

Leo Elsenberg

280526

'Then I kissed her' – A passionate love affair that ended tragically.



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*Used to be a dreamer  
But you know I've found  
A better way - you  
Thought I was a loser  
But you proved me wrong  
You're taking me so much higher*

*You're taking me so much higher  
Higher and higher*

*("Taking Me Higher", Barclay James Harvest, 1977)*

## Exposition

At first I was somewhat reluctant and struggled with myself for a long time, asking myself repeatedly if I should publish this story, since it is not fictitious. The story reflects a very important episode and turning-point of my life and the people mentioned are real-life people – some of them probably still live somewhere in our universe. Since most people mentioned in this short-story more than likely don't recall what I am writing about, I decided to use real names and places. You also find [additional documents](#), like an old scanned railway ticket or scans of my diary, backing up the story, in the Public folder of my Windows Live SkyDrive.

Please feel free to send [comments](#).

## How did this story come about you may ask?

My 17 year old nephew, who lives in Poland, was taking English lessons and wanted to improve his English. He asked if I could write a story about a day in my life for him, so he could use my text to brush up his English. I didn't have a clue of what to write about since my days seemed to be rather dull of late. By total coincidence I found a diary of mine from 1980 which I thought no longer existed. The idea was born, as I could now base the story, a true love story, on facts. That not being enough, I also found a railway ticket and some names and phone numbers from the period I am writing about. Although one can clearly read names and phone numbers on some scans, which you may access by opening the [documents](#) and [photographs](#) files stored in the Public folder of my Windows Live SkyDrive, the individuals have died, moved or changed their phone numbers in the meantime. Contacting them via the information provided is impossible. I tried it!

Looking at the entries I made in that old diary I started to recall a short intense love affair that ended too quickly, unhappily and traumatically for me. All of a sudden I found myself back in June 1980, closed my eyes, started to dream and the movie started to play – a reflection of what happened each day noted down in my old diary.

Fortunately the diary still exists. I acquired my first computer, an Apple //c<sup>1</sup>, in January 1985 and started to manage my diaries on the Apple computer. Old-fashioned diaries were no longer required and I recycled them all. Somehow the 1980 diary and three other diaries managed to survive in a bellows unit<sup>2</sup> box and I can assure all readers that this wasn't intentional. Quite the contrary: I was absolutely certain that the diaries didn't exist anymore. I won't tell you where I found the railway ticket and phone numbers – you simply wouldn't believe me!

Leo Elsenberg

Sunday, 28 September 2008

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<sup>1</sup> 8 bit, 128 KB of memory.

<sup>2</sup> A bellows unit is used in macro photography in combination with a macro or bellows lens for close-ups of flowers or insects, for example.

## 280526 – 'Then I kissed her'

*This story is dedicated to Elisabeth, wherever she may be now.*

*Out of the Blue you came to me  
and blew away lives misery.*

*('Out of the Blue', John Lennon, 1973)*

September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Woke up three o'clock in the morning and recalled the dream I had, reminisced an affectionate love affair that didn't last long and ended awfully tragically from my point of view. Got up, turned the radio on and the first song I heard was 'Friday I'm in Love' by The Cure, jump-starting the project. It's Friday and I had a dream about my incomparable great love the night before. Take a ride with me and let me tell you the full story.

### Preamble

A long, long time ago the Dire Straits released 'Romeo and Juliet'. I remember me hopping and dancing whenever I heard this song. It seemed to be incomprehensible that my quest for Juliet, Emily or whatever her name eventually may be, was about to culminate in the not too distant future!

At the age of twenty-eight I was prescribed a six week recreation – I suffered from congenital underweight. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1980 I travelled by train to the clinic in Bad Dürkheim in the Black Forest, which is located in the south-west of Germany. The patients were between 17 to 60+ years old.

My time was occupied with medical examinations, psychological treatment and sporting activities.

One of the patients was a most beautiful Lufthansa stewardess in her mid twenties. We usually had lunch together and one day exchanged phone numbers. Sometimes we took a stroll into town, where we went to a café to have the inevitable coffee and cake. I admired her, but she was unreachable! I remember her name, Nuraltay, to today.

About three weeks after my arrival at the clinic a woman, about my age, looking like a goddess, arrived. Whenever she went swimming the male patients couldn't keep their eyes from her and all the female patients looked at her with envious eyes. I was brought up respecting women, so I didn't look at her with sexual thoughts, but admired her lovely face and captivating smile. However, one day she sat opposite me at lunchtime and we started talking. I immediately recognised that she came from Turkey. She told me that her name was Nurhan and that her husband was that deeply in love with her that he had come along to be close to her. During the time Nurhan was at the clinic her husband Oktan lived in his mobile home on a camp ground about 20 kilometres from the clinic. One day she introduced me to Oktan and we immediately understood each other. Nurhan must have told him that I treated her, as one would expect in Turkey, with utmost respect. Two weeks later they invited me to a BBQ they had scheduled to take place at the camping site one Sunday. I enjoyed the Turkish BBQ and the salads. Since some people just couldn't keep their eyes from Nurhan she left the clinic early.

'How come that I always meet unobtainable women?' I asked myself. This was to change, but different from what you may think! Keep on reading.

I soon wished that the cure would end so I could travel home. The days tended to be rather boring with nothing else to do than visiting the odd pub to have a beer or two with some other patients, all

of them considerably older than me. We had political discussions and talked about other, mostly boring, things. Sometimes one or two women in their forties joined us. The female patients separated from the male patients – obviously the female patients preferred the café over the old pub – coffee and cake rather than beer or wine. Whenever I wanted to be alone I played the grand piano 'ad libitum' in the assembly hall.

### First encounter – heaven-sent

May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1980

There she comes: Elisabeth<sup>3</sup>, a young woman about my age, arrives at the clinic and I immediately take notice of her. At dinner time she walks through the door: slim build, cheeky smile, height about 1.65 meters, brown eyes, dark curly hair and wearing glasses. 'Look at that girl, she must be made in heaven!' is my first thought. Sadly she takes a seat far away from mine. I can't keep my eyes from her. Has she noticed me?

*I've just seen a face, ...  
She's just the girl for me.*

*('I've just seen a face', The Beatles, 1965)*

You may call me foolish, but when I first saw this young woman I thought that my eyes are belying me: She had a striking resemblance with the famous Blues singer Janis Joplin ('Me and Bobby McGee', 'Mercedes Benz'), who regrettably passed away a couple of years earlier.

### Love at first sight

Suddenly I realise that I have fallen in love! I am a rather shy kind of person, so I don't dare talk to her. When she leaves the dining room Elisabeth twinkles at me and my heart stops beating for a second or two. She is on my mind all night and I can't sleep – the Beach Boys keep on singing 'Then I kissed her' all night through!

*I had met other young women before. Ulrike, a very good looking 17 year old young girl, posed nude for some photographs for me in 1978. I am a dedicated amateur photographer, still using film in the now digital world. I was strongly affected by David Hamilton, who took soft focused, very romantic and idealising nude photographs of young women in the 1970s. The young girl and I never had an affair, but we could talk endlessly and smoked a joint from time to time. Great times! Sometimes she sat completely naked on a chair opposite me, talking with me, and I didn't even notice that she wore no clothes. At the age of 47 she still poses nude for me and we still haven't had an affair!*

May 28<sup>th</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup> to June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1980

I see Elisabeth going to the gym after breakfast every morning, wearing a blue sweat suit and carrying a bath towel, and again when she leaves the gym, quite exhausted, about one hour later. She looks so fragile! I don't approach her to start a conversation but, since I can't resist looking at her, I am quite certain that Elisabeth must have noticed me. Every night I curse myself – for not having dared to speak to her.

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<sup>3</sup> I obviously didn't know Elisabeth's name when I first saw her. However, I decided to introduce her first name at this early stage for reasons of continuity.

*czekam wciąż na jakiś znak  
co powie mi gdzie iść co zrobić mam*

*('Laura', Ewelina Flinta, 2005)*

May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1980

No sport activities on week-ends. I see Elisabeth during breakfast, lunch and dinner. If I remember right, Elisabeth looks and smiles in my direction.

June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1980

I receive the book 'Of all things most yielding', published by The Friends of the Earth, New York, as a present from the psychologist, who practises at the clinic. He added the dedication 'Leo, vielleicht findest Du Freude an Text und Bild. Alles Gute Dir, Wachstum und Erfüllung. Bad Dürkheim 2.6.80 Knud'<sup>4</sup>. I told Knud that I had fallen in love with dazzling Elisabeth and he encouraged me to approach her, which explains the use of 'fulfilment' (German: Erfüllung) in his dedication.

*Each time I saw her I couldn't wait to see her again.*

*('Then I kissed her', The Beach Boys, 1965)*

## Coming together

June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1980 22:00 hours

As usual, groups of females and males go downtown after completing their medical tests and exercises, with the men going to a pub and the women to a café or restaurant. Sometimes the groups got together to visit a restaurant. About 21:30 hours that evening our group decides that it is time to return to the clinic, which is quite a long walking distance. On our way back we notice a group of women about 100 metres ahead of us – Elisabeth amongst them. Someone in our group says that I should speak to her – they had all noticed my feelings for Elisabeth. It is about 22:00 hours when I decide to be courageous for a change, leave our group and walk up to Elisabeth. The unbelievable happens: when I start to talk to her she actually answers! She tells me that her name is Elisabeth. We continue to talk and soon realise that we have quite a number of things in common (at the time I worked for the Royal Air Force and she worked for the United States Air Force). I love the conversation with her – she is so different from the young women I know. Her smile is intriguing. I can't help, but to fall even deeper in love with my angel. Upon arriving at the clinic I ask if we could meet the next day, I have never been that brave again, and she agrees. My heart starts beating faster – I can reach the stars! I can't sleep all night. Again, the Beach Boys song 'Then I kissed her' keeps on playing endlessly in my head that night. Was this wishful thinking? She doesn't look like a beauty queen, but very natural and cute instead – simply adorable from my point of view. She captured my heart! I love the way she walks, the way she talks and her lovely smile. She is so handsome! I am over the moon to finally have found my destiny. The search seems to be over! Then I realise with horror that I only have 5 days left before I return home. Will this short period be sufficient to build a relationship?

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<sup>4</sup> English translation: 'Leo, maybe you'll enjoy text and photographs. All the best to you, growth and fulfilment. Bad Dürkheim 2 June 1980 Knud'

*Dream, dream away  
Magic in the air, was magic in the air?*

*('#9 Dream', John Lennon, 1974)*

June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1980

After Elisabeth completed her medical examinations and tests, we visit Café Schlenker (now called Café Ultra) in Villingen-Schwenningen. She tells me that she lives in Kaiserslautern and draws a plan of her flat. I tell her that I live in Goch, a small town close to the Netherlands border, and draw a sketch of the flat I live in. Before we return to the clinic for dinner Elisabeth tells me that she is 26 years old with her birthday coming up on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July.

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1980

All day out with Elisabeth. I can't remember where we went to, but since we were out all day we more than likely visited Bad Dürkheim or Villingen-Schwenningen. If my memory doesn't fool me, Elisabeth tells me that she worked as a seamstress at the famous Pfaff sewing machine factory in Kaiserslautern before she started to work for the USAF at Ramstein, where she handles punch cards.

*Six years after I met Elisabeth I started studying Business management and Business data processing and learned everything about punch cards and COBOL programming on a Siemens mainframe. COBOL and FORTRAN code is written in punch card style, using only the first 72 columns of the card. Many years later I wrote a computer program to automate the creation of dynamic JCL scripts for execution on IBM mainframes. JCL scripts are also based on punch cards.*

We continue to talk endlessly and I feel very close to her.

June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1980

*What a dream I had:  
Pressed in organdy;  
Clothed in crinoline of smoky burgundy;  
Softer than the rain.*

*('For Emily, whenever I may find her', Simon & Garfunkel, 1966)*

We spend the day together. Elisabeth tells me that she likes me very much. I am over the moon, all the stars start to shine and I seem to recall seeing a comet!

During dinner the same evening a mid-aged lady comes over to our table and says: 'I see you are in love'. How right she is! From then on Elisabeth and I walk hand-in-hand, inflaming my heart even more!

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1980

*We walked on frosted fields of juniper and lamplight  
I held your hand.*

*('For Emily, whenever I may find her', Simon & Garfunkel, 1966)*

We walk hand-in-hand through the woods all afternoon and return to the clinic for dinner. Elisabeth invites me to visit her in Kaiserslautern once she returns home from the clinic. She surely noticed

that I was terribly shy, not daring to hold her hand, embrace or kiss her. Would the unspeakable happen during my visit?

Elisabeth and I talked about many different things. What I seem to remember is that we talked about the kind of music we prefer. I told her that I particularly liked classical music (Bach, Beethoven, Corelli, Handel, Haydn, Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky), Angelo Branduardi (a month or two before I met Elisabeth I bought his Album 'Fables And Fantasies' and instantly fell in love with it – dreams of old never really die! I am more than certain to have told Elisabeth enthusiastically about him.), The Beatles, Simon & Garfunkel and YES. She liked Elvis Presley<sup>5</sup>. Totally different worlds, but 'Opposites attract' as the saying goes. What really astonished me was the fact that Elisabeth apparently never heard of the US band Boston, to name just one. Boston used to be very popular in Germany and I could listen to their albums for hours.

We talked about other things too: Elisabeth told me that she was born in Poland which, since I was a member of the Polish-German Society at the time and had plans to visit Poland in a year or two, really fascinated me. Sadly Elisabeth knew very little about Poland! I don't remember if Elisabeth spoke any Polish.

*In September 1982 I visited the city of Wrocław (German: Breslau) for three weeks, after getting clearance from the RAFG Military Intelligence. Poland was put under martial law by General Jaruzelski on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1981. After my return I had to report to the RAFG Military Intelligence.*

I also remember us chatting about our favourite food. From what I bear in mind Elisabeth appeared to be rather Americanised in her food preferences, which lead me to meditate: 'what a pity, she's an American girl, but maybe all is not lost!'

*Well, she's an American girl  
raised on promises.*

*('American girl', Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, 1976)*

June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1980

The day before I was to depart home Elisabeth says that we can spend a night together by meeting in the 'smokers' room'. So evening comes and we leave our rooms to meet in the 'smokers' room'. Soon the sun starts to set and the room is lit by lovely red evening sunlight. And there she stands, wearing a short skirt and an extremely thin top. I believe she never wore a bra, so her soft skin and adorable firm small breasts shimmer through her top, dancing in the red evening sunlight. Then she takes place next to me. We start caressing each other. I am hopeful that this is going to be a night to remember! Then she kisses me (I wonder if the Beach Boys play their part again?) and as her tongue enters my mouth shivers run down my spine. As she begins to undress and is about to take her top off, allowing me to take a glimpse at her immaculate body for a flick of a moment, the unexpected happens: We didn't bear in mind that the night nurse is checking all rooms at 22:00 hours. And so the inevitable takes place: We are caught by the night nurse and have to leave the room. Elisabeth gives me a kiss and off we go to our rooms for the rest of the night.

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<sup>5</sup> The only Elvis Presley single I ever bought was 'In the Ghetto'. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1973, my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, I watched his 'Aloha from Hawaii' concert, broadcasted via satellite, on TV.

I am devastated and have a really bad night, thinking about my departure and having to say goodbye to my beloved cherub Elisabeth the next morning.

*... since I fell in love with you  
I need you more and more.*

*('All I want is you', Roxy Music, 1974)*

### **... and farewell**

June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1980

In the morning we say goodbye with tears in our eyes. I haven't seen a woman crying that emotionally before – Elisabeth touched my heart! With her bitter tears Elisabeth conquers my heart and manifests my eternal love. Before I board the bus, taking the patients leaving the clinic to the railway station, Elisabeth embraces me and gives me an unforgettable kiss. We only met again once.

*Thank you for the days,  
Those endless days, those sacred days you gave me.  
I'm thinking of the days,  
I won't forget a single day, believe me.*

*('Days', The Kinks, 1968)*

The trip home is, as you can imagine, not easy. I am unable to hold back my tears for a long time. During my trip home a nice young woman in her early twenties boards the train and takes place opposite me. I start a conversation with her. She says that she is a student, returning to university. I invite her to have coffee with me and she agrees. We continue to talk and about 2 hours later she reaches her destination and leaves the train.

### **Back home**

June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1980

When I go back to work my colleagues read from my face that I am deeply in love. Everybody notices.

A couple of days later I receive a postcard from Berta Quindeau and Wolfgang Thomasberger (I met both of them at the clinic in Bad Dürkheim), sending kind regards and asking about the state of affairs with Elisabeth.

June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1980 14:00 hours

I phone Elisabeth at the clinic.

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1980 11:30 hours

I phone Elisabeth at the clinic. She renews her invitation: I am welcome to visit her in Kaiserslautern after she returns home from the clinic. This makes me exceptionally happy since I can't wait to see my beloved angel again.

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1980 13:30 hours

I phone Elisabeth at the clinic.

July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1980 11:30 hours

I phone Elisabeth at the clinic.

July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1980 13:15 hours

I phone Elisabeth at the clinic.

July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1980 09:30 hours

I phone Elisabeth at the clinic and we make final arrangements regarding my visit. Elisabeth tells me that she spoke to her American friend, who was on detachment for a couple of months, and told him that I am going to visit her.

## The Visit

July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1980

Four long weeks after we saw each other the last time and three days after Elisabeth returned home from the clinic, I travel by train from Goch to Kaiserslautern to visit my darling. She comes to pick me up from the railway station and welcomes me with an immeasurable hug. I hand over the flowers I bought for her in Bingerbrück, where I changed the train. Then she drives us to her place in her little car.

Upon arriving in her flat, we talk until late, drink a beer or two, smoke some cigarettes and watch TV. As far as I recollect she smoked Marlboro, whilst I smoked Dunhill cigarettes. I told Elisabeth that I am going to move to a new address on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1980. I don't think that I felt happy about moving, as I was more or less talked into it by some rich chap, who called himself a friend of mine and obviously just wanted to cash my monthly rent for his own benefit. I asked if I may take a photograph of her, but she didn't consent and I had to leave my camera in the bag. This is why I haven't got a physical portrait of her, but it still continues to exist in my remembrance. Time went on and it soon was bedtime. She goes to the bathroom to brush her teeth and wash her body. Some fifteen never-ending minutes later she returns to the living room dressed with only a tiny white shirt and panties, with her lovely little nipples protruding dangerously. Next, I go to the bathroom, brush my teeth and wash myself. I remember her urging me strongly not to overlook my private parts (who did she think I was?). When I return to the living-room Elisabeth leaves the kitchen and takes a seat next to me. Her outfit really turns me on. Elisabeth asks me to embrace and kiss her (I still remember the taste of her toothpaste), which I gladly do. My fingers instinctively start to caress her firm small breasts and erect nipples. After a while Elisabeth says that it is time to go to bed.

## Coda - Heavenly gift

Next thing I remember is that she takes my hand and guides me to her bedroom, where she turns the lights off. I am somewhat hesitant to share the bed with her, but on the other hand hoped the unspeakable is going to happen tonight. A day or two after I met Elisabeth I confessed to her that I hadn't had sex yet – my precious little darling guessed it. I hope to be deflowered by her tonight. As I get into bed and turn over to her I notice that she is completely naked. I gently move my fingers up her legs, which she opens non-reluctantly, and continue by moving my fingers little by little towards her magic petite triangle, where I caress her damp pubic hair (sorry, Henry Miller), black as the night, and her by now dripping wet vaginal lips, opening them lightly – an indescribable sweet opium-like odour, at least that's what I imagine, starts to fill the air – her sweet fluids have begun to flow and eventually it happens: I won't repeat what she complained about upon my first attempt to penetrate

her – we have out of this world intercourse and I have the best orgasm ever, releasing millions of little spaceman into this up to then unknown universe of pleasant desires – a soft, warm and moist vagina, contracting ecstatically – ready to be conquered. She really knows how to make the first time an exciting experience and a memorable moment, excelling even my wildest dreams! 'Hooray, I am a man now!' I thought and it definitely was worth the wait! Elisabeth grabs a couple of Kleenex tissues, cleans herself and says 'Let's do it again'. We have intercourse again, but after a short while I suddenly think 'What am I doing here? I am abusing my precious little girl!' and say 'It hurts, I have to stop'. My Beloved appreciates that I feel uncomfortable and we stop having sex.

*When I thought about my excuse a few years later, I realised that I had used a girl's complaint! I wanted to show Elisabeth that I respect her, the girl I love, and didn't want to hurt or abuse her. I hope she understood that I was trying to be considerate and didn't want to treat her as an object of sexual desire!*

It's a couple of minutes before midnight when I suddenly realise that I am exactly 28 years, 5 months and 26 days old today.

You  
Soft and only  
You  
Lost and lonely  
...  
You  
Strange as angels  
Dancing in the deepest oceans  
Twisting in the water  
You're just like a dream  
You  
Soft and only  
You  
Just like heaven

*('Just like heaven', The Cure, 1987)*

Please, my guardian angel, stay with me forever! I need you more than ever! I hoped to have found a way into Elisabeth's heart, since she already found her way into mine, beating faster whenever she is around!

*Woman I know you understand  
The little child inside the man,  
Please remember my life is in your hands,  
And woman hold me close to your heart,  
However distant, don't keep us apart,  
After all it is written in the stars...*

*('Woman', John Lennon, 1980)*

Please let me touch her soft body like warm summer-rain over and over again!

July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1980

*And when I awoke and felt you warm and near,  
I kissed your honey hair with my grateful tears.  
Oh I love you, girl.  
Oh, I love you.*

*('For Emily, whenever I may find her', Simon & Garfunkel, 1966)*

I am not dreaming – the quest is over: There she is lying next to me, my Emily, at last! I feel like the first man on the moon, calling Houston to say 'It's looking good!', and kiss Elisabeth gently.

After breakfast (bread, butter, various sausages and some kind of cheese, if I remember right) we go shopping for the week-end. On our way I put my arm around her shoulder, which she dislikes ('what will the people say!') and I walk next to her while we continue to talk. I don't recall the shop, but it was some kind of supermarket down Dürerstraße and quite a walking distance from Elisabeth's home, where we bought something to eat and drink.

Later that morning, after having returned home from shopping, we talk about how we plan to spend the day and I suggest that we could visit Ernst Weller, whom we met at the clinic, in Speyer – not too distant from Kaiserslautern – and Elisabeth agrees. I remember him suffering from diabetes and wearing an amputation appliance. I rang Ernst up to ask if it was alright if we visited him later that day and he assured me the he would be very happy to see us again. Said and done, we jump in Elisabeth's little car and off she drives to Speyer, passing the famous Pfaff sewing machine factory on our way. I honestly don't know how Elisabeth manages to locate his address so quickly – she must be a very good driver! He is pleased to see us; we have a coffee, a beer or two, and talk for a while before we drive back to Elisabeth's home.

We have breath-taking sex again that night. All my dreams have come true. If there is a God, then please let this wonderful time with Elisabeth never end!

July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1980

Later this morning we visit her parents and sisters in Ramstein-Miesenbach. On our way to Elisabeth's family in her little car I imagine the Beach Boys singing '...and one day she'll take me home to meet her mum and her dad.' (Fragment from 'Then I kissed her'). Elisabeth introduces me to her family. We talk, have something to eat and drink and return to Elisabeth's flat two very long hours later.

This night we have no sex ('Not every night' she said), but I am allowed to touch and caress Elisabeth, which I contentedly do. After a while her body starts to shake and she climaxes heavily breathing. I am really pleased having satisfied her. I will do anything she desires! Will it go on like this? I very much hope it does! All my dreams seem to have come true with Elisabeth on my side, hopefully sharing the rest of her life with me. It looks like the search for a happy relationship with a loving woman has ended! Was this just a dream?

July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1980

The last day of my visit came sooner than I expected. The American president was to be elected later that year and I favoured Jimmy Carter, as he stood for peace – the peace agreement he arranged between Arafat and Israel being a perfect example of Jimmy Carters achievements. She favoured

Jimmy Carters opponent Ronald Reagan and we disagreed entirely. For reasons unknown the Beatles song 'You're Gonna Lose That Girl' kept on ringing in my head.

*At the time I was rather biased towards the USA: The assassinations of the Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King, the bestial murder of Sharon Tate and, last but not least, the atrocities committed by US troops during the Vietnam War shocked me deeply. Bob Dylan, Simon & Garfunkel and others manifested my vision that the USA may be different one day. I am no longer biased towards the USA. A few years after Elisabeth left me I met some very interesting US citizens, sharing the same thoughts and ideas I did.*

However, we soon stop discussing, have dinner and go to bed where we have outstandingly good sex! If only I had known that this is the last time Elisabeth and I were to have intercourse! I thoroughly enjoyed her company and sex with her was an unforgettable and fulfilling experience. Oh my lover, do you realise that I'd carry you on my arms and fulfil every wish you may have?

Tomorrow I am travelling home and I can't stop thinking about having to say goodbye to Elisabeth again.

### **... and farewell again**

July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1980

What a dull and rainy day this was! During breakfast I ask Elisabeth, if she would like to visit me sometime. She says that she would indeed like to visit me in a couple of weeks' time. About midday Elisabeth drives me to Kaiserslautern central station and gives me a hub beyond measure and a kiss to remember for life before I board the train. She waves at me when the train departs.

*You look in her eyes; the music begins to play  
Hopeless romantics, here we go again  
But after a while, you're lookin' the other way  
It's those restless hearts that never mend*

*Johnny come lately, the new kid in town  
Will she still love you when you're not around?  
There's so many things you should have told her,  
but night after night you're willing to hold her,  
just hold her, tears on your shoulder*

*('New Kid In Town', The Eagles, 1976)*

Elisabeth looks fairly sad when the train leaves the railway station. The journey home is awful. I can't stop thinking about Elisabeth and the wonderful time we shared together. 'Will I ever see my love again? Will she still love me tomorrow?' are the two questions occupying my mind during the trip home. Doubts regarding Elisabeth's love start to emerge. I just want to be alone, change to 1<sup>st</sup> class in Bingerbrück, and travel the remaining 264 kilometres home in solemnity.

Whilst walking home from Goch railway station I can't stop thinking that the magnificent episode with Elisabeth may have come to a premature end.

My sincere feelings for Elisabeth and the wonderful sex we had where such a major turning-point in my life that I noted 'had sex with E.' in my diary – an out-of-this-world experience!

*You took my life,  
But then I knew that very soon you'd leave me.*

*('Days', The Kinks, 1968)*

## Back home again

When I went back to work July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1980 my colleague Carole asked: 'Did you enjoy your 'first time'?'. All colleagues, three young women, seem to have known.

July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1980

In the evening I write a long letter to my friend Arthur and tell him everything about Elisabeth, that I love her like mad and that she is possibly having second thoughts.

*I first met Arthur, who was a member of the Royal Air Force, in 1962, when I was 10 years old. We soon became good friends. Arthur taught me the basics of the English language. He also arranged that I joined the British Boy Scouts in 1963. It didn't take long before I became Second of the 'Yellow Six First Goch Wolf Cub'. I've still got an old photograph of me in Boy Scout uniform, dated August 1965. Arthur moved to the Republic of South Africa in 1968, where he worked for the British Embassy until he retired. He died December 1988 in Durban, Republic of South Africa.*

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1980 14:00 hours

I phone Elisabeth at work and ask if we could meet again. I propose that we could meet over Christmas leave in the Hotel 'Salinensee' in Bad Dürkheim from December 25<sup>th</sup> 1980 to December 28<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> 1980 and Elisabeth agrees.

Since it's Elisabeth's 27<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July I am off to the flower shop in the evening and arrange that 27 red roses and birthday greetings are sent to her.

July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1980

It's Elisabeth's birthday today and in the morning I ring her at work to wish her all the best on her 27<sup>th</sup> birthday. She confirms our plan to meet Christmas time and we fix dates. I make a note in my diary to remind me that I have to place an advanced hotel booking. I am terrifically joyful that the future is looking good and the arrangement of being together with Elisabeth again over Christmas makes me exceptionally happy. I just can't wait to see, hug and kiss my sweet little girl again! Elisabeth also tells me that she intends to visit the psychologist at the clinic in Bad Dürkheim to talk about the relationship with me.

A few weeks later a letter from the psychologist, whom I had known for six years, arrives. He tells me that Elisabeth came to talk with him. He didn't, of course, give any details of what he and Elisabeth talked about, but he writes that I should accept Elisabeth's decision.

August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1980

A letter from my friend Arthur, dated 25<sup>th</sup> July 1980, Elisabeth's 27<sup>th</sup> birthday (what a coincidence!), arrives in the post. He responds to what I wrote to him in my letter, dated 16<sup>th</sup> July 1980, about my faithful love towards Elisabeth and that she probably thought things over. (Quotes from Arthur's letter: '*... I am sure she must have been a very nice young lady Leo, otherwise you would not have been attracted to her. I am also sure she found you to be a very nice young man. ... I know it is a hard*

*thing for me to tell you this Leo, but the best thing for you to do is to try and forget all about her.')*  
Why I never took his advice into consideration remains a question unanswered.

August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1980

After having telephoned with Ulrike, the young girl I had known for about three years, a couple of days ago I took some nude photographs of Ulrike and her friend Sabine. Ulrike, nine years younger than me, looked absolutely sweet!

August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1980

I send Elisabeth two Audio cassettes onto which I recorded the first album by a band called Boston and the album 'Gone to earth' by Barclay James Harvest. I particularly loved the titles 'Love is like a violin' and 'Taking me higher', both by Barclay James Harvest. I don't know if she ever heard the tapes and understood why I included 'Love is like a violin' and 'Taking me higher'. The first song described my feelings for Elisabeth and the latter my thorough gratefulness towards Elisabeth for taking me higher, so much higher, into heaven of felicitousness, than I've been ever before in my life. Many years later I bought the album 'Gone to earth' by Barclay James Harvest on music CD. I also liked the Boston songs 'More than a Feeling', 'Rock & Roll Band', 'Hitch a ride' and 'Let me take you home tonight' very much indeed. More than 28 years after sending the tape to Elisabeth I added the first Boston album to my music CD collection – 'More than a feeling' still moves me.

*When I'm tired and thinking cold  
I hide in my music, forget the day  
and dream of a girl I used to know.*

*('More than a feeling', Boston, 1976)*

August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1980

Ulrike comes to visit me and I take some nude photographs of her, using 'Kodak Aero Infrared' film for some of the shots. The infrared pictures turned out really good.

### **Tragic end – 'Love lies bleeding in my hands'<sup>6</sup>**

A couple of days later disaster hits me really hard! I rang Elisabeth at work to confirm our Christmas arrangement, but before I could say a single word she said: 'Leo, I have got to tell you something'. This didn't sound good and I instantly sensed that she was about to end our affair. 'I have to end our relationship. I am going to explain everything in a letter' she continued, leaving me speechless for a couple of seconds. 'Why?' I asked, hoping Elisabeth would think things over, but she didn't answer my question and our telephone conversation ended, leaving me in despair. When I return to my office after this annihilating phone call I nearly faint. My colleague Caroline instantly notices that something is wrong and asks if my girl has dropped me. All I am able to do is to nod my head. I can't speak for hours.

Elisabeth tore my heart into pieces! The happiest time in my life has come to a sudden and unexpected end! I stop writing anything to do with Elisabeth in my diary.

A few days later I receive her letter. Elisabeth writes that she intends to stay with her American friend Howard and our relationship must therefore end. She adds that I am a nice kind of person and I best find someone else to build a loving relationship with. I remember reading her letter over and

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<sup>6</sup> 'Funeral for a friend (Love lies bleeding)', Album 'Yellow Brick Road', Elton John, 1973

over again, shedding bitter tears of pain and sorrow, not believing that her words could be true, but after a few days I started to realise that our extraordinary love story – a present from heaven – has ended! Elisabeth broke my heart and threw it bleeding on the ground! I was totally shattered and fell into a deep hole!

John Lennon's 'Jealous Guy' reflected my feelings – maybe I am just a jealous guy?

I never met Elisabeth's fiancé, so it isn't up to me to say if she is happy with him. Maybe things would have been different if Elisabeth stayed with me instead. I'm only dreaming, am I?

Two years later, I just got acquainted with Marta, my wife-to-be; I realised that Elisabeth breaking up with me was unquestionably the best thing that could happen to me! Moreover, I found it quite frustrating that she shared none of my abundant intellectual interests. We apparently didn't speak the same language!

### **I can't let go**

Sometime in 1966 a good friend of mine asked if I had heard the song 'I can't let go' by The Hollies? I also remember him playing the single for me numerous times and I started to recall the lyrics, reflecting my deepest inner feelings:

*Oh I tried and I tried but I can't say good-bye  
Feel so bad baby  
Oh it hurts me  
When I think of how you love and desert me  
I'm the broken-hearted toy you play with  
You got me goin'  
I need you baby  
I can't let go  
And I want you baby  
I gotta have all your love  
I can't let go  
Though I'm just one of your lovers  
And I know there are so many others  
You do something strange to me baby  
You got me goin'  
I need you baby  
I can't let go  
And I want you baby*

*('I can't let go', The Hollies, 1966)*

August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1980 until August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1980

I had nobody to share my pain and sorrow with and asked Oktay and Nurhan Okan, who lived in Cologne at the time, over the telephone if I could visit them over the week-end. They kindly agreed and Oktay picked me up from Cologne central station. We had long talks about what happened to me and they were very understanding.

End of August, 1980

I record Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> symphony (Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Bernstein) and a Bach prelude, the latter played by me on the harpsichord (*I wonder if Elisabeth ever*

*appreciated my efforts: After numerous recording sessions the sound track finally met the standards set by myself, leaving my fingers numb for days!*), onto a music cassette. I used the remaining space to add a message stating, if I remember right, that I am very disenchanted for the reason that Elisabeth has chosen someone from a nation with no culture. Why, for heaven's sake, did I state something as ridiculous as this? Jealousy of course!

About a week after sending the tape to Elisabeth I destroy all vinyl records featuring American musicians, including my treasured set of the nine Beethoven symphonies (the famous recordings with Leonard Bernstein conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra<sup>7</sup>) in a state of insanity. To hell with everything American! How absurd can you get? However, 'Bridge Over Troubled Water' by Simon and Garfunkel survived my furious action!

A postcard from Berta Quindeau and Wolfgang Thomasberger arrives, announcing the trip around the world they had scheduled to start on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1980. They ask how things are with my girlfriend (Elisabeth).

September 1980

A friend comes for a visit. He notices that I hardly speak and asks why I am so quiet. I tell him what has happened and he suggests taking me in his car to Elisabeth, so I could ask her why she was so heartless and cruel to me. I reject his proposal, since I don't want to upset Elisabeth by visiting her unexpectedly.

October 1980

I purchased the Cliff Richard album 'I'm No Hero', released September 1980. I particularly liked the title 'Dreamin' ('Dreaming you into my life'), which is not surprising as my dreams continued to circle around Elisabeth every solemn night. Even today I sometimes listen to this track, but nowadays I dream about the beautiful, intelligent and very understanding young woman I used to be acquainted with many moons ago. She was without doubt the loveliest girl on earth!

December 1980

A Christmas card from Ernst Weller arrives in the post. He enquires about the state of affairs with Kaiserslautern (Elisabeth). ). If my memory doesn't fool me Ernst died very unexpectedly a couple of months later. He was a nice chap!

I ring Berta Quindeau, who was at the clinic with me, at work to extend Christmas wishes. She asks if I still was with Elisabeth. When I tell her that I wasn't, she says 'What a pity! You were such a good match and lovely pair.' and asks me not to give up, since Elisabeth may change her mind one day (*I didn't tell Berta that I was in a really bad state after Elisabeth left me and that I couldn't stop thinking about the wonderful time I spend with her.*). After wishing me all the best for Christmas and the New Year she says 'Please, don't do anything stupid!' She is obviously afraid I might try to commit suicide. She didn't know that had already tried to commit suicide three years earlier.

This was the last time I spoke about Elisabeth.

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<sup>7</sup> Leonard Bernstein – The Beethoven Symphonies (DG Recordings), 1977-79, DG 365 660-6

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1981

Much to my surprise I received a phone call from Elisabeth at work. We talked for a couple of minutes. She told me that she twisted her arm and asked, if I could send her my home address. Don't ask me what else we talked about – I don't remember.

To make sure Elisabeth that gets my home address as soon as possible, I wrote a letter to her the same evening and put it in the post the next day.

January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1981

I celebrated my 29<sup>th</sup> birthday. When I got home from work I found a birthday card and greetings from Elisabeth in my letter box, which made me exceptionally happy. 'Does she still feel for me?' I wondered, pretending 'Maybe everything is not lost?'

January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1981

Elisabeth rang me at work. From what I can recall Elisabeth wanted to ascertain herself that I haven't misunderstood her birthday greetings, substantiate that she is happy with her American fiancé Howard, and therefore has no intention to rejuvenate our relationship. This was really sad news, but I was very happy to hear her voice again.

This was the last time I spoke with Elisabeth!

Though I stopped writing anything to do with Elisabeth in my diary some time ago, I must have regarded the last two phone calls as very significant and noted them in my diary.

Elisabeth and I exchanged a few letters from June 1980 to January 1981. I never wrote in my diary when I received a letter from Elisabeth or send one to her. None of her letters have survived the changes of time. Looking at her letters made me very sad and I eventually burnt them. The letters of my truly loved Elisabeth caused too much pain!

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1981

My father dies at the age of 51. We never had a good relationship, until I met Elisabeth: A few days after I returned home from the clinic I visited my parents. My father noticed that I was much more open than usual and asked why I am so happy. I told him that I met Elisabeth, a most wonderful young woman, at the clinic and that I was in love with her. I was so happy to be with Elisabeth that my feelings overthrew me. This was the first and only time I wept in front of my father! From this day on our relationship started to improve. He died too early!

### **A long goodbye**

May-June 1981

I must have been really mad! After having taken harpsichord lessons for no more than 9 months and whilst contemplating about Elisabeth, I wrote a Fantasia about our relationship and called the short movements 'Encounter' (Andante mobile), 'Passion' (Allegro staccato) and 'Funeral' (Andante con moto). The final movement reflects my failure at trying to 'bury' my love to Elisabeth. I remember playing the Fantasia for some friends of mine and especially the female listeners liked it very much. The score got lost a long time ago.

I stopped playing the harpsichord early summer 1981 and never played it again since. The intimate, some call it feminine, sound of the harpsichord brought up memories of my beloved Elisabeth whenever I played it. Every key seemed to sound the way she smiled, the way she talked, the way she walked and the way she kissed, bringing back the pain of having lost my love.

July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1981

In the evening I visit a florist and arrange that a bouquet of 28 red roses and birthday greetings are being delivered to Elisabeth's home address in the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup> of July, her 28<sup>th</sup> birthday.

October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1981

I start to write [poems](#), expressing my desire and love for Elisabeth, my lost passion; whilst others are about a girl I knew somewhere. Most poems circle around the unanswered questions I kept asking myself over and over again: 'Why is Elisabeth so cruel to me and doesn't accept my sincere feelings for her? Why can't we build a loving relationship? Will she ever return to me? Doesn't she realise that my heart is bleeding?' I wrote the last two poems on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1983; dedicated to a girl I knew somewhere.

The following entries exist in my 1981 and 1982 diaries:

June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1981: Met Elisabeth one year ago.

July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1981: Elisabeth's birthday.

July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1982: Elisabeth's birthday.<sup>8</sup>

Since I never heard anything from Elisabeth again, no further entries were made in subsequent diaries.

It took three and a half long and painful years, shedding millions of tears in deep sorrow, during which I often thought about my dearly loved Elisabeth and the wonderful times we shared together, before I finally managed to take leave of her!

*And though you're gone,  
You're with me every single day, believe me.*

*('Days', The Kinks, 1968)*

## Epilogue

After Elisabeth's letter, which was the cause of the saddest period in my life, I fell in deep agony and listened to Beethoven's 3<sup>rd</sup> Symphony and John Lennon's album 'Imagine', long-time favourites of mine, endlessly. I stopped liking the Beach Boys and never listened to the Beach Boys again until June 2005, when I purchased the Beach Boys Platinum Collection. And there it was again: 'Then I kissed her'!

I know that I am a dreamer (John Lennon: 'You may say I am a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.') and I believe that people that aren't able to dream can't find fulfilment in love. Sex, as far as I am concerned, is not the most essential part in life, important as it may be. The character of a person is much more relevant and two hearts can only beat in harmony if one another treats the beloved as a person having its own character and mind.

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<sup>8</sup> I don't memorise if I sent flowers. However, since I still was madly in love with Elisabeth I may well have.

We never phoned, exchanged letters or met again and I lost trace of Elisabeth. She apparently lives happily married somewhere in the State of New York, USA, now. I still love her in some way (the first love is the deepest and never dies!), and will remember her cheeky smile, charming eyes, warm heart and open mind to the end of my days.

The worst was still to come: I moved from my small modern flat to a different very uncomfortable old flat, which proved to be such a bad move that I had to move to another flat one year later. Jimmy Carter lost the election and December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1980 my icon John Lennon was murdered in New York. No 'Gimme some truth' no more! Will I manage to survive the struggles of life, and my longing for the woman I lost, without my idol John Lennon?

What's more, the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1980 was my colleague Carole Buchanan's last working day – her husband was posted back to the United Kingdom. She was a very kind and understanding young woman and the loveliest collaborator I ever had the pleasure of working with. I still miss her!

1980 wasn't, with the exception of the unforgettable time I spent with Elisabeth and the enchanting moments of happiness she devoted to me, a good year for me at all.

Happier times started to shed their light on me in autumn 1982, culminating in the birth of my daughter Daniela September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1987.

The railway ticket is all that is left of my short, affectionate and intense love to Elisabeth! I have never met another woman like her again and I am grateful for the nine on cloud nine days we spent together – they have been a present from heaven and remain some of the most memorable days of my life!

*So long ago!  
Was it in a dream? Was it just a dream?  
It seemed so very real, it seemed so real to me.*

*('#9 Dream', John Lennon, 1974)*

Now, that the story is told I am able to listen to my favourite music again. I haven't listened to the 'Symphony Fantastique' by Hector Berlioz since Elisabeth left me, but now I can enjoy the fabulous music again. (Quote from the CD booklet<sup>9</sup>: '*... the first movement is meant to suggest the artist's reveries and passions, inspired by an unobtainable ideal... From this opening passage is drawn the symphony's idée fixe, denoting images of the Beloved, which is transformed for each successive movement: it is next glimpsed through the swirl of waltzing couples at a Ball, then longed for in the countryside and finally imagined in opium-induced nightmares of execution and orgy.*' D. Kern Holmes)

Though 'the first cut is the deepest' (Cat Stevens), this most certainly doesn't imply the end of everything. Two years after Elisabeth broke my heart I met the nicest young woman one can possibly imagine. Her name was Eva and she was the loveliest, kindest, cutest and most angelic young woman I ever had the pleasure to have known. She was my fairy from another world! Even today I sometimes think that I am still 'secretly' in love with Eva. In 1984 I married Marta, a young woman from Poland. Our daughter Daniela was born September 11<sup>th</sup> 1987 and in autumn 2009 Marta and I celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Lexington, Virginia, United States of America.

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<sup>9</sup> Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) – Symphonie fantastique, op. 14, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, DG 410 895-2

Last but not least, Elisabeth had absolutely nothing in common with Janis Joplin! What a fool I was to ever have believed that I could possibly be her Bobby McGee ('Freedom is just another word for nothing left to lose')!

## **The End**

Without the support, sympathy and understanding of my dear wife Marta this short-story wouldn't have evolved.

*Oh yeah, all right  
Are you going to be in my dreams  
Tonight?*

*And in the end  
The love you take  
Is equal to the love you make.*

*('The End', The Beatles, 1969)*

## About the author



Leo Elsenberg, born January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1952 in Goch, Germany, is a 'Business data processing specialist', who specialised on IBM DB2 database servers, and has written a number of professional application programs, which are available free of charge on his [homepage](#).

He and his wife Marta, born April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1959 in Luban, Poland, got married in Tonder, Denmark, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 1984 and their daughter Daniela was born in Kleve Hospital, Germany, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1987 18:02 hours.

In his spare time he likes to listen to a variety of music: Classical (Bach, Beethoven, Corelli, Handel, Haydn, Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky), Rock (Beatles, Beach Boys, Boston, Bruce Springsteen, Dire Straits, Green Day, Marillion, Pink Floyd, Rolling Stones, Supertramp, The Who and YES), Folk & Pop (Simon & Garfunkel, Amy MacDonald, Angelo Branduardi, Lily Allen, Maria Mena, Marit Larsen, Mylène Farmer and Christina Stürmer), Instrumental/Synthesizer (Jean Michel Jarre, Mike Oldfield and Michael Rother), Country (Emmylou Harris and Shania Twain) and, last but not least, John Lennon, who became his idol with the release of 'Imagine' – a peace hymn and his favourite title until today.

His hobby is classic (film-based) photography. In 1976 Leo attended the 'Nikon School of Photography'. He uses colour transparency film for the majority of his work with his [Olympus OM-4 Ti black](#) camera and occasionally brings his Berkey Omega C760 XL colour enlarger into play to enlarge colour transparencies onto 12x16 inch Ilfochrome® CLM.1K super glossy colour reversal paper (Ilfochrome® P30 silver bleach process), known for its brilliant, vibrant colours and excellent colour stability.

He is a member of the IBM DB2 Community and translated the Book '[Getting started with DB2 Express-C](#)', written by Raul Chong, into German for IBM, Toronto, Canada.

Apart from his mother tongue (German), he speaks fluent English, is able to communicate in Polish and understands Netherlands as spoken and written.

His favourite places are the Château de Versailles and Le Hameau de la Reine (Le Domaine de Marie-Antoinette, Versailles, France) as well as the cities of Wrocław (Lower Silesia, Poland), Liberec (North Bohemia, Czech Republic) and Potsdam (Brandenburg, Germany).

If time permits he likes reading a good book, lastly 'ILSE WEBER Wann wohl das Leid ein Ende hat: Briefe und Gedichte aus Theresienstadt' (ISBN 3446230505).

'You may say I am a dreamer, but I am not the only one.' (John Lennon, 1940-1980) is his number one quote.

Robert E. Lee, General of the South (Confederates) during the American Civil War (1861-1865), is his hero.

His favourite film is 'The Fearless Vampire Killers' (aka 'Dance of the Vampires'), directed by Roman Polanski, starring Roman Polanski, Jack MacGowran and Sharon Tate.