

Continued From Page 8

"That's not a reason, that's bullshit. I've seen your heart and I know it's good. I know you Sao."

"You not know me." She replied.

"I know you very well Sao. I watch you when you don't know I'm looking... I saw you with the little girl in the shop. I watched through the window and I know you were kind to her. You can't hide from me."

She smiled to herself and resumed her knitting. She knew what I was talking about.

"She not have enough money so I pay for her."

"I know. You're a very kind lady."

She beamed as we allowed each other to drift into our own random thoughts and I reflected on her small act of kindness which had warmed my heart.

A thought occurred to me and I sprang forward grabbing a tube of Pringles that lay on the bedside cabinet.

"See this" I bellowed as I waved the tube in front of her face. "This is you and this is how much I know you." The tube was three quarters full and the message I was attempting to impart was that I was three quarters of the way towards understanding her essence....

'Quite a profound metaphor' I thought, smugly.

Quick as a flash she grabbed the discarded sliver of foil that had once sealed the tube and waved it in my face.

"No this how much you know me."

She dropped the knitting and howled with laughter, delighted with her witty wisdom. We laughed and hugged for a few perfect moments until she broke away, stretched and arched her body backwards, extending her arms like a steeple above her head.

"Tell me about your mama." She said softly.

A small voice in my head urged caution.

"My Mama?" "Yes."

"Well she's a good lady. She loves me and she took good care of me when I was young. She had many problems and very little money but she still took good care of me. She's funny and true and she does not speak bullshit. I love her..."

She pulled me towards her, pressing her face to my neck and sniffing my scent.

"Tell me more." She encouraged.

"Well, all my friends loved her and used to say that they wished she was their mama." Her dark fluid eyes moistened as she sat, absently stroking my leg with her foot and

nodding vigorously.

"That good." She said wistfully.

She didn't push me. She waited for more as she searched my soul and gently took my hand in hers. Looking at her soft skinned face I saw my mother looking back.

I left the bed and drifted to the CD player, collecting my thoughts. I could feel her watching me as her voice stoked my back like warm honey.

"I think your mamma a good lady. I want speak her. I think I like she."

I leapt back on the bed and tested deeper.

"Maybe one day you will."

She flashed that bright white smile of hers... "I like see she."

"That's good Sao but why?"

"Because she good lady."

"Tell me about your mamma." I said.

She twisted and grimaced...

"She die when I little girl. I no know her."

That's all I got and that's all I needed.

I hugged her and she held me tight ... for a long, long time.

She shed no tears. Sao only ever cried alone. I hoped that one day she could cry with me.

And then I might know her better than the foil from a tube of Pringles.

Things We See And Hear

The Six Day Cruise

DEAR DIARY

DAY ONE

I am all packed and ready to get on the cruise ship. I've packed all my pretty dresses and make-up. I'm really excited.

DEAR DIARY

DAY TWO

We spent the entire day at sea. It was beautiful and we saw some whales and dolphins. What a wonderful vacation this has started to be. I met the Captain today and he seems like a very nice man.

DEAR DIARY .

DAY THREE

I spent some time in the pool today. I also did

some shuffle boarding and hit some golf balls off the deck. The Captain invited me to join him at his table for dinner. I felt honoured and we had a wonderful time. He is a very attractive and attentive gentleman.

DEAR DIARY ...

DAY FOUR

Went to the ship's casino ... did OK .. won about \$80. The Captain invited me to have dinner with him in his state room. We had a luxurious meal complete with caviar and champagne. He asked me to stay the night but I declined. I told him there was no way I could be unfaithful to my husband.

DEAR DIARY ...

DAY FIVE

Went back to the pool today and got a little sunburned. I decided to go to the piano bar and spend the rest of the day inside. The Captain saw me and bought me a couple of drinks. He really is a charming gentleman. He again asked me to visit him for the night and again I declined. He told me that if I didn't let him have his way with me he would sink the ship. I was appalled.

DEAR DIARY ...

DAY SIX

I saved 1600 lives today .. twice !!!!

Can You Give Me A Push

A man and his wife are awakened at 3 o'clock in the morning by a loud pounding on the door.

The man gets up and goes to the door where a drunken stranger, standing in the pouring rain, is asking for a push.

Not a chance, says the husband, it is 3 o'clock in the morning! He slams the door and returns to bed. Who was that? asked his wife.

Just some drunk guy asking for a push, he answers. Did you help him? she asks. No, I did not, it is 3 o'clock in the morning and it is pouring out there!

Well, you have a short memory, says his wife.

Continued Page 29