Ark of Martyrs

An Autobiography of V

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The Nellie, a cruising yawl, swung to her anchor without a flutter of the sails, and was at rest. The flood had made, the wind was nearly calm, and being bound down the river, the only thing for it was to come to and wait for the turn of the tide.

The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. In the offing the sea and the sky were welded together without a joint, and in the luminous space the tanned sails of the barges drifting up with the tide seemed to stand still in red clusters of canvas sharply peaked, with gleams of varnished sprits. A haze rested on the low shores that ran out to sea in vanishing flatness. The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful gloom, brooding motionless over the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth.

The Director of Companies was our captain and our host. We four affectionately watched his back as he stood in the bows looking to seaward. On the whole river there was nothing that looked half so nautical. He resembled a pilot, which to a seaman is trustworthiness personified. It was difficult to realize his work was not out there in the luminous estuary, but behind him, within the brooding gloom.
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Her belly protruding, Doll clung to the Banker, swished outer cover of her veils across flat breasts. Her smug hand-maid chagrined—Bosnia’s Imam-banned evening gowns. Round of figure, her sewn G-string corset sores gruesome; new mandate order spurns altar brides.

Clergy speech oft condemns vexed clitoris, privately sinning organ in unbiblical lingerie. Spinster’s offspring agree that desire’s splendid; true pleasure slipped south her groin, rattling her glutinous face, her grand wails from her dirges lilting undignified, memed new trend, chilling dread ruptures of sadness darkly streaked wish-dreams of tarnished bliss. Her gaze melted somber poor whores that scan route to see the ravishing actress. Despair is mark of love, brave friend; damned heart attack, till weaned spawn tensed in view unborn full womb, oozing swollen exposure, her thickness crammed her tasteless gown for birth.

The Collector of Subsidies wore a caftan for a boast. He swore, irreverently washed V’s crack as V wooed Minnie Mouse, puking, flu-fevered. On parole, Killer mellows hustling, sat spooked, laughed low, audible. We imperiled a climate glitch; future season is just murderous, worse, homicide. He dozed, indolent, uncivilized; his quirk chose hot scout-wear in a dubious seminary, smut aligned whims with sinners choosing doom.
Between us there was, as I have already said somewhere, the bond of the sea. Besides holding our hearts together through long periods of separation, it had the effect of making us tolerant of each other’s yarns—and even convictions. The Lawyer—the best of old fellows—had, because of his many years and many virtues, the only cushion on deck, and was lying on the only rug.

The Accountant had brought out already a box of dominoes, and was toying architecturally with the bones. Marlow sat cross-legged right aft, leaning against the mizzen-mast. He had sunken cheeks, a yellow complexion, a straight back, an ascetic aspect, and, with his arms dropped, the palms of hands outwards, resembled an idol. The director, satisfied the anchor had good hold, made his way aft and sat down amongst us. We exchanged a few words lazily. Afterwards there was silence on board the yacht. For some reason or other we did not begin that game of dominoes. We felt meditative, and fit for nothing but placid staring.

The day was ending in a serenity of still and exquisite brilliance. The water shone pacifically; the sky, without a speck, was a benign immensity of unstained light; the very mist on the Essex marshes was like a gauzy and radiant fabric, hung from the wooded rises inland, and draping the low shores in diaphanous folds. Only the gloom to the west, brooding over the upper reaches, became more sombre every minute, as if angered by the approach of the sun.

And at last, in its curved and imperceptible fall, the sun sank low, and from glowing white changed to a dull red without rays and without heat, as if about to go out suddenly, stricken to death by the touch of that gloom brooding over a crowd of men.
Wee penis, rare cause. Crass, I am all sweaty; death’s unfair, embalmed off early. V tries quoting Karl Marx for pleasure to conspicuous capitulation. V had the defect of raising us Protestant to reach Mother’s arms—and weaken afflictions. The Author, obsessed by stilettos, sad remorse for glitz manicures and belly tattoos—a bone infusion \textit{au Greque}, had paused dying from E. coli bug. The Informant, mad, sought spousal trafficker cops of Quantico’s brand, annoying gnarly, texturally withered crones. Marco spat, gross, fetid, tight-assed, dreaming of fenced-off prison past. Pee bag’s function leaks, bordello infection, ornate lack, an aseptic ass sweat; sand genie’s charms stopped Saddam’s offense powers, he strangled a rival. The Collector ratified the Banker’s manhood, gold trade cliché. Can’t stand that clown Columbus. V arranged askew verbs hastily. Harsher words may cause violence abhorred and fraught. Poor dumb heathens, oh Mother, we’re distraught, we kidnap, maim, or bomb widows. Inept Legislative, addicts for cussing out, vapid swearing. Debaters venting with the insanity of brigand deficit minions. The Author yawned terrifically; her guy, so out of step, bores a divine celebrity of untamed spite; her cherry kiss of his excess morsels would psych the swarthy Arabian cleric’s humdrum polluted vices once banned, inflaming her cold sores with gelatinous molds. Lonely, the Groom too confessed soothing lower her udder features. V blames poor toddler mammary limit, panic gathered by the reproach of her Son.

Tanned, steadfast, with reserved and indefensible gall, the Son’s Anglo; an ongoing spite deigned to halal bled with mouth sprays, banned pig-snout meat, vascular gout too, no doubt gluttony-driven stewed breath, diner’s luncheon backroom feuding drove off deflowered femmest.
Forthwith a change came over the waters, and the serenity became less brilliant but more profound. The old river in its broad reach rested unruffled at the decline of day, after ages of good service done to the race that peopled its banks, spread out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth. We looked at the venerable stream not in the vivid flush of a short day that comes and departs forever, but in the august light of abiding memories. And indeed nothing is easier for a man who has, as the phrase goes, “followed the sea” with reverence and affection, that to evoke the great spirit of the past upon the lower reaches of the Thames. The tidal current runs to and fro in its unceasing service, crowded with memories of men and ships it had borne to the rest of home or to the battles of the sea. It had known and served all the men of whom the nation is proud, from Sir Francis Drake to Sir John Franklin, knights all, titled and untitled—the great knights—errant of the sea. It had borne all the ships whose names are like jewels flashing in the night of time, from the *Golden Hind* returning with her round flanks full of treasure, to be visited by the Queen’s Highness and thus pass out of the gigantic tale, to the *Erebus* and *Terror*, bound on other conquests—and that never returned. It had known the ships and the men. They had sailed from Deptford, from Greenwich, from Erith—the adventurers and the settlers; kings’ ships and the ships of men on ’Change; captains, admirals, the dark “interlopers” of the Eastern trade, and the commissioned “generals” of East India fleets.

Hunters for gold or pursuers of fame, they all had gone out on that stream, bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the might within the land, bearers of a spark from the sacred fire. What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery
Post-Twitter rage, shame bolster support of Manifest Destiny renamed, resilient, outlaws’ home ground. Paroled Killer mimics fraud speech, festered un-muscled after recline of gray, stuffed curvaceous from food, surplus fun to debase enfeebled twits; rank debt spouting mercantile infamy offers pauper pay, bleeding to recover gross lends from coerced. He cooked up irreparable schemes, plot of illicit rush to extort stray handguns, manly parts store Weber’s gutting dishonest plight of subsiding penuries. Men agreed loving is meatier from a Bantu lass; yesterday’s lows “furloughed yearly” in severance and deception accrue revoked rebate limits on harassed, foregone foreclosure leeches odds and ends. Her bridal parent shuns human woe limits, demeaning surplus clouded rich reveries of Yemen trips V performed to oppressed of Rome for future chattels of Turkey. Sinbad’s sown absurd origins; assume the brazen are loud, born ambitious fake to the non-ranking, whites unbridled and entitled—the straight white errand of deceit. V forewarned sol eclipse fused brains, arc light duels flash, squinting as sights divine conquer old and blind; disturbing picture: clown Yank’s fuel endeavor, cruelly disciplined by Marines’ finest as grunts’ brass shroud off a satanic jail, ruler fear of class aggressor—count on Mother complex—and yet expertly learned. V had blown Turkish Saracens. They exhaled, some wept, scarred from men’s itch, some spared it—fur clad emperors pander meddlers; pink slips scanned permits, foreign-exchanged; factions, radicals, the shark “spinster gropers” stalk assistant aides, planned extraditioned “spectacles” of these filthy elites. Hungers of soul for producers of shame, faithful had grown stout from extremes, scaring the horde and orphans unscorched, ravagers often smite, whipping the damned. Spare us from the dark quarter’s flagrant Liar. Courageous have connoted honored death of Madiba imbues the history