

It's Good to be Topless

(Excerpt from The Pink Party by Jane Bissell)

Manon has announced her return to the world in spectacular fashion. She searches for solutions to problems and has come up with one that is simply marvellous.

'Desperate times call for desperate measures,' she said.

Manon is buying a new car. Not just any car.

She wants a brand new, sporty convertible and she calls it her 'breast extension'. Even though she has heard it has potential problems with its retractable roof, she isn't put off and wants it very much.

Manon said the dealer showed her a four door sedan first.

'He said, "This is a practical car", as if I had three kids and a dog. I replied, "You say 'practical' like it's a good thing! I'm going through a mid-life crisis and I don't want practical!" That's when we moved on to convertibles.'

The car is gorgeous and Manon likes it in the neon blue colour.

She has come into some money and thought, what shall I do with it? She has always been into spontaneity and fun. Her spending is well-considered but impulsive enough to guarantee a good time. However, this car is a major spend and even Manon is a little nervous because she has never bought a new car before.

'But you've heard that it's lousy,' I say.

'I want it,' she says.

'Will your golf clubs fit in the back?'

'Just – I have to buy a new bag for them and then they'll fit comfortably.'

'You can't take any back seat passengers – unless they have no legs.'

'Good,' she says.

'It's not very practical,' I say as an ex-courier who likes to haul things about.

'I'm not practical,' she says. 'Cancer isn't practical! Nothing about this life is practical any more.

I want it and that's enough for me.'

There are fewer dollars in the bank but Manon will ride in style. This reminds me of Mom when she said she would spend her last pennies on a bottle of fine perfume so she could at least 'smell expensive'.

The day she picked up the car, she came by my work and collected me at knock-off time.

'This car is sex on wheels!' she said, embracing the gleaming blue sport model with outstretched arms. 'It's drop dead gorgeous and screams out, "Look at me! Look at me!" I feel sexy in this car! It's good to be topless!'

We drove round the waterfront in a splashy and extravagant way, cruising along looking ever so flash in the topless car. It was very cold but we had the heater going like a blast furnace.

Who would know that we high rollers had dinner at our usual restaurant in K. Rd. – Won Ton Soup, five-dollars-fifty a bowl and a pot of tea for a dollar?