

# Joh. Joachim Winckelmann

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other past-times.» Charlie winked impishly. «So, when the oldest boy was on the way we figured it was time to tie the knot. Really, Captain, she's a great wife. Anyway, one night in bed she got the bright idea that my naked body would bring in money for years yet. And with this,» he grinned again and jerked his thumb unaffectedly at his broad, smooth chest, «you make your best living in queer hangouts. I never even thought of it. Like I say, she's really got a head for business.» Charlie laughed heartily. There was really no evil in him. «My God, Captain, what you can experience in those places would fill volumes if someone would just take the trouble to write it down. Really, no one believes that I'm not gay.» Charlie's face suddenly became serious, and he leaned over and put his hand on Alex's knee. Alex almost winced. «Captain, it's really great to have someone to talk to for a change who's not queer—you don't know what it means to me to have someone like you.»

Alex smiled weakly but sincerely. Great consolation, he thought. Then he happened to think of the old saying about the sea being full of fish. After all, he still had six days to go, and Paris is a big city.

By Christian Graf

Translation: H.H.

## Joh. Joachim Winckelmann

It was Joh. Joachim Winckelmann (1717—1768), tragically murdered by a young Italian at Trieste, who revived in the 18th Century in Germany the classical tradition in art and showed himself one of the best interpreters of the Hellenic world that has ever lived. His letters to his personal friends breathe a spirit of the tenderest and most passionate devotion: «Friendship,» he says, «without love is mere acquaintanceship.» Winckelmann met, in 1763, in Rome, a young nobleman, Reinhold von Berg, to whom he became deeply attached. Almost at first sight there sprang up, on Winckelmann's side, an attachment as romantic, emotional and passionate as love. In a letter to this friend he said, «From the first moment an indescribable attraction towards you, excited by something more than form and feature, caused me to catch an echo of that harmony which passes human understanding and which is the music of the everlasting concord of things. I was aware of the deep consent of our spirits, the instant I saw you.» And in a later letter: «No name by which I might call you would be sweet enough or sufficient for my love; all that I could say would be far too feeble to give utterance to my heart and soul. Truly friendship comes from heaven and was not created by mere human impulses. My one friend, I love you more than any living thing, and time nor chance nor age can ever lessen this love.»

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