

Hungry for Love



A Vignette Found
in the Mouse Room

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A Vignette Found in the Mouse Room

The White Man died. His body was wrapped in the finest royal rose Ægyptian cotton. He lay in state for three days, and then he was boxed and taken away to hell.

Monkey Boy was left alone.

He had no companions or close friends other than the White Man, and when he died the Monkey Boy was left alone.

I got to worrying about him there in his room riffling through the White Man's Larder all day and standing around looking sad and lonely and suspicious and arrogant. It was the arrogance that had been his undoing, they all said. It's why none of the other Colonists were interested in coming over to say "Hi!", maybe pay their respects and what not. And they knew sure as you please the Monkey Boy wasn't inviting anybody over for tea. He was ungenerous with snacks.

He went on unaccompanied for days, before I went ahead and brought Gnagerinde over to visit him. I reminded her that visitting the sick, insane, imprisoned, elderly, and those without social aptitudes were all Works of Mercy. The Monkey Boy was all fire. I reminded her that a little day trip to Monkey's demesne would serve to fulfil five in one. She came and visitted, for a day.

It was a wild day.

"Gnagerinde! Gnagerinde," I said. "You're coming to visit the Monkey Boy!"

And she came.

At first he was unwelcoming. He sat glaring in his puffpile of bite-size wool pellets and made no effort to accept her greetings or condolences. It came to a time when she'd had enough and decided to go aroaming round the room, all four corners and even unto the Larder itself, the Monkey Boy's severest *sanctum*. About then, it came upon the Monkey Boy that Gnagerinde was female. At his age, it was unlikely he'd be getting a lot of female visitors. So he ventured forth to meet her properly. She was nearly his age. She'd understand.

It turned out she did. All too well.

She knew what he was after, and it wasn't *camaraderie* (Though, in the original sense, it sure was!). It wasn't nice conversation. He went after her like a mad bull lepus. She saw it coming and took off.

Old and blind and cataracted as hell, she was still fast as fuck, when it pleased her. Monkey Boy had sharp eyes, and Gnagerinde was white (pink-drab, more precisely), but he was hauling a little extra weight and not as young as you.

No matter how fervently—and he really went out of his way releasing the fervours on it!—he pursued her, Gnagerinde easily leapt and sprung and darted just beyond reach. He thought he had her cornered. She was in the Larder making a snack, and he went after her. It was the tightest part of the room. Even there, the self-frustrated impure grasps of the Monkey Boy were easily

evaded. She got away. He grunted and whistled. He got nothing. And she got a free meal. It rankled. It really rankled.

It was a long day, and mostly the same runaround again and again. Gnagerinde's energy was unfagged, but the Monkey Boy was getting tired. He was real tired. He was sick and tired of her teasing and flitting and playing the coquette. She was an old lady, but it was no excuse. He was an even older man. And he was awash in deep sorrow for the loss of the only friend he'd ever kept for more than a few moments. The White Man was the only one ever strong enough and wise enough and socially ingenious enough to keep friends with the Monkey Boy—and now he was dead. And while the White Man was dead all wrapped up in his royal rose Ægyptian cotton shroud in his box in hell, this interloper, this upstart, this usurper, Gnagerinde Tyránna, was taking over what was left of his self respect and making of him what he was—a laughingstock, a thing of shame.

It was the end of the day. It was near about time she'd have to go back to her own room and family. In her superiority and confidence, she paused to stuff her gullet with another dainty morsel stolen from the White Man's Larder that now belonged to the Monkey Boy. She paused, and he was upon her. Finally! He had her within his grasp. She started to do as every time before he'd almost laid hold of her. She went to leap lightly away, just far enough to make him work at making another try, but close enough to tempt. It was a sad thing. I think I saw a sad face on the Monkey Boy's face. His eyes were sad, at the least. They were so sad. And arrogant.

But he'd had enough, and it was about time he took what was his. So there he was, just about to catch a hold of her, and there she was just lightly leaping away. I looked away. Then the screaming started. Sick and tired of her bullcrap, the Monkey Boy had taken things to the next level. He had a hold of her now. He had her by the butt, and he was holding on with his teeth. She was shrieking and plunging, but the Monkey Boy was too old and powerful and wise and massive. She was less than half his size. She couldn't get away. She screamed and jumped to no effect. I had to

intervene before somebody got hurt. He had toothhold on her rump, and he wasn't about to let go wittingly.

Later that night, he attacked, and ripped off part of my big toe.

I guess he must have been hungry.

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