Aftermath and a new beginning

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A major waypoint in a man's development

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The storm clouds were clearing rapidly now;the sun slanting across the valley, a low sharp diagonal of golden light. Steam rose from the tops of the trees, small wraiths of vapour twisting and evaporating as he watched, fascinated. The thunder had died away long since; at least so far as the weather was concerned. The thunder of his heart and head was slowing too, becoming manageable again.

He sat on a low stone wall, his back to the gable end of the farmhouse. Solid, reassuring. It had been there for more than 100 years and would remain there for another century at least. Not like him, “ a mortal creature doomed to die” as the phrase went. He started; why the melancholy now ? For him it might be a personal autumn, but it was going to be as prolonged, colourful and enjoyable as he could make it.

It wasn’t the first time it had happened; a drop from a truly extreme high leading to a brooding introspection, guilt almost. He grimaced, old habits die hard in extremis it would seem. Best not to let on, deal with it and break it now. He had come a long way but not so far as she wouldn’t take great delight in verbally booting his backside at backsliding. Another grimace, but this time whether or not at the thought of what she would do or at the murdered metaphor he wasn’t certain.....

That was better; humour and a rueful internal admission of mentally slacking off a bit, acceptable in the circumstances but not to be wallowed in. Actually he’d had a damn good time today, he always did with her, but today had been more than “damn good”; it had been - different. Verbal play and banter, as always, deep pleasure in each other’s company, certainly. A mutual joy of being and in watching the world were the stuff of their meetings. but today had been – different; Gaargh ! that was such a weak word, but other phrases like “crossing a line” or “Breaking a barrier” were also so wrong.....

His mind wrestled with its failure to produce a summary adjective. Indignant almost he drove it whimpering back into engagement with the problem. Intensity, yes, yes, that was a good word; depth, another..... PASSION ! yes, yes, yes, that was it, passion and sharing were the true descriptors here.

They were close; had been supportive of each other when the black, depressive waves rolled in. They had looked out for each other for a long time, been comfortable as well but today had seen play deepen and evolve into something else, a newborn child of an emotion perhaps, but a demanding , lusty, loud and primal infant. He had to chuckle at that last word, he could see a faintly smug look on her face in his mind’s eye.

Contented he paused and looked out over the valley again, still several hours of daylight left now the storm had passed, the stone was warm against his back and very, very tempting. his senses seemed preternaturally sharp; the detail in the trees on the bottom of the dale and the field walls climbing away to the hills was so clear and distinct. The sheep, so often indeterminate off-white splodges in the distance now resolved into moving, living creatures.

Talking of sheep, He was woolgathering plain and simple; it was time to head back to the stone barn and take stock of the day. Yes, it had been magnificent; it was complete but not completed and he had things to do to make it so. He pushed himself off the wall, wincing slightly as his knees and ankles reminded him of their comparative tenderness and his age. Given the events of the day, it was a good thing that the tendonitis in his right arm and elbow was controlled. It would have been difficult to achieve what they sought if he had still suffered the same level of discomfort. Let’s face it, he was crap as a left hander.

He walked the few steps to the door of the stone barn and, pushing it open, walked into the open space. The sunlight from behind him threw his shadow across the flagged floor like a pointed finger, illuminating her form in sculpted honey amber, a chiaroscuro study against the darker recesses of the barn. A wave of pleasure passed through him at the sight, his only regret that he had not thought to bring a camera to capture the vision.

Tall she was, and elegant, a magnificent conformation. Similes of horses came to mind so easily and fittingly. The long magnificence of leg and tone of muscle, neatness of joint and carriage and above all the mettlesome pride of her head and gait. For long moments he simply gazed, feeling his pleasure mount relentlessly. He considered her now, stretched upwards before him, restrained and yet so free.

From a beam above her hung a pulley with a slender soft rope threaded through it. At one end this was tied off to a ringbolt set in the wall and to the other.... ? To the other it lead to her wrists, wrapping round them close together in firm coils that held her arms together above her head at full stretch . His gazetraveledthe length of her body to her feet, the toes barely touching the floor, at full extension. He wondered how a body could look so relaxed at such a level of strain yet it did. No, not relaxed, that was not the right term.... Composed, that was a better word, conserving itself and yet seeming to draw on the restriction for an inward peace. She never lost the capacity to astonish him

even though he “knew” beforehand. “knowing” is completely different from being “part of” though.

He slowly paced to the side bringing the sweep of her shoulders and the length of her body into view . He knew what he would see there, of course he knew..... his doing, his desire, his pleasure... and his joy at giving into her craving.... A desire deep enough for both of them to taste it and a desire that still set his nerves trembling now, so many minutes later. That feeling was so deep and powerful and seductive that he used to think it was at best ambivalent in its hold on him: at worst..... he cared not to remember..... But now.... Her transcendent embrace of the ordeal, the power she took from it and the pleasure she had helped him to find left him winded and joyful and open.

As he moved out of the direct line of the sun, the light in the barn intensified, taking on more of the full spectrum and throwing into relief his handiwork across the length of her body. His mind replayed things so slowly. The blindfolding before he led her here, carefully, silently. The undressing of her passive self as ritual. The binding, slow, carefully firm to hold secure, then the hoist to tip toe with the delicious straining and acceptance. He savoured the thoughts, treasured them.

Deeper memories now, the feel of her flesh on his hands, teasing; the sharp slaps as he smacked her bottom, the red hand prints rising into sharp relief and her wincing ever so slightly at the impacts. . no sounds but the in drawing of breath and the hiss of its release. The thin stranded flogger worked gently but firmly from her feet to her shoulders and passing over her front, her breasts and thighs, passing in a fluid and continuous motion up and back and around. The glow of its passage; pink, then red and then redder still. No sound save her breathing and the susurration of the flogger against her skin. He had concentrated then, vision tunnelling to the pleasure at hand, all extraneous thought suppressed, unnecessary for the task at hand.

He’d chosen the heavy leather cat at the end. Draped and pulled leisurely across her body at first; her shoulders, her breasts sensual and tactile to his movements, then strokes to her body; slow flicks at first then building harder than before to full-blooded strikes across her back and legs and bottom, deep bruising weal’s biting deep into the flesh. 10 seconds between strokes; then she gave voice, writhing against her suspension and the falling lashes; pitiless.

So much memory, so much feeling.; his heart beating like a trip hammer as the visions ran through his mind. He staggered and broke the spell. The memories were so powerful but the reality was here before him, she bore his marks, composed, serene now. The physical being of the girl so much more than the memory; still assaulting his senses.

As he moved closer, she sensed him and her head came up as she tried to localise the source of the small sounds. The movement was calm and certain; “like a gun turret” he thought for a fraction of second before quashing the idea and yet…. Yet he saw her fix to him, blindfold or no. Closer now, he

saw and felt her breathing. Calm, deep and steady. He felt – uncertain, a clear shift in the dynamic bubbling into his head, was he now the supplicant come to judgement ? He threw off the feeling, for now. Composed, he reached around and released the blindfold.

Her eyes regarded him and he felt drawn to them as he always was, this time however he was not fearful or hesitant of blankly staring. He simply gazed back with the same open questioning look as she had. A moment lasting a year passed and her expression morphed into the faintest of smiles, even to her eyes. Enigmatic. His capacity to run off at a tangent bubbled up into a part of his mind; was this the secret of la Giaconda hanging there in her room at the Louvre? Had Leonardo smacked her bottom before painting “that picture”, had…… Damn ! His train of thought was obviously showing on his face, he schooled himself to stillness. Too late; the faint look of amusement had become deeper and coupled with a slightly mocking look in the eye.

“Too bad,” she said, “you had done so well up to then but you relaxed”.

He felt disappointment welling up, threatening to overwhelm him. His head drooped as the internal recriminations started; He was his own worst enemy he was use…… NO ! came the silent shout, not this time, don’t play mind games with yourself, take control. Slowly his head rose to regard her, still bound and on tiptoe. He felt his face move to a lazy smile as his eyes found hers

“You think so ?”

Another age-long pause lay between them, the faint sounds of the summer day outside forming a soft stage of sound for the tableaux inside. Keeping himself in her vision he half turned and walked to the table against the wall. 2 items lay on it, in clear view.

He reached for the first, a long golden yellow cane, inspecting it critically along it’s length. Quite thick and solid, this was no make believe “playing at teacher” toy. He swung it experimentally; it hummed rather than swished, a deep-toned spiteful sound. She watched him calmly, but the mocking look had gone, more inward and assessing now.

He replaced the cane and picked up the second item, The supple coils of black plaited leather glistened in the half-light as he shook out the whip to it’s full length. His arm moved and the whip hissed out to crack in the air behind her. He saw her start and tense against the rope. Her breathing was deep and faster now and a faint flush came to her face as she watched him, unblinking but with glow in her expression. He recovered the whip with a fluid motion.

“Never too late to try for a pass mark though….”

As he stepped behind her he felt his arm begin to travel back…..