

<posted to the *Wilting Rose GalactiComm BlogSite*>

Designer Brand Visions

I would like to paint a picture for you:

Imagine if you will, spending the day in bed – it's Friday after all; surrounded by luxuries, servants, and friends. Your biggest worry is what shoes to wear with that new designer skirt you bought on your shopping spree yesterday afternoon. Your breakfast is waiting for you after a long soothing hot bath – did I mention it was after noon? You have your choice of fresh fruits, croissants freshly baked, a succulent blueberry muffin, or all of the above. And, if that doesn't suit your needs, you can always order out for Eggs Benedict.

As the clock flips over to 1:30 pm, you decide it's time for you to do something productive. There are calls to make, schedules to check, or complaints to be made. It is the life of the rich, the famous, and the pampered. Of course, you could always spend the day with your fashion designer, spiritual advisor, or hop from café to café until boredom strikes or the sun starts to set.

As the sun begins its fall from the sky, your real work begins. There is a reason you lounge until the late afternoon and do little else but punch numbers on a screen or PDA. It isn't always readily apparent to others around you, to those that aren't privileged to follow your paths throughout the day.

By 4 pm your hair has been crimped, teased, tugged and pasted down into the perfect quaff. Your next stop is the manicurist. Your hands are dipped in hot wax then peeled before being lacquered with the color of the evening. The process is repeated on your feet and toes. By the way, forget eating now, even if you're hungry – you must keep your fingers still or the lacquer on your nails will smudge and the process will have to be repeated. Besides, there's no time for food anyway.

By 5 pm it is back to your swank digs to sort through your assortment of clothing. You have to be dazzling, rainbow high (it's a history reference folks, go look it up). The problem with the clothes in your closet is that you've worn it all before. Normally, that wouldn't be an issue for anyone else, but for you it is imperative that you not be seen in the same thing twice. Why? Because people will talk. They'll point and snicker, stare, laugh, and question your ability to purchase new trends despite the works of your foundations or acting careers. None of that is important to the gawkers and hawkers. So you sift, you sort, you toss, you try on, you take off and ultimately you make that phone call to your designer friend and have that one perfect dress charged to your account so you can wear it in all its glory, display it like a mannequin at the store, and earn rave reviews that will slingshot your friend into designer heaven or plummet them into squalor for designing something so atrocious. But, that is opinion and worry, for another time.

The outfit picked, now it is time to accessorize. The shoes you choose are designer brand, perfect and polished. They will also pinch your toes, stab at your heels and cause you endless amounts of pain but it is pain that must be endured or the voices will run wild. Hoes that bind your legs and stomach, tape to make your assets bigger or better than they already are because what you have naturally isn't enough. It has to be more, always more. You are bangled, you're a painted, you are primped and finally, you are ready to go. And no, you still haven't eaten yet.

At 8 pm you hit the town but you are not alone. Two of your friends go with you but it doesn't end there. At least one security officer, private and hired merely to follow you around, go with you. If you're part of the lucky, its only one; otherwise there's at least 5 that follow you, stand guard wherever you go and make sure things remain calm. But why the need for all the security? Because there's at least 4 other people in known space that would literally kill to see you harmed, hung, or hacked to pieces. But that's just part of everyday life.

The seas of people part for you as you walk through, and already the flashes begin. From your left and right, from places you didn't even know people had been hiding. By the time you get inside the pictures that have been taken will be plastered across known space via GalactiComm for all to see – not only that, but you're also seeing spots as you walk through the throngs of people already dancing and moving inside.

Before you even hit your reserved table, five people have asked you to dance, your order has been taken, and don't even think about ordering something non-alcoholic. Oh yes – you still haven't eaten yet. You sit for five seconds then it's up into the masses to kiss and hug, dance and make nice with people that are more interested in starting a rumor than starting a friendship. Your outfit is scrutinized down to the last thread, your attitude torn apart and analyzed for imperfections. If you dance with that person you'll be accused of starting something scandalous but if you don't, someone will be put out and let it be known to the masses before you step out of the club. You have to have at least 3 drinks before you leave and make sure you're still sober enough to remember names and faces or else you'll be turned into a sloshing drunkard before morning.

You are complimented, fondled, handled, moved, twirled, swirled, and left gasping for breath before you move on to the next club. It is imperative that you hit at least three before the night ends or you'll be seen as a light weight. Important people may be missed if you decide to skimp out and go home early and THAT, simply cannot be allowed.

Everyone watches you, everyone waiting for you to misstep. People smile and bleat at you out on the dance floor and then turn around and call you a tramp or worse in the bathroom. The man following you **MUST** be a new lover despite the fact that he's not laid a hand on you once and has been nothing but gentile and courteous. Your contingent of guards still follows you around and you've even been assigned a female guard so she can follow you when you have to take the two second break to relieve yourself. Anything longer will be turned into a rumor that you're shooting drugs in a stall or having some torrid affair with your homosexual lover.

By 3 am, you've visited four clubs, seen thousands of people – don't forget their names now – had at least a dozen different mixed drinks, danced until your feet are numb from the pain and so tired you could fall over where you stand. And all of it will be repeated the following day because, it is only Friday after all and there is still Saturday night to get through.

Oh, and no – you still never ate any actual food.

This is the life of the rich, the famous, the powerful, and the privileged. Everyone is dying to know whose clothes you wore, why the shoes you had last week no longer don your feet, and why you suddenly need to walk in the presence of your own spiritual advisor.

I have this response: why NOT have a spiritual advisor? When your identity is stripped down to the name on the tag of your dress or the insole of your shoe, it is easy to lose a sense of self. Through all the pomp and circumstance, the flagrant eccentricities, the real you, the you that matters is ignored and ultimately lost. Is it too much to ask to want to hold on to that?

Apparently so. It is expected of you to be tormented, fondled, caressed, touched, photographed, recorded, shoved into uncomfortable clothes or shoes and followed around no matter where you go – the bathroom included – without any kind of protest to the contrary or plea for privacy.

Privacy is the one and only the thing the rich truly cannot afford. It is a luxury reserved only for the working class, a luxury we take for granted.

You cannot eat, there is no time. You cannot breathe; your dress will bunch if you do. You cannot stop, or someone else will get there first. Heaven forbid you want to wear jeans and a t-shirt out in public – someone might see you. You fight a battle no one sees because we all want to touch a piece of the star you live on.

You know what I've learned? It isn't worth it. The star can only shine for so long before all the energy burns out of it and nothing remains but a rotting, dim meteor. By then you are forgotten in favor of a brighter star and the peace you thought you might have turns out to be the vast emptiness of a lonely life. So much work, so much passed up or forgotten so that you can shine brightest for 15 minutes before another star bursts onto the scene.

Stars are lovely to look at, but in the end, they're too far out of reach, placed too high on their pedestals, and forgotten before they really have a chance to shine.

~Wilting Rose~