good time himself fellowshiping with the people around him.

48. WOW! IT WAS REALLY A GOOD EVENING! I was sorry to see it draw to a close. The sweat soon dried on my body when we got to the car and ventured toward their house worn out. I was really sorry to see the end of it, but then they were married. We said good bye and I thanked them for such a lovely evening. I drove like a maniac home to my lonely flat. I think "crest-fallen" was a good description for my feelings then.

49. WHAT HAD SHE GOT that I had not seen in any other woman? She was not very physically attractive --a small slim body, nice legs and a superb smile. But the secret was in her eyes!

50. SHE COULD MAKE LOVE WITH HER EYES!--And, thinking back, so could David. They had an inner love that came through as he spoke to and looked at you. WOW! How it made me feel so good! I arranged by telephone to take them out for dinner again. We had really enjoyed ourselves! Well, they seemed to and I know I had.

51. ANYWAY, A WEEK LATER WE WENT OUT AGAIN. I had seen them at the dance hall in between, and all was the same as ever. I did not tell anybody we had been out together, so none of my friends suspected anything. I arrived at their house again, but this time Maria was all ready with a large shopping bag, which seemed strange, as we were only going out for dinner!

52. WELL, IT SEEMS THAT DAVID COULD NOT COME with us this time and I would have dear Maria all to myself! WOW! We went back to the same little Turkish restaurant and I felt really self-conscious about being there without David but all

alone with Maria! But it did not seem to worry her, so I just tried to relax.

53. SHE SEEMED IN A HURRY to get dinner over with, but I never understood why until we had paid the bill, left and got into the car. There for the first time I could not help myself: I held her tight and kissed her softly right on the lips! I could tell from her soft marshmallow kiss that she felt the same way as I did!

54. SO WE DE-CLINCHED AND DROVE TOWARD MY FLAT. I must say, I really felt bad about taking her there without David, but she was not worried, and assured me that he knew and had told her to have a good time.--Phew! I could not understand it! He must be a strange husband to let her do that!--I thought. I know I would never share my wife with anybody. But her peaceful attitude set me at ease.

55. I ASKED HER WHAT DAVID WAS DOING and she said, "Becky is looking after him!" WOW!--I thought, I wish I had two gorgeous-looking girls to look after me like that! Then I began to wonder if they were married! But right then with her hand softly caressing my right ear I must admit my natural inclination did not include considerations as to her marital state!

56. I WAS AROUSED and extremely hungry but not for food!--Ha! I remember my old grandmother used to say to me when I was in my early teens--please excuse the crudity: "A standing cock has no conscience!" Ha!--How true! So we went to my flat and we talked and talked and loved and loved! What a dream! What a fantastic dream! How pure she was!

57. WHAT A NIGHT! It was the first time they had been parted for over three years, and that I should have the privilege of dear Maria's love for the night I could not understand. How close I felt to

dear David! A very unique experience for me--real heart-felt love and no strings! We really had a lot in common.

58. HOW I REMEMBER THAT NIGHT...

Well, I eventually got to work next day and reflected on the night's happenings! I did not get much work done that day--Ha! How the night's happenings kept coming back to me!

59. WHAT PURE LOVE THESE PEOPLE

HAD! They asked for nothing in return, but just gave themselves as Jesus Christ had given Himself. They sacrificed for love, the love of God! I worked all weekend, and during Sunday when at work I was moved to make a little love token for dear sweet Maria. I had money, but I felt it meant more if I made it myself.

60. IT WAS JUST A SIMPLE LITTLE WOODEN PAPERWEIGHT

with the words "Love" and "Peace" carved on it. I used to make samples of plastic mouldings in wood, so it was not difficult for me, but it seemed to impress them both that I should bother. I popped around to see them on my way from work and she was so happy to receive it. She said later I was like a little schoolboy running around to show his mum and dad what he had been doing at school.--Humm! Hum! But I guess underneath I did feel like that.

61. I WAS SO HAPPY! I then invited them around so that I could cook a meal for them at my flat. It was a shame that again David could not come, but dear Maria came and stayed the night again! We had a steak dinner with wine and all the trimmings. Ah! What happy memories!

62. WHAT LOVE! All through the evening dear Maria phoned David and told him she loved him and missed him, and he even spoke to me on the phone to tell me, "Have a good time, Son! Look after her for me.....!" It really was unnerving! I had never before spoken on the phone to a friendly husband while I shared a

bed with his wife...! It was quite a change to be open and honest for once in my life! She told me that David said she was an angel, and it is only now some months later that I realise what he said was true:

63. SHE WAS AN ANGEL! We rose and went to her home. I was in a daze! Something had happened to me, but I didn't know what! I said good-bye.

64. THEN ONLY TWO DAYS LATER SHE WENT AWAY with David, but for the life of me I could not find out where! To drop right out of my life like that without knowing where! Why did she...? How could she...? Was I being used...? My selfish thoughts sprang to mind as ever. What a selfish pig I was! Always woe is me, pity my lot--never, Well, c'est la vie!--That's life!

65. DEEP DOWN I WAS VERY HURT.

I missed her a lot. I had never known a love like that. I had never been dropped by a girl before. She couldn't do it to me, not me!--But that's just what happened! I curled my tail between my legs and sulked for about two weeks.--Ha! They wouldn't even let me give them a lift to the airport! Complete rejection!

66. HER LAST WORDS TO ME were, "We love you! Don't forget to phone Becky--she'll take care of you!" I wasn't interested....though Becky had had that same look in her eyes and her big wide smile and I really fancied her when I first saw her. Mmmmm! Well, maybe. But I let the thought pass away.

67. I READ THE DAILY LIGHT dear Maria and David had given me faithfully as I promised, and I also dug up a New Testament my sister had given me three years before and started reading it again. Then I got back madly into my work and tried to forget this whole wild dream I had been enacting! I had no address to write to apart from Becky's, so I decided not to bother. I was so damn stinking selfish!