

# UNTAMED BUTTERFLIES



**Rachel-Erika Henderson**







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Dedicated to James Douglas, Daisy Jo, David John and Ziggy Lachaise.



Douglas Donohue has lived in Pasadena (a city in California, northeast of downtown Los Angeles) all his life. Doug has always been blessed with an eye for creative art whether it is admiring or creating it himself. He is very handsome, tall and muscular with dark brown eyes, and wavy shoulder length hair. Doug is extremely well spoken, although incredibly shy, he is quite an extraordinary young man, his parents always said he had wisdom and knowledge far beyond his years. Doug tends to dress down to every occasion. Never far from his tan leather boots or his old buckled cowboy hat. Being a lover of art -also one of the few subjects he left school with a certificate in. He is drawn to expressing his creativity at every given moment.

At first glance Douglas's appearance is stereotypical of an uncouth illiterate drop out, but his personality is that of a spiritual being in search of the Dharma -his Dharma. He is friendly, kind, charismatic and unbeknown to him, his life is about to take him on one hell of a journey...

Douglas finds himself sat on a bridge railing watching the cascading waters thrash against the rocks beneath him. Something deep inside, a tiny ray of hope is giving him the strength he needs to reconsider his options. There was a downward spiral that lead him here to ponder his fate.

He once seemed so happy with free-spirited Joanne, a little naïve never the less but he had once loved this about her. Jo (as everyone called her) worked as a waitress at 'Aikendrum' a tiny cafe on the west side of town. Doug and Jo rented a small apartment not far from where Jo worked. Doug always introduced himself firstly as an artist, he was a very talented artist but like many, he was struggling to get his art noticed. John Steele was running an evening art class and as himself and Doug were good friends (being Doug's former High school teacher), John had convinced Doug it would be beneficial to broaden his art career by joining the class he was running.

Douglas hadn't ever really grasped the concept of John's erratic ways of teaching, however this time was different. The second week of class changed everything when 'Still life' became the following project. It was at this time Douglas met Erica.

John's teachings quickly became much more interesting. Erica like Doug was a struggling artist and had volunteered herself as a still life model to get a bit of extra cash together and head up to San Francisco. This was the 60's, poets, artists and musicians were flocking to San Francisco's Haight Ashbury in a bid to express themselves freely (ultimately getting their work out there in hope of making it big). The time of revolution was in the air, war was over and the world was being unveiled in a different shade. Freedom, expression and creativity were in the air.

Erica first entered the classroom wearing a tight figure hugging crimson velvet dress. Her long black wavy hair fell just above her petite waist. Her bright red lipstick accentuating her beautiful pale ivory skin. Lifting her head to smile, revealing her piercing blue eyes, she was simply divine! 'Ok folks listen up' John announced to the class. 'This is Erica, she is going to be our life model for the next project'.



Douglas was taken in by Erica at first glance. When John announced Erica would be the subject for the next part of the course Douglas instantly felt something deep inside, like butterflies, untamed butterflies dancing about his body. Erica was not only beautiful she had a certain alluring aura about her. 'I want to see you all creating, use any brush, pencil or tool you so desire' John continued.

'A woman's body is one of the most beautiful and powerful things to behold'. 'If you feel earth child - create, a mother figure -create, love, sex, lust...' John paused. I want you to create not only what you see but what you feel' he finished. 'Well hello ya'all' Erica smiled giggling with a sweet southern accent. There were a few sniggers and a wolf whistle. 'OK, that's enough' John interrupted quickly.' A woman's body is sensual, but it also tells a tale of what she has overcome' he finished. 'You can get sorted in there my dear' John smiles to Erica pointing towards his office door.

Erica winks back before walking into his office carrying with her nothing but a colourful large leather patchwork bag. John is still busy talking but Doug can no longer hear a word, he stares at the door in a trance awaiting Erica's reappearance.

After what feels like an eternity Erica walk's back into the classroom, she is wearing a purple robe tied with a yellow satin cord. 'OK Erica just over there, on the seat by the window, there's a bit more light over there'. Erica complies simply walking over simply seating herself and dropping the robe to her feet, revealing every inch of her curvaceous naked body. Douglas's cheeks burn but he composes himself by clearing a space for his art tools, pencils, charcoal and paper, rolling out his bound leather art case. She doesn't seem phased at all, she sits silently still while the class produce their sketches. Douglas draw's Erica's hands, they look soft and pure, angel like. He starts with her palms drawing them outstretched as if to reach for something.

After class most people head to 'Barry's bar' it's a dive, dark and dingy but open late. It's also frequented by some of the finest eccentric characters you will meet. Usually there's some kind of live musical gig on too.

Erica pulls her robe back up and on before going into John's office to get dressed. She appears again in the classroom grasping her patchwork bag trying aimlessly to squash her robe back in.

'So you coming to Barry's with us for a drink?'

Douglas asks. 'I could absolutely murder a drink, but I got another sitting tonight' she winces. She pulls a journal from her bag and flicks a few pages. 'The Grange?' she reads 'you know where it is?' she quizzes Doug. 'Great, it's not too far from here' Doug smiles 'We got about three blocks' he winks.

'What are you a bodyguard?' Erica laugh's. At this time she thinks Doug is a bit forward, she doesn't know him and isn't too sure whether she is comfortable with a stranger escorting her. In the end she reasons with herself she doesn't know the way and this is cheaper than a cab. She accepts gracefully, they set off into the moonlit night. 'Hey you guy's coming to Barry's tonight?' ask's Bette one of Douglas's class mates. 'Nah we're groovy Bette, gonna show her the Grange' Douglas smiles. 'Lucky her' she laughs back.

They start their walk down a small cobbled brick lane. 'So what's your deal?' Doug asks Erica. 'What do ya mean?' Erica replies. 'Like what's your deal, your story? Everyone's got a story to tell' Doug smiles back. 'Well my story, let me see' Erica smiles looking towards the sky. 'A couple mates and I just doing a few random odd jobs in a bid to raise enough cash to head over to 'San Fran' she finishes, before suddenly pouring out her aspirations and dreams. She goes off on a tangent. 'My dream is to go to San Francisco and become part of it, you know to be part of this new generation?' 'I can feel it in the air and I want to grasp it with both hands' she continues. 'I want MY art to be noticed and one day be hailed alongside the great's'. 'I want to leave behind a legacy, my legacy, like my very own Mona Lisa' she giggles. She continues describing the world she envisions through her beautiful blue eyes. Douglas would normally be bored by this type of erratic conversation, but tonight he felt gripped. He hardly utters a word, he just takes it all in, like that of a spellbound audience.

‘Well that’s us here, this is the Grange’ Doug stops Erica as they reach a brightly lit Neon sign.

‘Oh my’ Erica stammers, embarrassed. ‘I’m so sorry, when you gotta sit still for that amount of time it’s like you kinda explode afterwards’ she laugh’s. ‘How rude of me, I didn’t even ask your name?’. Douglas smiles before giving her a sneaky peck on the cheek ‘Doug’ he says winking and turning to walk on. Erica stands under the sign for a couple minutes facing Doug as he walks away she has a puzzled expression etched across her face, but smiles before turning to head up the stairs of the Grange.

Doug skips Barry’s bar tonight heading straight home with a brisk walk and a whistle. When he arrives Jo’s sat up with a joint waiting on him. ‘Hey Dougie baby’ she welcomes him she is ever so slightly drunk. ‘I’ve been listening to some of Dave’s L.P’s and I found this tune...’ she trails off ‘It’s around here somewhere, on one of these’.

‘Oh my god Dougie you’re gonna love it’ she shrieks stumbling about, then raking through the pile of L.P’s and knocking them to the ground. Douglas smiles ‘Jo baby, you’re too high to find anything, let me help’ he says tidying up. He sorts through the pile. ‘What song Jo honey?’. ‘It kinda go’s do do da da du da...’ ‘Oh Dougie just find us a tune’ she yell’s before dropping the joint into the ashtray and slouching back against the couch.

Doug searches a while before deciding on a bit of Ella Fitzgerald he lifts the needle to the turntable and places the record on before turning back to Jo who has passed out sleeping. He lifts the needle, switching off the player. He walks over to Jo, gently removes her shoes, before lifting her up to carry through to their bedroom. Doug lays her down, covering her with their old Tunisian quilt. He sits down beside her. Jo is ever so silently snoring but Doug is wide awake. His heart is racing, he feels so alive. He looks over to Jo, her silky fair straight blonde hair slightly covering her beautiful long eyelashes, she looks so peaceful. He loves Jo but sadly is no longer in love with her. They met at 16, and fate seemed to of paired them up. Doug found Jo childlike, and felt obliged to look after her.

Over the last 5 years it had gone from 'young lovers' to more of the love an older brother would have for his sister.

Douglas thought's turn to Erica. It was like a spark had been ignited. Although the whole situation seemed a little crazy, he'd just met Erica, besides what about Jo? Why was he even having thought's about Erica? On the confusion of this alone he falls asleep.

In the morning when he wakes Jo's already left for work, he can smell a freshly brewed pot of coffee, he gets up and walks into the kitchen. There's a note beside the coffee with a scribbled love heart, 'Try come home early Dougie baby, Let's just hang' Your Jo Jo x.

Doug sits down for a quick brew before heading to shower. He decides to leave the house early as today is a beautiful, the sun is shining, and he wants to embrace it. He walks to his favourite music shop 'Rudsy's rave cave' five blocks from the house. On his way Doug's mind is a whirlwind he keeps going over his relationship with Jo and this crazy spark he felt with Erica. Maybe it's lust, because she is absolutely beautiful, or maybe it's just a thrill because he's no longer in love with Jo? Never the less Doug is excited about tonight's class. He wanders down a little earlier and stops at Barry's for a pre-class beverage to whereby complete surprise he finds Erica sipping a scotch. 'Well hey there little lady' Doug surprise's her. 'Hey Doug, well if it isn't my very own chaperon' Erica smiles back. They share a smile before Doug perches on a stool next to her. 'I'll have whatever she's having' he smiles to the barman pointing towards her glass, 'and better get her another as well'.

Erica thanks Doug before they quickly lose themselves in deep conversation. This time Doug tells Erica about his love of art. How he wants to portray the world he see's.

It's not long before another couple from Doug's class Sheena and Matt appear. 'Hey Doug man, hey Erica' Matt smiles. 'Hey guys why don't you come join us?' Doug invites them over, the conversation quickly erupts with great debates and a lot of laughter all the while the drinks are swiftly flowing. They talk about films, debating whether 'The Birds' or 'Psycho' is Alfred Hitchcock's best creation. Girls voting Birds, boys Psycho. Before they all know it, it is time for class. The two couples head out into the early evening the fresh air makes them all feel a little giddy. They get to class with a mere few seconds to spare.

Doug, Sheena and Matt all take their seats and Erica heads through to get ready. Doug is a little half cut but Erica is as professional as ever. She reenters the room and once again lets her robe fall at her feet, positioning herself and the class begin to sketch.

Tonight Doug's focus is on Erica's eyes, he decides to use oil paint to bring out the prominent aqua coloured flecks inside her crystal blue eye's. After class everyone is once again heading to Barry's. 'So what you up to tonight?' Doug asks Erica 'you need to be walked anywhere?'. 'Well I could certainly do with some food after all that scotch then stillness' she smiles back. 'You fancy walking me back to mine for a bite to eat?' she winks.



‘Of course ma lady’ he replies in his finest put on English accent hooking his arm around hers. They set off into the night walking the four blocks back to Erica’s. The night air is pleasant, there is a slight breeze, and with a brisk walk, it doesn’t take long to get to her apartment. It has a small picket white fence surrounding it, dusted with a garden of colourful carnations. They walk up the steps to her front door, she unlocks it to reveal a quaint but modest apartment.

Small but perfectly furnished with a large bookshelf. There is also a lot of art everywhere. Doug walks in and over to a framed charcoal sketch of a legless soldier hung on the wall above above an old shelf.

‘Wow’ he smiles. ‘Yeah?’ Erica quizzes ‘Some people don’t really like that piece’, ‘I suppose art is supposed to be controversial, that man lost his limbs fighting for his country, he was the most beautiful caring soul’ she finishes. ‘You knew him?’ Doug quizzes. ‘Well how else could I draw him silly?’

‘You want a drink?’ she questions.

‘Got anything strong?’ Douglas replies following her into the kitchen. ‘Like more Scotch?’ she asks lifting a bottle of Loch Dhu malt whisky from the top of the cupboard. ‘Wow you are definitely a lady of complete class’ he smiles back, before turning to gaze deep into her eyes.

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