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Sibyl James

THE GEOMANCY OF RESTAURANTS

You say there's something about the way this restaurant's been laid out that sucks the clientele in, every other place in Albuquerque empty. It's something special about the corner, the streets converging on the door, diagonals of aisles that meet like ley lines at a well. Could be some ancient Chinese principle of placement, though the menu's pasta and the tape piped into bathrooms teaches Italian, seductive male and female voices trading phrases that advance more like a story's plot than lesson: "to wed," "to hesitate," "to give in." You're wed, we're both hesitating over menus, gunfighters circling the corral in some Spaghetti Western, testing who'll give in first, reach across the cloth and let our skins smoke. It's not a big town, all the waiters and the crowded tables know you. I could love you just because that doesn't hold you back.