The Toe-Ring

A Work of Domestic Servitude and Erotic Mind Control

By
Wilson Henshaw

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Dedicated to the Memory of the Late Arthur Machen

Prologue

As he had been taught, he sucked each of her brown toes in turn that his saliva might supply her nails with an extra lustre. He was a long way past any feeble and futile demur he knew would only win him her displeasure. Knowing also that, if she were displeased his wife would be sure to follow suit.

And, given the history he had shared with the former love of his life, punishment at her hands seemed even more excruciating and humbling than the considerable shame he felt at being chastised by a younger woman.

And a woman of colour, to add to his sense of personal and manly disgrace.

The sing-song, almost Welsh in nature, English in which she addressed him also a matter of some personal angst and debasement.

Angst and debasement he felt now as her words drifted down to him as he sucked upon the big-toe of her left-foot from a kneeling position on the kitchen floor below her.

“You must consider yourself favoured,” she told him, pomposity all the more outrageous for its certainty it would not be taken to task by the wretch at whom it was aimed. “It is not all servants who are favoured by their Malkin enough to be allowed to serve in such a way.”

The delightful prospect of serving her in sections to the wildlife in the zoo at Regents Park presented itself to him once again and, also again, he wondered just how it was she managed to keep him not just at her feet without any possibility of retaliation, but deferential to all women he met. His own wife most of all.

“There are many theories about where and when nail polishing actually began,” she told him in that hatefully accented English, this as his thoughts bemoaned the onslaught of yet another of the low-caste and hatchet-featured woman’s educational reveries. “It would appear, however, India was where the practice first originated. When you suck upon my superior Indian toes that they may be bright and vivid before I allow you to colour them, you are privileged to be playing your part in a custom thought to date back well over 5,000 years.”

He made no reply, conversation necessarily limited by the presence of the toe around which his tongue was currently wrapped; though his thoughts bridled at the knowledge this low-born and evil woman *truly* considered herself his superior.

The suggestion offered by a more realistic inner voice that she would be hard-pressed to feel any other way, given the deal of almost total control she exercised over him, he allowed to be swamped by the more immediate concerns of his eviscerated male pride and the various scenarios of vengeance forever writ large across his inner diary.

“Soon,” she continued, the magnificent eyes which were so out of keeping with the rest of her features fair dazzling with the vitality lent them by her complete and utter control over the demoralised and abjectly beaten Englishman at her feet, “if your progress warrants it, you will have earned the honour of serving Miss Christina in such a fashion. Perhaps even Miss Cora, should she find the time and be receptive to having her feet attended by you.”

He felt himself begin to tear up at the prospect of having the woman he had married watch him perform such an emasculating and repulsive chore and fought the urge back.

It was enough for his tormentor to degrade him, without aiding and abetting her in what she seemed to consider her life's work.

But then why, if he felt as degraded as he did, and hated the woman with an impotent passion, a passion he could not act upon and felt must end in his insanity, was his cock tenting out the black-trousers that served as a part of his working *"uniform"*?

The silky smooth skin of the shapely calf-muscles he could see above his mouth and the nail shining tongue within it; calf-muscles upon legs that shared nothing in common with his preconceptions of Indian women with thin, rickety lower limbs; going some way to answering his question.

As did the nipped in waist over which flowed her vivid pink sari and the magnificent breasts contained within it.

But that face…?

And the cess-pit of a mind contained behind it…?

Never a man of a particularly fertile imagination, his situation and how he had come to be reduced to it was a constant source of torment and puzzlement to him.

As was the fact the predatory featured houri above him need only to fix him with her piercing and unnaturally bright eyes for him to become nothing more than her servile thrall.

And a thrall who lived in terror of his conqueror at that.

It would have been a mercy, he told himself often, if he had no cognizance of his submission to this abomination.

But that was *not* the case.

Even as he performed the debasing acts she insisted upon and his manhood retreated further and further into nothing more tangible than imagined revenge scenarios and the memory of what he had once been, he was aware of performing the tasks expected of them; though his inner self raged at his weakness for submitting in such a way.

He had heard it said of mesmerists that they could not hypnotise a person to perform acts that went against their core beliefs. This, he prayed, was not true. For, if it was, then his shame was multiplied beyond calculation.

As if sensing his thoughts, and confident in her complete power, she wiggled the toe still inside his mouth to underline her control of him, utterly and completely certain there could be no possibility of the merest rebellion from him.

When, as expected, no response was forthcoming, and wishing to play with her pet more playfully, she placed the sole of her free foot over his trousers and against the erection raging inside of them; an action that drew a gasp from her victim despite the presence of her toe in his warm mouth.

“There,” she said as if to an infant rewarded for having learned a lesson; or, perhaps more pertinently, a household animal who had just voided itself for the first time in the place expected of it. “Obedience will always find itself rewarded by a just master.”

Instantly, he felt himself falling further into the subservient mindset both words and actions were designed to provoke; the usual contradictions doing nothing to lessen his debasing desire as contrived to keep her toe in his mouth and thrust against the sole of her foot at one and the same time.

As he erupted into his own undergarments after only a matter of seconds, the beaten man asked himself yet again how it was possible for him to have been brought so low.

And so quickly…

The Gift

On the first morning of October, in the year of our Lord 1913, Edwin Covington awoke from a disturbing dream.

It had consisted of an ancient wood, and of a clear well rising into grey film and vapour beneath a misty, glimmering heat; but it had not been the landscape accompanying his nocturnal thoughts that had disturbed him.

Opening his eyes, he saw the sunlight bright in the room, sparkling on the varnish of the new furniture, and for a reason beyond him at this point, was grateful to find his wife's side of the bed vacant. His gratitude, he knew, and with some confusion and wonder of the dream still lingering in his mind, could be traced directly to the presence in his slumbers of their new Indian housekeeper and…

Unwilling to revisit a dream he found as unseemly as it was troubling, he left the bed also, and began hurriedly to set about his dressing, for he had overslept a little, and the 'bus passed the corner at 9.15. He was a tall man, dark-haired and dark-eyed, and in spite of the routine of the City and all the mechanical drudgery that had lasted for seventeen years, he had until recently carried about him the curious hint of a wild grace, as if he had been born a creature of the antique wood of his dream and had seen the fountain rising from the green moss and the grey rocks.

A curious hint more and more submerged beneath the crushing and relentless drudgery of a life spent in finance until, over the past few weeks or so, it had taken the route of a river that only existed beneath the earth; a river so subterranean, in fact, there was no longer anything of it that even hinted at its once *wild* existence above ground.

Though, since the arrival of their new housekeeper, a new and troubled inner life – witness his nightly slumbering and his resting mind’s indecipherable and nightmarish depiction of his new domestic.

At first, he had shrugged his nightly ramblings off as no more than a by-product of the vivid imagination he had always allowed to counterpoint a life that even he conceded was dull and, if those vivid imaginings had decreased over the weeks since her arrival, he would have happily accepted such an explanation.

But they had not.

If anything, she was growing stronger within his subconscious and – despite laughing at himself for the fancy – seemed to be wielding more and more of an influence there.

An influence, he had noted, that was not restricted to the world of dreams when it came to his wife; who seemed so taken with her that she looked desolate when he informed her he was thinking of letting the woman go.

So desolate, in fact, that he reconsidered the intention before she had managed to even broach the subject of his reasoning.

It would be a soft-hearted moment that would return to haunt him.

Amongst other torments.

This morning, the breakfast was laid in the room on the ground floor, the back room with the French windows looking on the garden, and before he sat down to his fried bacon he kissed his wife seriously and dutifully. Christina had brown hair and brown eyes, and though her lovely face was grave and quiet, one would have said that she might have awaited her husband under the old trees, and bathed in the pool hollowed out of the rocks; although, if one looked closely these days, there appeared to be an almost perpetual curl at one corner of her lips one might have considered sardonic had it not been so sinister and out of place with her previous character – almost as if she knew his nightly fantasies and was waiting only until she knew how best to use them to her own ends before confronting him with her knowledge.

They had a good deal to talk over while the coffee was poured out and the bacon eaten, this after Covington's egg was brought in by the plump Indian woman herself and he found himself colouring red as he recalled his only recently truncated dream. That the woman herself, dressed in the costume of her own country still and lending a throwback to more elegant and colonial days of yore to the breakfast-room, seemed to hold his eyes with a quiet insolence that seemed to be telling him she knew of his shameful dream did not make him any more at ease – even if he did scold himself for being childishly fanciful.

He and Christine had been married for the past twelve years and remained childless, in fact, until the advent of Isha into their household and daily life, they had got on excellently, rarely sitting silent for more than an hour and in accord on most things. But for the past few weeks Aunt Cora's present to them of a household servant had afforded a subject for conversation which seemed inexhaustible. At least when that servant herself was not around. Mrs. Covington had been Miss Christina Reynolds, the daughter of an auctioneer and estate agent in Notting Hill, and Aunt Cora was her mother's sister, who was supposed rather to have lowered herself by marrying a coal merchant from Turnham Green.

Cora, an imposing woman in her late forties who, from what Edwin Covington had seen of her relationship with the man, ruled him with such iron control he himself had described the man to Christina as: *"a disgrace to the male species"*, had felt the family attitude a good deal for having *"married down"* and lowered the family standing so carelessly. A superior attitude that soon underwent a sea-change and ensured the Reynolds's were sorry for many things that had been said when the coal merchant saved money and took up land on building leases in the neighbourhood of Crouch End.

Greatly to his advantage, as it appeared.

Nobody, it transpired, had thought that Nixon could ever do very much; but he and his wife had been lived for years in a beautiful house at Barnet, with bow-windows, shrubs, and a paddock, and the two families saw but little of each other. Widowed now, Cora made but few attempts to see her favourite niece, though, on the few occasions she had, she'd made it plain that, upon her own passing, her estate would be left entire to Christina.

Plainness that had not sat too well with the rest of the family deprived of their share of the derided former coal-merchant's fortune and ensured he and Christina, along with Cora, saw very little of them from that point on.

Of course, before the news her niece would be inheriting her estate, Aunt Cora and her husband had been asked to Christina's wedding. But they had sent excuses with a nice little set of silver apostle spoons, and it was feared by his wife at this time that nothing more was to be looked for. That had been twelve years before and their sole contact had been through birthday and greeting cards since.

Until a month ago.

Upon Christina's 35th birthday, Isha had turned up at their door with a letter of introduction from Aunt Cora explaining that she had purchased her housekeeping services as a gift and would be paying her salary for as long as she remained with them.

It had been a most affectionate letter, enclosing also a cheque for one-thousand-pounds for them to *"use wisely"*.

The Covington's, as may have been expected, had discussed the question of this gifts judicious disposal – as well as the necessity of having to dispense with the services of their part-time domestic and get used to the idea of having another person in the house; even if the tiny attic room at the top of the house was perfect, what with its bed and wash-stand, for the housing of their new housekeeper. But when it came to the money, Mrs. Covington had wished to invest the whole sum in Government securities until Mr. Covington had pointed out that the rate of interest was absurdly low. It was only after a good deal of talk that he had persuaded his wife to use the bulk of the thousand to clear the existing debt of just over five-hundred-pounds on their home, and put four of the remaining five in a safe mine, which was paying out at five per cent. This was very well, but the remaining one-hundred-pounds, which Mrs. Covington had insisted on reserving, gave rise to other frictions as to its use.

At first Mr. Covington had proposed that they should furnish the 'spare' room. There were four bedrooms in the house, excluding the aforementioned attic-room serving as servant-quarters. But he soon had a change of heart. £100 invested wisely in more volatile, but hopefully more rewarding, stock, he considered, could soon turn from acorn to oak.

Again, being the head of the household and a man, it was the husband's view that was followed – though he noted that, since the arrival of the Indian domestic, his wife no longer followed his lead with quite the same… *willingness.*

With this in mind and determined to nip any wifely rebellion in the bud, he stopped off on his way home to consult his closest friend.

Greville Hanson lived at Fulham, and had often given him judicious advice as to the laying out of money to the very best advantage – mostly upon the buying of superior French wines, connected with the Bordeaux wine trade - and Covington's only anxiety, given his long-time friend's fast lifestyle, was lest he should not be at home.

It was, however, all right; Covington took a tram along the Goldhawk Road, and walked the rest of the way, and was delighted to see Greville in the front garden of his house, inspecting his flower-beds with his usual glass of claret to hand.

"Haven't seen you for an age," he said cheerily, when he heard Covington's hand on the gate. "Come in… Oh, I forgot," he added, as Covington still fumbled with the handle, and vainly attempted to enter. "Of course you can"t get in; I haven't shown it you."

It was a hot day in June, and Greville appeared in a costume which he had put on in haste as soon as he arrived from the City. He wore a straw hat with a neat pugaree protecting the back of his neck, and his dress was a Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers in heather mixture.

"See," he said, indicating the handle as he let Covington in; "see the dodge. You don't *turn* the handle at all. First of all, push hard, and then pull. It's a trick of my own, and I shall have it patented. You see, it keeps undesirable characters at a distance—such a great thing in the suburbs."

“But how about visitors?” said Covington. “How do they get in?”

“Oh, I put them up to it,” adding with a wink, “if they are on my good side.”

They shared a laugh and Covington followed his friend inside, where he too was soon sipping a full-bodied Lynch-Bage, Greville assured him he would enjoy.

His friend was not wrong and Covington swiftly brought the conversation around to his wife’s *“gift”* and his desire to invest in a *“sure thing”*.

“Yes, that’s what everybody wants,” Greville sighed playfully, having heard it all before on countless occasions. He pretended to mull it over, before asking: “How much?”

Covington told him.

“Why not put the whole thousand with me?”

Covington explained this also.

“Sensible to get yourself out from under with the bricks and mortar,” he agreed. “But a safe mine?”

Covington did not respond, having been convinced beforehand of his friend’s reaction to his… *caution*.

“Hmmm. Well, it’s your money,” Greville sniffed before going on to sip at his Claret with a thoughtful expression. “Actually, I do have something and it is a good cut. But you needn’t pass it on to everybody. Understand?”

“You’ve known me long enough *not* to ask such a fool question,” Covington replied a little testily and his friend held out his hands palm first to mollify him.

“Very well. I got the tip from Jameson - you know him, *"Jim-Jams,"* in the China trade, 39 Eastbrook. He said, for obvious reasons, he didn’t want everybody in the City to know about it.”

Greville scribbled something on a sheet of paper, folded it and passed it over to Covington. Just go to Jennings, in Old Wall. Show him this and mention my name. He’ll see you all right.”

Covington pocketed the note and, business concluded, set about enjoying both the wine and the company of his bachelor friend he sometimes envied when things were less than harmonious at home.

“A housekeeper?” his friend exclaimed finally, and with some surprise. “The last time we met you were complaining about the prohibitive cost of a cleaning lady three times a week.”

“Christina’s aunt made her a birthday gift of it. The one-thousand of which I mentioned, and the fully paid services of our very own Indian housekeeper.”

“Man or woman?” asked Greville, shifting a little in his wingback.

“A woman, of course. Indian.”

The expression of Covington’s closest – nay: his only – friend became serious to the point of grave.

“Does she speak the lingo?”

“I’d say that’s obvious,” Covington snorted; “given neither Christina nor I have Guajarati, Tamil, Bengali, or any kind of tongue used upon the Subcontinent.”

Adding quickly:

“And, before you start, neither do we have any intention of either learning our servant’s native tongue nor paying for an interpreter to make simple household instructions plain to her.”

Covington shook his head with mock disgust, though he remained somewhat perplexed by the troubled look that had occupied his friend’s face since he had mention his new housekeeper and, more relevantly it seemed, her nationality.

“*Of course* she speaks English,” he finished, before adding: “even if her accent is damnably thick.”

It was at this point that Greville, still looking serious and, even, concerned, said something that Covington considered odd at the time and would only later see as the warning it was.

“Well, a word to the wise, my good friend; keep a vigilant eye and a concentrated ear upon her. I have heard certain tales concerning such arrangements that I have found… *disturbing*.”

Having no idea what his friend was on about and thinking he was probably preparing to play another of the harmless pranks for which he had been renowned during their school-days, Covington refused to be drawn and the interview came to a friendly and warm end soon after.

But it would not be long before his friend’s words returned to him and ensured further interrogation.

By which time, though he was not to know it at this point, he would not be at physical or mental liberty to pursue such a course…

Signs

Christina, in keeping with what he described to himself lately as a most uncharacteristic wilfulness, had been a little miffed at first that he had committed the remaining £100.00 from what had been, after all, her own birthday gift. But when Edwin Covington explained just what kind of a return they could expect in so short a period of time, she saw the wisdom of his investment and comforted herself that there would soon be some extra income coming into the home for such necessities as comfy furnishings and the very latest domestic appliances. As well as the fact they no longer had to meet the weekly obligation of paying for the home from his adequate but less than stellar salary from the City.

It was almost immediately after her acknowledgement of his correct thinking that the first mild cause for concern in respect of their new housekeeper rippled its way towards him.

"It will be very nice to own our own home, of course, and I do see the sense in both the safe-mine and your more daring investment through Greville," she congratulated, sending a frisson of irritation the length of his spine, as if for all the world she felt he needed such… *encouragement* and she was in a supervisory position of some kind that made her feel comfortable enough to supply it.

But it was what she said next that set his hackles to rising:

"Just the same," she went on, "I would have preferred you to consult me first."

His breath caught in his throat.

Was his usually timid and obliging wife rebuking him?

Bad enough that she had seemed *troubled* by some of his recent decisions.

But this?

This was very close to outright criticism.

"As Isha said," she continued, taking advantage of his shock to press on and, in the process, shock him further, "the money was, effectively, given to me. You are my husband, that is obvious. But that did not give you the right to appropriate the decision making process."

Covington was speechless. He had been used to her feminine sulks and silences of late, when domestic decisions had not gone her way and, most times, had seen them in an affectionate, if growingly concerned, light. But this!

"He did not have the right?"

"He had appropriated the decision making process?"

And, worse than both of the above:

"As Isha said?"

Christine took advantage of his temporary shell-shock to further make her point:

“It is really too bad that you feel so little concern for my opinions that you would make such arbitrary decisions irrespective of my own input and I should hope in future that you will think twice before abusing me in such a way again.”

Edwin Covington regarded this stranger from another galaxy and felt anger and annoyance overcoming his initial shock.

“Do tell me, my darling wife; was it *Isha* who brought these *‘arbitrary’* decisions of mine to your attention?”

Now it was the turn of his wife’s pale cheeks to colour with anger and her response was made with equal hotness as well as sarcastic emphasis:

“Are you saying you regard me as too mentally incompetent to draw such conclusions for myself, my *dear* husband?”

“Not at all,” he said matter-of-factly, her own annoyance seeming to sober his as he realised they were in the middle of what was, possibly, their first marital dispute of any real moment. “But you have been content to follow my lead in such matters until now. Why would I consider this occasion to be any different...?”

The falseness of the smile accompanying his question to her was underlined by his next interrogation:

“…Or has *Isha* – our servant - persuaded you otherwise?”

The rebuke was not missed by her and did nothing to lessen her irritation.

“As a matter of fact, yes,” she answered.

His mouth gaped open as she delivered the reply that had been the last thing he had been expecting; aware through his shock and outrage that his wife was regarding him with what he could only describe as a half-amused look.

The kind of look, in fact, an adult gave to a particularly slow child in the presence of some grown-up logic.

He felt a rare anger rising in his breast:

“You speak of our marital relationship with a menial?” he questioned but did not question; though accusation was very much present in both tone and bearing as his outrage grew. “Share the secrets of man and wife with an *Indian* woman we employ as a maid?”

To his surprise, Christina’s posture stiffened and he saw that, rather lose her amusement and quail in the face of his displeasure, she was readying herself to do battle; his increasing ill-mood or not.

“Firstly,” she began, in a voice of command and assuredness he had not heard from her until now; “Isha is not employed by either of us but by my aunt. And, secondly, her views are of no less value because gender, geography, and male tyranny have ensured her only course in life if she is to feed and clothe herself gainfully is that of domestic service.”

Again, Covington cursed those damn suffragettes and their inability to leave well enough and the natural order of life alone. Their ever-growing militancy and acts of aggression that he, for one, counted as treason, had spawned a whole generation of troublemaking women who seemed, for some unaccountable reason, to consider themselves the equal of men. Christina’s

aunt, largesse or not, being one of their number and a target for his disgust. One of them, only this past June, having stepped out in front of a horrified King's horse as it attempted to honour its master by landing the year's blue-ribbon race for thoroughbreds.

That this woman had given her life to correct an injustice and for a cause to which she had committed herself, not leading the watching Covington or his friend Hanson, both of whom had been present on the day, to offer anything but criticism of the destructive selfishness that had ended her life and spoiled a glorious day out for thousands of horse lovers.

Now, it appeared, selfishness of the kind was making itself apparent in his own household.

And would *not* be tolerated!

His wife taking a lead from an aunt, and fellow countrywoman, was hard enough to countenance. But to not only be influenced by an Indian female who was neither family, countrywoman, or equal, was beyond his ken. As was her seeming readiness to discuss their married life with the woman.

"Isha," she continued, "may not have had the benefit of wealthy parents and a good education; yet still she has contrived to learn both a foreign tongue *and* fend for herself in a strange land. Or is it that you take your own privileges of birth and geography so much for granted that such achievements are of little note?"

"It is not her country of birth or her achievements that merit my attention in this instance, rather than the fact she is in receipt of confidences on your part that are not only disrespectful of your husband but border on the edge of being… of…"

He had been about to say *"treachery"* but considered it a little strong; struggling, consequently, for a less *forceful* word to describe what he thought of as her lack of discretion.

The gap allowing his wife to supply a word that was a million miles from what he had intended:

"I believe the word you are looking for is *'emancipated'*."

He stared at her as if she had grown two-heads.

"Aunt Cora and Isha have many interesting things to say on my suppression and, it might interest you to hear, I agree with them."

"Suppression?" he burst out.

She nodded.

"Victoria is long dead," she told him, "and I for one have no desire to see her restrictive times exhumed and set in place again. Women are finding their voice now and men such as you had better come to terms with the fact pretty quickly."

"Men such as I?" he asked, going from outrage to numbness in the space of seconds.

"Bullies," she confirmed. "Content to assume power, though they most assuredly do not deserve the honour."

"And…? And this is how you see me? Your husband?"

"You as much as any," she agreed. "Perhaps more, even."

“But…? Where does this come from, Christina? We have been blissfully happy these past years. Surely you do not regard my taking up my natural role as head-of-household as… bullying? Someone has to make decisions and…”

“You automatically assumed it would be you.”

“It is the natural way,” he protested, feeling uncomfortable under the scrutiny of wifely eyes that seemed to hold only malice in his regard. “Men must lead and women must follow. It has ever been so.”

“Then you are as poor a student of history as you are a husband,” she sniffed.

The criticism from a woman he loved to distraction cut him. Not a minute of any given day passed, that a thought of her did not flash through his thoughts. And yet she had just described him as a *“poor husband”*.

And seemed to regret her observation not a whit.

“Were it not for strong women such as our esteemed Mrs Pankhurst and her followers; together with Aunt Cora and our housekeeper Isha, of whom you are so dismissive; we should find ourselves as subjugated and unjustly treated as ever. And, to aid your education, there are a multitude of societies down through the ages in which women were both the rule-makers and, as you say in your usual pompous and old-fashioned way, heads-of-households. If you will not take my word on the subject then make use of the nearest library and read of the Sitones of Germanica, the Padaungs of Burma, or the Manipurians of eastern India; to name but a few of many aside from the famed Amazons.”

Covington was silent as it became clear that this was not some here today gone tomorrow fad his wife was throwing up to him. At the very least, it sounded as if she had undertaken some semi-scholarly and serious research on the subject; serious enough at least to convince her of the rightness of such ludicrous assumptions. He knew she was about as truthful a person as there could be – which in itself did not, of course, preclude delusion - and, consequently, had no reason to doubt the existence of these so-called matriarchies she was urging him to investigate. He also knew that he had returned home to a happy home and household, with what he had thought was clearly defined roles, only to find himself in the middle of an insurrection that, obviously, had been rising slowly to such a temperature it had no alternative but to boil over.

And boil over upon him.

It was the first altercation of any real heat he could recall having with her from their courting days, through marriage, to now and he could see her aunt’s hand in it as assuredly as he could see the red-mist of anger beginning to film his eyes; his anger growing all the more toxic at the realisation her aunt had deliberately introduced a likeminded female into his household to stir the pot.

And a female of inferior quality, from an inferior region and culture, at that.

Well, that aspect of the aunt’s interference – he had no intention of returning the monetary portion of his wife’s birthday gift – could be rectified and nipped in the bud quite easily.

“As I intended to do some days ago, before my soft-heart on your behalf prevented me, I shall write to your aunt and thank her for the gift of a domestic,” he told her. “I shall also inform her

that, as well meaning as I am sure her gift was intended, that it has not worked to our satisfaction and we have had no recourse but to dispense with her services."

The response to his superior and clearly announced edict was not the one he had expected:

"You will do no such thing," his wife insisted, with a force of will he had not experienced from her to now. "It may not have worked to your satisfaction, but I am delighted with Isha's efforts on *my* behalf. The gift of her services was made to me and I am more than delighted with the way she performs them."

Her expression became scornful:

"And I notice you make no mention of returning *my* one-thousand-pounds?"

The servant came in at this point with a tin of biscuits and a glass of milk for the mistress, but nothing for her master, and Covington bridled at the sight of her; his antipathy towards her race and her presence in his home made all the stronger after hearing of the influence she appeared to be exerting over his wife.

"Would the Master be requiring some refreshment also," she asked in her good English that was accented in that sing-song way of the multi-lingual Indian and put him in mind of the Welsh and their, equally irritating use of his mother-tongue.

Not trusting himself with words at that precise moment, he gave an emphatic shake of the head and simply looked on as she served her mistress. She was dressed today in a green sari that ended below her knees and underneath which she wore a pair of leg hugging trousers of the same cotton fabric in beige. But, for some reason, it was her feet, clad in their usual sandals with brightly coloured straps, that caught his attention.

Or, more crucially and equally as inexplicably, her toes.

For there, on the second toe of her left-foot, glittering beside a nail painted in vivid scarlet, was a gold ring.

A gold toe-ring that glittered within his vision and from which he found it extremely difficult to tear his eyes…

Unease

He had slipped off his clothes as the bedroom clock chimed ten and slid gently into bed, putting out the candle on the table while careful not to disturb his already slumbering wife - having no desire to revisit what, to him, had been the shocking events of the day.

Events he fully attended to address that they might not occur in his home *ever* again.

His earlier intention of asserting himself and sending the Indian domestic packing; thus nipping his wife's irrational and intensely irritating mini-rebellion in the bud, had been postponed by the arrival in the front-room of the woman herself, bearing tea and biscuits – though he could not quite remember why he had not followed through on his intention afterwards.

"No matter," he had told himself as he prepared to join his already sleeping wife, "tomorrow will serve equally as well. Any longer though, and Christina might actually become confirmed in the nonsense being spoon-fed her by aunt, servant, and any number of credulous Pankhurst sympathisers."

The blinds were all evenly and duly drawn, it was a summer night and outside a great golden moon had floated into view through intermittent puffs of magical cloud, the London beyond the blinds filled with the wonderful light of a red sunset auguring much good for the following morn.

But it was neither magical puffs or shepherd sunsets that occupied his mind as he eased back the single cotton sheet covering his wife that he might enter the marital bed that had, until the events of the day about to pass, been happy and free of acrimony.

What arrested his thoughts and petrified him in motion was the sight of Christina's womanly figure resting upon the divan.

Her alabaster skin revealed in all its glory as she slumbered facing away from him; the round and full contours of her still firm buttocks revealed to him in all their glory given her usual concealment in the shape of neck to toe nightwear was absent for the first time in his memory.

Never the most tactile or sexual of fellows, Covington felt his breath catch at his throat as his eyes drank in the full glory of his wife's sleeping form.

He could also feel a monstrous erection as it tented the front of his pyjama-bottoms and realised he was unaware of feeling it grow; so sudden was his response to his wife's unheard of nakedness – minimal interest in the more animal human passions having mirrored his own to this point and going no small way to explaining why their union had been a coming together of like tastes, opinions, and inhibited sexual response.

Feeling incredibly aroused, he manoeuvred his penis through to the bottom's fly and slid in alongside her automaton-like, barely aware of his actions until his rigid cock was sliding up and down between the valley of her buttocks. He slowly stole his arm under his wife's neck, and played with the cascading brown hair she habitually released from its perennial bun before sleeping. She did not move and gave no sign she was aware of the cock he was sliding the length of her alabaster arse. A lack of awareness that seemed to fan the fire of his excitement still further until.

He was no stranger to making love to his loving and attractive wife, of course, but that lovemaking had been, like the man himself, conservative and very much missionary in its routine.

More to the point, though, and no matter how uninspiring their coupling, his wife had at least been conscious during the exercise.

This, however, shocked him to his core, even as the sensations of his foreskin gliding the length of her arse in so base a fashion fried his senses with the power of the perverse and proscribed.

A catholic, if not of the devout variety, a small voice told him to seek the confessional at his earliest convenience for taking such a foul liberty with his sleeping wife; even as he prayed that she remain insentient long enough for him to fully savour the incredible sensations her unknowing derriere provided him.

Feeling the power of true sexual abandon for the first time in his life, all his thoughts concentrated on the living and pulsing ramrod he was negotiating the length of her crease as his sensations of euphoria surged and the blood deserted his upper body give his cock an unholy power and urgency he had not imagined to that point, let alone experienced.

Finally, with but a few more strokes, already regretting the explosion that would cut short his glorious anticipation of it, his manly emissions burst from the mushroom at the apex of his penis with the force of a volcanic eruption and defiled the skin at the hollow of her flawless back.

And still, as his thoughts came back to him and the full horror of his bestial and uncharacteristic actions became apparent to him, she lay still, breathing regularly and easily as though she were sleeping the sleep of the truly just and innocent.

Feeling sick to the stomach for his usage of her; despite his relief she was insentient still and his remaining anger for their marital spat of not hours before; he slid quietly from the bed and made his way down the hall to the bathroom for some water and a flannel that he may clean them both of disgrace – praying as he went about it that his wife did not wake from her sleep as he made good the damage.

It was only as he reached the bathroom, that its door seemed to open with a mind of his own and, as he stood in shock, diminishing erection protruding from his pyjama fly and the evidence of his shameful recent passion dribbling from its tip, the naked and candlelit form of their Indian housekeeper emerged to face him.

His mouth dropped open, mortified to have her see him in such a condition and equally as horrified at the sight of her naked form that seemed to him… *barbaric*.

The moonlight that streamed from the landing window, added to the flickering light of the candle in which they were bathed, lent a kind of horrific backdrop to their surprise encounter; though, when he thought about it later, he could find no recollection of shock of any kind in either her bearing or her expression. In fact, it would suggest itself to him that she seemed fully expectant of his presence at the bathroom door. *And* in such a condition.

At this moment, however, totally lost for words and too numb for reaction, he was aware, nonetheless, of dark northern Indian skin on an hour-glass figure and a pair of magnificent breasts with nipples betraying their owner's own arousal; his eyes only leaving them when those belonging to his servant rose to meet his own and he felt himself drawn into their compelling gaze.

Any question or rebuke on the subject of her presence there was academic the moment her head rose to his.

For what was only seconds but seemed to him a forever, Edwin Covington stared into the eyes of his servant with a sickly feeling of dread as he sensed something being drawn from his body.

It would only dawn on him gradually, over the next few days, that what he had felt himself losing was his own sense of self-governance.

It would be, he told himself repeatedly, the moment his life was no longer his own to dispose of but became the property of another.

The moment his own hell on earth began.

*****

The slap, though he would not know it as such until his scrambled senses returned to something like normal, fetched him from sleep to wakefulness more effectively than the glass of cold water his wife had thrown in his face only moments before.

Dislocated and uncomprehending, Edwin Covington's back arced convulsively as he sat up in bed to the sight of his wife, in her everyday attire, holding an empty glass and with a hand drawn back as if to strike him again, should it prove necessary.

"You were dreaming, Edwin," she told him, voice and expression calm and even but, he would tell himself later, displaying no audible or visual concern for the nightmare he had so obviously experienced.

"But…" he spluttered, relieved to find himself - he checked quickly – in unmarked pyjamas and in his own bed. "I… I…"

His normally loving and caring wife was matter of fact:

"You have had a night-terror," she told him, rising to leave as if no more need be said on the matter. "Isha is preparing us a cooked breakfast, so it might be an idea for you to wash and shave before we begin our weekend."

Aware, but too dislocated to respond, Covington did, nonetheless, register that her words as she took her leave of him had the distinct air of orders being given to an underling.

Finally, still upright upon the divan, his equilibrium returning, he laughed at the fanciful nature of his own thoughts.

"Christina?" he said almost aloud. "Give orders to me?"

He was still chuckling to himself; the events of the previous day that had disconcerted and angered him so having receded in strength; when an image from his *"night terror"*, as she had described it, blazed across the black curtain of suddenly sightless eyes.

As the image of himself kneeling upon his own upstairs landing, penis protruding from the fly at his pyjama bottoms; this as he lowered his head to place his lips upon the ring of gold circling the second-toe belonging to his naked and imperious Indian servant; he felt something build within him.

Something that felt very familiar and very…

Edwin Covington let out a little strangled scream that was intermingled with shame, disgust, and a debased and incredible pleasure as the cock that had erected to no kore than the fleeting imagery of his lips on the woman's feet jetted his semen into the room with such power it landed some five feet away upon the bedroom rug.

Reversals

Saturday morning was always an occasion of comparative idleness. Indeed, before the advent of Isha, they would never have got breakfast if Mrs. Covington, who had certain instincts of the housewife, had not awoke and seen the bright sunshine, and felt that the house was too still.

Things were different now though.

"The *'Master'* will be down shortly," she told Isha upon entering the kitchen, her emphasis on the description fetching both women to unseemly giggling, given they were some years beyond the schoolyards of both Europe and the Subcontinent.

"He was," continued the Mistress of the house, still making merry, "experiencing a bad dream of some kind. It was necessary for me to slap his face to bring him from his sleep."

"Sometimes, Miss Christina," she was assured in heavily accented English, her servant and recent confidante at pains to address her as if she were still a single woman, "it is necessary to take a firm hand with men such as your husband." She transferred sizzling bacon from pan to plate. "It is the only language to which such brutes respond."

Christina Covington accepted the diminishment of her husband from the lips of her Indian servant with a nod, though she did question herself as to when such acceptance became tolerable – even… *necessary* – to her.

"Do not forget that Miss Cora is visiting this morning," Isha reminded her, the sari of choice on this particular morning somewhat different from the usual flowing variety. This one, designed of a clingier fabric in purple, hugging itself to her womanly curves and emphasising the shape of her considerable breasts that went some way towards ameliorating the somewhat cruel and predatory features of a stark face in which by far the most riveting asset were the clear and piercing ice-blue eyes made all the more vivid by an underscoring of kohl.

"I have not forgotten, Isha. Though I do puzzle at the urgency, since we have not met face-to-face for some length of time now."

The housekeeper completed the Master's English breakfast and wiped the sides of the plate clean with a tea-towel.

"Miss Cora is kept very active with her many activities on behalf of women and it is only to be expected that she has not as much time as she would like for visits more social in nature."

Christina nodded.

"But," the Indian domestic continued with a smile, "you must be in no doubt of her high regard and love for her niece. She has nothing but the best intentions when it comes to you."

The smile faded.

"Though not as much, I am certain, in regard of your husband."

The lady of the house again accepted the less than flattering words of her maid in respect of Edwin Covington and, for one brief moment, felt a sense of disloyalty for allowing him to be spoken of in such a way by one of Isha's station. Only to berate herself for thinking of the woman in such a derogatory fashion. And in a way she knew from her aunt's correspondence

– the same correspondence she had kept from her husband – that would have angered her last remaining relation a good deal.

A last remaining relative who was coming to see her with exciting news that would change her life.

“Did you really make him kneel before you and kiss your foot last night?” she asked, frissons of ungodly desire travelling the length of her spine to find a home in her pussy simply at the mention of it; frissons that triggered a return of the feelings she had experienced as she had played insentient and felt her husband’s pole-hard cock insinuate itself the length of her arse crack – it having taken a supreme effort of will not to orgasm herself when she felt the copious and warm cream of his lust spray the small of her back.

“Only my toes,” Isha confirmed in her excellent but heavily accented second-tongue, raising a sandaled foot towards her and displaying her toe-ring.

“Or, more precisely, the ring placed about one of their number.”

“And your eyes and the gift of mesmerism that runs hand-in-hand with them is so powerful you can make him believe he has dreamed the experience?”

“With him? Yes, Miss Christina?”

“But…? I still don’t understand. Why with him and not another, Isha?”

The Indian woman looked a little… *conflicted*.

As if, in fact, she wished to spare the feelings of her mistress.

A confliction that mistress sensed:

“I will not be offended, Isha,” she assured her. “You have my most solemn promise.”

She smiled:

“Have we not shared so much in respect of him already?”

Now it was Isha’s turn to both nod and smile.

“That much must go without saying, Miss Christina,” she agreed. “But the fact remains he has been your husband for some time now and, though you are now beginning to see him in quite a different light, shall we say, he remains your husband still and I would not wish to offend you by making my true opinion of him plain.”

“And what if I were to tell you that this *‘different light’* in which I now see him makes it impossible for you to offend me in any way with your opinion of him?”

Isha thought about it, her reservations sincere, being that she had developed a bond with the wife in the short time since she had taken up her position in the household that was at least the equal of that felt by the aunt.

“I promise you, Isha,” Christina gave further assurance, “that I have never felt to alive as I have during your stay here. It is plainly obvious that a huge part of my new vitality is that I am now aware of my husband’s feet of clay. The knowledge that his being and remaining the head of our household is not carved in archaic Sinai stone.”

She hesitated, Victorian upbringing no small thing to shed and the sharing of such intimate matters not easily done.

“I also… I also feel for the first time that I am alive… alive… You know?”

“Sexually,” Isha finished for her, no question mark required.

A red-faced Christina nodded and her servant and confidante smiled.

“Then you have lots to look forward to in the coming years,” Isha assured her.

“And my husband?”

The Indian woman again became thoughtful.

Then:

“Your husband is a very weak man, Christina. You mention my gift of eye and mesmerism. And yes, I do possess such a gift. But you must believe me when I tell you that it is only with the truly weak that I may do them full justice.”

“And… And Edwin, my Edwin, is of their number?”

“Would you have believed he could have behaved in such a craven manner as he behaved last night before actually witnessing it for yourself?”

“Isha, I… I’m not saying I don’t believe you. But I didn’t actually see him with his… You know?”

“His lips upon my toe-ring as he adopted a traditional posture of respect upon his knees?”

Christina nodded, a small part of her shamed that imagery of the kind could induce such… *longings*… in her breast.

As well as elsewhere.

“But you did feel his hardened pee-pee as slid the length of your arse-crack before it exploded over your exposed skin?”

Again, and with cheeks fair burning with embarrassment, Christina nodded.

“And was it not exciting to you to imagine a time when you could simply order another part of his anatomy to show its respect to your superior female ar…”

Isha broke off as the sound of Edwin Covington’s footfall descending the stairs diverted her attention.

In a hushed voice she assured her Mistress:

“Believe me, by the time your husband has finished this last breakfast a female hand will ever prepare for him, Miss Christina, I promise you will have no problems of belief whatsoever…”

Rest Troubled

He was at that stage of sleep where he was aware of dreaming but too deep into his slumbers to awaken.

Even though he wished to.

For the dream was a familiar one and not at all appealing to his somewhat limited and unforgiving English sensibilities that had always been behind a vibrant if entirely predictable imagination.

How could it be anything other than unappealing and demoralising to a man of his embedded beliefs?

He was in the process of undressing a woman. And not just any woman, but one of colonial background. The Indian subcontinent, to be precise. And, to add yet more of an edge to a shame he could feel almost as keenly as if he were awake and living the domestic ordeal, the woman was his housekeeper and not his wife.

"Fold my sari neatly and place it on the chair," he was ordered in her sing-song version of his native tongue that grated upon his nerves with unfailing regularity.

Upon the back of his eyelids, he saw himself do as he was bid as the now naked form of the housekeeper looked on with a stern expression upon features far too hard and angular to ever be described as anywhere near resembling "comely". A failing, however, he could only acknowledge was nowhere present in the wondrously firm and full breasts also etched upon his closed lids and certainly not in the hourglass form and most un-Indian and shapely legs below.

"Good boy," the dream housekeeper praised mockingly when he lay the sari upon the chair and came back to stand before her.

Penitently, it seemed to the dreaming man.

"There is much for you to learn if you are to become the body-servant of a woman," the accent that grated upon him so irritatingly told him, "but you will find my teaching both strict and diligent."

The thoughts running in tandem and just below the surface of his dream pronounced themselves amused at the sheer implausibility of its content and, had he been fully conscious, he would have laughed at himself for such a ludicrous flight of fancy.

And yet…

He watched as his own equally naked, if extremely pale in contrast, body responded to the unthinkable situation in which it had been placed.

And in a way he found as horrifying as it was reprehensible and insulting to the wife he had loved and honoured for so long.

"Yes. That is the way your unsatisfactory cock should always be when in my presence. It is a mark of your respect and your reverence for your superior Indian master."

“Master?” his thoughts raged, as the dream began to deteriorate into nightmare and he willed himself to wake.

“It is early days for you in your service to your new female superiors,” his dream tormentor continued. “No doubt you will, as an English gentleman and the former head of this household, attempt to fight the fate fortune has seen fit to bestow upon you. But the end result will remain the same.”

“Never!” screamed a voice beneath the dream.

“Oh, yes. It is but very early days in the service that lays before you; but a servant you are and a servant you will always remain from here on.”

He watched as his dream presence shook its head violently to one side but what truly caught his attention was the rutting rod of his manhood as it pointed towards his navel with a power as puissant as its admission of his shameful arousal.

“Kneel and place your lips upon the toes of your Indian superior,” the words bounced from one side of his cranium to the other.

“There will be snowstorms in Hades before a proud Englishman and devoted husband consents to demean both his person and his race in such a way,” he urged his metaphysical doppelganger to tell this hateful and inferior person.

Urgings that were to no avail.

He watched the scene upon his eyelids with dread as he seemed to slowly cave in upon himself; knees buckling under the weight of some unseen but no less unanswerable pressure to lower him to waiting rug beneath her brown and highly arched feet.

“It is something you will always do for me as a mark of your respect for my authority,” he heard, his own eyes focusing upon the hateful and inhuman face of his low-caste tormentor with incredulity; aware that her own arousal was adding a different dimension to those hard and angular features. “Something that will symbolise both your submission to me and your acceptance that is it I who controls your manhood from this point forward.”

The sleeper below the dream watched as the monstrous Indian female took a step towards him.

“Place your hands behind your back respectfully and then lower yourself from the waist until your lips are pressed against my toes,” she ordered his doppelganger with full confidence she would be obeyed.

At this point, the sleeper at the edge of the dream became one with the dream itself.

Now, not only did he see brown and arched feet with vermillion painted nails as his head lowered towards them, but he felt the full force of his inexplicable arousal as his manhood strained so hard he felt sure it must surely detach itself to the scrotum keeping it moored.

And worse…

As his lips came closer to the toes he was intended to… “respect” …a glint of something gold and familiar filled his vision and, just as his lips made contact with their intended object, his

cock exploded with a force and power this reserved and undemonstrative English husband had not experienced or even imagined until that point.

Then, as he remained motionless with his lips upon her painted nails:

"Good boy," came her voice from above. "Now you see the rewards of such respect.

Cock still emptying itself onto the rug below him, her heard:

"And just think how much more rewarding your respect will be when your lips and tongue show the rest of your superior's body such devotion."

*****

Edwin Covington came awake with a start with which he was more and more familiar, his body beneath the flannel pyjamas awash with perspiration and saturating the starched white sheets of the bed. Not only were the dreams tormenting him on a regular nightly basis now, but they were becoming both lewder and more… *vivid*. And the sense of disquiet he experienced upon waking was taking his conscious and rational thoughts longer and longer to dispel.

So long, in fact, that he could not dispel them at all, as that same conscious rationality made it plain to him that the dreams of his monstrous housekeeper he had allowed to deteriorate into nightmare had, since that ghastly morning at his own breakfast-table, but a few weeks before, become his new reality.

Not for the first time since that fateful morning repast, he lay gazing at the darkened and star splattered sky visible beyond the attic window and racked his brain for a solution to the situation and a means of freeing himself from the metaphoric but no less painful shackles in which the Indian woman held him with such seeming ease.

And not just him…

As was his way recently, his eyes began to mist when he thought of the evil enchantment in which not just he, but his beloved wife also, was held.

And all, it appeared, at the behest of her wealthy and *"emancipated"* Aunt Cora.

The same aunt who had visited them recently and took great pleasure in ignoring him completely and giving him only that attention a great lady might be expected to devote to a lowly and indentured servant.

That the man she was acting towards as if her were a human possession was the husband of her favourite niece was of no matter as he served the ladies their tea - under the supervision of the Indian abomination and was then banished to the garden to do some *necessary* weeding.

For what else but hypnotic malevolence could explain the sadistic delight his formerly loving and feminine wife took in seeing him lower his dignity before the Indian abomination as he knelt before her and placed his lips upon the gleaming metal that ringed her toe.

A dignity he had lowered many times before her since that fateful morning in the breakfast-room.

And before a wife who seemed energised by treating him as if he were her…

Unable to bring himself to utter the word, even in the privacy of his own tormented thoughts, Edwin Covington gave that line of thought up and concentrated instead on a prayer for deliverance to the just and compassionate deity he truly believed dwelled, ethereal but no less vigilant and all-seeing, in the canvas of stars beyond the window of his new quarters.

Christina

Christina lay quiet for many minutes after waking; a common occurrence since the events of the previous month. It was as if she needed this time to come to terms with life of domesticity and fulfilment she now lived; a time necessary if she were to assure herself the pure eroticism of her situation were not simply a dream and her sense of well-being a metaphysical chimera no more than a by-product of an over-active and *very* decadent imagination. It was only when full reality played over consciousness that she allowed herself to smile in the knowledge that the recent female despotism under which her husband now toiled was no figment of her imagination.

The décor and furnishings of *her* new bedroom waiting to meet her focusing eyes adding the final confirmation that her position as head-of-household was both real and, if she had anything to do with it, irrevocable.

Not for the first time recently, the transformed wife gave thanks to the guidance of her revered aunt and the advent into her life of the wise and mesmeric Isha. That she was a convert to her aunt's radical view, of not just female equality but supremacy over the brute male, would have been wholly transparent had there been anyone other than Isha and her demoralised husband in the house to take note of the fact. More surprising though, would have been their discovery that treating her former love-mate as if he were no more than a beast-of-burden in his own country, as well as humiliating both him and the manhood her treatment of him was withering on the vine, was taking its toll upon her formerly loving and compassionate nature and leading her to embrace the more *perverse* delights of sex in which it was the female who reigned supreme. Her early resistance to the contents of her aunt's private correspondence with her and the more subtle way Isha had underlined these *"natural truisms"*, had gradually been subsumed by the unexpected response of her own psyche; to the point that when the Indian woman had given her first demonstration of the power a woman could wield over a man – and over her own husband – she was already practically a convert.

Alone in the room she had once shared with that same husband, she took in her own choice of colour and style with satisfaction and, following on from it, the image of her husband downstairs as he went about the preparation of her breakfast under the watchful and severe eye of the Indian woman who had once been his housekeeper lit up thoughts as if it were a lightning conductor connected to her most intimate womanhood. A golden tube of sunlight shone through an opening in the recently purchased Venetian blinds and dappled the brown hair that lay about her head on the pillow as she looked steadily into the room at the "duchesse" toilet-table, the coloured porcelain of the washstand, and the two photogravures in oak frames, *"The Meeting"* and *"The Parting,"* that hung upon the wall. All of them things she would never have been allowed to purchase before her husband's… *surrender*.

The resonance of this unspoken word in her thoughts made the current travelling from head to loins even more… *vibrant*… and she let out a sigh of sheer contentment as she allowed herself to bathe in her own sense of autonomy and sexually charged anticipation – though her luxuriating was not so all-consuming she could not find the time and space in those thoughts to again give thanks to her sophisticated and liberated aunt who had made this new life possible.

She was still thanking the family member who had changed her very existence when the sound of her servant's footsteps, this as they climbed the stairs with her breakfast tray, brought another smile to lips that were both anticipatory and sadistic.

It was, after all, the man who had once ruled this same household, and who remained still, even if only notionally, her husband, lord, and master.

Not a month after his fall, even the memory of him in such a role was enough to make her head shake and a tutting sound escape her lips.

How had she not seen him for the weak individual he truly was?

As the steps brought him closer, the faint shadow of a shade of a thought came over her, and she again found herself in the quick rapture of a fond dream. Another world where bliss was wine and where one wandered in a deep and happy valley; the moon always rising red above the trees and one's desires paramount. And yet, she told herself, this other world need remain a dream no longer – even if the images it contained were what the vast majority of her fellow islanders would describe as… *depraved*.

And depraved to the point of mental illness, at that.

Christina Covington sat up, wide awake now and with eyes fixed upon the door; wanting her husbandly chattel to think he had kept her waiting. Her mocking smile refusing to recede as she recalled how humiliated poor Edwin had been yesterday when she inspected his new *quarters* in the attic for the first time since Isha had insisted he occupy them instead of her. After all, he was her underling too when it came to it, and her position of housekeeper with a responsibility for anything to do with the household, on behalf of the *"Mistress"* who was now also an intimate friend, made it unthinkable he should occupy a more spacious and luxurious living space than his immediate superior.

The servant's attic once occupied by their Indian domestic was small and stuffy and Mrs. Covington paused for a moment at the door that was opened in readiness for her inspection, wondering whether the man beside the single-bed, standing to attention with hands behind his back as if awaiting the approach of the pompous Lord Kitchener himself, could possibly be the slightly condescending and controlling man to whom she had spent so long married.

Even more incredible to her – despite the fact it was not the first time she had witnessed his supervision at her hands – was the presence of the Indian woman slightly to his side. For no matter how often she witnessed her husband's meek and docile behaviour in her presence, Christina Covington found it hard to reconcile the change could be real, let alone lasting. Perhaps what amazed her more, was the impression Edwin gave while tendering his docility and obedience to one of her… *kind*. An impression of deep and abiding hatred, burning and cutting beneath the slightly lowered head that seemed relieved to inspect the bare boards of the attic rather than recognise his shame in the gaze of both wife and housekeeper.

For how else could his situation be described?

And especially by one of his narrow and unbending beliefs?

Never a cruel man, he was, nonetheless, of that species of Englander who believed implicitly in his nation's unquestioned place at the very summit of the civilised world and the superiority of its peoples over those of less… *enlightened*… parts of the globe.

Isha's Indian Subcontinent, along with darkest Africa, foremost amongst these *"unevolved cultures"*.

Along with women of all denominations.

How much more humiliating for him, then, to not only be reduced to the status of chattel and flunky in his own home – and to his own wife; but to be supervised and educated in the ways of the domestic menial by a woman from just such a culture and civilisation?

"Good morning, Isha," she greeted her so-conspirator cheerily, though she had already spoken with her earlier, knowing her cheery familiarity with the woman who had once been his domestic would not only serve to heighten his sense of despair and humiliation but trigger yet again the delicious sensations the exercise of such control over him seldom failed to produce at the very centre of her womanhood. "I trust our new servant is proving receptive to your excellent training of him and is showing you the respect your new position demands?"

The dusky-faced former housekeeper, knowing his lowered head prevented him from observing, allowed a smile of recognition to transform her angular features for a moment; knowing as she did that the formerly submissive wife had chosen her words in such a way as to stoke the constant fire that was her once commanding husband's shame. She also recognised the excitement at the housewife's core and felt a corresponding wetness beneath the white sari bedizened with purple she wore that day. For the plans both women had for the handsome Englishman who stood so penitent before them – even as feelings of revenge and the means of taking it boiled beneath his seemingly accepting exterior – went way beyond the instilling of simple domestic obedience and into those lewd and decadent areas polite society preferred to believe the fair sex incapable of imagining; let alone visiting.

That he hated them both; perhaps especially the supposedly loving and loyal wife who had betrayed him to his new fate; with a fury that was equal if different in both their regards was not only apparent to them but welcomed.

It made his unwilling submission to them that much…

Delicious!

"It is still early and he is but a man," Isha answered, purposely exaggerating her accent that it may grate further on the Englishman's sensibilities now that he was in no position to pass comment upon it. "But he will soon learn his new place and the skills necessary to serve his female masters."

The swoon that almost undone Christina at these words was not lost on the Indian woman and, in truth, the uttering of such words before the powerless Covington, a man she knew regarded her and her race as his inferior, was enough to take her already considerable arousal into less manageable dimensions.

As Christina pictured herself inspecting her husband's new quarters and heard Isha's words afterwards as she described her own reaction to the experience, it was all she could do not to slide an impatient hand under the covering bedding and between her legs to slip an easing finger into the morass her recollections had made of her cunt. The image of her husband simply standing to attention the whole time, cheeks crimson with shame and unable to even make eye-contact with the wife whose life he had virtually ruled since the swapping of their vows so many years ago before a priest who had been his uncle, was so stimulating in its subservient simplicity that she wondered if she would be able to prevent herself from ordering him to his knees between her legs the moment he entered with her breakfast. After all, there was surely no harm in him taking his *breakfast* as she took hers, was there?

It was at this exact moment that the gentle rapping of the knuckles belonging to that man who had once been the driving force in her life heralded his arrival.

“Come!” she said in a grand voice she hoped did not betray the sheer excitement she took from witnessing him in his more… *servile*... role. The sight of him in the servant’s uniform – or *‘livery’*, as Isha preferred to describe it – they had both chosen for him only served to enflame her excitement and she was beginning to believe her new female and Indian intimate was correct when she said she would *never* tire of seeing her husband dressed in such a way. Not that there was anything outrageous in his clothing, you understand – perish the thought that two women living in such narrow and judgmental times might invite the censure and wrath of what remained a male-dominated society to come down upon their heads; even that of a number of their fellow women yet to be made aware of the power residing in their supposedly fragile frames. Just the same, though, there could be no doubt that anyone seeing Edwin Covington in his *‘livery’* would no instantly that he was a man who provided a service.

And in his own home too.

Why else would she no longer encourage the visits of family and friends that had once been commonplace before his… *fall??*

Her husband’s missing presence, when she herself visited friends and relations – with a growingly infrequent regularity, it must be said – explained away by an illness of the nervous system that had not only required him to resign his position in the City, but made social interaction of even the most fleeting and limited kind intolerable to him.

It was a fiction that had served her well; winning as it did instant sympathy for both husband and wife and supplying the privacy their new domestic arrangements demanded.

“G-Good morning, M-Madame,” he began the moment he entered, the voice articulating the coached words Isha had told him to utter a croaky facsimile of the vibrant and self-assured delivery Christina Covington had grown used to over the years.

“Am I deceived,” she began, not acknowledging his greeting, “but is my breakfast a little later than usual this morning?”

As he lay the tray containing her tea, toast and boiled egg, across her lap, she could see colour infuse his handsome cheeks and a pulse ticking furiously at his temple as he thought how best to answer her.

“My apologies, Madame,” he began, eyes darting anywhere and everywhere in attempts to not engage with her own. “Miss… Miss Isha asked me to…”

“Now, Edwin,” she cut in, thrilled to be able to take such a stern tone with him and be confident he would not scold her for so doing. “Do not be insolent. You know very well it is no longer *‘Miss Isha’* to the likes of you. I may be the head of our household now, but she is your *‘Malkin’*. And that, as you well know, is how you must address her from now on.”

Covington felt the familiar roiling in his stomach as the meagre breakfast he had barely touched threatened to burst forth into his oesophageal tract at the certainty that his wife’s words were no sadistic joke but a matter, rather, of sadistic intent upon her part.

Her next thoughts upon the subject were no more consoling:

“I may be in overall control of both my marriage and my home,” this woman he recognised only physically – and even then without the warmth of love and affection he had felt for her previously – but Miss Isha is in complete charge of all matters domestic inside my home and those she employs to ensure its well-being.”

Not for the first time, he wondered if she actually believed the utter nonsense she was spouting and wasn't, as was he, under the influence of their housekeeper's nefarious and mysterious… *gifts*.

What he heard next went no way towards persuading him otherwise:

"In her country, a woman in authority over servants is addressed as *'Malkin'*.

She looked him in the eye as she said this and there was no sign of her labouring under some kind of a spell or personal magnetism.

Far from it, in fact.

His formerly loving wife was fairly blooming in her new and unexpected position of power and, where once he had looked into eyes warm with her fondness for him, he saw now only the unhealthy animation and perverse excitement of the worst kind of zealot.

A zealot won over to the unholy joys of the barbarous and the satanic.

"She is most serious that you observe the distinction and has promised me there will be severe consequences if you show your disrespect by addressing her in any other way."

Again, his mind raced from pillar-to-post in attempts to gauge a way out from under his most dire and *fantastical* situation.

And, again, found his thoughts empty of any resolution.

He recalled the look upon the face of his friend, Greville, during his visit to the Hanson home for financial advice. All had been bonhomie and cheer until he had mentioned the aunt's gift of a housekeeper and, more importantly, the nationality and gender of this paid-for domestic. At that point, a grave look had passed across his friend's cheery expression and been followed by a warning of having heard *"disturbing"* tales and for him to be vigilant to events at home.

Greville could not be drawn further and, the nearer he got to his own home after leaving Fulham, the less concerned by his friend's *"fancy"* had Covington become.

A brushing aside of his friend's concerns that come back to bite him with a vengeance.

More than once he had attempted to pen a letter to his friend explaining his circumstances, and each time had found himself physically incapable of placing the words he so desperately wished to disclose onto the paper itself. Not even a *"Dear Greville"*. It also struck him that, even had he been able to compose the missive he had in mind, he would have had neither the money to purchase a simple stamp or the strength of will to leave the house without either the permission of his Indian task-mistress or his wife herself. In fact, now he gave it serious thought, he realised he had not left the house itself since that fateful breakfast that had seen him lower himself before the Indian woman – and his wife – to place his lips upon the shiny metal of her barbaric toe-ring; his flesh crawling as recalled the words she insisted he use to pledge himself not only to his wife's service but to hers.

Aside from the back garden – *never* the front – the only time he had sampled fresh air since his… *demotion*… had been on those occasions when he had been required to tend either lawn or flower-beds.

This as they had taken tea he had just served them and gazed upon his labours!

And now one more piece of emasculation was about to be laid over his already beleaguered pride:

“Of course,” the wife he no longer recognised continued; “I have given your Malkin permission to discipline you as she sees fit if you prove… *wilfully disobedient*.

Thinking he could not be shocked further, Edwin Covington stared wide-eyed at the stranger regarding him from the marital bed they had once shared.

“D-Discipline me?” he asked in a voice so discountenanced and beaten as to be barely a facsimile of the vibrant and commanding baritone that had once been his.

“Yes,” Christina Covington snapped at him, her own voice not holding even a smidgen of its former love and respect. “And do not speak without having first asked permission again… Unless, of course, you wish to sample some of that discipline sooner rather than later.”

He stared at her aghast, manhood taking yet another lowering as he realised tears had formed in his eyes; his sense of betrayal and desolation so great he could forget her warning and do just as she had warned him against doing.

“Christina,” he croaked, voice piteous. “What has become of you that treating the husband who loved you in such a despicable way can seem so… so… *natural* to you?”

“Loved?” she exclaimed with mock surprise. “Are you saying your feelings for me are now in the past tense?”

Suddenly, he realised that, unlike him, she was not labouring under mental yoke placed upon her by the Indian abomination but had simply lost her sanity.

How else could she have asked such a question and how else could she expect him to feel about her?

“Anyway, in answer to the question you put to me, despite having been warned not to speak without first asking and gaining permission – and for which you will be disciplined at a more convenient time; did you really expect my feelings of love and respect towards you to remain the same after having witnessed the true nature of the man I married?”

“But…?” he tried to protest.

“Oh, do save your puerile excuses for someone gullible enough to believe them,” she told him. “Yes, I am well aware that Isha has gained a degree – a *huge* degree – of mental control over you. But I am also aware that her dominion over you in no way condones the weakness residing in your heart that allows her to have done so.”

Having taken the very defence he was set upon from his mouth, Christina Covington gazed upon her *former* husband with utter contempt.

“Both Isha and Aunt Cora herself warned me it would be so,” she told him in a voice so full of malice and delight that he racked his brain for evidence of past behaviour from him that would have warranted such a reservoir of hate towards him being filled to flooding.

None came to him, save for those decisions he had taken on their behalf and – as it was his right as a man to take – for the future betterment of their marriage.

“Like a great many men,” she went on, “you have simply traded upon the circumstances favourable to those of your sex in Western society and used it to portray an aura of strength

your wife was compelled to obey. Not once were you truthful and courageous enough to concede it possible your much overridden wife might be better and more naturally equipped to be the partner in control of the relationship."

Now he was convinced she was insane and promised himself, should he ever find a way to escape the mental clutches of her new Indian intimate and accomplish it, of seeking treatment for her at a relevant institution.

The partner in control of the relationship?

More naturally equipped?

How had evidence of such a glaring mental imbalance escaped him all these years?

None of which made his current situation any less excruciating or redeemable.

"You are where you are because you are a weak man. How else could you have been made so servile to your wife and a woman of colour you despise in such a short space of time? How else could you accept being forced to give up a career that not only defined your manhood but gave you a sense pride and accomplishment."

In truth, he had not regarded his career in quite the same terms and had often dreamed of making enough money to have done with it and simply lead a life of leisure.

But that had been *then*.

Before he had been shown a far less palatable alternative.

"That which you portrayed as strength of character," Christina Covington continued, "was simply a chimera that had yet to find itself questioned. The moment it was, and by a superior woman from a continent you abhor, you submitted to your interrogator in the instant and crave way of the true coward. You used our marriage to pretend a substance you do not possess. But no more. You are finally where nature intended you should reside and I, for one, have no intention of ever allowing you to forget the fact."

"But…?"

This time, it was not words that halted the advance of the others that would follow but a resounding slap to and already reddened cheek that not only left the imprint of its fingers across his burning skin but scorched its symbolism into a battered manhood unable, it seemed, to defend itself or make plans to do so in future.

"There!" she all but screamed, her own cheeks flushed also, but accompanied by an unmistakable expression of… *triumph!* "Your own wife has struck you. Are you not angry? Do you not wish to take her to task for her presumption?"

Through blurred vision he saw the rage of contempt and triumph aimed his way and, for the first time, experienced a sense of his life as he knew it being over for all eternity. The breasts revealed to him through the cotton-nightshirt rising and falling violently with emotions that had nothing to do with love and passion but everything in common with a perverse desire to torture and control.

"Yes," she answered her own question. "Of course you do. You wish for nothing more in the world than to become the master of your own domain once again. To place your superior wife under your inferior heel once more and adopt a position you are neither strong enough, nor

intelligent enough, to command without the bullying and hectoring assistance of a society governed by your brother-in-infamy."

The tea and toast rattled upon the breakfast tray residing precariously across her lap as she goaded herself to even greater heights of frenzy with this imagined injustice and her beautiful breasts heaved violently as she again bent at the waist and then reached upwards to deliver his other cheek a stinging slap to counterpoint the first.

"There!" she cried, leaning back upon the bed and supporting herself upon her hands, breakfast tray rattling furiously but, remarkably, undisturbed still. "The wife you once expected to concede her will to your own, no matter how strong her opinions, has laid hands upon you. With the help of her new and highly valued friend, Isha, she has stripped you of your career, your manhood, and your self-esteem. How will you respond, o husband mine?"

Edwin Covington found himself completely bereft of an answer and could do no more than remain in position at her side as she stared up at him with a look of contempt that struck him as being that of an owner for a piece of none-too-highly valued and easily disposable property. There was an undercurrent of the purest venom in her regard of him and he could in no way recall ever having been deserving of it. *"Brothers-in-infamy"* or not. There was something… *reptilian*… about her now and, apart from the obvious physical references, he could see nothing in the female creature staring up at him so dismissively from the mattress they had once shared.

When he could make no answer, feeling as sick at heart as he could ever recall feeling; she allowed herself a laugh that was both insolent and mocking.

"As if there could ever have been any doubt," she jeered. "Your days of having your wishes observed in *my* house are over and will *never* return. And, with my good Isha's assistance and Aunt Cora's support, you will soon be unrecognisable to yourself."

Covington willed himself to speak. To move. To do anything. And could do nothing more than stand before the wife he had once loved and allow her vitriol to debase what remained of the masculinity in which he had once placed such store and received such a huge sense of security.

"You were never much of a husband," she went on, "but it is our intention that you become the most diligent, respectful and…"

She lingered upon the next word as if to savour its meaning for all the longer:

"…*abject* of servants."

At her use of the word, and just for the briefest of moments, Edwin Covington felt the low burning anger that was always with him these days transform itself into something hotter that might actually be of some service to him. Taking a half-step towards the bed and the tormentor residing upon it, the heat and sudden intensity of his unlocked emotion seemed to him as if it must be leaving his eyes as fire. He was, he knew, on the very brink of breaking the first rule of the manly code – for those of his gender who were also gentlemen, anyway – and wreaking physical punishment upon the female.

In the few seconds in which this took place, he also saw a look of shock and, yes, fear, transform Christina's features as she saw his intent and realised she had pressed too far and too fast.

Only for her enraged husband to realise she hadn't, as white-heat receded to warm-under-the-collar in no more than an instant before once again becoming the low burning anger that had

been his constant companion since he had first lowered his head to place lips upon the accursed Indian woman's glittering and irresistibly mesmeric toe-ring.

A constant reminder of his cognizance in regard of what was being done to him and the hatred he felt for those debasing him in such a way.

And a reminder without the least power to re-ignite his manhood and allow him to take back the masculinity that had once been his.

As if it had been no more than the most fleeting cloud passing a desert's scorching sun, both his anger and his resolve dissipated into nothing more dangerous than a tortured inactivity.

And, just as quickly as it dissipated, his wife's confidence in her ability to manage him returned.

Though it was some thirty seconds or more before her own unease calmed to such a level that she could again feel safe enough to abuse him.

"Well," she started with mocking confidence. "For once in your predictable and humdrum life, you actually came close to surprising me, Edwin."

With his eyes lowered to the floor – the better not to see her unholy pleasure – Edwin Covington knew both her confidence and her mockery were false. He knew fear when he saw it; even if he had never known the horrors of war, or even personal conflict of the physical kind apart from the inevitable scrapes of the schoolyard. And, no matter it was only for seconds, and for the first time in their marriage, his wife had been mortally afraid of him.

Which, given his ineluctable desire to escape the metaphysical chains that seemed to bind him in obedience to both wife and former housekeeper, and his utterly sickening service to them, begged the question as to why he had not allowed his sudden and unfettered anger to serve the purpose his subconscious had intended when having at last found the key to unlock it.

A question, his answer could only acknowledge, that spoke volumes of the level of mental control the Indian female now exercised over him and which, he sensed, would only grow in strength the longer he was exposed to her influence.

"…Just the same," he came back to the present in time to hear his wife continuing; "such disrespect from a servant really cannot be countenanced. You are no longer of any account in this household and losing your temper with the women who now run it is simply unacceptable."

She sounded to his ears just like a hectoring schoolmistress taking one of her young charges to task, and the worst aspect of her speaking to him in such a fashion was that even the position of powerless schoolboy came with more autonomy than that accorded him.

Sensing, as he heard her scrape butter over her cooling toast; aware that her scrutiny was still upon him as he kept eyes and burning cheeks lowered, that even that minute autonomy they now granted him would soon become a cherished memory.

Having not been dismissed, he remained in the same shaming position as she partook of the boiled egg and toast he had prepared for her, wanting nothing more than to escape her presence, even if it was into the hateful clutches of his Indian tormentor.

As it turned out, his formerly loving and tender wife had another even more shaming position in mind for him.

Two of them, in point of fact.

“I shall inform your Malkin of this… *insurrection*,” she told him. “She is far more experienced in the disciplining of disobedient household servants than I and will be sure to suggest something that will make you feel very, very, carefully before ever having the temerity to show your owners such disrespect again.”

The roiling in his stomach, that was seldom far from the surface these days, called itself to his attention yet again as he realised her language in respect of him and their new… *relationship*… was becoming both bolder and more daring.

Yet another concern to go with those currently unmanning him.

“For now though, I want you to got to the corner and kneel with your nose to the wall.”

His eyes came up to meet hers at this latest suggestion intended to humiliate him beyond the pale of his own self-respect and, even knowing how far she had fallen from the ideal of loving and genteel English wife, he found himself unable to believe she could be serious in her request.

Once again, he was wrong.

“While you are kneeling there,” she told him, voice as serious as a lead ball from a Howitzer, “you can reflect upon your behaviour and the repercussions it is going to have for you in the none too distant future.”

His eyes remained on hers, searching desperately for some sign of the nurturing and compassionate female with whom he had fallen in love and married; praying that some glimmer of that humanity prevailed upon her conscience before she took from him *everything* he valued about himself as a man.

Again, it was not to be.

“Now, stop idling there like some half-witted dolt and do as your Mistress has ordered,” she barked at him with such conviction he flinched.

Then:

“Unless, of course, you would like me to call for your Malkin to deal with you straight away?”

The thought appalled him.

Bad enough that his wife witnessed him kow-towing to the Indian abomination as it was without having her witness him being reprimanded by the creature.

If it did turn out that he was to be punished by the woman in some way, then at least he could hope it would be done *away* from the eyes of the woman to whom he was still married.

A possibility that vanished if the Indian hell-spawn was called to deal with him now.

“Do it!” Christina Covington’s cold and authoritative tones slashed through his thoughts and, as if his lower limbs had taken on a sentient life of their own, and without him recalling ever having directed them into movement, he found himself heading towards a corner of the bedroom those same limbs appeared to have already chosen for him to occupy.

“That is better,” he heard from behind as he lowered himself to his knees in a corner of what had once been *his* Master-bedroom. “Now place your nose in the corner and think long and hard about your behaviour and how to control that tongue of yours.”

Almost as if he were some kind of automaton, Edwin Covington found himself obeying his wife's words as if she, and not her Indian mentor, was the one holding him in her hypnotic and bestial thrall. For the first time, her words reached his ears as out-and-out commands and he found himself without the power or strength-of-will to fight a development that was, he knew, was not only against all that nature taught of relationships between the genders but was stripping him, with each inch of ground he gave before both her and the accursed Indian, of all that made him a man. Or, at least, all that made him a man worthy of respect in the wider world.

As well as in his own mind.

"Good boy," she said condescendingly, delight and arousal fair dripping from each demeaning word.

He thought he heard her giggle but could not be sure as, left to his own devices in the corner, he again allowed his thoughts to search frantically for a way from his mental and domestic prison.

A prison to which was about to be added a sexual element.

And not one that, given its decadent nature, had ever made much appeal to him.

"When I think you have your tongue under control and I have finished my breakfast," he heard. "I will whistle for you to come over."

"Whistle?" his asked himself as puzzlement added itself to already beleaguered thoughts.

"Then we can make a start showing that tongue of yours how to *really* make itself useful…"

Correction

Everything about the situation had been set up to cause him maximum pain and humiliation.

There, across the desk in what had once been his own study, his sanctuary, the place even Christina was loath to enter without having a reason valid and important enough to pass his muster, Edwin Covington sprawled.

Utterly naked.

Sat behind the desk that had once belonged to him was his wife herself, a look upon her face he could only describe through his mortification as *"evil incarnate"*.

And how else could such a man and former husband be expected to describe the woman who had been the love of his life and now seemed to love him only for the pleasure her torment of him provided? Even as his thoughts framed themselves, he was aware of her hands fiddling around beneath the table in a way that, charitably, could be described as *indecorous.* That her fingers were busy with the womanhood she had allowed the Indian woman to depilate, he was in no doubt; the same womanhood she had introduced to his horrified tongue and now insisted he *"pacify and worship"* on a regular basis – along, at the instigation of the brown-skinned abomination, those parts of her posterior no human being other than herself should ever be intimate with.

He remembered the *"Malkin's"* words as she exhorted her English mistress to:

"Make your chattel familiar with your most intimate smells that he may show his submission completely. That he may regard the worship and cleansing of your shit-chute as the highest honour a dog such as himself can be afforded."

And, as if such service had not been horrifying enough to him; imagine his thoughts when he learned that it would be the Indian horror herself who would be teaching him the fine arts of such abject and dehumanising service.

With herself as the model he would practice upon.

As he clutched the edge of the desk as he had been instructed and stared up into the glazed and power-crazed eyes of the woman he had once loved, Edwin Covington felt again the bile of nausea rise up in his throat when his nose had first caught his Malkin's womanly scent before the taste of her burst upon his flattened tongue; barely able to keep the memory from making him vomit into the chest of his watching wife as she waited for the first cut of his correction to land upon his, till now, white and virgin arse. A feat of retention that almost proved beyond him when he remembered that same Malkin forcing him to attend to her own *"shit-chute"*. This before being required to bathe her – thankfully hairless – armpits with the same tongue that had attended both her perineum and her anus itself.

In the centre of the world's greatest metropolis, he had become the modern day equivalent of an ancient Rome lady's slave.

And without being able to bring the injustice to the attention of anyone in a position to rectify it.

Even if a person with the necessary standing, force of personality, and personal strength were to somehow come across his situation.

His thoughts fractured and dispersed, to be replaced with a physical pain the likes of which he had never imagined let alone experienced, as the first cut of his Indian owner's cane exploded over the vulnerable flesh of his behind.

Yet no sound escaped his lips – despite his attempts to scream.

He had, after all, been commanded not to make a sound.

Which did not prevent tears the size of igloos escaping his eyes and flowing down his cheeks onto the leather bound surface of his former desk.

A desk beneath which the woman to whom he was still married was thrusting agitated fingers into a cunt she felt sure must erupt any moment with the molten lava of her out of galaxy arousal.

As the second stroke overlaid it upon the first and he writhed in the forced silence of his agony, the wife he now hated with every fibre of his being brought up a hand from beneath the desk and held out two sopping and glistening fingers towards him.

His eyes implored her own, though he knew the futility of such attempts.

As if at her unspoken command rather than his own, his lips parted and she slid her fingers into the moist and waiting cavern of his temporarily speechless mouth.

"Good boy," she told him as he sucked upon the fingers slick with her perverted arousal; so pleased with him she even gave her other hand a break from its duties below and fetched it up to stroke his hair, just the way an indulgent owner would stroke the head of a dog that required either soothing or a reward for pleasing behaviour.

By the time the third cut had taken his agony into yet another dimension, the stroking hand was back in place beneath the desk and his wife's eyes again took on a glazed look as she allowed his suffering to stoke the fires of perversity she had so readily allowed her Indian mentor to ignite for her.

Another four cuts sliced into him in quick succession and he realised he was struggling to remain conscious under his torture while praying he might become temporarily insentient that he might be spared further agonies.

He also realised something far more shaming to him.

Despite all he was experiencing, and his hatred of both women for making suffer in such a way, Edwin Covington realised that part of him that was still fully a man was responding to their treatment of him and coming erect with more force and vigour than he could remember in all his years.

A fact that had not been missed by his Malkin in her vivid purple sari and be-kohled eyes as she finished her wielding of the cane and stared at the taut balls and rigid cock below her.

"If it is acceptable to you, Christina," she began, completely comfortable at being on a first-name basis with the woman who, effectively, employed her, "I am very pleased with how our chattel has behaved during his first disciplinary session and feel a reward would not be out of keeping after his punishment."

On the verge of yet another eruption, Christina Covington found her own voice deserting her.

“Are you amenable to your servant being rewarded, my dear?”

The best the wife in crisis could manage was a nod as her husband, still attempting to come to terms with the pain lacerating his buttocks and the indignity of his netheregions response to it, stared into her glazed eyes and allowed his thoughts to promise the most savage retribution should their situations somehow be reversed.

Which was as far as his thoughts took him before he felt his cock taken in one hand and his balls cupped in another.

The groan that came as if from the very bowels of his being was the very epitome of sexual need as his Malkin spoke in what, for her, was soft and seductive tones:

“This is what you can expect to receive if you devote your efforts to becoming the best servant you possibly can for Miss Christina and your Malkin,” she whispered into his ear sibilantly, laying her body over his upon the desk while both hands maintained contact with his almost painful erection and swollen balls. “You will be severely tested over the course of the next few days, so let this pleasuring supply you with motivation to learn your lessons well that the next time your Malkin honours you by handling your inferior cock and balls will not be so long in coming.”

Covington half heard her words but, to his unending shame, was far more focused upon the feather-light teasing she was supplying to his foreskin as she slowly manoeuvred it to its base before, even more slowly, allowed it to make its way upwards once more. A barely heard voice at the back of his head assuring him that, despite his hatred of this brown-skinned abomination, he had never felt so sexually alive in his entire life to this point. Even the fully aroused and fully mocking gaze of his wife as she speared him with her eyes served only to emphasize the unheard of level of his own stimulation.

Still in his ear, still sibilant, his Malkin told him:

“I will be teaching you how to properly and respectfully serve people at table over the next few days. And, if you ever wish to feel either the hands or the feet of your Malkin around your unworthy white penis, you will observe them with great attention.”

An image of the woman’s foot, resplendent with toe-ring, overlaying his blood filled cock as it stroked him, filled his vision and, again, he found it difficult to breathe, so great was his excitement.

“In fact,” she continued, allowing her manipulation of his erection to increase in both speed and vigour, “at those times when you feel your behaviour merits my attention, you may lower yourself to your knees at my feet and place your lips upon my toe-ring that you may supplicate for my attention.”

Another round of unmanning imagery was provoked by her words and Edwin Covington knew it would not be long before his seed spouted from cock to floor.

“But that is for later,” she told him as he felt an eruption building. “First, there is the important matter of ensuring you know the correct etiquette for the serving of food and the dispensing of drinks.”

It was just as she completed her penultimate sentence on the subject that Edwin Covington felt himself about to explode.

“But there can be no question of another reward until after you have learned your lessons and shown both your Mistress and Malkin you can be trusted with her guests.”

The conflict between her words and his shameful and unwanted desire did nothing to prevent his oncoming crisis.

Though he would recall her final sentence long after his explosion and feel a sense of dread and humiliation he hoped no man after him would ever have to endure.

“Miss Christina’s is hosting a very special guest for dinner next week and expects you to be on your very best behaviour for your former friend, Mr Hanson.”

As loop after loop and strand upon strand gushed from his cock, Edwin Covington’s conflicted feelings at that point made themselves known in the only way possible to him at that moment.

“Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagh”

Epilogue

"Thank you, old sport, that was a delicious supper," offered Greville Hanson to the friend who had waited upon him and his own wife with such obsequious, if red-faced, attention throughout the repast.

"You are welcome, Sir," his former schoolyard friend, attired in the sober black trousers, white-shirt and tight chequered waistcoat one would expect to see on a household retainer, offered without allowing their eyes to meet.

"That will be all for this evening, Edwin," he was told somewhat curtly and dismissively by his own wife as their growingly mystified guest looked on.

Even after everything he had witnessed since entering his friend's home near two hours before had not managed to reduce Greville Hanson's amazement at witnessing the wife hand out such… *disrespectful* treatment to her husband.

But not so much as the fact Edwin Covington was allowing her to do so.

And why, if the Indian woman in the sari with the angular features and compelling eyes was their housekeeper, was his friend taking on the role of general dogsbody with not a hint of resentment – let alone anger.

As Covington retired to the kitchen with the sweet dishes and then, presumably, to his bed, Hanson could not help but suspect he was on the wrong end of one of the practical jokes he so enjoyed playing on his friend. But there was also a whisper of something he had heard some days before Covington had described his new Indian housekeeper that gave him pause for disquiet. A man who had taken on a live-in servant from the Subcontinent and whom polite society now no longer considered a man at all.

He scoffed at his suspicion and inclined more to the practical joke explanation.

"So, Christina," he began after they had raised a glass of Port to each other. "I assume Edwin has gone upstairs to divest himself of that ridiculous outfit and will be re-joining us in his role of head-of-house shortly. I must compliment you both on a most ingenious joke – and at my own expense, for once."

Not for the first time that evening, Hanson noticed that her eyes took on what appeared to be an added animation whenever they met his; and not for the first time he felt uneasy at the sensation.

Ditto the shrug that served as an answer to his question.

Uneasy or not, Hanson's eyes immediately fixed upon those of his hostess with inquiry. Always an attractive woman, he had noted that she seemed even more vivacious and desirable than was usual this evening. In a low cut gown in vivid red that served to emphasise the rise and fall of her décolletage to sensational effect, it suddenly struck him, heightening his unease in the process, that she looked… *predatory*.

Unease that increased when she next spoke:

“As much as I dislike the disappointing of a guest,” she began; “I am afraid none of what you witnessed is in any way a practical joke on my part and you may be sure that what you have seen these past few hours is exactly as it seems.”

Of course, being the type of man he was, Greville Hanson’s first impulse was to laugh at such a preposterous explanation. But his impulse did not survive the look of utter conviction being trained upon him by the wife of his friend. A look that served also to make her expression seem even more predatory.

Taking advantage of his rare inability to launch a comeback, Christina Covington laid a hand over his and continued herself; observing as she did so how his hand lurched beneath her own as flesh made contact with flesh:

“I am afraid Edwin is no longer, as you out it, *‘head-of-the-house’* and will not be joining us later, or ever again, in the role of husband and provider.”

“Wh-What are you saying?” he asked, confounded but making no attempt to remove his hand from beneath her own.

“Really, Greville,” she chided. “I would have thought a man such as you, with his finger upon so many pulses, would have heard by now that my husband had resigned his position in the City?”

The look of complete surprise that greeted her statement was answer enough.

“Call it what you will: a nervous breakdown; temporary insanity, perhaps; but Edwin has reached the conclusion that he can no longer function beyond the four walls of this house in the same way as he did before – and even inside it, as you have witnessed for yourself – he is all but unrecognisable from the man he was not weeks before.”

“But surely, he can receive…”

“Treatment?” she came in. “The tender mercies of an institution and their barbaric and experimental approaches to mental health?”

“Well…”

“I am still his wife, Greville,” she said with a sharpness she did not feel for a man on whose behalf she had often allowed herself to fantasise in the past. “How could I look at myself if I were to desert him in such a way in his time of greatest need?”

“Yes, I understand, Christina,” he told her, attempting to absorb the revelation of his friend’s breakdown as well as offer support to his wife. “But…”

“You are his closest friend, Greville,” she came in over him. “And the only man in whom I would consider entrusting the news of poor Edwin’s departure from manhood.”

She stared at him intently until he finally took her drift.

“You mean…?”

She nodded, sadly.

“Edwin is no longer capable of completing the duties of a husband and the guilt stemming from this inability goes a long way towards explaining his decision to remove himself from the

marital bedroom and occupy the servant's quarters in the attic once occupied by our housekeeper."

Hanson felt his head go light at such news and snatched at his Port glass for a revitalising swallow.

"He cannot be my husband in the way a true man should be a husband," Christina Covington continued, still retaining her grip upon Hanson's hand and feeling her confidence heighten when he made no attempt whatsoever to remove it. "That is why he took the decision to take on the household duties one would normally expect of a paid servant."

She fought back a chuckle.

"Except, of course, that he is not paid, nor will accept, a brass farthing."

"This… This is simply unbelievable," Hanson exclaimed.

"You will be even more amazed to learn that not only does he insist upon being my manservant but allows himself to be instructed and supervised by Miss Isha, the housekeeper, as was, who greeted you this evening."

Hanson was dumbstruck.

"He also insists that she discipline him in the traditional way Indian servants are disciplined when their attention to duty is not to standard."

"D-Disciplined?"

Christina nodded, careful not to reveal the enjoyment she took from describing her husband's fall to his friend.

"Across the bare bottom with either a tawse or a cane," she informed him.

"It… It is simply something from another world," Hanson muttered, almost to himself; before, no stranger to the more outré elements of the sexual arena: "Are you saying Edwin is a…"

"No!" she said with more sharpness than she had intended before leavening it with a lie. "He is most certainly not a masochist. He accepts this discipline because he feels he has let me down as a man and is desperate not to disappoint in his new role as my manservant."

Hanson was shaking his head violently, finding it near impossible to reconcile these conflicting descriptions of a man he knew intimately – both hers and his own.

"Truly, Christina, if what you say is true…"

Her eyes flashed at the inference she may not have been totally honest with him.

"…Apologies, my dear. I did was not my intention to accuse. But I am finding it most disturbing to discover the friend and man I have known for so long is so… so… weak."

The *loyal* wife gave him a look of reproof he was not to know was fake in every way.

His contrition was instant:

"I apologise, Christina. It was not my intention to be so… judgemental. And I still have trouble convincing myself such a situation can exist with him."

Adding quickly:

“Despite what I know and accept as your complete sincerity.”

“Do you then, disbelieve the evidence supplied by both ear and eye? Or do you still consider this some elaborate hoax we have perpetrated upon you as a way of repaying you for the many juvenile pranks of your own we have laboured under down the years?”

Suddenly, instantly, Hanson became convinced that the situation was exactly what it appeared to be and his friend’s mind had given way under the humdrum but unrelenting pressures of a life in finance and the numbing expectations of marriage itself.

“My dear, I believe you completely and cannot begin to fathom the agonies Edwin’s breakdown must fetch you.”

The squeeze of empathy he supplied the erstwhile widow’s hand was, though he was not to know it, a sign that she might proceed to lead her husband’s great friend further into the toils with which she intended to ensnare him.

Even if they were not as life-altering and draconian as those keeping her husband captive.

“Then,” she began, in a voice she forced to sound hesitant and hopeful at one and the same time, “as a friend you are willing to do whatever you can to help him?”

His protestation was earnest – and exactly what she had wanted to hear.

“I am amazed you should even feel the need to ask me, my dear Christina,” he told her, actually laying down his Port and placing his other hand over hers supportively. “I would do anything to help my friend. You know this.”

She allowed him a nod.

Then:

“And what of the wife his… *malady*… has effectively widowed?” she asked.

A flicker of puzzlement flared beside eyes that were full of compassion for her plight.

“What exactly would you do to help her, now that she no longer has a husband to ensure her needs are met?”

Man of the world or not, Greville Hanson’s puzzlement deepened as he wracked his brain for her meaning.

A meaning he was no nearer to divining when she smiled.

A smile that was, unmistakably… *inviting*.

*****

The scream that reached Edwin Covington’s ears as he resided upon the floor at the foot of the bed, pierced his heart with all the effortlessness of a Parthian arrow penetrating the woefully inadequate armour of a Roman foot-soldier.

Tears literally rained from his eyes as this final death knell from a marriage and a life that had been wrested from him carried down the corridor and through the solid oak door of the room that now belonged to his Malkin; so great were the screams of sexual abandonment being drawn from the woman who had once been the love of his life.

And drawn from her, he knew, by the man who had been his oldest and best friend throughout that life's duration.

His night in the fires of hell, that had begun when he first realised his wife's supper guest that evening was his closest companion, and that *he* would be forced to serve him in his new role of chattel and manservant, had taken on and added… *warmth*.

For the first time since he fallen afoul their housekeeper's infernal and dark arts, Edwin Covington eschewed thoughts of revenge and rehabilitation and confessed to himself that his life as a free and proud man was over. There could be no coming back now. And, whether or not his former friend remained close-lipped about his situation and having taken sexual advantage of a friend's wife, the knowledge he had would always be shared between them.

Having lost a wife, and with no remaining family, he had now lost his one and only friend.

Edwin Covington felt the desolation of those who were truly alone in the world as the latest of his wife's screams of sexual abandon reached him at the foot of the bed.

Perhaps, then, it was not so surprising when he felt the sole of his Malkin's foot slowly make its way over moist eyes and down towards his waiting mouth and actually protruded his tongue to taste it without the necessity of an order.

"That is my good boy," he heard her voice from atop the mattress over which her leg dangled. "Miss Christina is having herself pleasured by a real man, but this does not mean she has not a special place in her heart for her manservant."

Rather than the anger of his revulsion for her that was his usual response to her attentions, Covington felt something inside him snap and be replaced by a desire to show this woman his submission.

Careful not to use his hands, he tilted his head back upon its single pillow and allowed her toes free access to his moist and warm mouth; aware that it was an act of the purest submission to her will. And yet, just the same, feeling his own manhood come to full tumescence as the toe encircled by glittering gold-ring he had come to see as symbolic of his servitude to its owner, he suddenly felt a most strange and glorious acceptance of his enslavement wash over him. A wave of subservience he knew with certainty he would *never* surface above again.

As the latest of his wife's screams burst into his ears and his Malkin slid her other leg alongside the other to gently jiggle the underside of his painfully full scrotum, he pronounced himself fully broken and sucked upon his Malkin's toe-ring that she might know his capitulation.

Assuming, of course, that she had *ever* been in any doubt!

THE END