



reading was a phenomenon. She nailed various people in my life: the “sadist” who “should have been cast in Friday the 13th”; the “obsessive-compulsive child” – “Gosh, he’s really bad.” Her eyes bored into me. “It’s a green-light year for you, but no more crazy men!” A 30-minute session starts at £70 (thebritishpsychic.com).

The **Poetry Society of New York’s** Spring Gala erased all memories of romantic trauma. Held at Gramercy Park’s gloriously bohemian Players Club, the night was a black-tie

riot of sonnets, laughter, eccentrics, dancing and champagne. Revellers were handed counters to be traded for poetry. I gave mine to the Poetry Brothel’s founder, Nicholas Adamski (a young Diego Velazquez), who had me swooning against a column as he murmured seductively about rain. A couple began jitterbugging through to the auction room, where a tall Chinese beauty was auctioning the £10,000 scarlet Valentino couture gown once intended for her honeymoon. “Her fiancé did a runner,” I

explained to Q (tickets from £32; thepoetrybrothel.com).

After a romantic midnight supper at NYC’s go-to Parisian bistro, **L’Express**, on Park Avenue (mains from £14; lexpressnyc.com), and before wriggling out of my sequined sheath, I stared at my teeth in the mirror. As I had been force-fed tetracycline for chronic bronchitis in my youth, they had always looked like derelict piano keys at dusk, and my horrible English dentist had made a mess of them. Tomorrow you will no longer be the colour of trout, I promised.

Celebrity dentists Drs Ramin Tabib and Elisa Mello, of **NYC Smile Design**, across the road from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, should be more popular than the Statue of Liberty. Married for 23 years, they revolutionise unruly mouths. Ramin resurfaced my thin tea-coloured enamel, whereupon Elisa expertly bleached it a Farrow & Ball ivory. (“Please not that awful American news-anchor white,” I said. “No offence.”) The result was rapturous – so subtle and beguiling that I had



MAIN PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOUENTIN BACON; EVAN SUNG

### HIP NEIGHBOURHOOD Antonella in New York, and above on the Seaglass Carousel, in Battery Park



to refrain from baring my teeth at strangers like a chimpanzee (treatments from £150; nycsmiledesign.com).

I strode into **Nerai**, New York’s hottest restaurant, near the Museum of Modern Art, ostentatiously grinning. Get a load of my fabulous fangs, I thought. This obsession was overtaken by a new one: chef Moshe Grundman’s haute-cuisine Greek style. “Taste my octopus,” Q suggestively asked. I refused, unwilling to eat anything that could finish a puzzle. My pan-seared salmon was as close to *la petite mort* as a thing with gills can be, at once deliriously moist and crisp.

As the wine director Michael Coll whispered, in a soft Scottish lilt, about the waters of the Faroe Islands washing over the fish, I ordered an exquisitely thick yoghurt drizzled with thyme-infused honey for pudding. Q was in a daze over his scallops. We almost walked into a wall on the way out (prix-fixe lunch £36; nerainyc.com).

This high lasted until the next day, when I entered the Park Avenue rooms of **Dr Lara Devgan**. Readers, beg, borrow or steal for an appointment with this superstar of cosmetic surgery, who, despite looking about 12½, is a classically trained sculptor and mother of six whose clients include the supermodel Bella Hadid.

Lara noted that my face, if not sufficiently weathered to scare horses, required hydration. She recommended

treatments, including the Dr Devgan Scientific Beauty Magnetic Kinetic Mask, an amalgam of improbable ingredients (volcanic charcoal, mineralised iron ore, bumble bee propolis and so on). The effects are beyond wonderful – I left feeling like a movie star and received a ridiculous number of compliments on my skin over the following days (skincare products from £40; laradevganmd.com).

Q and I then headed off to **Johnny Utah’s**, Manhattan’s finest cowboy dive bar. Carved out of a converted bank vault, it is the only true home of gunslingers in the heart of Midtown (johnnyutahs.com). Aptly named for Keanu Reeves’s character in Point Break (“young, dumb and full of” – you get the picture), this pistol-whippin’ bar attracts big-bottomed girls and muscle-bound blow-ins from the Bronx, plays impossibly fun music and features a mechanical bull.

“Gee up,” Q instructed. Heart hammering, I slipped off my heels, waded through the splashed beer on the floor and crawled astride a monstrosity of Minoan proportions. As Toni Basil’s Hey Mickey thundered and the beast began to buck, I screamed in wild delight. It was, I thought, a 21st-century spin on a Bacchanalian rite, with revellers shouting as the mandatory virgin (if a tad long in the bleached tooth) straddled the bull. A tale as old as time: that of rebirth.

I raised my arm in a triumphant cowboy salute, happier than I had felt for years. Divorce? What divorce?

*The writer was a guest of all the people and establishments in bold, as well as the Colour Factory (colorfactory.co) and the Museum of Illusions (museumofillusions.com). Fly to New York with British Airways, Virgin or Iberia. Virgin Holidays has three nights at the Westin New York Times Square from £569pp, including return flights from London (virginholidays.co.uk). For more information, visit nycgo.com*