A Journey to Disgrace

Complete Novel

By
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Part One

Introduction

What you are about to read in the journal below these words of introduction is a story and a testament to the weakness that resides in all men and upon which the female of the species, should she be of a mind, preys to make of us what she will.

Be that something a lover, a husband, a father or a slave.

The story that found its way into my hands during the autumn of 1929 is, I say with little fear of being contradicted, as intriguing as it is repulsive - the latter undoubtedly so - and is also a testament to the presence in our world of unseen, and certainly unsuspected, spiritual and metaphysical phenomenon which, in the wrong hands, can wreak havoc in the lives of others.

I have done my utmost to ascertain the facts behind the journal and its keeper and, to the best of my knowledge, what you will read is, if nothing else, a journal of personal truth revealing one man's destruction as a person of high mind and morals at the hands of a mother and daughter.

A mother and a daughter this writer for one had not suspected could exist outside some of the more outlandish depictions – some of them my own – of the fairer sex.

It will, I am sure, shock you as it has shocked me.

Shocked me so much, in point of fact, that I find it difficult to gaze upon the women who share the same native lineage as this depraved mother and daughter pairing with any degree of equanimity - nonsensical as I know such a generalisation to be in regard of the womanhood of one entire street; let alone a land and a subcontinent.

The journal that is about to confound any preconceptions you may have in respect of an Englishman's natural and God-given superiority – a conceit I myself have paid lip-service to in my past fiction without ever truly believing its substance – came into my hands, aptly enough, during my writing of a short-story with which you may now be familiar titled "The Death Voyage".

My preoccupation with the above tale explains why yet another year saw itself turn before I saw my way clear to send these words, and those of the journal itself to my publisher. A journal that had been handed to and passed on to me in turn by an acquaintance in the Foreign Office during a spell of tenure in the Indian coastal port of Madras – or "Chennai," to give the location its ancient and local name.

Unlike the tale I tell in "The Death Voyage", however, the cruise upon which the keeper of the journal embarked would involve no death of a physical kind.

Of that keeper's pride, spirit, and very manhood, however?

That, is quite another matter and one, moreover, that does not make for easy reading.

It is why I would ask of you who read this, in our more open-minded year of 1930 - and just as our embattled hero will ask himself in the few words with which he introduces his journal - to look deeper than the unavoidable and understandable reaction of horror and disgust his tale, along with the seemingly easy way he succumbed to events we all must find abhorrent, inspire in both our hearts and our minds.

For I must confess that I also found myself, and for long periods of his journal, in a frame of mind that was not disposed to look kindly upon the man. In truth, I was all but on the verge of dismissing him as no more than a poseur of the silver-spoon variety. A man whose own weakness and lack of true masculinity and substance had finally found him out in the shape of two heinous and perverse examples of Indian womanhood.

However, the more I read, and the more I applied thought that was not of the reactive and less analytical kind to the situation in which he found himself and his own response to it, the more I began to question myself and my own preconceptions.

How many of us, after all, can say we know ourselves?

Truly, I mean.

Here, in our blessedly fertile and secure homeland, safe from the horrors of hunger and tyranny that shape so many of those colonies we have tried to bless with a little of what we take for granted, can we truly say that we have confronted anything of either a physical or spiritual nature that has called into question all of those qualities we take as read and believe ourselves to be possessed?

What you will read below, I say with no intention to be a sensationalist but with complete seriousness, will challenge many of those notions we take for granted in respect of the superiority of one gender over the other and one nation over another.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Crowborough
February 1930

The Journal of Denton Burnside

To you, whoever you are, who may be about to read the pages of my journal; be it a man or woman of my own time or the produce of some later and, I hope, more forgiving and understanding age; I give the following warning:

If you are of a timorous or easily shocked temper when it comes to matters of sexual relations between a man and a woman – especially when those relations are disturbing in nature and take place between an adult Englishman and a young Indian girl many years his junior – an Indian girl and her mother, moreover, considered in most circles his social inferior – then you must close this journal, consign it back from whence it came, and not return to it.

Ever.

For I can state with some certainty that what you will find upon its pages is likely to disturb any cosy feelings residing in your breast for either the proper relation of man to woman or that of white to coloured.

The language in which my fall is related will also come as a shock to many of you. But I have no intention of telling my story in any but the language that occurs to me as I write. No flowery prose or unnaturally cosmetic language will attempt to gild a tale that is, anyhow, beyond the help of ornament and, in avoiding this, I trust belief – and perhaps sympathy – may be all the more readily instilled.

This, however uncomfortable I am with process, is my intention.

Should though, from curiosity or simple prurience, you decide to continue with my description of a particular time in my life then I ask only that you keep as much of your mind open as is within your power and to bear in mind the urgings of wise and holy men down the ages on the subject of Christian charity and the failings of others.

This I beg of you.

My fall is not an easy one of which to write and you will understand why when I

describe the humiliations no proud Englishman should have had to endure at the hands of foreigners – and one young foreigner in particular. But I buoy myself to do so in the hope my writing of it and the effort required to commit such a description to paper will be worth it. I say this with a heartfelt prayer that, at some time after my death, the dire nature of my plight and the weakness that led me to it elicits some shred of understanding and, more importantly, compassion in the heart and soul of another.

For now, from my bed in the English Mission to which the daughter and her parent who decimated my life have consigned me, I know once more some small measure of peace and composure; enough at least to complete this journal.
This before the illness of which there is no cure consigns me to an oblivion that no longer seems so troubling and will bring to an end the sixteen years of purest misery I have endured since that fateful first meeting with the two malevolent females.

My consolation in the face of this termination being the certainty that my two Indian tormentors will not be accompanying me on this particular journey to continue taking their sadistic pleasure upon my disgraced and unresisting carcass.

I beg your indulgence.

Denton Burnside
English Mission
Madras
1916

Entry-One

Falling in love and, more especially, lust on a long sea voyage is no difficult feat when one is a single man of eight-and-thirty and in full command of both his looks and his powers. A time when masculine beauty is some years past its first bloom and has taken on the attraction of maturity. Some small compensation, one would think, for the departure of comely if callow youth by the introduction to the world of a wiser and more considered soul.

So much greater my shame then, that I, Denton Burnside, at exactly that age and in full possession of all its many boons, should have allowed myself to be taken to the depths of degradation and…

Profuse apologies.

I rush when I should be considered. So heightened is my sense of ignominy by the knowledge my fall into the pits of personal and sexual despair is about to be immortalised in words for all to see after my death. For you may be sure that it is my intention *none* of those who knew me prior to… *them*… should do so while I live.

Of all the vile indignities that have conspired to decimate my manhood this, by far, would be the hardest to keep countenance under.

So I must begin my story where it truly starts – though I sense the seeds of my downfall were planted in some congenitally weak and atavistic way long before and, indeed, the mother and demon I will shortly describe to you said as much.

For this reason, I go back to those days before the ignominy and tragedy of the White Star Line in the North Atlantic. Some eleven years before the sinking of Mr Ismay's pride and joy took the tarnish from the glory days of the transatlantic liner. A tragic and avoidable event that did so much to detract from the grandeur and opulence available to those fortunate enough to purchase passage at the most rarefied of levels.

The keeper of your journal, you may have divined, having been once of their number.

Once.

At the time of the my voyage and the story of it I am about to relate, I was two years from a seriously ill-advised marriage to a woman whose cunt was no more faithful than her heart and whose words one could trust no more than one could trust the aforementioned epicentre of her womanhood.

A union that had depleted – though not too seriously - the wealth I had inherited from my father and last surviving member of our line other than me. Clement Burnside – or "Sir Clement" as he was popularly known. The old man having been a decorated hero of the Punjab conflict who went on to own a string of factories the length of England. Factories that did so much to supply our great land with confectionary while at the same time, and for those who could afford it, also kept busy the growing number of practitioners following the relatively new and lucrative profession of dentistry.
A pandering to the land's many sweet-tooth's that did not impact upon my father's wealth in any wise whatsoever before he sold his interest and lived extremely comfortably upon the proceeds.

So, at the time of which I write, I was a wealthy man with a broken marriage behind me and an intention to never place myself in such a vulnerable emotional and financial position with a woman again.

Yes, you have it right,

Not just delusional, but a fool into the bargain.

No surprise then that a spell spent shipboard in luxurious surroundings would seem to me, at the time anyway, the ideal way to both pass time in company, if I so wished, and, if I did not, to keep to my stateroom with book or gramophone player until such time as I felt in need of human companionship again.

Thus it was that I found myself upon the SS Horatio on the grandest of my trips thus far.

To Sydney and then Melbourne and any number of exotic locations before and after.

The perfect solution for a man who was a loner by temperament and made more so by the wounds of a disastrous marriage that remained close to the surface still; yet not so

much of the recluse that, from time to time, he would not seek out the temporary companionship of others.

Would, instead, that I had consigned myself to the most frugal and severe of holy orders and been consigned to the coldest and most inhospitable cell.

Yet it all started in a way no different to the beginning of the four or five other similar, if of shorter duration, cruises I had taken since ridding my life, at great expense, of *that* woman.

I will not, throughout this journal dignify the hell's spawn with a name.

For, though I have since been brought low by two versions of her sex even more perfidious, it is to my former wife and her treacherous gash that I must give thanks for sending me on the voyage that prove to be my collision course with disaster.

A voyage, I must say, that started so promisingly.

At least for a few days.

There is, I confess, nothing quite like the departure of a great ocean-going liner from port and I am no more immune to it than others. But, with me at least, the euphoria of waving relatives and friends at quayside – none of whom were, or would ever be, mine I might add – soon gave way to a desire to set myself in a routine and avoid the pitfalls made by others who became *too* involved with their fellow passengers and, consequently, found themselves included in a great many activities and social pursuits they might otherwise have eschewed. A fate from which my natural and habitual taciturnity saved me on many an occasion.

So it was that, in the year of 1899, barely a year before the passing of our beloved and long reigning queen, I found myself upon the SS Horatio as we made headway upon a grey English Channel on route to Le Havre and the Atlantic.

I may add that I for my part had not the faintest intention of becoming involved with another of my wife's sex while on board; though I was – then at least – man enough still to not forswear completely the possibility of meaningless sex.

Should, of course, such an opportunity occur.

But then I could hardly be expected to know of the presence on board of the young Indian woman and her mother who would alter my very existence.

And certainly not for the better.

Padma Choudhary was the young woman's name, and she cannot have been more than nineteen years of age.

Perhaps, and quite conceivably, less; to this day I still cannot be certain.

In fact, I remember her telling me just that when she joined me – uninvited – to promenade the deck. My own name, for the moment, was unknown to her - in an uncharacteristic and ungentlemanly way I had neglected to supply it after finding myself in receipt of her own – and yet she appeared utterly unfazed and led me, despite myself, to pay grudging compliment to her unabashed self-possession. The women and, indeed, the people of the sub-continent had never interested me in the same way as they had my father, you understand, and I could not help but feel a sense of superiority towards them to match what was, I must confess, a feeling of faint contempt.

Hence some of my first, forced and unwilling, words addressed to her:

"It is unusual to find a… A person of your… country… on such a cruise, hmm, Miss Choudhary," I observed rather clumsily, recalling the name she had only just introduced herself with in the nick of time and not a moment before I started stammering.

"You mean an Indian," she said, English transformed by the thickness of what turned out to be the accent of her Madras roots in the Tamil Nadu, the port located on the Coromandel Coast off the Bay of Bengal to which we would arrive at harbour some time into our voyage and where, presumably, she would disembark.

"I suppose I do," I told her, unwilling to be fazed by her forthright look and the piercing brown eyes that held themselves upon mine so fixedly. She was, after all, no more than a young Indian girl. This I clearly remember telling myself.

She was, though, as I was to find to my cost, no *ordinary* young Indian girl and - I would discover this for myself soon enough – had seen in me the very essence of something she had long desired.

In short, and jumping ahead to risk your mockery at this early stage in my journal, she had seen exactly the kind of Englishman her young and perverted thoughts had pictured her owning.

Miss Choudhary, it must be said – even if it does make my later behaviour still more inexplicable – was not as beautiful as she was young, though it must also be said there was a bloom of ideal health upon her perfect skin and she had a wealth of lovely and wondrously dark hair that drowned a pair of delicately shaped ears seemingly out of keeping with facial features more… *rural*… than classical.

Was it, I almost hear you asking, that I sensed a young admirer and was, given the needs a man of my age is seldom able to gainsay when they come upon him, already planning to take my wicked way with her – native of a country and continent for

which I had precious little time or not?

You may content yourself that nothing could have been further from my thoughts and any thoughts of wickedness were winging their way *to* me, rather than *from*.

In truth, and at that moment, I wished nothing more than for the girl to take off for other, more interesting, diversions and spare me the glances of the other well-heeled – and English – passengers, some of whom seemed fairly scandalised by what was after all no more than an innocent conversation.

On my part.

Even if it was being held with a girl half my years wearing the costume native to her land

Suffice it to say, that by the time I had pleaded a headache – looking back I see now that even at this early stage I was acutely and inexplicably uncomfortable in the girl's company – and taken off for my cabin, I was already promising myself to avoid the girl's presence whenever possible.

Did I believe my falsehood would save me from any further unwelcome encounters with our unlikely passenger?

No, of course not.

We were to be at sea together for a good deal of time and I was not so credulous I could believe there would not be other… *meetings*.

Even if I would most certainly not be seeking them out.

Though I was of the hope that she would find someone else to engage her unwelcome attentions while I was absent and, thus, take the heat from me.

As it turned out, Miss Choudhary was not the only Indian lady on-board.

Though she was, along with her mother, the only one under the age of forty.

And, married or not, the English variety of female passenger was *not* of a kind to elicit a genuine pleasantry from a cove, let alone lust.

The Choudhary matriarch, however, was a bird of a quite different plumage and her striking looks and lithe elegant form in her sari and silken adornments made it hard to believe the same self-possessed young girl who had engaged me, a perfect stranger, in conversation could have been delivered of those same loins.

I put her at around my age, though she would turn out to be three years younger and,

in proving so, confirm me in my dislike of a country that could see nothing wrong in a woman, or in this case and at the time of delivery, *girl*, giving birth at such a young age. She was, I must confess, and despite my aforementioned distaste for her race and culture, the only female passenger of physical distinction on board. Her name, I would discover later, was Nirupa. But it would not be long before it struck me that her striking looks were no more than the snare by which the praying mantis lures in its victim before snapping shut the trap behind it and depriving it of freedom.

Forever.

A freedom it would then proceed to entrust to another while…

Again, I leap ahead of myself and attempt to describe my fate before the correct ordering of the events leading to it.

I ask your forbearance.

Mrs Choudhary, it soon became apparent, treated her daughter with great indulgence and was oblivious to the disdain of the other passengers; passengers who not only resented the fact that one of her race and colour could be in possession of money enough to travel in the same exalted company as them but that the shipping line would deign to allow the duo on board in any class other than steerage.

Was I of the same opinion, I hear you, whoever *you* may be, ask?

To answer, I would again refer you to my aforementioned distaste for the native land of both mother and daughter. Though I would defend what some might in these more tolerant days see as *"elitism"* by saying the land and the privileged position into which I was born, notwithstanding my father's passion for the sub-continent, could *only* have made me feel such a way. To be at my Public School, after all, was to be certain that we were the chosen few of God's favoured nation and that the natives of other, more faraway and less fancied, lands were not.

Told a certain something for long enough and not hearing it questioned, it can hardly be surprising that certain types come to believe that *certain something* as gospel. It is, I see now, a conditioning by elites upon those of their number designed to maintain a certain… *distance*.
A distance from both the great unwashed, if economically useful, of their own land and the barbarous and godless and, to my mind, utterly useless of others.

So, in answer to your question as to whether I viewed our passengers from Madras with disdain, the answer would be:

Yes.

It is, however, a disdain which was soon turned upon its head with a vengeance and

began with a remark to me by Mrs Choudhary after she – as self-possessed and heedless of my displeasure as her daughter – seated herself next to me on the empty sun-deck as most of our fellow passengers, along with her daughter I assumed, gorged themselves at lunch.

It is a moment to which my thoughts constantly return and the moment I see as being the start of my demise.

A moment that came just over a week into our voyage.

I had set myself down in the pleasant midday sun to enjoy the privacy of the sun-deck, assured of my own company by the presence of my fellow passengers at lunch, and had already immersed myself in one of the many books I had taken with me for just such a purpose, when the mother, oblivious or uncaring that she might be intruding, seated herself in the lounger opposite and necessitated out of simple good manners that I acknowledge her presence.

In my impatience to return to the fictional adventures of the book's hero, I was paying only minimal attention to the woman's words as she showed, what was in my view, a complete lack of self-awareness and dismissal of my obvious requirement for privacy. But, from that which I took in of what she was saying, her presence aboard, and that of her daughter, was explained by their having had to travel to England upon the death of her sister. A sister who had married an English merchant with a trade connection in Madras and returned with him to his own country; to be greeted, no doubt, by the shunning and opprobrium most people of my land reserved for the participants in a *mixed* marriage.

The merchant, it transpired had passed away some months before the sister and, his wealth having passed to her, now passed in turn to her sister who had remained behind in Madras with her daughter, explaining the duo's presence in England in order to claim it.

One small mystery, at least , had been explained.

But it was after a pause, of which I had taken advantage to again bury myself in the book, that she uttered the words I see as the start of my descent:

"Tell me, Mr Burnside," she began, eyes that were replicated in the daughter, even if her striking and finely wrought features were not, holding mine with a confidence I found… *disturbing*, "do you find the women of my country sexually attractive?"

My perusal of the adventures of Tristram Shandy were not so much forgotten as consigned to the planking of the deck as the shock inspired by her words caused it to slip from my hand to land with a resounding thump.

"Oh, come now," she went on in that same heavily accented English displayed by her

daughter, vocabulary impressive for all that. “You are a grown man and we are alone. Surely you are not so stuffy you will deny that you have been looking at me with three eyes from the moment my Padma introduced us.”

My mouth, I confess, was catching flies at this out of the blue and, believe it or not, unwanted tete-a-tete with the girl’s mother. Truly, my one intention at that moment was to simply show her my disgust by retrieving the fallen Laurence Sterne and leaving. Allowing the woman to consider her faux pas and the opprobrium - *more* opprobrium - it would bring down upon her should I choose to inform our fellow voyagers of her… *lewdness*.

Despite the fact she was not entirely correct and my observations of her had *not* been made with three eyes but were no more than a simple and detached acknowledgment of female beauty – no matter from whence it came – I found, for some reason, that, movement was impossible.

Her eyes had me transfixed.

I was, it seemed, unable to move a muscle, let alone retrieve my book and head away in haughty fashion.

Unable to move a muscle apart from one, that is.

My cock, I realised with a thrill that both energised my libido and repulsed my sentiments at one and the same time, was nothing short of one of the steel girders I had seen being hoisted into position not so long ago during the building of the Hotel Russell across the way from my town-house in London’s Russell Square.

I was horrified *and*, I confess, elated.

Conflicting responses of which the Indian virago with the striking looks opposite was all too aware.

“Yes,” she went on with complete confidence it seemed that her magnificent and compelling eyes could overmaster me, keeping my person in position to hear what she wished to say in the process. “I sense that third eye staring at me right now.”

Man of the world that I was, I believe I blushed and the somewhat contemptuous laugh won from her by my colouring was not likely to relive my high dudgeon any time soon.

“I have offended your sense of propriety,” she said with that command of vocabulary, if not accent, I found so impressive in one of her… *standing*.

Wanting to answer in the affirmative, and add a whole lot more besides, I found myself so overcome with sudden lust for this brown-skinned devil in female form that

all I could do was picture what I knew would be a firm and womanly body beneath her sari and how it would feel to…

"You wonder how it would be if I were to allow your third-eye a closer inspection of my luscious Indian cunt until the moistness it finds on the inside blurs its vision in the same way as it currently blurs your mind and its thoughts."

Her interruption of my thoughts was *not* framed as a question and I felt truly like the rabbit in the presence of a seductive and hypnotic reptile.

You may believe me when I tell you the ridiculous sensation that the exotic woman opposite might devour me at any second did not seem so fanciful to me in the flesh as I persuaded myself it was later once back in the sanctuary of my cabin.

Never, to that point, had I been spoken to by a woman in such a fashion.

Not even by the Piccadilly Tom my father had Jenkins, our family retainer, take me to visit that I may become a man at the age of sixteen.

Though I had felt it best to keep my own counsel at the time and not let pater know my manhood had been kick-started a year or two before by a delightful young girl from the village adjoining my school.

"Does it not thrill you to have a beautiful Indian woman, even if you consider yourself superior to her," she went on, "speak to you in such a fashion."

I could not even so much as shake my head to refute her suggestion, so supine had I been made from the sheer shock of being addressed in such a way.

And by such a one.

"To have her… *lead*… you," she continued, "in such a forthright and commanding way?"

Her words, you may be sure, and as well as shocking me, appalled both my intelligence and my sentiments. They were words I considered no civilised man of taste and bearing should ever hear from the lips of a woman. No matter that she came from a culture and civilisation my own background ensured I would find… *backward*.

And yet…

Why was I not moving?

Why was I remaining in place to listen to her… *filth*… when all I needed to do to pre-empt it was rise from my sun-lounger and repair to my cabin?

Why, more crucially, was my cock harder in the prison of recently purchased Simpson's trousers and under-garments than at any time in my life to that point?
For the first time, I *really* looked at her and, despite my disgust for the boldness and impropriety of her language, could do no more than confess to myself that she was indeed a beautiful example of sub-continent womanhood. I had admitted as much to myself before, of course, but now other impressions were crowding in upon me as I sat immobile and suffered her filth in silence. The finely wrought features below magnificent eyes, perched upon a neck swan-like in its elegance and grace, were now, I saw, debased by full lips that were at once sensual and disdainful. The eyes I had on more than one occasion told myself were compelling and alluring – if one's tastes ran to women of her colour and type – struck me for the first time as being twin looking-glasses down which I could peer into a soul that was…

Evil.

To this day I have no idea how our tete-a-tete upon the promenade deck of the SS Horatio would have ended had she remained seated opposite me any longer.

Though I do know what happened when Padma Choudhary returned from lunch, at the table for two assigned to herself and her mother in an isolated corner of the dining-salon, and informed her she would like to take some turns around the deck.

The eyes of both mother and daughter had been… *knowing*… as they had left and I could only pray, at least at the time, that this knowingness had no bearing upon my discovery, not moments after their leaving.

I had made an emission into my trousers.

Entry-Two

After my experience upon the sun deck and its disgraceful denouement – for me, anyway – I promised myself, and with no small venom in the intent, to shun all further contact with both mother and daughter.

No need to say, life being nothing if not playful verging on the vindictive when it comes to the self-made promises and resolutions of men, that I seemed unable to avoid their presence – no matter how hard I tried.

Strangely enough, it was the daughter I came more in contact with and, though it was not my ideal preference, she at least would have no idea of what had passed between myself and her mother. Even if I suspected there was a… *knowingness*… in the young girl's expression. A suspicion I immediately shrugged off as being as repugnant as it was ludicrous.

There was surely no mother breathing who would confide her own scandalous behaviour to her own offspring.

Was there?

I know now that such was exactly the case and, far from hiding her treatment of me to her daughter, Nirupa Choudhary had positively crowed to the young girl as she described the effect she had managed to have on the *"handsome English gentleman"* and his inability to do nothing more than sit with mesmerized fascination as she spoke such filthy words to him.

My only consolation was that neither of the two could have any knowledge of the disgraceful event that occurred within the confines of my new Simpson's trousers after they had both left.

Now, when I write of Padma Choudhary, I am like, in the same way for which apologies have already been made, to let my pen outrun my tale. I lay the pen down, and a hundred of her demeaning and inhuman comments ring in my ears along with those of her mother's. Accompanied with images in which no self-respecting man should see himself depicted and *always* by the surprise and sheer gut churning humiliation that I, Denton Burnside, could have been brought so low by such creatures. A myriad visions of such a kind scud upon the back of my eyelids whenever I close my eyes and you will not be surprised that shame – and the desire heightening

that feeling – accompanies them. Visions I - never a religious man particularly, and certainly not of the Holy Roman kind - would like to have repented of in the hallowed and cleansing surroundings of a church.

Had I not been expressly forbidden from so doing.

Forbidden, moreover, by a young Indian girl and her mother whose authority over me would once have been as unthinkable as it would have been uproariously risible to the man I considered myself to be at one time.

But again, and as mentioned, I rush ahead of myself.

Suffice it to say that, in the days following the shameful incident and my seeming inability to avoid mother and *especially* daughter, I kept pretty much to my cabin. Even my meals and other refreshments I had delivered to me in the hope of avoiding these subcontinent blights upon a trip I had undertaken in, relatively, good spirits. A sad thing for a gentleman to have to do after having paid good money for the pleasure of a sea cruise, you might be thinking, but it was not such an onerous commitment given the numerous books and gramophone records, mostly recordings of favourites from the baroque era, I had taken pains to have with me and the private space outside my cabin from which I could take the air and have my own thoughts.

It was a successful undertaking and I was pleased with my cleverness in avoiding demonic parent and forward offspring, as well as the possibility of an ugly scene should the mother's earlier behaviour find itself repeated.

Or at least it *had* been successful.

Until *that* night.

The third of my self-imposed and temporary, I believed, exile from shipboard life.

I had taken to walking laps of the promenade deck in the small hours when my fellow passengers were sound asleep and found it pleasing to stroll the decking completely alone with only a canopy of stars above and the reassuringly constant sound of the bow as it cut through those benign ocean waters that had been calm from the very moment of our departure.

On this particular evening, the third of my five tours had been made when, deep in thoughts I cannot recall, a voice startled me.

Her voice.

"Mr Burnside, how delicious to see you again."

As embarrassing as it is to admit, I confess I jumped with no less hysteria than a

startled cat at her sarcastic and, it seemed to me, sinister *"delicious"* before turning to my unwanted promenader.

A promenader who was doing no such thing but was seated in a lounger in her habitual white sari, the diaphanous adornments with which she decorated the plain and unremarkable native garment swirling in the light breeze accompanying yet another balmy night. Her feet, slender and shapely in diamante sandals, nails painted a… *carnivorous*… red, seemed bathed in a most unholy glow and, for some reason, it was to these lower extremities that my eyes kept flickering as I strived for a suitable response.

The flickering of my eyes and the direction in which they were aimed not going unmissed.

"Really, Mr Burnside, there is no need to steal sly glances at my delicate feet from a distance when you can see them at closer quarters."

I was struggling, a cod out of water, for a cutting rejoinder, when she went on:

"Just this once, I will even allow you to sit in the lounger next to me as you do so."

Her words baffled me at the time and it would not be until later that I would fully understand their meaning and what the implication behind them meant for me.

It was with some effort that I found words, as amazed as I was chagrined at my inability to act with manly decisiveness in the presence of a woman I described to myself as an *"Indian whore"*.

But attempting to do so nonetheless:

"Madam, I have been a witness to your reprehensible behaviour at close-quarters once already and have no desire to see the process repeated."

If my frosty, albeit icy cold, words had fazed her she was at great pains not to show it.

"Mr Burnside," she began, the thickly accented English, no matter how correct and concise her wording, demeaning and mocking me for some reason, "I can hardly be called to account because your cock cannot control itself around me."

"My…?"

Again I was on the backfoot, nothing in my upbringing or my expectation of womanly behaviour preparing me for the forthright and thoroughly unselfconscious way she spoke of matters most of her sex with some small sense of decorum would choose tuberculosis rather than utter.

“That is what I said, Mr Burnside.” Her compelling and insidious eyes lowered to the front of my trousers and, with a thrill of horror, I realised yet again that I was in a condition of some considerable rut. “Or do you deny that unseemly bulge and the third eye that strains at the leash in order to make… *closer*… acquaintance with me?”

“I… I…”

“Sit next to me, Mr Burnside,” she said in a seductively gentle voice that I sensed, just the same, was anything but.

My feet, those same treacherous limbs that would not allow me to escape her presence, were suddenly moving towards her without, it seemed to me, my having willed the action.

“There, is that not more comfortable for you?” she said when I was perched upright upon the edge of the lounger next to her.

But it was her next words that took my breath away:
“Now you may look at my pretty Indian feet until your heart is content.”

So great was my shock – not so much at her offer but at my reaction to it – that I do believe I actually stopped breathing.

She wanted me to look at…

Her feet!

And, as the good Lord is my witness, I found myself wanting to do so without, it must be said - having *never* paid such utilitarian human accoutrements much attention in the past - knowing why in the slightest.

Apart, that is, from a raging at the groin that seemed even more marked on this occasion with me not a foot or so from her person.

A *raging* the offer to look at her *“pretty Indian feet”* did nothing to lessen.

Quite the contrary, in fact.

“Yes, that is it,” she said as my head, again without my seeming to have ordered it, lowered that my eyes might take in the sight of one high arched foot in its diamante strapped sandal and toes with painted nails I found myself describing to my thoughts as…

“Exquisite!”

Her voice had taken on a soothing quality that was both metronome-like and soporific

and I was aware that my eyelids were drooping and…

Entry-Three

“Ah, you are awake.”

The gentleman looking down at me had a face ovoid in nature and was, at first glance reassuringly avuncular – and would have been all the more so had I possessed the slightest clue as to why he was leaning over my bed in the privacy of my own cabin.

“Dr Mendip,” he told me, grey-green eyes scanning mine carefully. “I’ve been looking after you since your episode.”

“My… episode?”

“That’s right, Mr Burnside. Seems you took something of a turn while strolling the deck.”

My thoughts raced. I felt a little groggy, that was for sure, but that was the norm for me of a morning and, other than that, I could just as well have been waking to the gentle urgings of my steward with breakfast.

So why could I not remember the *“episode”* of which *“Dr Mendip”* spoke?

I would soon enough.

“Always wise to have someone to hand when promenading at such a late hour, the

man who I took, obviously, to be the ship's medicine-man, told me, somewhat bafflingly.

"Had you taken a turn near the rail and ship given a lurch, who knows what could have happened," he said with a fatalistic shrug.

I racked my mind and nothing came.

Would that it had stayed that way.

"As it turned out, your episode happened while you were close to the steamer-chairs and Mrs Choudhary was able to assist you into one before you lost consciousness.

I must have turned even greener than I felt as his mention of the woman's name, almost as if I had been programmed to react to its utterance, released full recall of that night.

The doctor's own face was full of concern too for what he no doubt took as the onset of yet another *"episode"* and his hand reached out to check my brow before he lifted a tumbler of water to my lips.

"You're probably a little dehydrated still, so take small sips to begin, Mr Burnside," he urged, bringing the tumbler close to my lips as, feeling unaccountably thirsty and underlining his observation, I did as he advised.

"Better?" he asked.

"No!" I wanted to scream. *"I am not better. In fact, I have never felt so appalling in my life."*

But then, how could he have guessed at, or understood had he been able, the image dominating my thoughts at that moment.

That image being one of myself kneeling upon the deck of the SS Horatio with head lowered, lips attached to the toes of an Indian woman as she spoke into my ear words I could not recall but sensed I remembered in some deep recess of my soul.

I prayed that I was imagining such an incident and that, just as the doctor said, I had been the victim of some *"episode"* or other and the image of myself making what appeared to be an act of obeisance towards that odious woman was no more than a simple hallucination brought on by a fever of some kind.

Even as I put forward such a hope to myself, I knew with certainty that it would not turn out to be the case.

"Mrs Choudhary has been very concerned about you," the doctor went on when he

appeared satisfied the water had worked its magic and my latest crisis had passed. "Between her and young Miss Choudhary you have not been left unattended since your… incident."

My thoughts screamed.

They had been here! In my room. *Alone* with me.

Somehow sensing that such… *attention*… was not healthy for me, I was about to ask how long I had been in need of their attentions when the doctor provided an answer for me:

"They would not hear of anyone else taking care of you and it was only at my insistence that they left the ship in the tender to go into Aqaba for some well-earned recreation.

At first I thought I must have misheard.

"Aqaba?"

"Did you say…?" I began, the necessity to finish my sentence pre-empted

"That's correct, Mr Burnside. We arrived in Aqaba early this morning."

"Then… I've…?"

"Been unconscious for two days."

My face must have paled – paled further anyway – because he went on:
"I was going to have you taken from the ship to seek treatment on land but… Well… medical science is not what you would describe as *'advanced'* in this neck of the woods and I am not so sure the treatment you would be in receipt of would prove… beneficial."

Two days!

How could this have happened?

One second I was talking this whore of an Indian she-bitch and the next…

The image of me upon all fours with my lips pressed to her toes crashed in upon me once again and, this time, I could have sworn it came complete with the jasmine and slightly sweaty odor of the foot itself.

Even in my somewhat disturbed condition, I scoffed at myself for giving such an impossibility house-room in my thoughts.

Just the same, I sipped from the tumbler still held in the doctors hand greedily; desperately, in fact, as if I believed the simple provision of liquid sustenance could banish the image and accompanying impossible thought from my memory.

“Mother and daughter seem unusually concerned about you, Mr Burnside,” the doctor had gone on, oblivious to what I was thinking but aware, perhaps, of something not quite right, and I knew instantly that he was fishing for information regarding the relationship I had with this unlikely pairing; no doubt to relay it to officers and passengers alike as a somewhat *“scandalous”* talking point over bridge and cocktails.

I wanted to scream at him that their *“concern”* had nothing whatsoever in common with decency and fellow-feeling but was based on more than a simple desire to humiliate a man from a land that had subjugated their own and who, no doubt, looked down upon them as if they were inferior – even if that man wold never be so ungentlemanly and discourteous to voice such a sentiment.

I also wanted to tell him that I wished no further visits from either and felt well enough to fare for myself if only he could prevail upon the steward to deliver *all* my meals and refreshments to my room from then on. Madras, I knew was over a month away, but no matter. It was my intention to keep to my room – to barricade it if necessary – if it meant keeping mother and daughter at bay.

How much more my anguish when I attempted to do just that and found myself incapable of doing so.

“In fact,” my somewhat inquisitive quack had continued, still in fishing mode, “Mrs Choudhary said that if you regained consciousness while she was ashore I was to ask you if you wished her to visit you later this evening?”

The rotund man’s eyes were fairly alive with greedy prurience as he sensed I was about to tell him this was the very last thing on earth I wanted.

Prurience that turned to mild surprise when, in complete contradiction of the expression the relayed words of Mrs Choudhary had wrought upon my features, I answered, and with greater shock than his own; expression continuing to contradict my words:

“I would be grateful, Doctor, if you would thank Mrs Choudhary for both her efforts and those of her daughter on my behalf and explain to the lady that I should be delighted to have her visit me this evening.”

The words had come from Lord knows where inside me but the compulsion to say them had been so overwhelming that the effort I had expended trying to prevent myself from saying it sent my head flopping back to the pillow.

The last thing I saw before I drifted back to sleep was the puzzled and prurient face of the doctor as he tried to make sense of the disparity between my words and my expression.

My last conscious thought before merciful Morpheus again took me, however, was Mrs Choudhary telling me that my fall from grace was well and truly sealed and that my life now belonged to her.

And not just her.

The thickly accented voice in my head accompanying me to sleep had a case to make for the daughter also.

Entry-Four

My breathing was becoming more and more ragged, and each time I inhaled I was reminded of the aroma of her…

She had been in my cabin when I awoke and had actually spooned me some hot soup and broken of bits of bread and fed me with them by hand.

“Be good,” she had warned when I attempted to turn my head from the humiliation of

being fed in the way an owner might feed a pet.

It was her next statement that chilled me to the core of my being, however:

“Unless, that is, you wish me to order you to walk naked into the dining-salon that all your fellow passengers may see that pitiful excuse for an English cock no woman would countenance unless it were on the body of a servant.”

It was not, I now knew, an idle threat and, with the humiliation and social death that awaited me should I disobey her prominent in my thoughts, I allowed her to feed me bread by hand as if I were of no more worth than a pet spaniel.

Though I was not to know it yet, my tormentor and her daughter had a position in mind for me far lower.

“From now on,” she began, “whenever you wish to speak with either myself or Miss Padma you will be expected to ask permission.”

My eyes widened with outrage, but also fear; knowing as I now did that in some way or another, and I knew not how, this woman had gained such a hold of my will I would be able to do nothing but obey should she insist upon such a humbling in front of my peers.

“Miss Padma?”

She had sensed my thoughts:

“Yes, that is right, Burnside,” she said, smile evil incarnate as she used my surname without bothering to prefix it with a *‘Mr’*, endowing it in the process with a finger-snapping imperative such as a particularly boorish and insensitive master used with a servant that master was assured would have no choice but to obey. “You will do this no matter *who* is present. And with *respect?*”

Placing the soup bowl and the bread to the side, feeding time at the zoo over, she held my eyes with her own and for the first time I felt truly afraid of her and of what she was capable. Without my knowing how she had done it, she had contrived to not only get inside my head but to place herself there in a position of complete command. I could no more disobey her, it seemed, than I stop the sun rising and setting.

“Have you something you wish to say to me now?” she asked, certain that I would. How could I, or anyone in such a position, not?

I nodded.

Her response?

She slapped my face.

I, Denton Burnside, English gentleman and Public School educated, heir to a fortune, had just been slapped as if I were an errant child or, worse, some indentured creature with no redress in the face of such treatment.

And by a woman – an admittedly beautiful woman; even if my thoughts on that subject were undergoing a transformation – from a sub-standard, subcontinent, colony I had looked down upon and, *now*, despised.

"You do not nod as if you are a dumb animal," she warned, adding: "though I could soon have you behaving in just such a way if that is your choice."

I could feel the imprint of her hand on my cheek as I lay back upon my berth and seethed with impotent fury, wanting nothing more than to pitch the Madras whore's body over the side of the ship that it may find itself once again in its benighted homeland by way of a less traditional and comfortable route.

"You must say, *'permission to speak, Madame'*," she told me. "Try it now."

Having tried to speak in her presence and having found myself at a complete loss to do so, I was certain now that only by conceding to her demand would I be able to do so now.

And, naturally under the circumstances, there was quite a lot I wished to say.

Her order to: *"Try it now,"* seemed, almost, to have unlocked some mechanism she had attached to my vocal chords and I felt the power of speech – at least in her presence – returned to me.

"P-Permission to speak, hmm, Madame?" I heard an unrecognisable voice I knew to be mine ask and a smile light up the face of the Indian woman of whom I was forced to make the request.

"Yes, Burnside," she conceded, queenly despite her thickly accented English; a demon-queen, "you may speak but be very careful to keep your tone and your words respectful."

"Why?" I asked simply.

There was no prevarication and no apparent thought process behind a response that was as instant as it was emphatic:

"Because you are a weak man and have no defence against either myself or my daughter," she answered. Because your English logic and sense of superiority makes no allowance for the less… worldly… and more mystical cultures such as ours and

can, therefore, have no understanding of that over which it believes itself elevated."

"But…"

"Were you not weak in the way I have described you then we would not be having this conversation and your life would not now belong to myself and my daughter."

"Mrs Choudhary, you surely…"

Another slap rocked my head back.

"Madame," she hissed in reminder. "You have been told. Do *not* forget again."

Wanting only to snuff out her life at that point but knowing I had no alternative but to try and win some respite for myself with some kind of appeal to a rational side of the woman I was not all sure existed, I swallowed both anger and manly pride and did as she asked:

"Madame, difference in cultures or not, you surely must see that what you are doing is physically, spiritually and morally wrong. I am a free man who, up until a few days ago, had met neither yourself nor your daughter and had certainly caused you, nor intended to cause either of you any harm. Why on earth would you take against me in such a way that you allow whatever it is that enables you to do so to behave towards me in such a fashion?"

"As it goes with country so must it go with the individual."

"You lose me," I said, catching her look of displeasure in time to add a faltering: "M-Madame."

"Did mother India cause England any harm, or intend to cause it to her?"

"Well…"

"No. It did not. But that did not prevent your country, simply from military strength and the greed of individuals for my country's wealth, from putting us under your yoke and plundering the riches of our temples and the land surrounding them."

"But… Madame," I protested. "What have I to do with such things that you would treat me in such a way?"

"Nothing," she agreed. "Precisely nothing. As much, in fact, as you have to do with the fate I intend for you and which great Kali has brought to pass."

I was lost at this point, knowing Kali was one of the many Indian deities but having no idea what possible connection she could have to me and, more worryingly, this

"fate" her unhinged follower seated upon my bed had in mind for me.
"It is your very weakness – a weakness under which no Indian man labours, and not *every* man of your race, that seals your fate. It is that weakness and lack of real manhood in the face of my superior female strength of will and purpose – much the same as the lacking manhood in my greatly missed sister's late husband – that made you susceptible to what were once my suggestions and which you must now obey as commands."

"But…"

"Enough!" she cried. "You no longer have your master's permission to speak."

"Master?" I was on the point of exclaiming with outrage, only to find the word could not be forced past my lips and so great was the hold this she-demon had managed to take on my sub-conscious I could only *consider* her lese majeste within the hermetically sealed world of my head.

"It is time I underlined your enslavement to myself and my daughter with actions rather than words. You had a small taste of your inability to refuse either of us anything not two evenings ago, but now I shall underline your position in our household in a more forthright and lasting way than simply having you on all fours with your lips on my toes."

Unable to quite believe my eyes and still in some considerable shock that I could be experiencing something from the pages of one of the exotic and terrifying Algernon Swinburne romances with which I had always been so taken, I watched as the Indian woman, the same woman who had just told me in all serious that she owned me and that she, along with her daughter, was my master, rose from the bed and raised the hem of her sari to reveal, first, a pair of shapely dark brown calves and then the twin columns of smooth and unblemished thighs before raising the garment further to reveal a slit that, for the first time in my experience, had been denuded of pubic hair and appeared as pristine as any vagina that had undergone the delivery of a child had a right.

Naked under the cotton sheet in the sweltering heat of North Africa, I felt my manhood stir in spite of the deep concern I had for myself and this woman's growing power over my will.

The sheet was ripped from my body and my cock, a rod of iron as it headed for the cabin's ceiling, sprang upwards.

"That is exactly as it should be," my tormentor said with a smile that did not beautify her features in my eyes any the more. "A slave must desire his female master. Not to do so is disrespectful and worthy of punishment."

I had, and have, no idea of what was happening to me, but her use of the terms

"slave" and *"female master"* sent a most perverse and unholy thrill the length of my spine that urged my already engorged manhood to greater efforts in its attempt to reach the ceiling.

Having always been a man of command and with strict views of the natural superiority of man over woman and the roles that with it, I was suddenly in a position where a woman had complete control of me.

A woman, moreover, who was of a race and from a land I had long considered substandard.

So why, when this Indian demon slung a leg over my head and came to rest upon my head with hairless cunt attempting to seal my lips and, it seemed, suffocate me, did something inside me sing with the joy of submission to her?

It was not a question I was given long to ponder – and my reaction would be one I would make many attempts to rationalise at a later date – as she shifted position atop me and reached down to wrap an elegant brown hand around my stiff rod.

As I sighed into the folds of her labia, the aroma of her urine pungent in my nostrils and, amazingly, heightening my sexual fever, I felt her begin to slowly stroke my cock with a loose, almost feather-like, grip.

"Now you will begin to understand the pleasure your Indian masters can fetch you should you prove utterly obedient and pleasing," came the muffled sound of her voice as her thighs held the sides of my head in a vice-like grip.

The laughter that followed was not friendly as she added:

"Not that you have the choice of being anything but."

She continued to slide her hand slowly up and down my shaft and I knew I would not last much longer, so great were these new and utterly humiliating sensations I was both experiencing and giving submission to. I could not recall having ever been in such a heightened condition of sexual rut in my life. As she stroked I could hear only the sound of my own torturous breathing against her slick mound and the up and sound motion of her hand on my flesh as I thrust up wards to meet it.

It was as she sensed me getting close that she placed her legs out straight and my face, the nose in particular, was brought into direct contact – humiliation of all humiliations – with the ring of her anus.

And still, effortlessly dominated, and with the smell of her arousal, her urine, and the earthier smell of her arse itself in my nostrils I was excited to the point of delirium.

Then, of nowhere, my body jerked involuntarily.

“That is my good boy,” I heard her muffled tones through my debased euphoria. “Spurt your useless English seed upon my superior Indian foot.”

Long past rational thought by that point and without caring why she would wish me to do such a thing, I felt first jet of milky white fluid exit my throbbing member to be followed by burst after burst as I shot my load with an intensity I had never thought to experience – and certainly not under such ignominious conditions.
Just when I thought I would spurt forever, the pulsing subsided and I felt her release her hold of me.

Raising her brown arse and sliding from the bed she raised the foot upon which I had just deposited my seed and reached out to take me by the jaw.

Looking into my eyes that were both pleading and horrified, she placed a cum covered toe inside my unresisting mouth and ordered me to suck it.

Unable to believe I was doing what I was doing I was still able, through my disbelief, to take in her next words and the full horror of them for a confirmed lady’s man such as myself.

“Disappoint us when you are taken to our home in Madras and it will not be just your own seed you will be forced to swallow.”

Part Two

Entry-Five

My eyes opened the following morning to Bennett, my steward, drawing back the curtains to allow the rays of the sun to stream into the cabin as the ship continued its southward passage from the ancient port of Aqaba.

“Sleep well, Sir?” came the inquiry that was habitual to him and barely required a response, so routine was his uttering of it, this as he placed the breakfast tray across my lap and I took in without enthusiasm – and no small puzzlement - the one boiled egg and some meagre slices of toast it contained.

“Mrs Choudhary’s orders, Sir,” my chirpy seaborne valet and general factotum informed me, the name bringing with it a full recall of the events of the preceding night; events I was praying I would wake to find no more than a particularly dispiriting and degenerate dream. “Says you’re not to have solids till you’re more yourself. So no bacon, eggs and sausage this morning.”

The man was in his mid-forties and hailed from Dagenham. So much had I gleaned from his desire to inform me of his life to date; along with the wife who wanted him to find another line of work and acquaint himself more fully with the three young boys he had been interested enough to sire. An interest, it appeared, that not gone so deep he wished to be around too often as they were being raised.

He was his usual dapper and cheery self and it was all I could do not to take his head off with a volley of abuse intended to make him shut up, the life restoring rays of sunshine normally guaranteed to instil a sense of optimism in me ruined by his mentioning… *her*… name.

And, if dropping that into my breakfast had not been enough, his next words almost added physical violence to my verbal intent:

“She’s something of a saint for an Indian lady, if I might be so bold, Mr Burnside,” he told me as he whisked off the head of the egg with deft and effortless aplomb and I considered repeating the process with a decapitation of his own and the mouth it contained.

“You think so?” I asked, marvelling at how he could miss the sarcasm in my voice and plough straight on with his eulogy on behalf of the most foul and perfidious woman I had yet to come across and could surely expect not to encounter worse.

In this I include the ex-wife I detest so much who, while I accept she is no more than a dilettante in the black arts of treachery and deceit in comparison to the harpies who had entered my life, could be blamed for pointing me towards the escape of the sea and the hell to which fate appeared intent upon delivering me.

I had been about to give him instructions that, under *no* circumstances from now on should either *that* woman or her daughter be allowed to enter my cabin.

The words had actually formed in my throat and were headed towards my lips.

Which was where they ended as I realised I could no more utter them than I could have leapt overboard and swum back to the safety of home and Blighty. The safety and security of which had never seemed so important now that it was so far away and things were *not* as they should be. The manly comforts and solitude of my three-storey town-house in London’s Russell Square, within walking distance of all the amenities possessed by our great capital *never* so sorely missed.

“Well, of course,” he appeared to rethink, unaware of my struggle, “she’s not one of us, I know, but actions are as actions do and that Indian lady and her young daughter have been kindness itself since you took your turn.”

I just wanted the man to go. With every mention of either mother or daughter the events of the evening before – events I hoped to have dreamt - came flooding back in upon my consciousness. The shame inspired by the images deluging me was near to being overwhelming as I recalled her slapping my face and informing me I must not only address her correctly and respectfully but actually… *ask*… her permission to speak.

Words and images containing far worse followed:

A picture of her arse, naked below the sari she had hitched to her hips, all but made me gag as I recalled its downward progress towards my…

“Face!”

This after she had placed her legs either side of me as I lay supine and unresisting

upon the bed, body refusing to respond to thoughts that were violent in nature towards a woman for the first time.

"There must be no barriers between your mind and the service it now owes both myself and Padma," her words had reached down to me before her supple and smooth brown thighs settled over my ears and that monstrous brown arse descended upon me, the insinuation that I might find myself in just such a position with her daughter not occurring to me at that point as, understandably, contact with an intimate, and utterly beyond the pale, part of her anatomy that was inevitable and unavoidable came closer.

It would not be too long in the future that such a possibility – nay: *certainty* - would, however.

Along with *much* worse besides.

But that was the future and, at this point, and despite what the abomination of a woman had already forced me to, I was still credulous enough to believe it was some momentary affliction or weakness on my part that allowed her to compel me to such… *unnatural*… behaviour.

Not that her ability to do so, even given this temporary failing on my part, justified my inability as a man to simply say *"No!"* and made me feel less… *sickened*… by my capitulation.

"Are you all right, Sir?" my kindly if none too bright steward inquired as I ran a hand over a brow suddenly at fever pitch.

"Nothing some fresh air wouldn't cure," I told him with a voice that was little more than a croak, attempting to affect more optimism than I felt that I might disguise a crippling sense of foreboding brought on by my contemplation of both woman and events.

Clearing my throat to add:

"Then I'll make a stab at my egg and doze a little."

"Very wise, Mr Burnside," he agreed, opening the door that led out to my stateroom's terrace and allowing a draught of fresh morning sea air to cool my sudden fever.

It was, you may be assured, unsuccessful.

"I'll leave you to it, then," he said with the good-natured smile of the man whose life was one of service and who, it seemed, expected no more from his own particular adventure than just that.

He was almost at the door when he turned:

“I almost forgot.”

I nearly groaned aloud, so great was my desire for him to leave that I may be alone to lick my very considerable mental wounds.

There was, however, worse to come:

“Mrs Choudhary told me to tell you that she expects to see you on the promenade-deck at precisely 1.30pm in order that you may get some much needed air and a little exercise. She asked me to say that she would accept no excuses and would be much put out if you were not there as asked.”

So great was my misery upon hearing this I marvel still that the man could mistake my stricken expression for no more than manly resignation in the face of feminine fussing – even if it was of subcontinent provenance.

“Might not be one of us,” my growingly familiar seaborne factotum observed jestingly, “but she’s still a woman and you know how they fuss.”

With a conspiratorial smile and a reminder to call for him should I need anything, Bennett went his cheery and unknowing way and, for the first time in my life when dealing with the lower orders, I found myself considering his lot and came up with a surprising take upon it.

I realised, and not without some surprise, that I *envied* him.

Of course, the moment he left I assured myself there would be more chance of cow-dung transforming itself into a fruit-salad than there was of my meeting *that* monstrous woman on the promenade deck at the time she said and that *she* could be as *“put out”* as much as she liked for all the difference it made to me.

I also – and so disturbed had my pusillanimous behaviour made me I believe I voiced it aloud – berated myself for having allowed her… *abuse*… of me to happen.

What kind of sapling before a tornado was I that I could be blown hither in such a fashion? And by a woman! A woman, moreover, who was of a race and culture I had, without wishing harm or detriment to either the land or its inhabitants, always considered inferior and, somehow, less than… *wholesome*.

How could I, a well-educated and well-placed Englishman of means allow myself to be subjected to acts that were mortifying to my very soul? To be told I must not speak to my *“Indian master”* without having first asked her permission and been given it and actually going along with it!

Another thought struck me.

She had said I would be disembarking with them at Madras to begin my new life as their…

"Servant!"

Despite my, understandable I believe, concern for all the above, this last made me laugh out loud and acted as a remedy for my gloom.

Me?

A servant?

To an Indian woman and her none too beauteous daughter?

Not that it would have made any difference had the daughter in question been a subcontinent version of Homer and Troy's "Helen", you understand? I was a member of the upper strata of British society, after all – or at least at a level so little below it as to be indistinguishable from the crust itself. Did this deluded and sexually wanton manifestation of an Indian harpy truly believe a man such as I would consent to accept a position of manservant to such people as herself and her daughter?

"Beauteous" or *not*.

I had, I told myself through much needed laughter at the prospect, been struck with some ocean-going malady that had weakened my system and made me malleable to her suggestions.

What else could explain it?

Certainly not some spiritual and mystical evil-eye from a backward civilisation that was contriving to turn me into the chattel of a native who believed herself endowed with such a capacity.

No, I had assured myself. The events of the previous night and those preceding it were no more than the results produced by my mysterious malady. A malady this odious Indian woman had, somehow, taken advantage of in the most despicable and shameful of ways.

But now I felt better - or at least better than I had felt the evening before when she had insisted I take her toe in my mouth after she had used one tiny hand with slender fingers to force me to deposit my… my… *seed*… upon her foot.

I had not to that point, I need to confess, known an explosion of such force and duration as the one she had won so easily from me.

An explosion made all the more incredible and shaming to me by the fact my nose was embedded in her anus and my nostrils were full of a triad of demeaning… *smells*.

"Smells" consisting of the earthy residue of her previous excretions, her urine, and the arousal she took from the abomination to which she was subjecting me.

The laughter inspired by her stated intent to make me her manservant was replaced by anger and intent at the memory of her usage of me and my response.

I recall assuring myself, resolve as steely as it had been - even more so - than it had been when I discovered my wife had opened her faithless legs and the insatiable orifice at it apex for my servants as well as my so-called friends, there would be no further contact between us and my stateroom would become a fortress preventing our paths from crossing until the ship moored at Madras.

And, over and way above that steely resolve, was the dispiriting acknowledgement that the events of the past week had shown, if nothing else, that when it came to this subcontinent Houri who was as perfidious as she was beautiful, my strength of will counted for nothing.

Entry-Six

"Will you be joining us for cocktails this evening now that you seem more yourself, Mr Burnside?"

The words had been spoken to me in the corridor outside my stateroom by my neighbour for the voyage, a stout American widow of some fifty years or more I knew to have been sizing me up as a possible on-board romance. An American widow with whom I had, consequently, been spending the rare occasions we happened to bump into each other diplomatically explaining - via the tendering of a whole host of falsehoods intended to get me off the hook and spare her feelings - that I was unable to enter into romantic liaisons of any kind at this stage of my life. And with her, as

pleasant as she seemed…?

Never.

Hardly surprising then that Mrs Eleanor Mapplethorpe, as was, appeared none too thrilled at what she saw as the *attentions* I was lavishing upon *"that"* Indian woman.

You may be surprised, after reading of my intention not to leave my cabin again until after Madras had been reached, and the mother and daughter of horrors had disembarked, to find me in the corridor outside my stateroom, dressed in white slacks and a cotton shirt.

As if, for all the world, I were about to indulge in a stroll upon the *promenade-deck*.

I promise you, your surprise at this point can be no greater than mine when, after assuring myself I would see no more of the woman, and as the time of 1.30 approached, I rose from the bed and, without any conscious volition of my own, took my slacks from where they hung in the wardrobe and threw off my dressing-gown gown that I may slip into them.

And yes, I did struggle. Struggled so much, in fact, that my whole body was covered in a sheen of perspiration the crisp cotton shirt of pale blue clung to my flesh instantly and provided none of the cool its fabric usually guaranteed. At one point even locking the cabin door and marching out to the terrace with the intention of throwing the key into the waters that I may have no means of leaving the room – in such a condition it did not strike me that a simple call on the bell for Bennett would have him unlocking it in moments.

In the event, and whether it would have made a difference or not, I was unable to bring myself – Another example of the power she seemed to wield over my will? – to launch the key into the waters.

"I… I really don't think I shall, Mrs Mapplethorpe," I answered her with an effort as I tried to force myself to return to the safety of my stateroom and be spared another confrontation with Mrs Choudhary.

"I offered to nurse you, you know," the woman told me, homely and maternal features both genuine and, I thought, a little miffed, her accent betraying ante-bellum roots.
"But I was told," she went on with a stern expression, "by that… *dark*… lady, that you had asked her to tell anyone who offered that you had no need of anyone else."

"Yes… er… well…" I spluttered before her indignant expression and stiff, if still stout, body as she prepared to talk over me in the way of someone wishing to get something off their – in this case – *considerable* chest.

"I must say, Mr Burnside, I was more than a little surprised to learn you preferred the

assistance of… *her*… to…"

She hesitated, but I knew her hesitation would not prove long of duration.

"I'm afraid there's no polite way to say this. But I'm surprised you would prefer to be nursed by one of her kind as opposed to one of your own. There! I have said it and I am sorry if you take offence, but it's the way I feel. Mr Mapplethorpe had very strict views on the subject when he was with us and I, for one, was always inclined to agree with him on the subject of the races... *mixing*."

I wanted no more than to tell her I considered her late husband an eminently sensible man and that, after my experience with Mrs Choudhary, I agreed with her completely.

But *"wanting"* and *doing* were desires and actions not entirely within my remit at that point.

It seemed, in fact, as if I were unable to utter even the mildest condemnation of my Indian tormentor.

Instead:

"I… I was not feeling myself and she… and she…"

My hesitation and apparent inability or unwillingness to take her to task for her forward comments seemed to embolden Mrs Mapplethorpe and, to my surprise, I looked down to find she had taken my hand in her own.

"Mr Burnside, I am going to speak frankly to you. It is our way in my part of the world to look out for our neighbours as much as we do for family and friends and, for the duration of this trip at least, I consider you my neighbour and..."

The smile as she paused was, I knew, hopeful.

"…eventually, perhaps, a friend.

There was something so sincere in her delivery of a statement I would have shrugged off as pure cornbread hokum – and would have done so right then had I not been in such a parlous state - that I began to sense this stout ante-bellum widow could provide a resolute ally against Mrs Choudhary.

If, that was, I could fetch myself to ask for assistance against the Indian horror.

As it was, I remained silent and ineffectual, even as I raged internally, while Mrs Mapplethorpe outlined her concerns in my regard.

"I do not think it seemly for a handsome man of wealth and position, such as yourself,

to be involved in such a way with a woman of her… *kind*."

"No!" I wanted to scream. *"Neither do I!"*

No such words left my lips and she continued; though I remain unsure if she found my silence encouraging or disconcerting:

"I am sure she has many admirable qualities along with others of her… *race*. But the fact remains that you are an English gentleman with an obligation to your country and your class, as well as to yourself, and should not be seen… *consorting*… with a person so far below you."

These were sentiments of that superiority, intent upon keeping the status quo, I had heard aimed at *certain* friends with *certain* tastes by others of the American woman's ilk and, though I hadn't paid them much heed in the past when aimed at a chum or cousin who was, it was considered, *lowering* himself for no more than physical gratification despite its attendant pitfalls, recent events had conspired to give such concerns a greater emphasis.

It will not surprise you, given the situation, that not only was I now heeding those self-same words and sentiments of superiority I was actually *agreeing* with them.

"Segregation", it suddenly struck me, was less to do with colour and geography than the simple desire not to allow a superior culture to become… *tainted*… by that of a less… *exalted*… kind.

"Now," my would-be American deliverer – if only I could have prevailed upon her to be so – went on, hand still gripping my own, "I have gotten it from my chest and we shall say no more about it. I see you're ready to take some air after your illness and I'm about to take a tour above decks myself and would love some company."

Not considering there could be an objection from me at this, her arm was already through my own as I stood rooted to the spot, quite unable it seemed to take her up on an invitation I would, now, be delighted to accept."

"I… I am afraid I have another, hmm, engagement, Mrs Mapplethorpe," I fumbled out a reply.

Her expression as she released her grip upon my arm was as questioning as it was suspicious and I fumbled around for an excuse that would prevent my providing her with the real reason for my hesitance.

As it turned out, my fumbling was quite unnecessary.

"There you are, Mr Burnside," came a familiar and heavily accented voice from behind me.

I do believe I near jumped out of my skin as my head swivelled to one side to take in the flowing and cool white sari of Padma Choudhary and the dazzling eyes that were so out of keeping with her unremarkable features

Eyes which, at that moment, held mine with what I can only describe as an unchallengeable confidence.

“Good day to you, Mrs Mapplethorpe,” the girl told my neighbour and hoped for deliverer. “You are looking very nice today.”

The look on Eleanor Mapplethorpe’s face seemed purposely designed to tell the young Indian girl that she had neither the need of nor any interest in her observations. Kindly, if insincerely, meant or not. Also, the fact the older woman’s expensive if drab attire hardly seemed to vary made subcontinent insincerity a strong possibility.

“I apologise for interrupting,” the girl continued, unabashed by what I can only describe as studied contempt for her on the part of the older woman. “But my mother is waiting on the promenade deck for Mr Burnside and is anxious to see how he is after his recent bout of ill-health.”

I did truly feel ill upon hearing these words and seeing the look upon my neighbour’s face and believe I would have faltered had not Padma Choudhary insinuated her own arm into the space just vacated by Mrs Mapplethorpe to gently, if no less insistently, guide me in the direction of the stairs leading up to the deck.

“Perhaps Mr Burnside will speak with you later,” she offered the older woman as she led me away, unresisting and ineffectual to my meeting with her mother.

My last sight of Mrs Mapplethorpe before we turned away towards the stairs was of a face thunderous with disapproval and contempt.

Both of which expressions, it must be said, were now reserved for me.

Entry-Seven

Down on all fours in my own stateroom, in the way of a servile canine looking for affection from its master, I humiliated myself at the heel of the Indian girl called Padma and indulged an overpowering craving to obey her every command.

No matter how injurious I knew such obedience would be to my reputation, my self-respect, and my very soul itself.

The fact that I hated myself for doing so and would have wished to have worked the longest shift in the deepest, darkest and most narrow of coal mine seams rather than be in the position in which I found myself made no difference.

Somehow or other, the influence the mother had managed to gain over my free will had been shared with the daughter and I was no more capable of defying the younger Choudhary than I had been, and still was, capable of resisting the older.

As I wallowed in my unwanted need to abase myself and prove useful to her, even as I detested the weakness they had played upon to insist I do so, Padma sat above me on the edge of my bed with sari hitched up to her hips with a pair of surprisingly – and, like the eyes, out of keeping with the unattractive features that were, just the same, becoming more and more compelling to me for some reason - shapely legs crossed.

A brown foot, its pigmentation heightening my disgrace for obvious reasons given the standing of both myself and my country in the eyes of the world when compared to that of hers, waved before my eyes. With no hyperbole intended, my eyes fixated upon its side-to-side movement as if it were a snake making ready to strike and I were the ineffectual and immobilised rodent it had decided upon for its next repast. Her nails were painted in exactly the same shade of visceral red as her mother's but were no redder than my cheeks as she rocked them from one side to the other with slaps that may have been delivered with nonchalance but were certainly *not* playful.

Yet *still* I remained in my servile position at her feet upon my haunches.

Was I… *aroused?* I hear you ask. To use such adjectives as *"shapely"* in respect of a woman, or girl's, features, after all, is most times no more than an implicit admission of attraction. And, yes, it is true; my manhood had been at full-mast from the moment she had entered my stateroom with the duplicate key her mother had insisted I request that it may be handed over and both she and her daughter would have… *"ease of access"*.

But, despite the erection that seemed constant whenever I was alone with one or the other, there was no single moment when I was away from them that desire of a sort, for their bodies or the treatment they were handing out to me with such obvious joy, made itself evident, either voluntarily or, somehow, coerced.

They had, in effect, reduced me to no more than an extension of their own wills and I appeared no more capable of resisting their supremacy than I could take a tour of Jupiter.
Above me, Padma giggled but there was neither humour nor affection in the sound.

Indian and eerily self-possessed she may be but, yet to reach twenty, she remained a child still in my eyes and was as prone to boredom and fits of irrational behaviour as most of the English girls of her age I had encountered – not a great many I must confess – at home.

My eyes pleaded with her to put an end to my torment – thoughts again full of recrimination for the weakness that gave her leave to inflict such upon me – and she caught my unspoken plea.

The hateful face that was coming to seem, though I'm loathe to confess it, more… *authoritative*… to me transformed into a look of utter spite and I knew I could expect nothing from this abomination of young womanhood.

Nothing good, that is.

Instead, she placed her toes upon my bottom lip and stared at me expectantly.

The small amount of self-respect and resolve that had managed to gain a much needed foothold in my soul after my conversation with her mother upon the promenade deck earlier that day had vanished almost in its entirety the moment she had let herself into my stateroom uninvited and what remained was now plummeting at such a rate of descent I felt sure it must make exit through the soles of my own feet.

For those of you who read this and have convinced yourself that this journal is no more than an attempt at self-justification by some degenerate sexual deviant who found some pleasure from being treated in such a way by his physical, intellectual and social inferiors, then my answer must be to count your blessings for the ignorance in which you wallow. Believe me when I say that, though I wish my story to be known and would hope for some fellow feeling, I have no desire that anybody should have to undergo the soul-destroying experience of seeing one's much treasured self-respect and pride in one's manhood trampled underfoot and, yet, have no recourse but to accept it. Even the blackest and less blessed mentally of negro slaves, after all, and on the most draconian and heartless of tobacco plantations, were at least left with free will.

Even if I accept that life and limb were risked if he or she chose to exercise the right

to express the option and attempt to escape their unjust oppression.

For the writer of this journal, no such option was available. In fact, it is only the illness that will soon take me and has made me useless to them; a most *blessed* illness that has seen them consign me here, to the English Mission in Madras. It is from this clean and comfortable bed, surrounded by my own people, that I deliver these words my illness has allowed me time to compose and has brought an end to my…

There is no other word to describe it.

"…*Slavery*."

Be assured, any desire and arousal on my part – and, as you have already gauged from the contents above, I have not attempted to deny the existence of such – was wrung from me unwillingly and I was as surprised at my body's reaction to being treated, both verbally and physically, in ways that repulsed me.

That being the case then, I hear you ask, and making so much of your *"manly self-respect"* as you do, why did you not simply throw yourself overboard or have that nice steward, Bennett, fetch you a knife that you may slit your own throat?

Again, if you have been following my words and recall my attempt to throw the key to my room into the foaming waters below, you will know that the attempt was futile and, in some way, I know not how, I had been given some subliminal command that prevented me from speaking or doing anything that was not in the interests of depraved and beautiful mother or decadent and *not* beautiful daughter.

Interests that included my remaining *alive* that I may serve them in the repulsive and heathen manner they demanded and which we have but to touch upon in these early days of my bondage to them.

Though this inability to act against their interests – seemingly in even the most trivial of ways - did not prevent me from spending an hour or two in the relative security of the ship's library. An unusually extensive library for a ship but one for all that I had not expected to yield anything that might familiarise me with the phenomenon of mesmerism. Imagine my surprise then upon finding an academic tome on that very subject and containing, in one chapter in particular, references to the phenomenon as practiced by the ancient civilisations of the Asian sub-continent and certain contemporary devotees.

The book, I recall, was titled, quite lengthily:

"Complete Hypnotism: Mesmerism, Mind-Reading and Spiritualism
How to Hypnotize: Being an Exhaustive and Practical System of Method, Application, and Use"

The author was an “A. Alpheus” and, from the copious notes, acknowledgment of academics in the field, and praise for his own efforts from the same, it seemed he was something of an authority on the subject.

One chapter in particular took my interest and gave me cause for hope that there may be an escape from my own *particular* predicament.

At least to begin with.

It began thus:

Dr. William James' Theory

A Bad Man Cannot Be Made Good
Why Expect to Make a Good Man Bad?

And, under a chapter entitled; *“Criminal and Spiritual Misuse”:*

One of the most interesting phases of hypnotism is that of post-hypnotic suggestion, to which reference has already been made. It is true that a suggestion made during the hypnotic condition as to what a person will do after coming out of the hypnotic sleep may be carried out. A certain Indian practitioner of this ancient art claims that once he has hypnotized a person he can keep that person forever after under his influence by means of post-hypnotic suggestion.

He says to him while in the hypnotic sleep:

"Whenever I look at you, or point at you, you will fall asleep. No one can hypnotize you but me. Whenever I try to hypnotize you, you will fall asleep."

He says further:

"Suggest to a subject while he is sound asleep that in eight weeks he will present himself to you with all his worldly goods and during the intervening period you may yourself forget the occurrence, but in exactly eight weeks he will carry out the suggestion. Suggestions of this nature are always carried out, especially when the suggestion is to take effect on some certain day or date named. Suggest to a subject that in ninety days from a given date he will come to your house with his coat on inside out, and he will most certainly do so."

The same writer also definitely claims that he can hypnotize people against their wills that they may serve him on a daily basis; no matter how they might

detest their servitude and rebel against it.

If this were true, what a terrible power would a shrewd, evil-minded criminal have to compel the execution of any of his plans!

We hope to show that it is not true; but we must admit that many scientific men have tried experiments which they believe demonstrate beyond a doubt that criminal use can be and is made of hypnotic influence. If it were possible to make a person follow out any line of conduct while actually under hypnotic influence it would be bad enough; but the use of posthypnotic suggestion opens a yet more far-reaching and dangerous avenue.

The writer's optimism that such criminal ill-use of a subject was not only highly immoral and reprehensible, but impossible, struck exactly the right chord with me.

Unfortunately, the observations with which he ended the chapter was where and harmony I found in the resonance ended.

It must also be said that certain sects – of which the writer of the above claims was one - upon the Indian subcontinent have long used such methods and, indeed, it is not rare for Europeans conducting scientific research into the subject to have come across certain persons whose wills have been subverted enough to allow them to be led by a "Superior".

Led, moreover, in ways quite contrary to the behaviour we see as decent in human-kind.

This, from what various researchers have annotated, is only possible when the will of the person performing the mesmerism is stronger than that of the man or woman he or she is in the process of hypnotising and, or, the recipient has certain character defects – sometimes unsuspected – that make a subject open and completely susceptible to such suggestion with long-term ramifications.

It was also noted that, once a mesmerist placed such a person under his or her power, it was extremely rare, unheard of even, for that unfortunate person to ever be free of the influence.

If this were true, what terrible power would a shrewd, evil-minded criminal have to compel the execution of any of his plans and to make servants and accomplices of his fellows!

We hope to show that it is not true; but we must admit that many scientific men have tried experiments which they believe demonstrate beyond a doubt that criminal use can be and is made of hypnotic

influence. If it were possible to make a person follow out any line of conduct while actually under hypnotic influence it would be bad enough; but the use of posthypnotic suggestion opens a yet more far-reaching and dangerous avenue.

It is for this reason, and sensibly in my view, that the Raj proscribed the practice of mesmerism.

But, as all commentators and observers upon the human condition know, legal proscription alone is hardly likely to prevent the execution of criminal acts.

Far from shoring up my spirit and my resolve – though they had stared promisingly - the observations of Mr Alpheus left me in a condition of despair at the possibility it was into the hands of a sect member who *did* continue to practice the phenomenon.

Despite my own people's *"sensible"* proscription.

As I felt the toes of the young Indian she-devil force their way past my lips and into my appalled yet unresisting mouth, I had not experienced, and not expected to do so, the sense of utter hopelessness that fetched forth the tears that added yet another strand of contempt for what I perceived as my lack of manliness.

Or at least what Mr Alpheus had described as:

"certain character defects – sometimes unsuspected – that make a subject open and completely susceptible to such suggestion with long-term ramifications."

To my horror, the girl brought up her free foot and placed it squarely atop my embarrassing – and considerable – erection.

"Mr Burnside," she chided, thick accent making her mockery of me all the more potent. "I do believe you are taking pleasure from the washing of Miss Padma's toes."

My cock, no less urgent and demanding for being trapped in its prison of trousers and undergarments, gave a sideways lurch beneath her foot and she giggled.

"Would you like Miss Padma to let you undress so that she may take your English cock between her toes and bring you pleasure?"

Imagine my thoughts, if you will:

There was I, an adult Englishman of education, wealth, and background; an Englishman, moreover, who had often been referred to as handsome and something of a catch – even if I was not such a catch it would prevent my former wife making the beast with any cove to take the fancy of her treacherous slit; on my haunches before a less than beauteous example of young Indian womanhood I would not, under ordinary

circumstances have had the slightest interest, let alone desire.

And there, inside my unresisting mouth, resided the toes of one foot I was in the process of *"washing"* as ordered.

Perhaps it would have been more sensible of me to have asked you to imagine my thoughts *"if you can"*; for I can scarce believe any who might come across these words will ever – and I pray to be correct – have experienced mental torture of such a kind.

To know that one is being used and compelled. Forced to perform acts alien to his nature and unable to take any action likely to free himself of his compulsion to provide pleasure, service and entertainment for two females, one woman and one girl. Two females he would surely have sent from this world to the next had he been in possession of even the slightest wherewithal in the matter.

And worse than that:

To have some, as Mr Alpheus intimated in his treatise on the subject, unsuspected character defects that made him ripe for such usage and *aroused* him in the process – even as he sucked and slavered at the toes his tormentor had forced into his mouth and he tasted her *distinctive* perspiration.

Suddenly, violently, Padma withdrew those toes and planted her foot squarely upon my face before kicking me away.

As I fell back upon my haunches with my back almost to the cabin floor, lip bleeding and manly respect all but under a headstone, I remember asking myself:
"How can I let such people do this to me."

They were, I knew, destroying everything that defined me as both a man and an individual and, worse, appeared to be doing it with my complicity. Small wonder, I told myself, that my fellow passengers had started to shun me and deliver looks full of the most obvious contempt. This after I had spent most of the afternoon at the mother's side in the role of what was obvious to any onlooker as flunky; fetching drinks, blankets and, at one soul-cringing point, standing behind her to rub the elegant and perfidious neck I would as soon have snapped. Doing so as my peers and fellow passengers passed on, Mrs Mapplethorpe amongst them, and threw looks in my direction that would surely have seen me dangling from the gallows had they been realised.

Padma Choudhary was smiling now and, as her magnetism immediately drew me back to her, she truly looked to me like some young and barbarous heathen goddess whose express purpose it was to destroy men.

Especially those who were white *and* English.

“Mother was right about you from the moment she first laid eyes upon you,” she told me, confident I would remain silent having been, unbelievably, given no permission to speak. “She said there was much of the canine in you but that you had yet to be made to accept your true nature and the position you must occupy at the feet of a strong master.”

Reddened as they already were, and with my lip bleeding profusely, my cheeks became still redder at this observation and finding myself described by a young Indian girl as a *dog*.

Not to mention – and despite the position I already occupied – her insinuation I was only fit to be of service to a *“strong master”*.

“My mother is well versed in knowledge of such men and the merchant Englishman her sister and my aunt travelled to England with as wife was one just such as you.”

“Such… *weakness*… in a man is very rare,” she continued, “so you are very fortunate to have encountered my mother and I.”

“Fortunate?” my thoughts blazed.

She read them; though this, given my expression, was not so mystical a feat.

“Yes,” she told me. “That is what I said. *‘Fortunate’*. It is an insult to the goddess for a man to go through life in a disguise. Mother says you are weak and that there are far worthier men, English men, even, who deserve what you have had given to you simply from having been delivered of a womb more favoured by fortune.”

Her eyes – her magnificent eyes, I was coming to describe to myself more and more – were holding mine and, as with the mother, I felt myself coming under her aura.

There is no other way to describe it.

You must, necessarily, take my word for it, but when those eyes were upon one there could be no question of anything but acquiescence to what they demanded and I can do no more than confess something… *demeaningly exquisite*… in the sensation of having oneself… *overmastered*..

At least for the writer of this journal.

“You will make us both an estimable manservant when we reach Madras and have more time to… *teach*… you in the Indian way,” she told me and, given my experience thus far at their hands, I was now in no doubt that if either of these two… *horrors*… were of a mind to make me disembark with them at Madras then disembark with them I would.

You will not wonder at my terror.

“But that is for later,” she began ominously. “Right now, you have only washed the toes of one foot.”

Crooking one brown and suddenly imperious finger, she beckoned me back up onto my haunches:

“I am too fatigued to help you by raising my foot to your mouth so you must make yourself useful to master…”

There it was again:

“Master!”

A young brown girl saw herself as *my* master!

“…and lower your head to the floor that she may not tax herself too much as you perform your duty.”

The prospect made me feel physically sick.

And yet my cock raged unabated.

Again, even though I now knew the circumstances of my fall to be out of my control, I berated myself for my weakness.

In fact, I was still berating myself as I lowered myself to all fours and lowered my head that I might place my bruised and bloody lip upon her toes.

“Yes. That is my good and obedient English servant,” I heard her demeaning praise above me. Clean your master’s toes. Slip your servile tongue between them and lick away the perspiration of the day.”

I did as she asked and my utter demoralisation was not helped exactly by the knowledge I was, as indicated above and even as I went on hating her, beginning to thrill to the young Indian girl’s growing mastery of me.

This, of everything, I told myself as I closed my eyes to the shame of it all, was probably the worst development of all.

Or was until a few minutes, and some more demeaning comments, later.

“Yes. That is good. Push your tongue between them. Show master your enthusiasm and how obedient you intend to be for her from now on. Prove yourself worthy to be

the English dog of a superior Indian master and you will soon taste the pleasure of my hairless young cunt and become truly mine.

Her words were both enflaming and inflaming, but it was the latter that was winning out with me and suddenly, memories of her mother's own cunt at my lips as my nose buried itself into her anus flashing across the backs of my eyelids, all I could think of, apart from serving her toes in the way she required, was how it would feel to run my tongue over the folds of her young Indian womanhood and taste the arousal my actions brought forth.

To my utter disbelief, despite the somewhat extensive nature of my fall thus far, I felt my tongue insert itself between the wood of the cabin floor and the underside of the young Indian toes resting upon it.

"Yes," she exclaimed, with what seemed from below *real* pleasure. "That is good. And you did it without having to be told. Mother was right and you will make the perfect English manservant to make all our neighbours jealous. Just think of the standing it will give us amongst your fellow countrymen who live in the town."

I did indeed, *"think of it"* and could not fetch myself to same level of excitement and fond anticipation of such an event as my tormentor – though even this did not stop my servile *"washing"* of her toes.

"If you please me, and along with my feet, you will get to lick my superior Indian cunt every day."

It was the second time she had used the word and only the third – the last one to use it being her mother – time I had heard the word upon a woman's lips.

Yes. I confess. I found it… *thrilling*.

It was a sickening and unnatural… *thrill*, however that was not long in duration.

With my tongue still inserted between wooden floor and long and slender toes, there came a knock upon the door.

Immediately terrified of discovery and knowing the door, at her insistence, remained open, I was about rise when her toes pressed my tongue to the floor and trapped me in position; her hushed admonition of *"Stay!"* barely necessary.
Grateful that she had hushed her voice and was as mindful of being discovered in my rooms as me, I waited upon all fours, tongue pressed to wood by the pressure applied by her toes.

Her next words, however, after lowering her sari to a point just above the ankles below which my slavering tongue remained trapped, shocked me to my core:

“Come in!”

Looking back now from my bed in the Mission, it seems to me as if time itself slowed to a crawl as, from the corner of my floor-bound eye, I watched the door take a seeming eternity to open and then another similar gap before a pair of black patent leather boots below the slightly raised hem of a black dress stepped into the stateroom and a pair of stunned eyes above them angled themselves in my direction.

My tormentor and self-described *“Master”*, appeared completely unfazed:

“Good evening, Mrs Mapplethorpe,” Padma Choudhary greeted her as if the woman were intruding upon nothing more similar than a husband’s search for his wife’s misplaced earring.

“My feet were aching after all the day’s activities and Mr Burnside, like the English gentleman he is, ever so kindly offered to relieve their suffering.”

Entry-Eight

This will, I know, come as strange to those of you who eventually read this journal.

But, after having my behaviour with the young Choudhary girl witnessed by my neighbour and *former* - *very* former – admirer, Mrs Mapplethorpe, I began to long for the ship to make its temporary berth in Madras. Despite what I knew with certainty awaited me there.

My life on board, you understand, had become a hell of humiliation.

Between being seen to run around and dance attendance upon the two Indian women of whom it was obvious to my fellow travellers that I was in some kind of… *thrall*… Mrs Mapplethorpe's unwillingness to remain silent – not that I found myself able to ask her to do so – on the events she had seen in my stateroom and my position at the feet of Padma Choudhary had ensured I took on a role equivalent in ship-board life to that of an *untouchable* from the benighted country we were on route to and from which, it appeared, I was to be making an extended stay.

The *Amish* of old Holland know it as *"shunning"* but I have some doubt as to whether their version of the English tradition of *"sending to Coventry"* contained as much obvious and outright vitriol and contempt as that aimed at me through comments whispered behind hands or looks that would have frozen the blood of the horned one himself.

Even the crew gave me a wide berth and the captain himself, an avuncular and not unkindly old sea dog, took me aside to say that, though he was inclined to live and let live, there could be nothing of an… *untoward*… nature allowed to happen on *his* ship.

When I say *all* the crew, I do of course exempt my steward Bennett.

In fact, when I look back upon it, I find the man's behaviour towards me remarkable; especially as I had placed him as no more than a cheery if commonplace factotum whose levels of life experience would give him no terms of reference in respect of what I was undergoing.

I could, as it turned out, not have been proved more wrong.

"May I speak freely to you, Sir?" he asked me one morning in my cabin as he delivered the boiled egg and *one* slice of toast with butter and a jug of water that had been ordained by my Indian masters as my breakfast from now on.

"I'm amazed you would speak to me at all still," I observed, grateful for his use of the *'Sir'* and the fact nothing detectable in his outward behaviour towards me had changed.

"Oooh, never a danger of me doing that, Sir," he exclaimed with that down to earth manner I was warming to more and more as I realised I was dealing with a man of genuine sentiment and one with a deal more depth than that with which I had first credited him – or not, as the case was.

“When you’ve travelled as much as I have and seen and heard what goes with it,” he went on, “there’s not much danger of being shocked by much. We’re all of us mediocrities when it comes down to it – as I once heard it described – and I don’t raise myself over others no matter what they do between the…”

He looked uncomfortable and, where once I would have made his discomfort worse, I put him at his ease:

“Please, Bennett,” I reassured him. “I would rather you spoke your mind than simply say something you feel I wish to hear.”

He did not look convinced and I continued:

“No matter how… *delicate*… what you have to say to me may be.”

“Very well, Sir,” he said after some thought. “But only if you’re sure?”

I nodded and added a smile.

“What I was about to say, Sir, is that I know enough of the ways of men – and certainly my own – to not sit in judgement about what some of us do with the fair, shall we say, ladies.”

I should not have been, but I was amazed.

The fellow actually believed I was seeking out my treatment at the hands of the Choudhary horrors and so great was my need for him *not* to feel such a way I found myself able to correct him in his misconception.

Almost.

My mouth opened but no sound save for an incomprehensible splutter emerged as Bennett stared at me with a look that puzzled me even as I continued my unsuccessful attempt to enlighten him.

It was as if he knew without my needing to tell him.

A suspicion on my part that was borne out not seconds later.

“Oh, my,” he sighed, look that of one who was mentally pained and reproaching himself in some way.

My own look said: *“What is it?”*

“They have you, Sir, don’t they?”

My jaw made a descent at his words.

Did he know?

And, if he did, *how*?

“I should have said something,” he said, almost as if to himself and again with that air of self-reproach.

Suddenly, I could speak:

“You…? You know of what is happening to me?”

He nodded, looking, I thought, a little green around the gills.

“May I take a seat while I explain, Sir? I don’t feel quite myself.”

“Please do,” I told him, pouring a tumbler of water from the meagre breakfast tray he had, under orders of the Choudhary horrors, only just served me as took a seat at the side of the bed.

After one or two sips from the tumbler, and a few moments more to compose himself, looking both queasy and… *repentant*… he told me what he knew.

“Back in 1890, I was just out of the army and four years in to the career that led me to this ship and the post of Steward-First-Class. At the time when Mrs Choudhary’s sister became known to me – through reputation and some small experience of seeing her on deck with her new husband, you understand? – I was with the British India Company on the ill-fated RMS Quetta and still learning my business, having moved up from the less glamorous position of a steward in steerage to what was then known as second class. In fact, I should have most likely gone down with the old girl when she struck that rock trying to round Cape York had I not been given my first-class pips, as it were, and transferred onto this very vessel.”

I waited for him to continue, willing him to get to the quick in regard of the Choudhary women and what he might know of them that may conceivably prove of assistance to me.

It was earlier in that same year of 1890 that we had dropped anchor at Madras and the woman I now know to be your Mrs Choudhary’s sister came aboard with her husband. He was a reasonably well-off and well known English merchant in the town, though not *so* well-off his means ran to first-class – either that or the line, I never did find out, refused to let an Englishman with the wife of a mixed marriage travel other than in second. Whatever the rights and wrongs of it, it was obvious from the very first moment they came aboard, with him trailing in her wake and deferential, it seemed, to his new Indian wife’s every whim, that there was something not quite right with the

pair."

Without knowing it, I had come bolt upright upon the bed, breakfast tray and its contents forgotten as he related his tale of the poor who had, it appeared, travelled in my shoes before me.

"Everything she demanded of him she got and, not to be rude to you, Mr Burnside, he danced attendance upon the woman in the same way as you do now with the mother and her daughter."

His look was apologetic and I waved his concerns away:

"Please, Bennett, do go on. You are not rude in the slightest and I sense I need to hear what you have to say if I am to escape fro…"

My words died in my throat as the infernal and subliminal condition I now know myself to have been labouring under prevented any further input from me on the subject.

"It… It's alright, Mr Burnside, Sir," my steward told me with an empathy and concern so genuine it was an effort not to let such unaccustomed fellow feeling fetch tears to my eyes. "I think I understand what's going on here."

Again, I waited, senses keened and every nerve ending alive with tension as I prayed what he knew would deliver me from the fate my Indian *"masters"* had in mind for me.

"We were many days out of Madras and headed towards our next port-of-call in the Seychelles when I got talking to with another passenger and his… *local* knowledge… shone a light on the… *slavish*… behaviour of the older English merchant towards his younger Indian wife. He was a barrister who was disembarking in Victoria that he might catch a ship that would take him onto Durban where he was hoping to begin a practice for those of his kind in need of legal assistance."

I could sense yet another digression on the horizon and could not prevent myself from giving a small impatient cough that, thankfully, my steward picked up upon.

"Anyway, I think he sensed, if I might blow my own trumpet, that I was a man of the world and someone he could speak to because he frequently engaged me in conversation whenever he sensed I was not too busy. Along with the merchant's wife he was the only Indian on board and, as you know, the other passengers tend to leave them to themselves, so this probably explained why he was so anxious to have a chat with someone."

Another impatient cough was imminent when, to my relief, he continued:

“We were docking at Port Victoria the next morning when he sought me out on deck as I sneaked a sly smoke beneath a calm moonlit sea. We were quite alone and I think this enabled him to speak freely.

“ *‘So,”* he asked me in the perfect English that was, if you’ll forgive the comparison, every bit as posh as your own, *“now that you have had time to observe your countryman and my countrywoman at close hand, what do you make of them and his behaviour toward her?’*

“To be honest, Sir, I was a little taken aback. It’s not now and wasn’t then my policy to discuss one passenger with another. Apart from not being my way, the British India didn’t take kindly to such behaviour and those caught indulging in it could not expect to be kept in the service long. I only do so now with you because I feel guilty for not sharing what I knew and maybe sparing you what I think is the same misery as our English merchant.”

He looked genuinely pained and in this I was at least free to find the words that would absolve him of his guilt.

“Bennett,” I assured him, “you are a good man and, even if you had informed me of what might be to come, the chances are I should have taken such a preposterous warning as a sign that you were mentally unstable and requested another steward. So no self-recrimination. Please.”

The nod followed by a smile was confirmation I had won him over and he went on:

“On this particular night though - perhaps I was in need of diversion myself after so many nights spent away from dry-land and loved ones in the preceding weeks and months – I was ready to indulge in a little crew-passenger gossip of the more indelicate sort and decided to answer with words rather than the inscrutable and non-committal smile I usually plastered across the old Bennett chops rather than be engaged in conversation of such a kind.

“ *‘He looks the kind of gent the female thumb was invented for,”* I told him. *“Don’t think I’ve ever seen an husband so hen-pecked.’*

“The barrister, who was a Christian with the given name of *‘James’*, seemed amused by this and, thinking I was being made a laughing stock, I asked what tickled him so much.

“ *‘It is the use of the term, hen-pecked,’ he told me, shaking his head from side-to-side.*

“ *‘You don’t think he is, then?’*

“ *‘Were you to ask the man himself, and he be permitted to answer,’* he told me, head

still shaking with what looked to me like regret, *'he would no doubt tell you that to be simply hen-pecked would be a most blessed deliverance.'*

"I don't mind telling you, Mr Burnside, Sir, that I was totally bamboozled by what he was saying. What did he mean: *'be permitted to answer?'*

" *'The country of my birth is backward to yours in many ways, Reginald*," he told me. *'However, there are ancient ways that, while they have no place in the great and sophisticated world of commerce and politics of the Western races, are continued still by certain people. Ways that can be most injurious to those in ignorance of their method and their power and, therefore, without defence against them.'*

"I don't mind telling you, Sir, that, after finding my Indian barrister a most sound and level-headed fellow, his words soon had me revising my position."

" *'You consider me credulous, perhaps?'* he accused, sensing my cynicism. *'Another superstitious Indian who still believes in the folklore and fairy tales of his upbringing in a heathen land?'*

'Well, I wouldn't put it quite as strongly,' I told him, *'but I do have to say it seems a little far-fetched. Perhaps if you'd seen as many under the thumb husbands as me you'd look at things a bit differently.'*

"His look wasn't one of pity, exactly, and struck me more as being… *indulgence*."

" *'Reginald, can you truly tell me that you have ever seen a man behave in such a cur-like fashion towards his wife? And an Indian wife, at that? You must believe me, Reginald, that the woman is a devotee of a sect well-known to me and is blessed, as her fellow devotees like to describe it, with the eye. An eye that has our English merchant well and truly in its thrall.'"*

It was some ten minutes later that Bennett, having finished his description of an earlier Choudhary sister's victim, and having made me feel less of a weakling for having submitted to the still living version left. Even if I could still see no way clear of her… *spell*… and Bennett himself had no thoughts on the subject. My excellent steward locking my cabin door behind him as I began, yet again, to rack my brains for an escape route from my subjugation; knowing now, that the writer of the academic study I had perused in the library was wrong and it truly *was* possible for a person to be mesmerised into performing acts against both his will and his better nature.

If, that is, the person labouring beneath such malign influence be weak of character.

Whether he suspected himself to be so or not.

As I continued to exert my wits for a way out of the mental bondage I had been placed under, the physical side of my subjugation seemed about to commence all over again

when the additional key I had been compelled to request and hand over to the mother turned in the lock and the sweat born of cold fear broke out once again upon my brow.

Closing my eyes in order to feign sleep – knowing it would serve no purpose but at a complete loss as to what other action I could take – I heard the door close and the key again turn in the lock before the shuffling of feet made their way towards the bed and their supine and helpless victim.

I seemed to wait an eternity before whichever of my tormentors it was decided to speak and, when they did not, my curiosity gained the better of me and my eyes opened to take in either the mother or daughter whose turn it was to torture and degrade me.

The sight waiting to greet me was almost enough to instantly snap my eyes back shut.

Standing at the side of the bed, staring down at me imperiously from beneath hooded eyelids, silk chemise pooled at her feet, was a sight I had not expected to see.

“Mrs Choudhary tells me that you have a most willing and obedient tongue,” said Mrs Mapplethorpe.

Part Three

Entry-Nine

I will never forget *that* morning.

My belongings were packed and I was sat dispiritedly upon a pile of cases in my cabin as I awaited the arrival of a porter to collect them. We were only hours away now from dropping-anchor in Madras, a destination that, had the voyage been of the usual variety, I would have been regarding as no more than another mildly interesting stop-off before we continued our journey deeper into the Southern Hemisphere. A port-of-call that appeared to me now as nothing short of a large and immovable full-stop that had arrived in the middle of both my voyage and my life.

Of course, I knew now, thanks to the ship's library and my steward, the good Bennett, that I was not the weak and puling specimen I had at first considered myself to be when the woman's domination of me first reared its beautiful and utterly evil head - though you may be assured I was well aware, nonetheless, that there was that in me which could only be described as…

Well…

Spineless and malleable.

Even if I had not until the intervention of my subcontinent tormentors suspected such a lack of… *manliness*… to have residence in my psyche.

Certainly not of the conscious variety, anyway, and in truth I was neither of a type nor knowledgeable about such things to ever have paid the metaphysical manifestations of spiritual infirmity much attention. Now, however, I could be in no doubt whatsoever that, whatever the magical, mystical, spiritual or pure evil capacity possessed by the Indian mother and her daughter, I was so weak at base I could have no defence against their superior subcontinent wills. A weakness that ensured my body was theirs to use in ways as humbling to the pride as any man could surely have experienced at the hands of a woman.

And worse was to follow.

Poor Bennett himself had taken much reassuring on my part before he could forgive what he saw as his *stupidity"* for not having warned me in respect of Mrs Choudhary from the very beginning – or at least after he had made the connection with her sister from a previous voyage. But I meant no insincerity when I assured him blame was not aimed in his direction from mine. After all, even had he made the connection between mother and sister and warned me from my first contact with the unholy mother daughter pairing that a similar fate could await me to that of the English merchant – the same merchant the sister had made her lapdog and used to forge a better life for herself in our less… *barbarous*… Home Counties - there would have been a strong possibility – nay: *certainty* – that I would have, as I had explained, taken him for unhinged and asked for a replacement steward.

The mere fact of having someone in my camp who understood what was happening to me was something of a consolation, just the same.
Though I was, and naturally, disappointed when his recall of the conversations with the en-voyage Indian barrister on the subject of the enthralled merchant failed to yield the slightest indication of an escape from my own mental bondage to the sister of the now late-wife of the, himself, late merchant.

This last coming, as you would expect, as something of a blow.

How could it not after the hopes raised by my steward's empathy and knowledge of the Choudhary sisters - this from his encounter some years earlier with an Indian passenger en-route to Durban, along with the merchant one of those sisters had enchanted and enslaved just as Mrs Choudhary had enslaved, though certainly *not* enchanted, me.

The Choudhary sisters, the passenger who was a barrister had told Bennett, were well known in Madras as being devotees of a somewhat secretive and ancient sect – my steward had forgotten the name and I have yet to, or seem likely to, learn it. A sect Bennett's barrister had insisted to be derived from Shiva-associated Shaktism. From the small knowledge I have gleaned since, Shakti embodies the feminine divine from which all earthly and creative power springs. The derivative practiced by the Choudhary's, however, concerned itself only with that form of creative power that

placed itself at the disposal of the female and *above* that of men. Consequently, and as you will have guessed from my journal up to now, this need for supremacy did not favour the more soft and nurturing aspects of the ancient and now lost matriarchy's and was interested only in that *"power"* that could be used to place men at the disposal of their *"betters"*. And placed there with the aid of – and this is where the barristers words rang true and utterly chastening – a form of mesmerism known only to the most devout of followers.

A form of *"mesmerism"*, moreover, that worked most successfully with those men of a certain *"weak inner fortitude"*.

You may well imagine how humbling this last had seemed to me.

Anyhow, what small pleasure I had gained from the knowledge someone at least recognised my plight did not endure for long, however, when, not ten minutes after my estimable steward left, the key to my cabin rattled in the lock and my perusal of how Bennett's revelations could possibly be of turned to my advantage retreated in the face of what I admit to be pure fear for what this latest and unwanted arrival in my stateroom would bring.

The words I heard, and the accent with which they were spoken; this after my eyes had opened, in spite of my intention to feign sleep in what I confess to be a puerile attempt to avoid the inevitable for as long as possible; chill me to the very marrow even today as I write these words in the comfortable warmth and relative security of my room in the English Mission where sun streams through my un-shuttered windows and I await the final stages of the consumption that will *truly* end my journey:

"Mrs Choudhary tells me that you have a most willing and obedient tongue."

Sound, in this instance, was no worse than sight as my eyes took in the naked form of Mrs Mapplethorpe, the American widow from the stateroom adjoining my own, a silk chemise pooled at her feet and her matronly breasts filling my vision.

"Mrs Mapplethorpe…?" I began to protest, the full implication of her words shortly to be brought home to me with the full force of the American woman's *considerable* personality.

The finger she placed upon my lips was both forceful and admonitory.

"I don't recall giving you permission to speak, Mr Burnside," she said, eyes boring deep into my own and glittering with the evidence of her… *anticipation*.

The forward movement had brought her pendulous breasts close to my face and a disengaged corner of my mind made the observation that this had once been a highly attractive woman.

Once.

Her face was stern and her eyes unblinking as she stared down at me from beneath the long and silver-blond hair she had unpinned and shaken loose, while the somewhat lined and mottled skin above her breasts and upon the neck above her neckline had me revising my earlier guess as to her age.

An *upwards* revision.

As she removed her finger from my lips and stepped away to kick the chemise from her ankles, I could also see that her legs, despite having taken on a somewhat matronly aspect, had doubtless been shapely at one time.

None of the above, you understand, making one jot of difference to my outrage and shame for both her presence in my quarters and the fact she appeared to know of the yoke under which I suffered.

A *"yoke"* that, far from outraging her on my behalf, and one she seemed perfectly willing to use, along with the malleable condition that went with it, to gratify needs of her own.

You may well understand and certainly sympathise with my desire not to be of service to the woman.

If I could possibly prevent myself, that is.

"I told Mrs Choudhary," she went on, having ordered me silent and being, somehow, assured I would comply, "that it was not your tongue I was interested in."

Like my Indian *"Master"*, she seemed blessed with the facility to read my thoughts and, as I lay supine and powerless below her without, it seemed, being able to move a muscle to prevent her or raise my voice in protest, she added:

"That is right, Mr Burnside," she said in the accent I had once decided to regard as quaint and endearing and had instantly changed my assessment of it as one that crowed and grated. "I had a long conversation with your Indian… *friend*… and I realise that though my late and much beloved husband said many wise things on the mixing of the races we white folk can still learn much from those less… *favoured*... than ourselves."

Now, it was not only the strength of my character that had been proved fallible but my judgement also. I had assessed the woman on her words and taken her to be of a correct – if rather limited person intellectually – and steadfast character.

The kind of ante-bellum matriarch who would be fierce in her protection of those she loved and felt a duty to.

The kind also who would make the most bitter of enemies.

That last aspect proving the only *correct* speck of prescience in my assessment of her.

“And to think I actually called in at her cabin to take her to task for the demeaning way she was treating one of my own people.”

Her… *hungry*… eyes were full of contempt also and, as a tongue protruded to wet lips dry from excitement at the position in which she had me, I saw room made in their appraisal of my helpless form for anticipation as she continued demeaning me:

“In my defence though, I didn’t know you then for the depraved and weak individual you really are.”

The lips, now glistening with her own saliva, curled derisively:

“The kind of individual who takes a kind of… *warped*… pleasure from taking on the role of a woman’s menial.”

“What now?” my scream resounded within the silence of my thoughts. *“What perfidy had the Indian hell-spawn fed the woman?”*

“Pleasure?” From taking on the role of an Indian woman’s – or *any* woman’s – *menial?”* Me?

“At first I could not bring myself to believe her,” she went on, “but then I had to ask myself how any man, at least one worthy of the description, would allow himself to be treated as if he were no more than a servant by an Indian woman and her daughter if he did not take some… *peculiar*… gratification from it?”

So went her answer to my unspoken outrage, oblivious to her presence in my room naked as she took *me* to task for *my* behaviour; her gratuitous and self-seeking hypocrisy angering me so much I even forgot for a few moments the gravity of the situation in which I had been placed by the Indian woman’s control of my actions, if not my thoughts.

“No!” those thoughts screamed just the same, her own shame and hypocrisy for presenting herself before me in such a way forgotten as I tried in vain to summon the words that would convince her – I know now that what I had to say on the subject would have made no difference anyway – that *none* of her accusations in regard of me had any basis in fact. I sensed – wrongly – that if I could just explain to her, or prevail upon Bennett to do so on my behalf, of the cruel and occult deception that was being worked upon me then I might still gain a formidable ally.

An ally who might just tip the balance in my quest to free myself of the pervading

influence of Mrs Choudhary and her demonic offspring.

I can also sense, even from the remove of both distance and time, your thoughts:

And you are, whoever *you* may be, entirely right.

Had there been any possibility of her coming to my aid she would *not* have been in my stateroom in such a condition and eager to take advantage of my reduced situation.

I assure you, it was only my growing desperation and the desire to find a saviour that clouded my thoughts to such an extent I could not make the same connection for myself at the time.

"Mrs Choudhary," the woman continued, " and contrary to my first unfavourable impression of her, is not only a beautiful example of her land's womanhood but a wise and knowing soul."

I, of course, was able to say nothing to refute what I knew to be an erroneous description of a *"soul"* that may well have been knowing but was possessed of nothing in the way of beauty or worthwhile wisdom, but this did not stop my neighbour from the adjoining stateroom and, at one-time, hoped for deliverer, reading my, all too readable, thoughts.

"Of course, you will blame Nirupa for the pass you have come to, but men such as you are, as she insists, beneath contempt and deserve all they find at the feet of the woman who knows how best to utilise their… *weakness*."

It struck me through all the conflicting emotions being inspired within me that the fact she now considered me, and in complete accord with Mrs Choudhary, *"beneath contempt"* was not exactly preventing her from showing the contempt in which she now held me nor the fact she might still have a use for me.

Her following statement was delivered with a mixture of what I took to be regret and self-recrimination for her own lack of judgement:

"I myself had thought you a man of some substance and moral strength and worthy of my attentions," she told me with a dismissive shake of the head. "But now I see you as you are and *exactly* as Mrs Choudhary described you and no longer wonder that my interest in you was not returned."

Had I been capable of free speech, of course, I should have told her that it was certainly *not* a lack of substance and moral strength from which my lack of interest stemmed but upon a point of purely personal taste and no more – not that it would have served my interests in even the slightest of ways.

“How could it be,” she sneered, obviously much miffed still by my refusal to regard her in a romantic light, “when you were seeking… *treatment*… of such a kind from a woman?”

I wanted to yell at her that I sought no such thing and that she was being played by the Indian horror. But it seemed, and I still have no idea by which means, that some of Mrs Choudhary’s power over me had been transferred to the older woman and I found myself unable to make the smallest whisper, let alone refute the untruths being uttered in my regard.

An inability of which Mrs Mapplethorpe took full advantage to lacerate my helpless body with more lashes of her verbal scourge.

“I now recognise in its completeness her description of you as a *‘dog awaiting a master’s collar’*,” she almost spat, her utter and complete contempt for me given the lie only by the unmistakable sparkle of excitement in her vivid green eyes.

“For that,” she finished, “is all you have been up to now and all you will ever be.”

If it had been galling enough to be insulted in such a fashion by my Indian tormentors it was, somehow, even worse to hear it from one of my own kind and social standing.

Even if I knew her to be totally mistaken.

But it had been her next words that assured me I could look for no assistance from her direction:

“You are not much of a man,” she sneered, matronly breasts heaving with passion and, I know now, anticipation of what was soon to transpire. “But Mrs Choudhary is right to believe you will make both her and her daughter a dutiful and obedient manservant.”

It felt, without resorting to hyperbole, as if a nail had been driven with much force into the lid of a coffin containing my carcass and the metaphor would have been a valid one had it not been for the fact I was being consigned to a death of the *living* variety.

Two Indian horrors of the female sex had convinced themselves I was to become their… *servant*.

And now, in my own stateroom as I lay powerless and without even the defence of words, an ante-bellum type American matron was telling me she saw nothing wrong with such a fate in regard of me.

But it was the knowledge that the role the Choudhary horrors intended me to fulfil for them was known to this woman and, far from having induced a sense of moral outrage

in the aforementioned *"matronly"* breasts, had, instead, prompted her to agree with their intention, that sent my despair to even greater depths.

Especially when that intention was to use me as no more than a domestic servant to them.

And worse.

"I told them," my deviant and faded Southern-belle was informing me, "that should they get tired of you then I would be more than willing to take you off their hands."

Her expression as she said this was completely serious and I had no doubt that she would love nothing more than to have an English manservant of her own – and especially one who had once had servants of his own and would now be compelled to complete obedience in *anything* she asked.

Serious expression becoming one of bitterness and venom as she finished:

"Since Lincoln and his damned interfering Yankees made war on us and took away our niggers, finding obedient servants who know their place *or else* has become near impossible."

She thought on this for a few moments – her *"or else"* telling me all I needed to know in regard of her handling of servants - and her expression became even darker as she gave recall to the human property the late Mr Lincoln's war, that I along with others had seen as a good thing; whether made for reasons of political expediency or not; had taken from her tender care and that of the departed husband and paragon.

Her expression only softening when her thoughts returned to the present and she took in the despairing man below her.

That man's sense of despair not lessened when his neighbour, and hoped for ally, tore the sheets from his body to release its penis from his pygama bottoms prior to straddling his torso with her *"once shapely"* legs.

"As I say," she said, pendulous breasts still swinging from side to side after having swung herself into the saddle, so to speak, "Mrs Choudhary assures me you have a most willing and obedient tongue."

My heart sank to a level matching my despair.

"She said she had a long talk with you today and I could be sure you would be happy to show me how well you can please a lady with it."

I searched my memory, unable to recall any such talk and, recalling other blank spots of memory since having come under the Indian woman's influence, knowing *why*

almost instantly.

“I thanked her but declined the offer,” said Mrs Mapplethorpe, nudging my heart upwards in the process.

But not for any great duration, as she added:

“I told her that a tongue has its uses but I’ve been without a good stiff cock inside me that was ready to please for far too long since Mr Mapplethorpe and my niggers departed…”

My eyes widened, as well used to being shocked as they were by this point, at the sound of such a word and her reference to… *relations*… with her niggers leaving those ante-bellum, faded Southern Belle, lips. Preoccupied as I was by the dire nature of my own predicament, there still appeared room for my social conditioning to exercise itself and wonder what might have been the reaction of the late and much-respected *Mr* Mapplethorpe. What, I asked myself, would have been the response of this man she had described as a person of *“high morals and the rectitude necessary to enforce them”* were he to have heard *“nigger talk”* of such a kind from his outwardly staid and correct wife? Let alone the prospect of his wife sampling their… *wares*?”

As if to underline that the man himself was no longer around to correct her she slipped the word in to the sentence ending her observation:

“…even if that cock did belong to a…”

She tarried over the completion of her sentence, obviously searching for the word that most precisely conveyed her meaning.

Until:

“...servant,” she finished.

It was, you will be as amazed to learn as was I, only then that I discovered the *“cock”* to which she referred was in a condition of which she was sure to approve.

Marvel of marvels, it was indeed, *“ready to please”*.

This miracle *despite* my stone cold certainty I felt not one single scrap of lust – and certainly not affection – for my neighbour.

A neighbour who had now added moral perfidy to what I saw as her shortcomings of age and appearance to make my personal distaste even greater than my lack of interest in her of a physical nature.

None of which explained my condition.

A sheer and perverse exhilaration that seemed to start from my toes and rush to the strands of the very hair atop my head as she hovered above my raging erection before allowing herself to – there is no other description – drop down and envelop me in a surprisingly tight cunt.

Her scream as she did so, I felt sure, must surely have been heard back in Aqaba itself as I tried to come to terms with the fact I was being ridden by this depraved virago as if I were one of her Mississippi mustangs she was using to make passage along the banks of a Bayou.

Not the least chastening aspect of the experience – not by any means – being the undeniable thrill I seemed to take from having my body mastered in such a way by her; a thrill undiminished even by the slapping of her breasts against her rib-cage and the unseemly rolls of unfettered flesh at her stomach as they oscillated in the way of a blancmange only just ejected from the mould.

That initial scream soon became screams, that soon became gasps of wanton and selfish satisfaction, as she rode me with no thought to my own pleasure and the completion I seemed unable to find – despite the shocking arousal I have already mentioned and the seemingly interminable time she rode upon me to find her own crisis.

Again…

And again…

And again…

And…

…The knock of the porter at my stateroom door shook me from a reverie I confess I found – and continue to find despite myself – as perversely exciting as I considered it repugnant and I feel sure I have no need to go into detail on the subject of just how much I despised the American woman who had been given the wherewithal by my Indian *"Master"* to inflict the experience upon me.

It was a *"knock"* I hear reverberating against the walls containing my mind and one I have, justifiably I think, endowed in the years since as symbolic of the doom and disgrace – of a nature far advanced to that disgrace I had until then experienced – about to overtake my existence.

A *"knock"*, I hear in my head as if it were being made upon the door of my tiny room in the Mission this very moment.

A *"knock"* taking me straight back to *that* morning.

Entry-Ten

"Mr Burnside," it is not usual for me to… intercede… with a passenger on the subject of matters that are, more properly, their own private business."

So spoke our Captain, the splendidly named: John Haringay-East. A man I recognised, after having shared his table for dinner during the early days of our voyage when I felt at least partly convivial, to be of a dutiful if kindly heart. From the few conversations we had managed and the odd confidence we had shared, I sensed a man of likemind and tastes who, though he loved the life upon the wave, found the social side of the responsibilities demanded of him by the shipping-line somewhat onerous. Something your writer – had he shared even slightly the man's gift for the nautical – would have looked upon with the same sense of dread.

Whenever we had passed each other, in corridor or upon deck, there had been what I took to be a fine unspoken regard, pleasing and permanent in its recognition of like and the unspoken acknowledgement that our inner clothing was cut from the same cloth – even if one of our number did mostly prefer the wearing of it upon dry-land. *"Unspoken acknowledgement"* or not, I have no idea if he had been aware of my behaviour with the woman and her daughter prior to confronting me as I waited upon deck for my cases to be conveyed to shore. Our captain did not strike me as a man who would tolerate tittle-tattle and gossip, after all. However, the moment I saw Bennett hovering some ten paces away, looking on anxiously, I knew he was aware of my predicament now. He was the very epitome of what I had always taken a ship's Captain to look like and I knew that there could be no finer person to have at one's side in a crisis.

The Choudhary horrors had yet to make an appearance upon deck at this point - though I was aware of the cases containing their belongings as they sat alongside mine awaiting a porter to ferry them to shore – and I knew that help was at hand in the shape of our steadfast helmsman.

If one could persuade that helmsman there was a crisis in progress, that is.

"I have been speaking with Bennett, your steward," he began, the weather-beaten skin beneath a close-cropped and immaculately kept beard showing red to indicate the

level of his discomfort at having to approach me – a passenger – in such a way, and on *such* a subject.

"Yes," I answered, the one word I seemed capable of uttering for some reason as optimism soared in my breast that, even at this late stage, deliverance from my fate might be at hand and throwing grateful looks in the direction of the hovering Bennett for providing the opportunity.

"He tells me you would rather *not* end your journey at this point."

I willed myself to speak, or at least nod an agreement.

"Is that right, Mr Burnside?"

In his – saintly? – white uniform and with his erect bearing, despite his fifty years and more, my Captain looked utterly ill-at-ease to be having such a conversation with me but there was that in his manner that told me he wanted to help. Something upon which we were of one mind. I wanted nothing more than to place myself under the temporary protection of this excellent man.

And could make no other response to his question other than the one I relate here which sickened me as much as it seemed to surprise him:

"Nonsense, Captain," I told him with an air of dismissive jollity, as if we were both at his table still and I was neglecting his advice on the subject of taking a glass of Port too many.

As I stood before him, my inner soul in turmoil as I found myself compelled to present an exterior demeanor utterly at odds with what I was feeling and wished to express, a look of puzzlement crossed marine features and he darted a look of mild accusation in the direction of Bennett.

"Then I… I must apologise, Mr Burnside," he stammered, even more ill-at-ease and puzzlement understandable, as my words - if my face reflected any of my internal horror at all - had to be a complete contradiction of sight and sound. "I was led to believe that you were somehow being coerced to leave us against your will and – had that been the case – I would have taken it upon myself to exercise my right as Captain and detain you on board until such time as…"

"Denton!" cried a voice that made my soul shrivel, even as I girded my loins for yet another unsuccessful attempt to voice my true feelings rather than those that had obviously been suggested to me without my knowledge.

Nirupa Choudhary, demonic daughter at her shoulder and looking for all the world the malicious and depraved apprentice of evil that she was, approached Captain John Haringay-East and I as if she were no more than a simple, if beautiful, example of her

country's womanhood.

A beautiful example dressed in a white sari to match the uniform of our Captain – if nowhere near as *pure* – and relieved to have finally returned home.

"Good day, Captain," she bade him with a dazzling smile. "Will you be making the trip ashore with us also?"

Shaking his head – though without regret, it seemed - he tipped his hat to her and delivered a faint smile of his own that came nowhere near to matching the artful example being aimed in his direction and in which, it was hard to miss, there was no small amount of distaste.

Though there was present, unless I am mistaken, a great deal of suspicion.

"Mrs Choudhary." The hat tipped again: "Miss Choudhary."

"Captain," said Padma Choudhary from behind and to the side of her mother, aiming, it seemed, as much distaste back in his direction.

"I was about to try and prevail upon Mr Burnside to stay aboard with us for the rest of the voyage that he may benefit from the beneficial sea-air to effect a complete recovery from his earlier illness."

I willed myself to say that was just what I wanted, or at least give a confirming nod or some other facial acknowledgement.

You must judge for yourself my success in the endeavour.

"Having been so good as to nurse him through his fever, Mrs Choudhary," the Captain went on as I stood immobile with a goldfish mouth and, what I assume, was a sickly pallor upon my cheeks that seemed the *most* I was able to accomplish in the way of rebellion to the Indian woman's ascendancy, "I am sure you can persuade him it would be in his best interests."

The beautiful features beneath the transparent and translucent silk scarf, covering her lustrous black hair to protect her head from the heat of a sun reaching its zenith, gave no indication of the evil lurking beneath and had one not been as familiar with her perfidy and depravity as I one would have taken her for the most caring and loyal of friends.

"Under normal circumstances," she told him, magnificent eyes holding his and, it pains me to say, making him blink first, "I would agree with such sensible advice, Captain, but…"

As I waited, along with Caption John, for her to finish her train of thought, I became

aware of the daughter moving behind me, ostensibly, it seemed to lean against the ship's rail and view the activity of sailors and porters on the shore below.

I say *"ostensibly"* because it was but a matter of moments before she was stood at my back and only a few moments more before I felt a tiny hand insinuate itself between my legs and begin to stroke my buttocks.

I gave a start but the Captain was too lost in the mothers eyes – if not as lost as I – to notice as Nirupa Choudhary finished:

"…but my daughter and I live on the edge of town in a comfortable and secluded villa that once belonged to the husband of my late-sister. You can believe me, Captain, when I tell you that Mr Burnside here will be looked after in a way no man has been looked after before."

The brown she-devil at my back actually pinched my buttocks and it was all I could do not to cry out – though, looking back, perhaps it would have been better had I done just that.

"Is that not right, Padma."

"Oh, yes, mother," the girl agreed, hand leaving my buttocks that she may dart her head to the side of me and engage the attention of the Captain.

The Captain's expression was non-committal as he eyed the daughter and she went on:

"It is a great honour for us to be able to entertain an English gentleman of Mr Burnside's quality and importance. All our friends and neighbours are going to be terribly jealous when they know we *have* him."

The little she-devil's emphasis on the *"have"* was not lost upon me, even if our Captain did not appear to pick up on it – and certainly not my wince as a small brown hand cupped my scrotum through the covering of lightweight trousers and started a gentle rubbing motion out of his sight.

"Now, now, Padma" the mother supplied mock reproof, the thickness of both their accents and their attitudes, I could tell, grating as much upon Captain John as they did upon me. "We have no interest in making our neighbours *'jealous'*. That is not the reason we are taking Mr Burnside to our home and you know it, so…"

She broke off as a movement at the Captain's back took her eye:

"Ah! Here is the porter to transport our belongings."

She extended a hand to the Captain as I tried to force myself to speak or react and

could manage no more than that same sickly grin of acceptance that was, nonetheless, good enough to seal my fate.

"My thanks and that of my daughter for a wonderful voyage, Captain," she told him unheeding of, or simply not bothered by, the unmistakably *distasteful* way Captain John Haringay-East took the proffered fingers; his own making the most minimal contact as if he were being asked to renew acquaintance with a spectacled cobra and recalled only too well his first experience of the species. Indeed, though it is small consolation, I like to think that this excellent man knew of the… *whatever it was*… I laboured under and judged not ill of me for the weakness ensuring I succumbed so readily.

Just the same, weakness or not, when the Captain turned to me with an inquiring look I summoned up every last scrap of will and self-determination I could locate and tried to tell him by some means that *"staying aboard"* was exactly what I wanted.

Nothing came out – though the sickly grin vanished to be replaced by at least a look of some alarm at least. Enough anyway to have him give me a concerned look. And enough also to have me praying he would insist I not leave the ship.

It was not to be.

"I do think you are tiring yourself, Denton," she said, her use of my first-name sickening me almost as much as the use she made of my body though her control of it.

As if to prove her right, I again exerted every scrap of will and strength I could summon to alert the Captain to my plight and did, indeed, exhaust myself in the process.

I have no need to describe the level of my success.

"The sooner you are nice and safe with us at home," the hell-hound continued, "the sooner you can return to something like your old self."

A thought struck her:

"Or perhaps an even better version."

She had laughed gaily at this, before turning back to the Captain and, effectively, dismissing him:

"We will allow you to be about your duties, captain," she told him in a superior way I could see rankled with him and, powerless to effect any change in my situation, and with what I took to be a regretful nod in my direction, he bade us goodbye and made off a few paces to be engaged by the next set of passengers for whom contact with the Master of the vessel carrying them was always such a thrill.

The eyes of both mother and daughter as the Captain, reluctantly, I knew, left me to my destiny were full of triumph and promise.

That *"promise"*, I also knew, being nothing that would prove good to me in any way shape or form.

My last vision of England – even if it was of a seaborne variety – was of Bennett and the ship from which I was being forcibly carried. This as my erstwhile steward gazed over the ship's side to observe my departure. A departure that involved myself and my belongings being ferried, along with my two *"Masters"* to a new and utterly *unwanted* life.

The wave I saw him aim in my direction was one that wished me good luck and seemed to condemn me to my fate at the same time as our carriage took me from his view and the small consolation his knowledge of my plight provided.

I was in Madras with my two tormentors.

An Englishman on the subcontinent.

Alone.

And quite, quite, helpless.

Entry-Eleven

Three hundred years before my unwilling and extended visit, Madras, under the name of *'Madraspatnam'*, was a tiny rural village on the Coromandel Coast adjacent to other rural villages such as Egmore, Vepery, and Triplicane. These downtrodden equivalents of the English *"Hamlet"*, you will be unsurprised to learn given the growth of trade and enterprise seldom found lacking whenever the British Empire visits itself upon a – most times unwilling, it must be said – land, are now crowded districts of the Madras in which I find myself today. Back then, of course, European influence such as had existed at the time had been mostly Portuguese but, with the formation of the East India Company and the advent of the English, that influence had grown and the city along with it to become one of the great merchant sea-ports of the continent.

So much of my new *"home"* was I aware already as the carriage containing my unwilling carcass took me to my new home, in company with an Indian mother and

her daughter who had been a stranger to me only weeks before and now insisted me to be their…

"Manservant

That new home being the villa that had once belonged to the late English merchant, ensnared after the same fashion as me, no doubt, by Nirupa Choudhary's sister.

A villa from which, I had been assured, I would not be leaving.

Not without *their* permission, anyway.

Madras, not that I was in any frame of mind to concede it so then and have only grudgingly made the concession over the years, is not without beauty and the Cooum river I could see to my left can be an attractive and meandering waterway, although for the greater part of the year it is no more than a stagnant ditch and may as well have been just that upon my first sight of it for all the difference its glittering water and fertile banks ensured by the time of year made to both my eye and my spirits.

In what I now know to be Triplicane, we passed an ancient temple that had been and remained a centre of pilgrimage, dating, like many village temples in India, from very distant times. This was the Parthasarathy temple and, even before I knew its name, it inspired my thoughts to dreams of *"sanctuary"*. *"Dreams"*, my story so far will have assured you, that were destined to remain exactly that.

Neglected, as if I were already the lowly flunky they intended for me to become in my corner of the carriage, I was left with nothing else to do but gaze upon the passing scenery and I recall us passing a tiny fishing village lying directly on the seashore I now know to be Kuppam.

The old Portuguese settlement at Mylapore, with its several churches passed before me until the landscape became more lush and the dwellings, wonder of wonder, more European.
I was to find – to my already heightened sense of humiliation – that a great many colonial English had residence here and, in fact, the Choudhary's were pretty much the only non-Europeans to own a property - not just a property, but an *estate* - in the direct neighbourhood.

The ownership of that *"estate"*, you are right to think, one that owed nothing to the industry of the two women. And certainly not the sister whose *ownership* of the English merchant ensured it became theirs. An estate, moreover, that extended some two miles along the shore and a mile inland and would have been - had I not been forced to experience living upon it as the most abject of English chattels ever to have experienced servitude at the hands and feet of his two perfidious brown masters – an idyllic setting I would once have given serious thought to acquiring.

Once.

I assure you, here upon my death-bed, it is a place I hope never to see again and give thanks to the illness that is sure to be my last for ensuring my absence from both it and its owners.

The house itself was not so much a *"villa"* but a palace in miniature. It was constructed entirely of granite, without any woodwork whatsoever and I was to discover later that it had indeed once served as the summer-house of the Raja of Chandragiri, a now obscure and marginalised in power representative of a magnificent Indian Empire of the past, who himself had delivered the deed of possession to the merchant representing the East India Company. A possession of his one-time summer-house the Raja was not to know would see itself eventually revert back to one of his own people of a somewhat humbler provenance.

And through nefarious means of which he may, or may not, have approved.

Palace in miniature or not, it was a place I would come to hate – and with good reason you will come to see – with a passion that was no less virulent for my having no means with which to express it, save within the crowded but lonely space existing between the walls of my head.

You will, even at this stage of my enslavement, understand the sense of frustration and futility such a lack provoked.

It had been the *"Padma"* horror who had been first to break the silence that had held sway since our journey to the estate had begun. My own silence, of course, was both compelled and, on this occasion, desired by me, and I was quite happy to be excluded from whatever it was they were saying to each other in the tongue of their land. A tongue and accompanying accent I was finding more and more… *grating*.

As it turned out, I would have preferred their conversation, grating language and accent or not, to have continued in such a way rather than what followed:

"Padma, it would make more sense," despicable mother told hateful daughter, "if you spoke in our new servant's tongue when discussing him."

The flicker of a smile Nirupa Choudhary aimed in my direction was not encouraging and had not been intended to be so; in fact, the great sense of pleasure she took from having me under her power was as evident to me in even her most bland expression as it would have been were it to have been written in ten-foot letters and allowed to replace the endorsement for Pear's Soap holding sway above Piccadilly's Eros.

"It is as well that he knows what we intend for him and how he will… *fit*… into his life with us. I know he is my gift to you, my darling stepdaughter, but with such a gift comes responsibilities and a good master will always ensure her…"

The monster's eyes ranged over me as I took in the revelation that, not only was the equally monstrous young girl *not* Nirupa Choudhary's blood offspring but that I was considered as no more than a… *"gift"*… to the horse-featured abomination.

"…*slave*," I came back to earth in time to hear the mother – *stepmother* – continue, "is fully apprised of the ways in which he must be of service."

Prior to this, both mother and daughter had addressed me – demeaning enough in itself – as their putative *"servant"*; but to hear myself referred to in such a way, in common with those unfortunate wretches whose fate it was to be transported to the New World and be purchased by the Mapplethorpe woman and her purported *"saint"* of a husband, was, at the time, more than I thought my sanity would bear up under.

Though, as I am obviously compos mentis enough to record the events inspired by my… *weakness*… from the security of the sick-bed accorded me by the good people of the English Mission here in Madras – people in whom I have not confided the treatment received at the hands of mother and daughter for fear of them thinking my mind was going the way of my ailing body – I was, in one respect at least, strong enough.

"Mrs Mapplethorpe seemed to enjoy the penetration of his puny white cock," the younger girl offered with language that would have appeared unseemly upon the lips of the lowliest and most gutter-spawned whore and seemed all the more appalling to be directed at a woman who was her stepmother. "But I am not sure I will allow him to use it – or have it used – in such a way again."

If Nirupa Choudhary was perturbed I could detect no sign of her agitation:

"That is your decision to make, Padma, and he will abide by it," she said solemnly before her expression softened and became amused. "Apparently, Mrs Mapplethorpe has missed having herself filled since the loss of her husband and the niggers whose larger cock's she used when something more substantial other than Mr Mapplethorpe's *'attentive but unimpressive'* love stick was required."

My cheeks, I knew, were of a fiery red and I felt near dizzy with shame to have to be a witness to talk of such a kind and be unable to take its progenitors to task.

"I promised her that when she takes us up on our invitation and comes to stay," the stepmother went on, "that she will not be interested in the cock of our English slave when she is introduced to some… *selected*… sudras."
Stepmother and stepdaughter laughed as if no more than a bon mot had just been delivered on the subject of a neighbour's tasteless and gaudy choice of home furnishing.

"Though," the older of my tormentors added, "she did say that she would enjoy

sampling our… *slave's*… well-trained tongue when she does come to stay on the ship's return passage via Madras."

Padma Choudhary had nodded and turned her attention to me in a thoughtful fashion: "I think," she said at last, "that the tongue of our English slave will have learned a good few more tricks and a deal more in the way of endurance by the time her ship makes port here once more."

The young eyes in that horse-face held my own and delivered what I could not mistake to be a threat:

"At least, it *will* have, unless he wishes his time as my property to be even *more*…"

Prominent cheekbones, and teeth with a slightly exaggerated overbite as they protruded from the framework of abnormally large lips that may have been considered sensual were the other components more fetching, again became thoughtful as she searched for the word that would most accurately convey her meaning:

"…abject," she finished, dismissing me from her vision and turning back to her stepmother as if I were no more than a speck of Madras dust that had adhered to her sequin covered sandals.

"I will enjoy," she told Nirupa Choudhary, "showing off my English bondsman and what I have taught him to Mrs Mapplethorpe when she comes back to us in seven weeks' time. It will do her good to see one of her own kind reduced to little more than the animal I intend for him to become."

"Yes. She is American, so there is some small difference," her stepmother agreed. "But there is still that in her make-up – no doubt from having owned negro slaves of her own – that regards itself as superior to those, such as us, whose skins are of a darker hue. Seeing an arrogant and superior Englishman in the service of two superior Indian ladies as the wretched flunky he is destined to become will be an education for her."

Now it was the stepmother's gaze that fixed upon me with a promise:

"Especially when she is allowed to witness more fully that arrogant and superior Englishman with his tongue inserted into the shit-chute of his young Indian master."

Just as I thought I could be shocked no more, they took my levels of revulsion and distaste to new lows.

"Perhaps if she is a pleasing guest," Padma Choudhary took it up, "she may even be allowed to have her fat white arse worshipped by him in such a way also."

The laughter this inspired in them at least prevented further conversation between

them for a while and for this, you will understand, I was extremely grateful.

I tell you now, whoever *you* are, that truly you can have no way of even guessing at the mortification one feels – and it is my sincere wish that this blissful ignorance, at least in the first-person, remains intact – to be seated in the presence of two women, and one of them no more than a *girl*, and hear oneself spoken of as nothing more than a.. *possession*.

Such inhumanity, of course, would have been hard enough to bear up under had one been of that stock used to personal service.

Even if that were service of a kind delivered for no more than a desire for necessary remuneration or a roof above the head.

But for one such as I?

The scion of a respected and wealthy military man and, possibly, the first confectionary millionaire?

A man educated in one of the top schools in England and used to socialising with those in or around the very highest levels of the English class system and well-used to the adoration of women – even if his former wife had decided to adore others more?

On more than one occasion, you may be sure, I asked myself what my former friends and female dalliances would have made of seeing their wealthy and formerly independent acquaintance and one-time romantic interest as he scurried and kow-towed to the wishes of a horse-featured Indian girl and her mother in the role of chattel.

It was a question often asked and seldom perused, so great was my humiliation in picturing the reaction of former friends and lovers, for any length.

I shall leave this attempt to describe my feelings of abject horror and humiliation by stating simply that such a state of affairs would have been galling enough to experience under the yoke of those of my own kind.

But to be delivered, bound hand and foot with metaphysical chains, to a couple of brown-skinned monsters – and the fact the younger of the two was not daughter but stepdaughter made her involvement no more tolerable – was near insupportable.

Even as I did just that.

Supported and endured it, I mean.

But back to *that* coach ride and *her* words:

“In answer to your question, you must not concern yourself on my behalf,” the Padma abomination assured the stepmother while keeping eyes alive with great excitement affixed to mine.
The eyes of the stepmother herself were fixed upon those of her younger charge as she waited.

“My new English slave,” Padma Choudhary went on, “will find his new owner to be most informative when it comes to his duties to her and what will be expected from him from now on. I will also, in accord with the wishes of my stepmother be most… *careful*… to treat him only as a manservant – if a most lowly example – whenever we are in less… *enlightened*… company.”

“That is good to hear, stepdaughter,” Nirupa Choudhary responded, nodding solemnly. “But you would do well to remember from the outset that it is better to refer to him as our *‘manservant’* when in company rather than a slave.”

“Yet you yourself have described him in such a way, stepmother,” the daughter chided. “He has no will of his own save to think his own thoughts and must obey us even though he hates to do so. What is he, after all, if he is not our save?”

“That is indeed so, Padma, but the way I refer to him when we are in private is quite different to what is permissible in public.”

The horse-features opposite had not been convinced.

“Slavery in his land is no longer legal – though the name is but a nicety and if the people dying in England’s factories and coal mines are any guide then the condition still flourishes in that miserable land.”

Hearing my country described in such terms, and from such lips, would normally have had me leaping to its defence with a strong rejoinder on account of its many virtues; despite recognising a smidgen of sense in the woman’s words; but on this occasion I was able to do nothing more than pray for her to be visited by all the plagues of Ancient Egypt and a few from its neighbouring kingdoms as she went on to horrify me still more:

“Our English neighbours will be surprised and outraged enough that such a person and countryman of theirs is in our service as a lowly menial, without being told that he does so without pay of any kind and must, therefore, be considered a slave.”

“English neighbours?” my thoughts had screamed at me and, for the first time, it struck me that my fall from high to low was not to be witnessed by *only* those brown of skin in a country my own ruled.

“He is an Englishman from a pampered background – even more so than the specimen my sister… *acquired*,” Nirupa Choudhary continued, “and his new life will be a shock

not only to his system but to those of his countrymen who will recognise his class and breeding and find it inconceivable that such a man is a master no more and has fallen from the high ground so far as to be fit only for the service of two superior Indian ladies. But for them to know the true nature of his service to us is to risk having them inform the English authorities and drawing attention to his… *slavery*."

My face must have provided an exact replica of my thoughts because Nirupa Choudhary laughed in a way that was, somehow, both teasingly coquettish and unmistakeably malevolent.

"Oh, but look at your new slave's face, my lovely Padma," she exclaimed, even though such a scrutiny was already being made and the less than beauteous face belonging to the girl I now knew as her stepdaughter was fixed in my direction. "He was hoping, perhaps, that the service he provides us both would be witnessed only by our own people and not seen by his."

The girl's face was stony; both childlike and pouty in a way reflecting her years and utterly inflexible in its intent; striking me for all the world as a child who had just been told she must hide away a cherished new toy from her peers that she might not excite their jealousy.

Her words bore her look out:

"Then he will be disappointed," she told her stepmother, eyes not once leaving my own as I sat transfixed before her. "I cannot wait to show our possession of him off to our pompous and oh-so-superior English neighbours. The sooner he can be shown to them as he waits upon us hand and foot cannot be soon enough for me."

"Yes," Nirupa Choudhary agreed. "I myself am excited to learn just how they will react to see us both with our English manservant once he is trained to our liking by our faithful Ajala. Though we must both be careful not to let our desire for them to recognise how completely we own their countryman to allow us to treat him in such a way that arouses their suspicion he is more than a simple servant and go with their concerns, as I have mentioned, to the authorities."

The girl named Padma nodded solemnly at this, the look of a child thwarted vanished now that she knew her control of me *would* be seen by those neighbours from the country that had enslaved her own – even if her display of it would be necessarily *less* draconian than she might prefer.

As it was to turn out, the treatment she was free to mete out to me within the privacy of their *"villa"* would prove ample consolation for this fettering of her natural inclinations.

And in the aforementioned person of Ajala, whose name I had heard of for the first time, she would be aided and abetted in her desires to ill-treat me by a person I was to

come to fear more than the two Indian horrors responsible for my bondage in the first instance.

Entry-Twelve

Ajala turned out to be a woman in her mid to late forties who, if I had taken Mrs Mapplethorpe for large, was quite gargantuan. Yet, I must confess, her dimensions were more… *voluptuous*… than grossly… *fleshy*.

Her lips within an oval shaped face were the deep red of betel, while her hair was of a coal black and braided in a skein of sequined tresses. A faceted stone cut from one of the baser fossils could be seen attached to left nostril and heavy gold rings swung gently from each ear. Nipples I know from experience to be always henna-red seemed to be forever pressed erect against her choice of clothing and heavy bracelets could always be seen upon her wrists.

Each of the above impressions combining upon first meeting to create a sensation of effortless and natural sensuality in this low-caste older woman who had been with the Choudhary abominations in the role of housekeeper for many years.

None of which impressions, I must add and you will understand, detracted from the fear I came to feel for this subcontinent martinet. A martinet whose English might not have been as extensive as the Choudhary's but served her well enough to instruct me in the ways of service to my new masters. Lacking vocabulary or not, the accent with which she spoke her limited but effective English was even thicker than that of her employers and added greatly to my sense of utter diminishment as an Englishman and, more importantly, a man.

It did not, to my shame, take her any time at all to have me jumping through hoops at the merest click of her fingers in the way of a diligently trained canine rather than an English gentleman of somewhere near the top rank.

To add to my sense of shame and mortification, as if it needed embellishing, I was informed that I could no longer ejaculate under my own volition and would need permission from one of the Choudhary monsters or their housekeeper, and my tutor, herself.

Not even my manly functions were to be left to my discretion and will.

How much more mortifying then that, after proving particularly pleasing during one of the fleshy and sensuous housekeeper's *"lessons"* and by way of a reward and inducement to further obedience, Ajala allowed me to rub myself against the smooth brown skin of her calf until she uttered a word in Indian with which I was unfamiliar and I exploded over her leg with a force and a degenerate pleasure I had not known could exist.

An explosion and its aftermath, you will not be surprised to learn, she insisted I fetch warm water and cloth to clean from calf.

This *after* I had licked the bulk of my emissions from her.

I was, you will have gathered, becoming as obedient as I was demoralised and this pleasure I took from my servitude and which appalled me almost as much as the servitude itself, was not to prove an aid in forestalling my slide into complete subservience.

In fact, by the time the good Captain Haringay-East returned Mrs Mapplethorpe to Madras and, unwittingly, exacerbated my already considerable suffering, I was in such a constant condition of terror and foreboding of what could be exercised upon my person should my service not be found… *"pleasing"*… I feel sure I must have been unrecognisable to all who had known me not three months prior to my fateful voyage and the taking of my berth upon the SS Horatio that was to prove my last experience of life as a free man.

"Does he do this with all your visitors?" my one time neighbour and ravisher asked after having broken her trip to visit with the Choudhary's. Her later conversation with her two hostesses informing me that she had booked another passage with a vessel that left for New York a month hence. An eavesdropping on my part you may be sure afforded me no pleasure.

"Only with… *certain*... guests of our choosing," Nirupa Choudhary assured her guest as she sat on the edge of a high-backed and cushioned rattan chair, looking somewhat flushed from the heat and her journey from ship to villa; unsurprisingly so given the thick cloth of her forever sombre clothing whose dark shades, she no doubt thought, detracted from her ever expanding fleshiness.

"You are a woman after our own hearts who has known the… *rightness*… of taking ownership of those weaker than oneself and providing their lives with meaning," the older Choudhary had continued. "But there are those for whom a misguided sense of equality ensures would take a less… *sensible*… view upon seeing the humble way our new English servant shows the respect we insist upon. And especially the strict way in which our good Ajala, who is preparing the tea he will soon serve us, delivers the discipline necessary to maintain his behaviour."

Despite my current position, crouched upon all fours in the Choudhary's drawing-room, with my lips pressed upon the toe of Mrs Mapplethorpe's Cromwell Shoe - a shoe with a high tabbed front and a buckle, inspired by the fashions of the 17th century Puritans and totally inappropriate for the region in which she found herself but totally in keeping with her own self-righteousness and hypocrisy – the recall inspired by mention of the *"good Ajala"* and the way she delivered that *"discipline"* sent shivers the length of my spine.

"It really is the only way, my dear Mrs Choudhary," the American devil-spawn I was coming to hate almost as much as my Indian tormentors assured her hostess.

"We both of us," Nirupa Choudhary, "offered, "Padma and I, knew you were a woman after our own hearts."

"You may be convinced of it, my dears. I always insisted my niggers be chastised for even the smallest of infringements. Let the smallest piece of insubordination go unpunished with these people and they get it in their heads they can do as they like." With my lips pressed to the suede toecap of this atrocious woman's shoe, careful not to slobber as the *"good Ajala"* had taught me and knowing only too well the pain I could expect were I to prove less than perfect in my application of her *"lessons"* I waited for a sign from one of my *"Masters"* that I had shown the requisite respect and might be allowed to return to Ajala in the kitchen.

The laughter above me was not pleasant and was, I knew, at my expense.

It was the horse-featured daughter I now feared as much as I despised who spoke next:

"You can be sure, Mrs Mapplethorpe," Padma Choudhary told her, "that our Englishman will *never* do as he likes again. My loving and generous stepmother has given him to me as my very own personal manservant and, though he will remain at her service also, it is upon me that his future behaviour reflects and I have no intention of being made a show of by such a lowly specimen."

"Well, said, young Padma," praised Eleanor Mapplethorpe, obviously much impressed at the way the young girl was aping Anglo-American behaviour and speech that was rapidly becoming ante-diluvian to those at the more civilised apex of society. "But tell me, why do you both continue to refer to him as a servant when he, English or not, the man is so obviously your slave? But, also, and before you answer, I think he has shown enough respect to my shoe for now and his position down there cramps my movement somewhat."

Nirupa Choudhary laughed:

"Then simply kick him away, Mrs Choudhary," she advised, still amused. "What else would you do with a dog when you are tired of his attentions."

Mrs Mapplethorpe needed no second bidding and the foot free to which my lips was not attached was soon placed upon my shoulder to shove me away.

Red-faced, and with thoughts seething with a mixture of outrage, humiliation, and utter terror of what might befall my person should I react adversely, I drew myself up upon my knees, placed my hands behind my back, and fixed my eyes upon the floor until told to do otherwise.

"My," the Mapplethorpe woman exclaimed, admiration unmistakeable, "you truly do have him trained beautifully. I cannot tell you how much I envy you. It's one thing to have a nigger at one's bidding, but to have a white slave under one's heel – and one who happens to be English and once saw himself as a superior gentleman – is something quite special."

Despite the weeks of my *"training"*, together with the fact her observations on my docility could not be gainsaid, the nature of my inner responses to the indignities heaped upon my head had not changed and I truly believe that had it not been for my fear of what Ajala would do to me I should have voided the meagre contents of my stomach upon the polished wood of the drawing-room floor upon which my abject gaze was fixed.
"You are too kind," Nirupa Choudhary gave thanks.

"And don't forget," Eleanor Mapplethorpe continued, "my offer."

There was a following silence and it appeared that whatever the American atrocity's offer had been it had since been forgotten.

Though *not* by me.

"Should you or Padma here ever grow tired of him," the American went on, "I should be delighted to take him off your hands and be more than happy to amply reimburse you for all your efforts with him. I assume such control as you have over the wretch could be transferred to me?"

"With no difficulty at all," the older Choudhary assured her. "Should either of us suggest it to him, your word would become as compelling to him as our own and he would have no choice but to obey. He is, as you see for yourself, amongst the weakest of men and will never find strength enough to so much as question your wishes. Though I feel I must tell you that he is no longer mine to give – even should I grow tired of him – and it is to my lovely Padma and her ownership to whom he has been entrusted."

Then, after a pause:

"I am sorry to disappoint you, Mrs Mapplethorpe," began the *'lovely Padma'*, "but I

have long dreamed of such a servant and I intend to keep him at my… *feet*… and… *elsewhere*… for some time."

"Well," began a distinctly disappointed sounding guest, "should you ever change your mind you have only to contact me."

There was a small silence and I imagined them all sharing polite smiles upon a subject that could in no respect be described in such a way.

Then:

"But neither of you have answered me as to why you continue to refer to your English dog as a servant when he is so obviously your slave?"

There was another pause as mother and daughter obviously decided which of them should answer what would have been, under normal circumstances, the most outlandish of questions.

As I had suspected, it was Nirupa Choudhary to whom the honour fell:

"That we continue to do so, Mrs Mapplethorpe…"

"Eleanor," the American interjected. "I consider the three of us friends – you might even say sisters, although, and don't take this wrongly, *Mr* Mapplethorpe might not have agreed – and I do believe we are entitled to such intimacy.

Nirupa Choudhary was already laughing, even if her stepdaughter was not – and not likely to if the resentment I knew she harboured for being viewed by those of my own race and colour as *"inferior"* held sway.

"From what you have already confided to me of the late and under-endowed, Mr Mapplethorpe…"

There was more laughter at the Indian mother's description of the late husband's genital development and, this time, the stepdaughter and *my* owner *could* be heard indulging as her stepmother's description of the late – and *white* – husband had a somewhat mollifying effect.

"…From your own lips, Mrs Mappl… Eleanor… it is hard to believe your husband would have approved of either the race of our chattel or the fact you have chosen to consort with us."

"Let's just say," Mrs Mapplethorpe offered, "that my late husband seemed a whole lot more impressive alive – under-endowed or not - than he does dead."

To my no great surprise the observation provoked more laughter from the three before

the faded Southern-Belle continued:

But the more I'm free to give thought to the subject the more I realise it was I who controlled the household and those within it. In fact, I'm becoming more and more convinced that had it not been for the fact he was from old money, and blessed with all the control and power wealth of such a kind brings, our… *relations*… with each other may well have taken a quite different course."

Another pause followed, then:

"But I interrupted you, Nirupa. You were about to tell me why you continue to refer to dog there as your *'servant'*."

I knew without doubt now that – though she was not in possession of the mystical and evil powers that had brought me to my current pass – the American woman was cursed with a penchant for cruelty that was easily the equal of my two Indian *"owners"* and their housekeeper.

Kneeling with my eyes fixed to the floor I could only imagine the perverse pleasure transfusing her fleshy cheeks as she took advantage of my mental bondage to indulge a proclivity for verbal ridicule.

You may be assured I had no desire to lift my eyes and satisfy the suspicions of my imagination.

"Not everyone is as enlightened as you as in regard of our more ancient ways… Eleanor," the stepmother had told her.

She paused a moment:
"The sect to which Padma and I belong, and our families before us, is not one of which we can speak freely to – and forgive me – an outsider, but what we can tell you is that it is based upon the fundamental truth that we are placed upon this earth with certain gifts and that it is sacrilegious for such blessings should to go unused. As the deer is fodder for the lion and a horse a beast of burden for his rider, so should he be a servant whose will is weaker than that of the strong master who sees his weakness and wishes to use it in his or her service."

"I can find no fault in what you're saying," Nirupa. "But, if you'll forgive me for pointing it out, it does not answer what I was asking."

"I was about to do just that, Eleanor, and you must forgive me if I seem long-winded but the little background we can provide you will, perhaps, help you explain why the *'dog'*, as you have referred to him, is in the position in which he finds himself and our power to not only place him under our yoke but to keep him beneath it. It is the lack of understanding of your own people – and I intend no criticism of you, Eleanor –on the subject of the service owed by the owner of an inferior soul and accompanying

inner fortitude…"

"Slavery, in other words," Mrs Mapplethorpe came in.

"Precisely, Eleanor. It is this lack in others that we here in India - even those not favoured by the wisdom of our sect and the service to our goddess providing it – understand so well. You will find little in the way of an ethical or moral problem with the concept of slavery in our land."

"Nor from me," Eleanor Mapplethorpe assured her.

"If our belief in nature leads us to be seen as simple," Nirupa Choudhary continued, then so be it. But nature provides us with many lessons and one of them is that the strong will always prey upon the weak and make of them their fodder. We are not animals and, therefore, will have uses for such inferior beings as more than just a source of nourishment. But, in order for us to accept responsibility for the weaker amongst us, it is necessary for them to prove both useful *and* pleasing. A lesson the *'dog'*, formerly known as *'Mr Denton Burnside'* is beginning to learn and take to heart as our good Ajala's… *care*… of him insists."

She paused a moment or two, then:

"Just the same, I do not think our English neighbours would be too happy to think one of their own class had been reduced to the status of… *slave*… by an Indian woman and her stepdaughter. Padma is not happy with me for my insistence that we do not proclaim his slave status to his own people but I am sure you would agree, Eleanor, that it is most unwise to draw attention to his plight in such a way."

"Your stepmother is right to be cautious, Padma," I heard Mrs Mapplethorpe assure the stepdaughter whose horse-face, I imagined to be suitably sulky for being prevented from showing off her… *property*… fully. "I can only imagine the reaction to him as your servant without them being informed he is your *slave*."

"Precisely, Eleanor," Nirupa Choudhary agreed. "In fact, upon their last acceptance of an invitation to dine here – accepted only, I believe, because they wish to use our access to the sea to purchase and moor a yacht of their own - I could tell our nearest neighbours were thoroughly scandalised to see an English gentleman acting in such a servile and utterly obedient way to two *'colonial'* ladies and the housekeeper who appeared to be supervising his service."

Whether she had intended to or not, Nirupa Choudhary's reference to the former General who had used his tenure in her land to enrich himself, along with his memsahib, had activated my recall – not that it was ever far from reach – of their visit and the sheer disbelief that had greeted the sight of *"one of their class"* serving dinner to them. And doing so in the most deferential and servile of ways with eyes lowered. For to raise them and disrespect my *"betters"*, I knew by then, was to guarantee a

taste of Ajala's bamboo. Applied to various… *sensitive*… parts of my body as if I were not a white Englishman but some poor brown-skinned devil just one notch up from the Untouchables occupying the bottom of the heap in this benighted land's caste system…

..."Surrey, ma'am," I had answered when the memsahib had been unable to contain her curiosity any longer and questioned me after my delivery of a dish of savoury lamb and vegetables I would have dearly loved to have eaten myself as a change from the filling but dull diet upon which Ajala had placed me.

"From your accent," her husband the former General had taken it up, "I assume domestic service has not always been your, hmm, first line?"

I had been saved from answering by the older Choudhary:

"You are quite right, General," Nirupa Choudhary told him, thus saving me from having to splutter a reply which, to this day, I have no idea as to what would have been its contents. "Only certain unfortunate but long lasting financial setbacks have ensured the good fortune of myself and my stepdaughter in acquiring such a diligent and devoted manservant."

Those "financial setbacks", as she had so diplomatically put it, being her insistence that I write to my solicitor in London and authorise him to dispose of all my English assets and wire them to the account with the merchant bank in Madras Nirupa Choudhary had accompanied me into the port to set up.

Assets that were, of course, and were still in the process of so doing, then placed in an account of her own, ensuring that before the year was out, and once all my holdings had been realised, I would be utterly destitute as well as the most abject and unwilling of serfs…

…"I must say," the American woman's voice had brought me back to the present, "that your housekeeper has trained him most diligently in the ways of service to his superiors."

"Ajala is a marvel with him," came the heavily accented and younger tones of Padma Choudhary, no doubt jolted from her sulk by the sheer pleasure she took from witnessing the *'housekeeper's'* treatment of me. "He is so terrified of her she has but to sigh and he grovels at her feet as if his very life depended upon it."

The laughter of the three women rang in my ears as my cheeks burned and I knew I was the object of all their attention – an abject figure in my white tunic and trousers that would normally be seen on the Indian flunkeys at the homes of other Englishmen or the factotums of the Colonial Club.

Not surprisingly, my thoughts turned to just what inspired my fear of the sensuous but sickeningly cruel and despotic Ajala…

…Unsurprisingly, it was the very first afternoon of my very first day in the Choudhary household and the unfurnished room to which she had taken me before, mortifyingly, ordering me to strip naked and then thrashing me about the room with a thin bamboo reed that came instantly to mind – even if there had been worse instances of the delight she took in cruelty since.

Beaten as I had been when I first arrived, I was still more demoralised and terrified when I crawled, whipped and broken, from the empty room I would come to know and loathe as my place of "correction" and make my way down endless wooden corridors, knees chafing, to place my lips upon the feet of my new owners and assure them I would endeavour to be the most respectful white servant in the whole of the Raj – a feat, given there were so few, if any, to be found in this outpost of the empire, that did not seem too onerous.

You may be assured that, at the time, I was almost sincere in my declamation.

And, had you seen the callous and uncaring way she had delivered cut after cut to the flesh of my uncovered body, you would understand my assertion at the head of this journal entry that the sensuality I had been able to do no other than acknowledge upon first sight of the Choudhary's housekeeper could, in turn, do no less than give way to feelings of pure and unsullied…

Fear.

Nothing escaped the cut of her rod; not my calves, my thighs, my buttocks, back or chest – and she seemed to take an especial delight in fetching that thin wispy rod I now loathed and feared the sight of up between my legs that it might make excruciating contact with a scrotumnal sac I was willing up into my body without success.

By the time she had finished with me, breath shortened not by her exertions but by the sheer thrill of treating a white man of the ruling English class no more than the most disobedient and wilful of dogs ever to have fallen into the hands of a relentless and vindictive owner.

Or, in this case, trainer.
But it was later in the evening, sprawled on my side at the foot of this demonic housekeeper's bed upon a steamer rug that had, no doubt been appropriated from the SS. Horatio, that my real training to service began.

"Up!" came the simple and accented command that made me feel even more of an

animal; though by that time, body and mind in different if no less agonising conditions, I was the point where even my humiliation could not compete with my physical discomfort.

Hauling myself up as ordered, and with understandable difficulty, placed myself between her large but no less shapely legs. The same legs with powerful thighs and smooth unblemished brown skin she had dangled over the side of the bed. Manoeuvre performed as she raised herself up to stare down upon me with the bullet-hard and henna-red nipples of her – I confess it - magnificent breasts.

"You are not a man here," she told me, dark eyes drilling into mine in a way that promised all kinds of retribution should I forget my new place in the order of things. "I teach you to cook and clean house and you must learn most quickly if you are not to feel pain. You are servant now and must attend ladies in all ways. You must learn place quickly."

A finger pointed to the slit of a cunt devoid of hair and, despite my agonies, I felt myself become erect in the presence of this fleshy and low-caste, but masterful and sensual, siren; cruelty, fear for the moment forgotten as I asked myself how I could possibly be aroused by such a… monster.

"The Mistress say you have good tongue," she told me. "I tell her it be much better once I teach. You not learn Ajala's way quickly she take bamboo to soles of feet and you not walk for long time."

Had it not been for the spicy scent of the cunt I had, without realising, drawing my nose and lips ever closer to, I feel sure I should have passed out with the terror of what she was threatening. That it was no idle threat had been underlined by the welts still an angry red upon my naked body as I knelt before her. My experience in the "correction" room earlier leaving me very little alternative but to believe she meant what she said.

"You like smell of Ajala," she observed, almost mockingly but with a touch of pride also that a member of the class ruling her land could react to her in such a way. "This is good. Make teaching you much easier."

Placing both her hands upon the back of my head, eyes staring into mine and bright with the thrill of dominance, she brought my nose to within touching distance of her labia.

"Servant take deep breaths now," she ordered. "Show master how much he respect her Indian cunt. Only when she satisfied you know how to please will she let you put unworthy tongue in her superior brown arse."
Her words took me straight back to Padma's insistence I do the same to her rear in my stateroom before Mrs Mapplethorpe had interrupted my unwilling and utterly demeaning worship of my horse-featured owner.

And my response to such a horrific prospect?

I began to take deep breaths through my nose, sucking in the scent of my demonic and sadistic tutor's arousal as she had ordered.

"Good boy," she praised me and, to add another strand of self-disgust to that which already existed at elevated levels, I thrilled to her heavily accented words and limited vocabulary.

"Now," she went on, "servant place tongue here."

A brown finger indicated her clitoris. Move tongue as if writing Missy Padma's name and spell out letters… Slowly!" she warned as I dipped my head to go at it, senses heightened by the presence of I know not what perversity.

Heeding her words, I slowed myself and did exactly as instructed by spelling out the letters of the horse-faced girl who now saw herself, along with her mother, as my owner. I placed my tongue to the left of her clitoris and began moving it in a clockwise direction as I tongued out the name of my young persecutor.

It took four repetitions before my persecutor's housekeeper was satisfied and moved me along.

"Now move tongue from side to side as if you sweep a floor," she instructed.

And so it went.

A "learning" session that only ended – this particular aspect of it, anyway - when, after my third time of placing my mouth over her clitoris and gently suctioning it in and out of my mouth, she went off in a thigh clasping and voluble explosion of utter joy that threatened to see my skull reduced to paste.

It was only as I thought I must pass out from the pressure being applied to my neck and skull that the grip of her brown thighs eased that I could breathe once again and waited for further instructions from my low-caste tutor.

"You have been good boy and Miss Ajala pleased with you," she told me in patronising and barely literate terms that should not have pleased but did.

Her next words having the complete and opposite effect:

"Now we see how nicely you lick Miss Ajala's shit-chute."

"…Have you thought any more about the possibility of availing yourself of my offer

and taking advantage of one of our lovely sudras during your stay with us, Eleanor?
My return to the first day of my Madras servitude with the Choudhary's was foreshortened by the question of the older Indian horror to an American of still more venerable provenance.

"I know how much you prefer a willing and available cock," Nirupa Choudhary finished.

Only to have Padma Choudhary add the coda:

"So long as it is a willing and available cock of a presentable size."

Again, and far from taking one so young to task for such language in the presence of her elders, laughter greeted the horse-faced girl's observation.

Until:

"I fully intend to take you up on your kind offer, Nirupa, and will be interested to learn if these sudras of yours match up to the bucks we used to have back home."

"I think I can assure you they will," the older Indian woman told her with a chuckle in her voice. "And, if they do not, you will at least have much fun in the finding out."

Once again the three of them began to laugh.

Until:

"Just the same, if it's convenient for you," Mrs Mapplethorpe began, as if about to ask for the use a bath-robe or some other domestic triviality, "I really think I might take you up on the other you made when we were aboard ship."

A silence followed and I could picture Nirupa Choudhary and an inquiring look.

"You know?"

Another silence.

"The use of your servant's tongue?" Eleanor Mapplethorpe gave reminder.

A further silence seemed to say: *"Ah!"*

"I assume it still remains as willing and obedient as you insisted it was aboard ship?"

Now the laughter belonged only to the mother and daughter; though an explanation of it was left to the older half:

"Not *just* willing and obedient, Eleanor, but *highly* trained."

There was the briefest of pauses before she finished:

"Both front *and* back."

Afterword

The journal does not end here and the fact it does is my decision and mine alone. For what followed offended my sensibilities to such an extent further reading became next to impossible. Offended me so much that, out of sheer compassion for the courage and honesty of the dying man whose words and experience had come before me, I could find no earthly reason to place them, in turn, before the eyes of a reading public.

For this, if you are of a youthful bent and full of that sense of inquiry I myself once possessed – and, having no problem when it comes to recall of such callow impetuosity and impatience, understand - you must forgive an old man in his dotage

In denying the public, both youthful and otherwise, this right – if such a story of human depravity can ever be described as such – and ending Mr Burnside's story before completion, I can only supply a very brief ending of my own. An ending that will attempt to hint at, without actually spelling out, the indignities forced upon the poor wretch. Indignities before what proved – in both my estimation as well as his – the timely illness that took him from his tormentors and ensured he spent at least some time in relative freedom in the mission at Madras where he drew his last breath.

To be perfectly truthful, I feel convinced I could no more provide an in depth and factual account of his sufferings than I could allow others of a more sensitive or, worse, judgemental soul to read of them. With this in mind, I must content myself, and you must be content, with my saying that I can believe no man anywhere, or at any time – and especially a man of his class and race – could have endured treatment of such a kind. For not only was his service of a sexual nature it was not confined only to those areas of personal and physical interaction we look upon as natural between consenting adults.

By this, I mean that the level of his "physical" service to his brown and female masters went beyond the natural and wholly understandable desire for sexual intercourse and involved abominations of the act, or in the actions precipitating it, of which we as caring and compassionate adults would do well to remain in ignorance. I see no gain in having these matters brought to our full and incredulous attention by descriptions – no matter their "courage" and "honesty". Descriptions so vivid it is unlikely we will ever be able to consign them to the waste-basket of memory where such human detritus belongs should we once encounter them.

I, for one, will certainly be unable to do so.

Suffice it to say that this man was compelled by the "mystic and evil" hold placed

upon him by the ancient ways of his brown and Indian masters to service them in the most unimaginable and soul-destroying of ways.

Ways that required, as well as cooking, cleaning and waiting upon them hand and foot – these last duties being at times performed, and most humiliatingly, in the presence of his own countrymen and peers - being in attendance as these, to use his own description of them, "monstrous" women went about certain ablutions.

Ablutions we each of us prefer to go about in complete privacy and certainly require no aid afterwards in, if you take my meaning, the cleaning of ourselves.

The above, of which I need, and will not, say any more, was the worst of the many indignities forced upon him but, and not far behind, was the fact of his body's own reaction to them and the deep and perverse joy he took from their usage of him that these barbarous and god forsaken women had somehow instilled in his subconscious. A perverse joy which took his sense of shame to heights we can only imagine and a hold upon him that ensured he could not end his suffering for himself by the simple expedient of taking his own life.

As I write these words, I am not a well man myself and I pray most fervently that in the short time I have remaining to me I am blessed enough not to encounter such a story and an experience again.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Crowborough
February 1930

END