

Rambling Thoughts After A Snowy Day



by Phyllis Chesler

The bare and wintry trees were draped in glistening silver and for hours, Manhattan became a magical place again. That was true—as long as you had not been sucker-punched, stabbed, thrown onto the train tracks, or murdered in your own hallway by a violent, probably homeless, no doubt mentally ill career criminal who had neither been jailed nor “helped.”

Magic Manhattan was also still here—as long as your grocery or jewelry store had not been robbed, again and again, forcing you to close, as long as your rent was not too high to maintain. So many stores and restaurants are gone—including “My Favorite Dessert” on West 72nd Street, yes, the very place that sold delicious Passover cakes for \$60.00 or even \$70.00.

So many clothing boutiques have closed, even more luxury shops shuttered.

But still, we must seize every day, each precious hour. Yes, even if we are women.

Today, two opposite page Obituaries in the New York Times had me by the throat. One, that of Stephanie Selby, who, as a child, starred in a book about ballet prodigies. Now, she is dead at 56, "due to complications of an apparent attempt to end her life."

Opposite this tragedy, we learn that Cuban-American artist, Carmen Herrera, is dead at 106—but she had to wait until she was 100 before her art was fully recognized. She is quoted as having said: "It's about time. There's a saying that you wait for the bus and it will come. I waited almost a hundred years."

Thus, a girl-child can achieve fame too early, suffer from depression, bow out of the limelight—and still take your own life early on. And, if you are a female artist, writer, scientist, you may have to wait one hundred years before your work is truly acknowledged. By then, few are still alive. Herrera was. And, Herrera is using her money "for round-the-clock aides...at the end of my life, to my amazement, you need a lot of help. Otherwise, I would end up in a nursing home. And I dread that."

Amen to that Sister.