

AREI

Seven Women—One Man

ONE

"Did he hurt you?"  
"He destroyed my dreams."

"How's that?"  
"He was unfaithful."

"What did you do?"  
"I waited for him."

"What did he do?"  
"He came back."

"What are you doing now?"  
"Waiting again."

TWO

"Did he hurt you?"  
"Of course not."

"How's that?"  
"He protected me."

"What did you do?"  
"I went about my business."

"What did he do?"  
"I suppose he went about his."

"What are you doing now?"  
"Whatever draws me."

THREE

"Did he hurt you?"  
"He couldn't."

"How's that?"  
"I didn't love him."

"What did you do?"  
"Used him to advance my  
career."

"What did he do?"  
"Thanked me for great sex."

"What are you doing now?"  
"Planning my next career  
move."

FOUR

"Did her hurt you?"  
"He respected me."

"How's that?"  
"We're very much alike."

"What did you do?"  
"Go after what I wanted."

"What did he do?"  
"Win at everything."

"What are you doing now?"  
"Reaching for the best in me."

FIVE

"Did he hurt you?"  
"He hurt my children."

"How's that?"  
"He demeaned them."

"What did you do?"  
"I took the children and left  
him."

"What did he do?"  
"Cried and asked me to come  
back."

"What are you doing now?"  
"Wondering if I should."

SIX

"Did he hurt you?"  
"He confused me."

"How's that?"  
"He was afraid of me."

"What did you do?"  
"I tempted him."

"What did he do?"  
"Stammered and walked  
away."

"What are you doing now?"  
"Making love to someone  
else."

SEVEN

"Did he hurt you?"  
"He seduced me."

"How's that?"  
"I thought he would take care  
of me."

"What did you do?"  
"I gave into him."

"What did he do?"  
"Satisfied himself."

"What are you doing now?"  
"I'm in therapy."

*Arei is a writer who lives in  
Toronto.*