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It Was a Dark and Stormy Night.....

The reasons why two persons come together for the purpose of sex, passion, and intimacy are as numerous as the stars in the midnight sky. The naturalist author will analyze the human condition through observance and interpretation to place upon paper the third person's opinion. Procreation and sex are natural drives within many animals who reproduce through the joining of genetic material of a male and a female sex. Humans have been able to form a dividing line between the act and associated responsibilities for itself and the feelings and sensations associated with sexual pleasure, which is purportedly the drive function of sexual reproduction, which has been anointed with the word "passion".

In her short story *The Storm*, Kate Chopin has written a powerfully erotic description of the coming together of a male and a female who have been known to each other, but are now married separately, and have engaged each other sexually for an undetermined period of time. Many studies have been conducted as to what will attract one person to another, whereby many different aspects of attraction are defined. Proximity, visual cues and stimulation, and or attributes, as well as olfactory sensations provide the stimulating beginnings of what is referred to in some literature of Latin and Italian origin as the dance of love.

The name of the heroin, Calixta, who in the story is overcome by her natural urges towards pleasures, is an interesting one indeed. The setting being in old New Orleans whose direct immediate French influence promoted an etymological search which yielded the French

word “**câlin:**” having the meaning to be affectionate or cuddly. The word is also used as a noun for the English noun “cuddle.” Upon consultation of an online Latin-English dictionary, the word “**calix**” was found to mean a drinking cup or a cooking vessel. The author has thus bequoth the woman with an extreme sense of erotic and nourishing presence even before the vivid literary illustration of her mature secondary sex characteristics.

The intentions of Monsieur Alcée appears to be brought upon by the sheer necessity of needing shelter from a storm. His original thoughts are to remain outdoors where the proximity to Calixta is greater, however, nature intended to drive the two sexually mature persons together with such an overpowering torrent, that there was no other choice than to seek shelter under the same roof together. To interject: can one not ask how many raccoons in the bayou have been created by the random search for shelter during a ferocious tempest? Certainly this ability of man to describe and decipher the mechanisms and chemistry of love and love-making set him apart within the animal kingdom, while this does not consequently remove him from the natural influence. Sex and the pleasures of sex are natural and healthy. Nonetheless with man’s ability to thwart the throes of nature, this natural sense has provided an abundance of humans, for whom the balance between man and nature has possibly been altered.

An afore standing relationship (22) with an insinuation of promiscuity and a promiscuous lifestyle having been lead by Calixta and Alcée becomes the preexisting catalyst for the natural spontaneous reaction about to initiate. Such candid sexual expression from a woman is viewed as wild for this period of time in history: the Victorian Era, although there are examples of such sexual illumination within many cultures and societies of many periods. During the renaissance the *Decameron* by Boccaccio was considered to the erotic in nature. As one goes forward in time the German “Bergroman” is encountered, which are early twentieth century romantic stories

usually set in the Alpine Region. Finally the American romance novel is a type of this erotic literature. Therefore such a story is not extremely unusual, but rather the authors style and description is unique. The immediate indication is that the author reflects upon herself a strong sexual desire, in contrast, however, the reference to the past love-making coming forward emphatically brings with it the sense of having lost a very special lover.

That the wife of Alcée is not present in New Orleans, may represent her dislike of the sexual stigma associated with the town as being loose. One can only speculate here, and the variations are numerous. The wife of Alcée indicates that she is either a frigid woman who does not possess the capacity for sexual pleasures or that she is not in love with her husband. The longing and sexual frustration suffered by Alcée would most certainly have been a factor in his decision to “possess” Calixta once again. This view of the man and woman of the Victorian Era is classic. This prudish view of the late eighteenth century has been taken on by post World War literary critics, but does not necessarily equate to each individual during Victorian times, as shown by this piece of literature.

Healthy release of sexual desire and energy is a part of every man and woman. The societal constraints will not keep the natural sexual urges at bay, but only strengthen the positively working natural passion within mankind. The author has left her personal passions in this work, and should reflect her individual wants, needs, and desires.