

My Lover's Hands [296 words]

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Gerry says this friend of hers is “down from school.” I wonder what that means, exactly.

Is she one of those women's lesbians who, so passionate in their long-winded, theoretical debates on feminism and political correctness, haven't actually been on the front lines like the rest of us, because they've been in school “learning” how to be radical?

Please, I pray, just don't let her be one of those earnest, cigarette-bumming, “*I-don't-like-labels-I'm-just-me*” bisexuals in chino pants and electrical tape-repaired Doc Maartens, with just enough cash for appetizers, but not enough for tax or tip.

Maybe I'm *just* a little jaded.

One of the things I like best about autumn in Manhattan is the line the black trees along Fifth Avenue and the oranges, reds, faded greens of the leaves, still clinging to branches or gathered in machine-blown piles along the street.

As the cab stops at the light at 86th and Fifth, I watch artists setting out their wares along Central Park's stone perimeter—brightly-colored landscapes and muddy abstract oils in cheap frames; alpaca sweaters and macrame bracelets; beaded earrings and silver toe rings—and consider taking the bus back uptown after brunch to shop trinkets and see the new exhibit on 18th Century Fashions at the Met.

It really is a beautiful day, and on days like this, everyone gets up early.

The street fairs and flea markets are crowded with cyclists in spandex shorts and leather jackets, women in winter scarves and summer dresses, thick socks and sandals. The street people are out in force too, casually moving through the crowds singing, chatting, begging. When the cold really sets in, they'll get more aggressive in their panhandling, but on a day like this, it is *Carnivale* and everyone is out to have a good time.