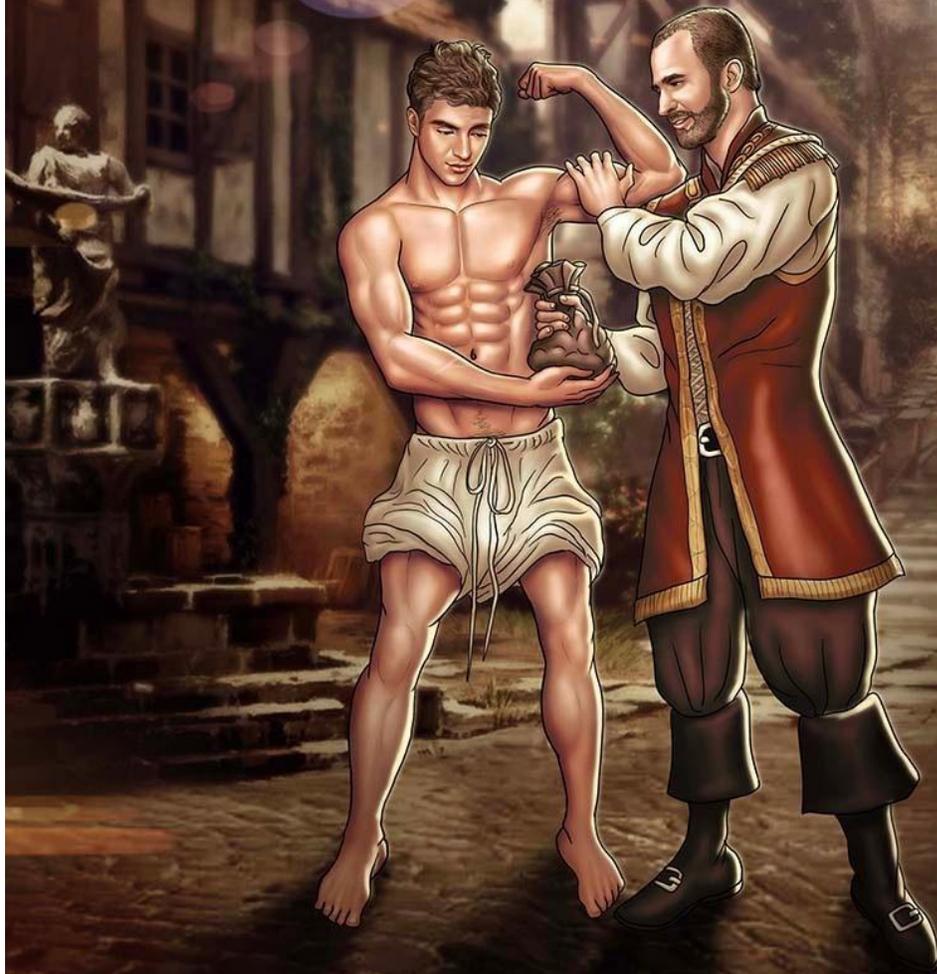


Beauvis, a medieval male prostitute



Ashton Labruce

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Synopsis

Back in the XV century, homosexuality was censored and persecuted in Europe. Beauvis, however, an attractive young man who is part of Christopher Columbus' crew on their 1492 expedition, becomes a male prostitute. Being discreet, Beauvis and his customers build an ongoing business relationship. The plenty of sexually explicit encounters help us dive into this world of his, while we see his innocence transmute into mastery.

From the darkness of harassment to the colourful joy of unrestrained sex, we visit a realistic medieval society and some of the most important historical events that took place around that time: the discovery of "the New World", the French invasion of Naples, the Syphilis outbreak in Europe, etc.

This compelling story guides us through a reality that we don't often think of: homosexuality and prostitution existed during medieval times too. More than an apology to such behaviours, this novel is a celebration of pride in what being a sex worker is, and an exhortation to embrace bisexuality.

PART I

Chapter 1

Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Hispania, Sun 29th of July, 1492

The young man was unable to articulate any word; his tongue had been chopped off at the torture dungeon. The executioner set the stake on fire, and the victim's attempts to apologise publicly, saying "*I am a man of God*" were just indistinct grunts in the middle of the pandemonium created by hundreds of attendees. His hair was quickly consumed by the fire. His eyeballs lost their last drop of water, leaving behind two cavities full of dry flesh. He breathed heavily as his mouth got dry and full of soot; his nostrils melted and became one single piece with the rest of his unrecognisable face. His body quickly turned into a malodorous corpse, at the centre of the public square, and in front of his own mother. The heat of the fire reached the expectators' faces, and so did the smell of burnt hair and skin. People were satisfied, being witnesses to the death of a sinner; they said all kinds of blasphemies, "Get used to burning, homosexual bastard, for it will be how you will spend the rest of eternity in hell." Aside from himself and his mother, only two persons knew that he was innocent of all claims made against him: his friend Beauvis, and the town's cleric.

"Let me go and burn with him!," said the martyr's mother as she fought against those who were keeping her away. No longer did the fire take to consume his body, than her mother did to become insane. She was inconsolable, watching what was once her biggest happiness be transformed into ashes. They flew away in all directions, making it impossible to put them together. "Why is nobody doing anything!," she continued shouting until she fell on the ground, unconscious. It all had been so fugacious and nebulous, that nobody could tell the exact moment in which Alaiñ ceased to exist. The mob continued their profanities, "You're lucky you weren't impaled and dismembered alive, as you deserved!," "I hope your homosexual acts brought you enough pleasure to make this be worth it."

“This is all my fault,” thought Beauvis to himself, “Alain would still be alive if I hadn’t provoked the cleric’s rage.” This wasn’t the first time in which Beauvis was attending the public square to accompany somebody in their last minutes of life, but it was perturbing to know Alain’s innocence, and to have been asked to be there by his friend himself. Beauvis barely had strength to turn his face and see the man who had made the execution happen, Porfirio, the town cleric. It was surreal to see the evil’s triumph. Porfirio’s monstrosity had no limits. He exchanged glances with Beauvis and smirked. With his eyes only, he said, “I told you I was able. Do you believe me now?” Beauvis was shattered inside, watching his friend leave this world that way. But he couldn’t cry; he was in shock and he was in fright of feeding Porfirio’s cruelty if he let show how much sorrow he had caused.

Porfirio was proud of his accomplishment but upset by Beauvis’ serenity. Porfirio began to cry. “It breaks my soul into one thousand pieces to see him go like this,” he said to those around him. People were touched, and were comforting him. Beauvis swallowed saliva. He was no more repulsed than he was terrorised of being in front of a person capable of committing such a hideous crime. He was the town cleric; it was him who had made poor Alain go to the stake. Only Beauvis and himself knew that. Porfirio’s hypocrisy came so natural that he didn’t even have to invent lies to tell. Rather, he had constructed a whole new persona, whose face he lived behind. In an unprogressive society, where dishonesty was greatly rewarded, lying was his biggest asset. “You should always be polite,” he used to tell Beauvis back in catechism, “there is always something you can get from anybody.”

Superficially, Porfirio was the kindest person on Earth. That’s how he had gotten the best out of Beauvis; the energy of a young man with a body like Adonis. His deceit had gradually escalated from hiring him at church only to obtain sexual favours in exchange, to the coercion of using his fear to control him.

“How dare you!” he had told Beauvis weeks ago, when the boy had told him his plans of getting married and moving back to his hometown in France, “You only have that much money because I, I gave it to you. Don’t you dare to leave this city. I know people who can get your head chopped. Even better, I will get you incarcerated for your immoral behavior, you faggot boy.” Beauvis, skeptical that Porfirio could do anything, had challenged him, “Go ahead. I have enough money to bribe people too.” “You don’t know what you’re talking about, boy. You don’t want to see me angry.” the cleric replied. Beauvis was still incredulous that Porfirio would dare to do it. It wasn’t because of his incapacity but rather because he would lose something big if he did; Beauvis’ penis. “I won’t see you angry,” replied Beauvis, “because I won’t see you ever again.” Beauvis mounted his mule to leave; Porfirio grabbed a metal stick and hit the animal’s legs, which fell to the floor in pain and wasn’t able to walk anymore. Beauvis was perplexed; he had never seen him do anything like that before. Yet, his abhorrence for him was such, that he only ran away. He was so fast that there was no way Porfirio could reach him. “Watch your back, you bastard. Your life won’t ever be the same!”

Beauvis didn’t have news from the cleric for days and then weeks. Beauvis was relieved; he began making plans with Fortunata to leave for France. One day, he woke up with sad news; his friend Alain had been imprisoned under sodomy allegations. He rushed to go see him. Beauvis entered the dungeon where he was being held captive. He had a breakdown when he saw him chained from his arms, on his knees, and unable to speak. He couldn’t approach any further than the cell gate allowed him to. After several attempts to call his name unsuccessfully, he realised that his tongue had been chopped off and it was laying on the floor along with his ten fingers.

Beauvis rushed to Alain’s house, where he found his father. He was inconsolable. “Ten men picked him up in the morning before dawn,” he

struggled to explain Beauvis. The boy didn't want to, but he couldn't get the idea that Porfirio was behind it off his mind. It all made sense; he had gone after a friend of Beauvis, instead of having gone to him because he wanted him complete to continue to enjoy the perfection of his body. It was too risky for Porfirio to go after Beauvis' fiancée, as he may take his own life as a result. There was only one way to know for sure; he went to see Porfirio.

"Hello, Son. I am happy to see you," said the cleric to Beauvis as he saw him walk in. The boy said nothing. "I know what you're thinking," he continued, "I will tell you everything you want to know. But you have something I want in exchange." Beauvis was nauseated by the man's proposal, but he wanted to help his friend; he wanted to mend the consequences of his own mess. With much struggle, he managed to give Porfirio the pleasure he was asking for.

"Why did you do that to him?," Beauvis asked in distress once the sexual interaction was over. "I never said I had gotten what I wanted in exchange," Porfirio replied. "But I have performed what you wanted, now set him free!," Beauvis demanded. "I apologise for the misunderstanding," said the cleric, "But let me be clear. You will come here to please me if you care a little about everyone around you. Alain will be a malodorous corpse by tomorrow evening. You must join the event; even his mother will be there. He will be burnt. What a mild punishment for such a sinner. I hope he has made his will already. I have made mine; to get you tortured and killed if I am found dead, bastard boy."

Beauvis became weak. He fell on his knees. Porfirio left him there, by himself. He barely had enough force to walk away. He was aware that there was nothing he could do to change Porfirio's plans. If he got him killed, Beauvis would be found responsible for it. His money for bribing could only get him so far. Beauvis was following Porfirio's orders; he had continued to please him while he built a solid plan against his evil.

Alaïn had had the misfortune to be in the way of Porfirio and Beauvis. The poor boy wasn't offered a fair trial and engaging in same-sex relations for the first time wasn't an unpardonable offence. He was innocent and yet, he wanted to apologise and to be given parole in exchange; he would pay his fine to the church authorities, make a pilgrimage to be redeemed, and even become a servant if that bought his right to live. With no tongue, however, he couldn't speak clearly. Porfirio's plans were meticulously arranged so that there wouldn't be a way out of it. Furthermore, Porfirio had bribed the authorities; they wouldn't offer redemption, even if this was a first time alleged misdemeanor from which there was only one witness.

As time went by, fire consumed the last remains of Alaïn. The most uncivilised inhuman people approached the body to commit barbaric atrocities with it. "Seems like you are in trouble, my friend," said one boy, "let me turn off the fire for you." He released his urine over the dead remains of Alaïn, as other men of the same age laughed and did similar things. They began to take parts of it until they made it disappear from the square. Alaïn's body was gone forever; there was no way to place his cadaver in a holy grave to let him rest in peace as the good Christian deserved.

The gruesome spectacle ended with a pile of ashes and waste all around in the main square of Palos de la Frontera, a town in the province of Huelva, in southern Hispania. Porfirio had left as soon as he saw Beauvis leave. The boy didn't stay long after his friend had passed away. He went back to his sister's place. She was in her house waiting for Beauvis to be back from the cruel ceremony, to which she hadn't gone as she lacked the courage to see that scene.

"Sit," said Beauvis' sister, "I know you wouldn't be hungry so I made you a tea." Her angelic voice was an oasis of serenity in the middle of the recent atrocities. Beauvis sat at the table; he had a grim semblance and he didn't say a word. "You can talk to me," she said, "you know I am and will always be there for you." Beauvis looked at her, still silent, full of emotions he wanted

to share with her and yet, he didn't say anything. "Are you alright?" she asked. "I am. Thank you, Belle" he replied, "I just... I don't feel safe anymore." "Why?" she asked. Her brother stayed silent again, just looking through the window. "Do you remember when dad was still alive?" Belle continued, "you were always his favourite son. You two were always together. We were broken inside when he passed away. But we carried on. And it was also hard to have left mom when we moved to Palos de la Frontera together. But we handled it. Mom doesn't love you less than dad did."

"Don't you dare to eat your eggs raw!," Beauvis' mother used to tell him, "I would be rich if I had a coin for every death I've heard of due to eating raw eggs." Subsequently, she would take a metal bowl to boil water. "Go!," she would then tell him, "go play with your siblings while I cook your eggs." Beauvis' mother always looked after her seven children; she always looked after Beauvis. She woke up early in the morning whenever she heard Beauvis was awake. There was always a hot breakfast at the table for all of them.

Beauvis thought to himself, "I wish I could give away that familial love I had the fortune to have had galore. There would be no hatred in this world; Porfirio would never become evil. Beauvis smiled for a second; then, he revived the memory of Alain's parents when he had gone to see them. Beauvis understood the despair they must have been going through. He felt ill. He was about to excuse himself to leave the table, when his sister continued speaking.

"I remember you when you accepted my invitation and came to Palos de la Frontera with me and my husband," said the young lady, "you were full of joy, full of dreams and eagerness to explore the world. This isn't you. And I'm not talking about today, brother. You are my twin; I can feel you slowly dying, lately. And that fact... that you don't want to... talk to me, as we used to..." her voice became shaky as she continued, "I refuse to believe that you have grown unhappy because I invited you to live here with us. But I can't

get that idea off my mind. It's been a while that I haven't seen that boy you used to be. What has changed you? Who had taken your joy away?"

Beauvis remained at the table, in silence, waiting for her to finish. However, she stopped there, as if she really wanted an answer to her questions. "You're right," Beauvis finally replied, "I was a different person when I first came to live with you when dad died. Nobody has taken my joy away, and nobody can ever do that. But as time goes by, it feels like life continues to place insurmountable challenges ahead of me. I am not afraid. I am frightened. Alain was an innocent man just like me. I don't want to live in fear, knowing that I can have the same destiny at any time. I will leave before something happens to me. I tell you this because I trust you, but nobody can know that I'm leaving." Belle began to cry. Her connection to her twin brother was so deep, that she knew he really meant what he was saying. Only he knew where he was going to go. He finally excused himself; he left Belle and went to his bedroom.

Beauvis was miserable. He felt defeated by life and everything he had thought to be true in this world. His genuine feeling of friendship that he had for Porfirio had turned out to be a nightmare. At the beginning, he had found in Porfirio a guidance to help him find a good place in society and explore the world together. In exchange, Beauvis had de facto agreed to share his youth with him. He used to feel blessed for having been able to lead his life that way. He was born a handsome man, reason behind his name and his twin sister's name. Due to his gift, he had succeeded in that mission. Belle had plenty of good husband prospects at a very young age due to her appeal too. Beauvis was living a life that most people could only dream of; while he wasn't in opulence, he was more than comfortable in financial matters.

Out of the seven siblings, Belle was the closest to Beauvis. His appeal was within the limits of normality, but Belle was a goddess. They were together all the time while they were young; hence, people usually called them both "pretty faces". As they grew up, the nickname remained, even when they were seen separately. Men used to call Beauvis "handsome" in a very natural way, most of the time with no sexual allusion. His pleasant face caused

attraction in women and also in some men, who would often hide their feelings behind exaggerated camaraderie, unusual friendliness, and remarkable loyalty.

Beauvis was no greek god, but he was slightly taller than average. He wasn't bulky; his body was, in fact, strong but quite lean. His abs were prominent from working at his father's smith for years, but he was unassuming when he was wearing a shirt. His soul was no less attractive than his body. His heart was full of pure innocence and goodness. His physical features were well measured. He was a thin guy to those who liked slender men; he was strong to people who admire big muscles. Frenchmen described him as the guy with dark skin during summertime, while Spaniards called him 'pale' during the winter. His attractiveness was unique and versatile. Regardless of the great variety in personal preferences, they all converged upon something; Beauvis was pleasant to the eyes.

Beauvis' nickname, and his name meaning itself, was innocent and yet, it led people's eyes to focus on, and acknowledge, his great physical appeal. Those who tried to dismiss the annoyance of questioning themselves where his nickname had come from, would always be betrayed by their curiosity, which made them analyse in search for an explanation. For that reason, they would notice Beauvis' prominent forearms, heights, perfect teeth, hair, and smile.

Some men, who were self-conscious about their own looks, had a hard time establishing eye contact with Beauvis. Rather, they spent more time paying attention to the pronounced curvature of his torso towards his waist. They couldn't overlook his broad shoulders which, in conjunction with his trapezius, emphasized the strength of his upper body. When they found the chance to look at him from behind, it was helpless. Enamoured with what they had already seen from him, they would now find their eyes making round trips from Beauvis' head all the way to his heels, stopping at the centre every time. His strong long legs were accentuated by a round butt on top, while his broad back emphasised the fineness of his waist.

When Beauvis had a shirt on, his soul was like an invitation to go to heaven; when his chest was bare, his body was an insinuation to sin. He was often invited by both men and women to act upon their instincts. He enjoyed the perfection of human creation in its two different forms; the soft anatomy of the female, and the coarse body of the male.

Beauvis had always been thankful for being as lucky as he was. He perceived the world differently and had lived more experiences than most of the people could. He was proud of making the most out of his gift, and of utilising it wisely in the name of virtue and peace. Now, however, he felt cursed; he wished he could go back in time to fix his mistakes and save Alain's life. But it was too late. Beauvis refused to believe something that he had thought before; the misuse of his forte had brought disgrace and tragedy to him and those around him. "Who will be the next victim?" he wondered, "I won't stay to find out. I am leaving forever."

Chapter 2

Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Hispania, Monday the 30th of July, 1492

The sun was shining with the splendor of a summer day in the morning of Monday the 30th of July, 1492. Everything was so peaceful, everything looked like it was in perfect harmony. It was the perfect day to say goodbye to everything; nothing would change after Beauvis was gone. Belle left the house to run her errands and her husband had left for work earlier. Beauvis and all his siblings had been taught by their father how to write. He sat at the table and began writing a farewell letter for his sister.

“Dear Belle, whose beauty is only surpassed by the kindness of your heart. I write you this letter in great despair, for I believe there is no way to fix what I caused and mend my mistakes. No force can ever take away the sorrow of Alain’s parents, regardless of how much I pray. I wish I could tell you, without the omission of one single detail, how I created this calamity. But I fear that you would forgive me. I deserve no pardon for having lived a life of sacrilege, for having profited from my physical being. Burn this letter as soon as you read it; it carries the ghost of dishonour in it. I apologise to you, to our mother, to our deceased father, to our siblings, to my dear Fortunata, and to everyone else to whom the sad news will bring grief. Forget not that I love you and I will always do, dear sister of mine. Shall you ever miss me, find the furthest star in the sky; I will be watching over you. Take care and live a long life. Beauvis.”

One tear dropped from Beauvis' eyes and fell on the paper, followed by another one, then three. He was ready to leave everything. He placed the letter on the table. Beauvis wanted to see through the window one last time. He opened the curtain. Everything was in perfect harmony; he heard two men having an argument over the details written on a document. One of them didn't know how to read and was telling the other that he was taking advantage of it. “That’s not what it reads,” said one of them, “I am sure it isn’t.

Usury is prohibited. It is a sin! I won't pay that much." "Do what you want," the other man responded, "but there's no way to get around your duties. I will make sure that you comply with them myself. Business is business; this isn't the attitude that you first had when you needed the money. Ask anybody to read the paper for you if you don't believe what I say." The lender was clearly not going to hand him the original sealed paper, but they resolved to go together to somebody else who knew how to read.

Beauvis continued looking through the window and when he was about to close the curtain, a man with a familiar face suddenly appeared in front of him. "Hello, young man," said the man. It was Rene, a close friend of Beauvis' father when he was still alive. "I am very busy right now; thank you for your understanding," said Beauvis as he closed the curtain and walked away from the window. "No!," said Rene, "don't leave. This is a very important matter. I will compensate you greatly if you read this paper out loud while my client listens." Beauvis was too depressed to care about other people's needs. But Rene was a merchant and wouldn't give up so easily. He went to the door, knocked and entered right away.

Beauvis rushed to grab the letter from the table but it was closer to Rene, who reached it first. "Well, well, well," said the man, "what can be more important than making big money, I wonder." Beauvis got nervous. "But why do I care?" he thought to himself, "What difference does a man reading Belle's letter make in the decision I have already made." "Do we have a deal, young man?," asked Rene, playfully, holding the letter in one hand and making it clear that he would read it if the boy didn't agree to help him. Beauvis remained silent, watching the man do as he pleased. He was too dejected for doing anything against it; furthermore, he would be left alone faster so he could continue working on his plan.

"Dear Belle..." Rene began reading. Rene knew Belle, Beauvis, and their five siblings. When he knew it was a letter to Beauvis' sister, he changed his tone and made it more sarcastic, selecting certain passages from the writing to read out loud, "...whose beauty is only surpassed by the kindness of your heart... despair... no way to... mend my mistakes... sorrow of Alain's

parents...” When he reached that part, Rene made a stop and looked at Beauvis. His impassivity didn’t give away any hint as to change the tone in which Rene was reading. However, the man began articulating in a more serious manner; he was aware of yesterday’s occurrences. “I wish I could tell you...” he continued, “how I created this calamity... I deserve no pardon for... a life of sacrilege... having profited from my physical being. Burn this letter... the ghost of dishonour... I apologise... I love you... Shall you ever miss me, find the furthest star in the sky; I will be watching over you. Take care and live a long life. Beauvis.”

Rene looked back at Beauvis when he had finished reading. The boy had held his feelings for so long, that he couldn’t hide them anymore. He broke into tears, as he hid his face using both hands. Rene was anxious; he cared about Beauvis and all of his siblings as he had cared for their father. “Are you alright, young man?” he asked Beauvis. He received no answer. “I have a great idea,” said Rene, “you don’t have to accept but please listen to me,” he had lowered his voice volume so that his client wouldn’t hear anything in case he was still around.

“There will be a very important expedition,” he continued, “we will depart from Palos de la Frontera on Friday. The spots are full and reserved for a lucky crew of about ninety men. But you know I can do magic. I will get you a spot with us. This isn’t a normal sailing venture. We will be ready to make the longest voyage ever made. We will go to the Indies, China, and Japan, lands that any man in Europe can only dream of, full of spices, gold, and money. Weeks of sailing but I bet you like money; who doesn’t like it? You are a strong young man, you know how to read and write, and you know about ships. I will teach you how to make good business when we are there. Come with me. Other young men would give everything they have in exchange for getting a place on board. You can’t refuse this offer, young man. Don’t you see? It was the power of God. He made me have trouble with that bastard because this was meant to happen. Everything happens for a reason. Your father was a good man. He and I became friends more than one decade ago. And here we are today, you and I, about to join the expedition to the Indies.”

Beauvis had listened carefully to everything Rene had said. The boy had always had a natural inclination for adventure and staying away from Palos de la Frontera for weeks while making money, would allow him to start over again somewhere else upon his return. He looked at Rene, who asked him, "Is that a yes?" Beauvis didn't say anything, which Rene interpreted as a positive answer. He smiled at him and tore Belle's letter apart. "I will come see you on Wednesday," Rene continued, "I will tell you all the details that you need to know. And don't worry, you don't need to bring anything with you. Food and blankets will be provided." Rene was headed towards the door to exit. "Mister Rene," called Beauvis and the man turned his head towards him, "Thank you for taking me with you." Rene smiled once more and left.

Beauvis was alone at the house once again. He was wondering how a simple purpose in his life could have changed his plans so drastically. Perhaps Rene was right; it may have been destiny. On the other hand, he knew he shouldn't get too excited about it. It was just words; there was no guarantee that such an expedition was happening, nor that he would be able to join. He decided to wait until he met with Rene on Wednesday. In the meantime, he would have to fulfill his responsibilities with Porfirio if he didn't want more persons around him to suffer the same fate as Alain had. "Life is easier for most people," he thought to himself, "I want to live like them. I wish I could go back to those days in which everything was simple." He sat at the table, closed his eyes, and remembered how happy he once was before having moved to Palos.

Beauvis used to work at his father's smith from a young age. His father was an expert in the trade, as he had had a master from Dinkelsbuhl, a town renowned for its metal crafts including armours and weapons. Beauvis accompanied his father everywhere he went. His skills were so acclaimed that he was hired by wealthy men to work in shipbuilding. They lived in Perpignan in southern France, but they would spend long periods of time working in Marseilles, Barcelona, Palos de la Frontera, and Genoa, among other cities of the Mediterranean sea.

Beauvis, the youngest male of his seven siblings, was the only one who would go with his father everywhere. The other six didn't have the same interest in naval engineering but they were privileged that their father had taught them maths and how to read and write. Beauvis' father spent most of his time travelling, designing ships, and doing metal artifacts at his smith. Perpignan was conveniently located along the coast in the middle of cities with naval presence.

As he grew up, Beauvis became an intelligent and strong young man. When he was with his father at the docks, he was offered high paying jobs due to his skills. Being still young, he never considered them seriously, as he found more pleasure in travelling and getting to know many different places. He enjoyed those hot summer days in which he was shirtless all day, working at the docks. His physique had brought him respect and admiration. He wasn't the strongest man in the working crew, but he was notable for the proportion of his features.

Life was more than comfortable for Beauvis and his family; the prosperity was visible in their lifestyle. They paid the taxes as proper and yet, they enjoyed some luxuries that the rest of the people in town couldn't. The situation didn't remain like this forever. One day Beauvis' father developed leprosy. It wasn't uncommon to see persons with the disease live long lives, exiled from the rest of the people in their own communities, being visited every now and then and attending church through lepers' squint. But Beauvis' father was so devoted to the well-being of his family, that he refused to have visitations and put them in danger. After having acquired the disease, he stopped eating and passed away quickly due to malnutrition. His body was burnt in place to prevent the spread of leprosy further.

There was much deliberation among Beauvis' siblings to decide what to do with the blacksmith. Beauvis was young but he was the only one who knew the trade. The family noticed a decline in their income; Beauvis' five older siblings saw an easy way out by selling the smith. Beauvis' mother wanted Beauvis to keep it but she wanting to help the

majority of her children, she approved the sale. That money, however, didn't last them long. In fact, they struggled to maintain their previous lifestyle having sold their business.

Beauvis' mother left town and went to live with her sister Vivianne. She was an older widow whose previous three husbands had all died in different cities but under the same circumstances, laying on their bed with no previous signs of illness or weakness. All three of them were very energetic men, who would always utilise their force to make Vivianne do as they pleased. She was proud of her sister when she learnt she had become a widow too, regardless of Beauvis' father being a good husband himself.

The last one of Beauvis' older three sisters got married and left for the bigger surrounding cities of Bordeaux, Madrid, and Paris. Their husbands didn't provide the same level of wealth that they used to have, as they were a shoemaker, a leather worker, and a wine maker. Beauvis' two older brothers also left Perpignan, and utilised their knowledge to work as scribes in Paris.

Beauvis' twin sister, Belle, finally accepted a marriage proposal and the new couple invited Beauvis to live with them in Palos de la Frontera in southern Hispania, where his fiancé was from. Both Belle and Beauvis were familiar with that town, as they used to go with his father when he worked in shipbuilding there. They had gotten acquainted with Rene as young children and he had quickly grown fond of the twins as if they were his own.

Beauvis was a talented young man. He found a good paying job at the docks. He would enjoy the product of his hard work if he hadn't fallen into the temptation of the easy money that the town cleric, Porfirio, had put on his way.

Beauvis hugged Belle tight when she came back from her errands. Little did she know that the reality she would live in would be very different if it wasn't

for Rene. He had been at the right place and at the right moment to help Beauvis stay; otherwise, she may have seen his brother never again. "I'm glad you're here," said Beauvis, smiling at Belle. "What do you... I'm glad you're here, too," she replied. "Will see you later," said Beauvis and left the house for an important task he needed to do.

Beauvis was good at it. He knew how to compartmentalise and make Porfirio feel good, even if he could barely contain his loathing towards him. It wasn't easy to focus on something else other than the atrocities Porfirio had committed but there was no other way if Beauvis wanted to escape without him suspecting of his plan. Beauvis didn't revive the good memories that he spent together with him. He didn't think of the few good attributes he had as a person. He simply transported himself somewhere else, abandoning his body on Earth. Responsive to the physical interaction, his member wouldn't struggle to help him perform the act for which Porfirio wanted Beauvis the most.

Beauvis' performance was neat but not perfect. He found himself being over compassionate and even exaggerated in his will to satisfy the cleric's requests. However ironic it was, the challenge of doing so was a powerful energy to propel Beauvis' actions. He found in Porfirio's harassment the fuel to feed his gusto. The boy remembered those times in which Porfirio had told him 'I love you'. In the midst of delivering what Porfirio was craving for, Beauvis thought of the things he would like to say to him. Porfirio had lived all his life based on negative sentiments. He had never cared for exploring what love was and it was sickening to have heard him pronounce those sacred words, words that are a mere representation to refer to the highest feeling in the realm of human emotions. Beauvis wanted to feel sorry for him; but more than pitiful, the cleric was pathetic. Repugnancy is all he caused in Beauvis when he fancied Porfirio thinking that he was able to love somebody. A person reluctant to accept that others had needs too, was simply condemned to living away from love forever.

Beauvis was absorbed into his own thoughts. Imagining how miserable Porfirio would be once his boy escaped to the Indies, kept Beauvis motivated

to do his best pretence. He wished he had a knife with him to cut Porfirio's throat with. The cleric would bleed a river while still alive and would ask him "why?" Beauvis would lie and tell him, "Because I love you. Just thinking that one day you may find another young boy to substitute me with hurts me deeply. I want you all for myself only." There was no higher pleasure than imagining him bleeding to death, and listening to a lie would be the last thing he would ever do. But Beauvis wasn't lucky enough to be able to turn that into reality and get away with it. He had to content himself with thinking that his murder and revenge desires would be passed through his blood lineage to future generations, who would stand up for justice and wouldn't let themselves be fooled by liars.

Delighted with his own thoughts, Beauvis charged towards Porfirio more energetically. The man liked the enthusiasm with which he was being pleased, unaware that the driving force behind it was Beauvis' will to see him dying and suffering. Beauvis continued until his body reached the zenith. Mentally, he had found climax imagining Porfirio agonizing to death, alone, and suffering. "I can't wait to be with you again, father," said Beauvis. The words came easily as there was honesty in them. The boy wanted to make him have the best days of his life to make his world fall apart later, as a result of his escape. It would be a minuscule castigation compared to the real calamity he had caused and yet, it was worth it.

What had originally seemed like it was going to be long days waiting for Rene's confirmation to go sail with them, turned out to be a fun game for Beauvis. He had discovered a hidden pleasure in awakening his basic instincts. Much to Beauvis' satisfaction, Porfirio didn't stop reminding him that he was a powerful man and capable of getting him killed. Beauvis was happy to have gotten him into his trap. Porfirio thought that Beauvis had become more caring due to his threats; little did he know about the boy's intentions to leave him on Friday. Beauvis continued to consummate his devoir in a similar fashion daily for the next three days.

Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Hispania, Wednesday the 1st of August, 1492

It was Wednesday the first of August, 1492. Beauvis was anxious to get news from Rene about their upcoming trip. He stayed home all morning, hoping he would come see him, and afraid that he would lose his place on board if the merchant didn't find him to talk about the details. Somebody knocked at the door and Beauvis went to open it promptly. It was him. To keep his plan a secret, they went out for a walk.

“Good news for you, young man,” said Rene, “I got you a spot for you to join the travels.” Beauvis was relieved as never before in his whole life. He was curious to know how Rene had made that possible but he feared that knowing the answer would make him feel more in debt than he felt already. Rene had, in fact, bought Beauvis' place for 400 maravedis. It had been easy to convince somebody to stay in Europe instead; some crew members were going on the expedition just for food and shelter. Rene had also exchanged his spot on board of Santa Maria, the biggest and most equipped of the three ships to go together with Beauvis on Santa Clara. Gelmiro, a merchant like Rene, had happily accepted the deal, as it was an upgrade for him to go on the main ship instead.

“There's no need to ask many questions,” Rene continued, “everything you need to know will be explained on the trip. As I said before, not even food or blankets do you need to bring. Just yourself and your favourite clothes. You and I will go on board of Santa Clara, captained by Vicente Yáñez Pinzón; his brother Martín Alonso Pinzón will captain the other caravel; and Mr Columbus will be on board of Santa Maria, which we all call La Gallega, the main ship with around forty-five men. Don't get jealous of the extra space they will have; the caravels are easier to maneuver and safer during storms and bad weather.”

"If you want to escape discreetly, join me at *lauds* on Friday. I will wait for you by the cracked tree near the tavern. I will have my wagon ready. You will hide inside it with the rest of my merchandise, so that nobody sees you leaving the citadel. Be prepared to be away from Europe for months or maybe years." "I am full of gratitude to you for having made this happen," Beauvis responded, "I will be ready to meet you and leave Europe in two days." There were many things he wanted to do before his departure. One, however, kept him distracted all day and awake that night. Beauvis wanted to let Fortunata know about it.

Chapter 3

Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Hispania, Thursday the 2nd of August, 1492

It was Thursday the second of August, 1492. After Beauvis had finished performing his duties with Porfirio, he rushed to see Fortunata. They met out in the country, where they wouldn't be disturbed. He didn't know how to start telling her bad news and ruin what was a beautiful sunny day surrounded by singing birds and green grass and trees of the late summer. The field wasn't on the way of commercial routes; there was an unusual peace.

They had been together many times before but something was different now. It was that vibe, that sinister premonition that another misfortune was about to happen. "Thank you for having come to see me," said Beauvis. "We don't have much time," said she in distress, "I convinced my sister to tell my father I went to the barns." "There's something I need to tell you," said Beauvis. "Don't," she interrupted him, "not yet. Hold my hands and kiss me." They kissed, first timidly and then passionately. It was through her hands that she told him how much in love she was. And it was through her lips that she told him how much she liked his touch.

Beauvis was a young man. Even though he was coming from seeing the cleric, he was responsive to the touch of her inamorata. Regardless of how much energy Porfirio demanded from him, he always craved for a woman's touch, the softness of a female skin, and the tenderness that only a *femme célibataire* can possess. Their lips, thirsty for each other, prolonged that magical moment. Beauvis' penis began to grow under his clothes. Fortunata felt his lover's lust, and her vagina got effusive in return.

Only married couples were allowed to have intercourse and most Christians abide by that law. Fortunata and Beauvis were not the only rebels who had surrendered to the temptations of carnality. The reckless actions of such couples often resulted in the procreation of bastard children. They were not

uncommon occurrences and Fortunata was aware of the big risk she was taking. Since it was very difficult to escape from people, she would never waste the opportunity to take advantage of their privacy. Beauvis, as the gentleman he was, had always made sure not to place life into her womb. Fortunata had fully trusted him since the first time. She believed in Beauvis and that he would never make her be the mother of a child out of marriage.

Fortunata placed her hands on Beauvis' member over his clothes. She loved the feeling of it growing in her hands, and reaching a size bigger than both of her hands could contain. She remembered the first time she had touched it.

Her fear had killed the last drop of curiosity she used to have before. She hadn't explored her own body and she was confident that something of such proportions could never find enough space in her. Later on, however, Beauvis' passion had awoken her libidinousness. And one day she had accepted Beauvis' request. They hadn't been successful in that first attempt, but they didn't get discouraged and kept trying. Not only was it a struggle for her, but also for him, as his member was forced into that narrow space of hers, fruitlessly. On their fifth assay, Beauvis had brought plenty of olive oil; only then was their endeavour a success. Being used to playing with his body, Beauvis was always able to recognise the highest point of pleasure while still able to control himself. Brute when he was with her for the first time, he almost did what he had promised he wouldn't. Beauvis knew that Fortunata would never trust him again if he was careless. An extraterrestrial force had made him keep his composure and lead the liquid of life away from Fortunata's core.

Beauvis touched his damsel's undergarments, finding them wet near her cavity. He made his way to explore it, taking advantage of how her gap dilated in response to Beauvis' touch and her ardour for intimacy. Knowing that this would be their last time together, Beauvis brought his hand near his nose. He was enrapt with the smell of her, which he wished he could keep with him forever.

Fortunata and Beauvis had that vast green space all for themselves, which made the boy feel comfortable getting rid of his clothing. She was timid, as their privacy came from the undisturbed location they were in and not from being in an enclosed space. She laid on her back over the green grass. Beauvis admired her beauty. It was so pure, so immaculate. Her hair colour resembled that of the walnut tree; her eye expression seemed to be always docile. He wished they were in the barn, where she had shown him the full splendour of her body for the first time. But he was aware that she would feel more comfortable keeping her clothes on in the open country. Beauvis lifted her dress and got rid of the last piece of fabric in the way.

As usual, Beauvis struggled to place himself where he was craving to be. When he was finally able, Fortunata moaned in a blend of pleasure and pain. Beauvis was fascinated by being inside her opening, the divine creation to fit a man's member, the only place in which he could find the flawless embrace, impeccable in every point of his manhood. The root of its shaft was the only exception, as there wasn't enough space for all of it. The young lady pushed Beauvis' hips, using the palm of her hands against him near their point of union. That way, she avoided getting hurt. Her narrowness caused the young man's member to bend gently where it wasn't possible to go further. Beauvis didn't perceive that as an unusual occurrence, for he was well used to not being able to place all of his manhood where he wished. Due to this distance, which had the two lovers barely detached, the thin layer of skin covering Beauvis' sexual glands rubbed Fortunata on each thrust.

After some moments in high pleasure, Beauvis felt the rush of prime. He knew that this would be the last time they would be together but he still stayed faithful to that promise he had made to her. He wanted her to be a reputable woman and find love, once he was gone, without being subject to prejudice. Beauvis directed his seed out of his lover; he later laid his full weight on her, seeking placidity in the smoothness of her skin.

Beauvis opened his eyes some time later and apologised for having fallen asleep on top of Fortunata. She was so in love with him, that she enjoyed

having him that close, as calm as he could be. “I must get going very soon,” she said, “what is that important matter that you needed to tell me?” Her innocence was such that Beauvis didn’t know how to begin what he wanted to tell her. Many words passed through his mind but none of them were promising to make things easier. Beauvis tried to justify his plan. There weren’t bad intentions behind the will to protect her from evil. And yet, he struggled to pronounce his first sentence.

“Fortunata, my love,” Beauvis said nervously, “I love you with all my heart. But there are a few... concerns about our safety if we continue together. You will see, Alain, a close friend of mine, was sacrificed as a signal to stay away from doing illegal actions. I fear for you and I fear for myself. I don’t believe we should continue to see each other.” Fortunata remained silent, thinking that Beauvis would continue speaking. He didn’t, and she took the word, “I understand, my love. And I agree. This must be the last time we see each other secretly. We must wait and get married to be allowed to be together.” Beauvis got worried when he realised that his message hadn’t been conveyed as he expected. “No,” he responded, “this is more complex than that. We are in danger already. We need to stop seeing each other completely. I am leaving town. I am leaving forever.” She got nervous but she breathed and tried to assimilate the nonsense she was listening to. “Why are we in danger?,” she asked, “If we are, let’s escape together. I love you deeply. I will follow you wherever you want to go. We can be happy together. We will be happy together. If we just... No, Beauvis, you are ill, what has gotten into you? We have plans. All I want is to be with you.”

Beauvis was aware that ending their relationship wouldn’t be as easy as he had imagined in his mind. He was, however, frustrated that it wasn’t as simple as he wished. The problem was that he couldn’t tell her the reason behind his decision. She would never understand.

“Do you remember, Beauvis,” she continued in distress, “that time when we walked together from my aunt’s house. I had gone with her to bring her a remedy for her sore throat. You frightened me to death when I saw the contour of a man following me closely.” She looked away and smiled faintly,

as if she was speaking of a long gone past, "It was a cool night of autumn. You took your jacket off and lent it to me. Love made the long way we walked together feel ephemeral. We spent even more time kissing that evening, feeling each other's hands. That was the first time we said *I love you.*" Fortunata looked at Beauvis, trying to find hope in his expression, unsuccessfully. Beauvis was looking at her as if she was telling the story of another person. But he recalled that promenade as if it was only yesterday. Struggling to go on, she continued, "And do you remember how we used to laugh at the unfortunate rich people who would never live the magic of true love. There was no money in this world that could make us happier than we were, you said. And there is still nothing on Earth capable of making us happier than we are today, as long as we are together. If you ever loved me, Beauvis, take me with you. Be certain that the immensity of our love will defeat anything in our way."

"I can't," Beauvis replied bluntly, "I will go on an expedition never done before. We will reach the Indies sailing west. Nobody has ever explored that far. It is an all-male crew. The world can't dispense with a woman's life, as it can prescind from that of a man." "I will wait for you," she replied, "you know I will. I love you. I am also terrorised by the recent occurrences. I knew Alain and only God knows how I feel about it. But we can't live in panic. Loving you gives me the strength to go on. We can defeat fear together."

Fortunata's words were as inspiring as they were hollow; nothing could change what Beauvis had planned. Beauvis remained in silence; he didn't know what else to say. She began weeping. "You said you loved me," she managed to pronounce in a shaky voice, "Who are you? I want my Beauvis back. Nothing but a hug from him is what could save my world right now." Beauvis was hurting inside too; he wanted but refrained from holding her in his arms. He didn't want to give a wrong message. In Beauvis' mind, the only way to keep her safe was getting away from her forever. He, being as young as he was, couldn't envision being ever able to get back with her after the voyage without being in danger of Porfirio's threats again.

Beauvis did love Fortunata. But he cared so much about her that he wanted her safe. And he was willing to pay the price of not seeing her ever again. The young lady was devastated but she refused to listen to Beauvis. She didn't know that he got everything ready for his departure tomorrow, and that there was nothing she could do about it. "Do what you want," she said crying, cleaning her tears with the palm of her hands, "but I am free to do what I want too. I will wait for your return. I will never welcome a man's touch other than yours."

Beauvis was touched but his heart was aching, knowing that he would ruin her right to love and be loved again. Beauvis realised that the only way to return the freedom he had taken from her was breaking her heart. Only then would she not wait for his return. It wasn't in Beauvis' plan to have gotten this far. But he wished for her happiness and lying, he thought, was the only way to set her free.

"I will tell you why I fear for my life," said Beauvis, "and why getting away from you is the only way to keep you safe. I am in the same trouble for which Alain was sentenced. We were found together. I will suffer the same fate if I don't escape now that I still can." Beauvis felt contemptible staining his friend's name. His channel to bring freedom to Fortunata was nauseating. Not only was Beauvis debasing a deceased one's memory to elude his own problems, but he was also the catalyst behind his friend's death. "I ask your forgiveness," said Beauvis out loud and wept, wishing Alain was in front of him to listen to his genuine apology to him.

"I forgive you," said Fortunata still weeping, thinking that Beauvis was speaking to her, "Let's forget everything. We will run away together and we will never mention any of this again. Everybody has faults and I don't blame you for having done what you did. We are not married yet and I understand a man's needs. I forgive you. Let's make it right. Escape with me and marry me. We will be the happiest family. I, you, Adam, Jean, Anne, Isabella, and all other children we will have and that we are yet to name. Oh, those beautiful names with which we will revive the memory of our grandparents,

who perished at a young age leaving our parents alone in this world. We will talk for hours as we used to do when you were full of plans for us together.”

Beauvis wasn't relieved but worried to listen to Fortunata speak like that. It had been a mistake to have said what he did last. “Fortunata, I beg you to understand what my past means,” he said in a more sober tone and holding his tears, “We can't be together. Not only do I want your safety, but also your freedom and right to be loved by a man who is loyal to you as you deserve. I don't abide by God's law and that previous incident is deemed to repeat itself. I won't be the one to hurt you. I refuse to be your misfortune.” “No,” she responded; her crying had become unrestrained, “that isn't true. That can't be true. I know you and I know you have the kindest heart. We can break free from the past and become new persons. I believe in you. When we get married we will have the right to live our intimacy intensely; you won't miss what you will have at home. I want you. And I love you. We will walk on the white sand of the beach, and we will kiss while we watch the sun set.”

“Please stop,” Beauvis interrupted her, “I don't want to. I don't want to live in a lie. Alaïn was neither the first one nor the last one with whom I have shared an elevated affection.” “My love! You've lost your mind,” said Fortunata incredulous. It was irony at its fullest how Fortunata didn't believe Beauvis when, in fact, he had been seeing Porfirio all along, before and after Alaïn's capture and death. But her love was a blindfold; she forbade herself from acknowledging the facts.

“That isn't true,” Fortunata continued in a big struggle to speak in the middle of her crying, “You know it isn't. Did you find another love? Did you fall out of love? Tell me. I can stand it. I am a strong woman.” There wasn't enough fabric in her dress to contain the river of tears flooding her face. Beauvis was waiting for her to continue, but she was waiting for his answers.

Beauvis replied, “No. I don't have another love. No. I didn't fall out of love. I have explained my reasons. Please don't make this more difficult than it already is. You are free and you will find true love, the one that a gorgeous good lady like you is worthy of. You will live a long pleasant life with your

future children and grandchildren. I won't ever be back and I apologise but my love for you is greater than the selfishness of keeping you by my side." It was Beauvis' candour speaking. His childish thoughts didn't allow him to plan a life with her after everything that had happened. He also couldn't find another way to keep her away and prevent her from suffering the same fate as Alaïn. "I don't want your forgiveness but your understanding," said Beauvis, "I also wish things were different. You will always have a special space in my heart. I am faithful that you will understand me one day in the future." "I want no future if it is without you," said Fortunata; her eyes were dry from all the tears. She was tired of fighting for something that simply wasn't for her.

"Would you please kiss me goodbye?," said the young lady. They kissed, wishing that the power of love would break the spell of evil, but real life wasn't as simple and Beauvis had plans for tomorrow, leaving Palos de la Frontera forever. "Please go," she said, "I would never forgive myself for having left you. Face away and run so fast that I can't reach you." The grass was the only witness of Fortunata's misery. She wished there was an antidote to alleviate her broken heart. She wished she had more tears to release her sorrow. She wished she had a friend to share her suffering with, but the person in whom she used to find comfort was the one who had caused it. There she stayed, broken into pieces, victim of destiny's mockery.

Chapter 4

Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Hispania, Friday the 3rd of August, 1492

Beauvis didn't sleep, thinking of the demise he had caused. He comforted himself thinking that he had simply been part of the unfortunate events and not the source of it. A gentle rain came from the sky all night, as if it was telling Beauvis that he was not alone in his grief. Never had a night been as long as that one. When *lauds* finally rang, he was ready. It was Friday the 3rd of August, 1492. He left a note for his sister and her husband to thank them for having been so accommodating. He walked towards the tavern to meet Rene near the cracked tree, as he had been instructed on Wednesday. Through the smell of wetness and moisture in the air, his beloved city was saying goodbye to him forever.

The older merchant was already there, waiting for him on his wagon. Judging by how damp Rene's stuff was, he knew he had been there for quite some time. "Thank you for waiting for me," said Beauvis, rushing as soon as he had noticed him, "I am on time." "Don't worry," Rene responded, noticing the boy's distress, "I arrived earlier. The wagon is ready. I placed soft items on this corner so that you would be more comfortable on the trip." "Thank you, Sir," said Beauvis as he found himself a spot to hide in the middle of the merchandise. "Do not make a single noise," said Rene, "especially when we pass through the citadel's gate."

Beauvis didn't struggle to remain quiet. Greater was his will to succeed in his mission than the discomfort caused by the roughness of the road. He escaped into the rain and its sound when falling onto everything below the sky. Beauvis noticed they had reached the town's gate, as Rene stopped the wagon without telling him anything. "Paper," asked the officer in charge in a serious tone. Rene gave him two sheets with seals, which the other man watched carefully. He checked that the items on the list matched those being transported. He grabbed the blanket covering the merchandise and Beauvis. "Please let me go, mister officer," asked Rene kindly, "it is raining and people

are expecting me early this morning. I'd rather share this coin with you than losing a good spot to sell my stuff at the market." The man in charge looked around to see if there was nobody else watching, and he took the coin from him without saying a word, and still as stern as in the beginning. "Guild?" he asked. "The Honourable Association of Merchants of Queen Isabella I of Castile." He stamped a seal matching Rene's guild on his sheet and handed it back to him. "You may go," he said.

They continued their trip, and when they were finally alone, Rene said to Beauvis, "that was close, young man. You have an angel." Beauvis laughed and replied, "It was the spacious wagon what saved me." "Don't get used to it, we won't be able to bring much stuff with us on the ships. I will get another one in the Canary Islands, our only stop before the long voyage."

Prime rang, followed by *terce*. Later *sext* and even *nones* did too. Beauvis was three hours late for his daily intimate appointment with the cleric. "Should I continue waiting?" lustful Porfirio thought to himself; he looked at his horse. "No. I'd rather wait for him a bit longer." *Vespers*. It was a fact; Beauvis was not coming at all.

"What an ingrate!," Porfirio said, having made sure there was nobody around to hear him ranting, "I give him everything and he can't give something back in return. A job, a friend, a mule, food, gifts, and even presence in high society. And when I need a little of his time, he's busy. What in the world can be more important than being considerate with a friend who is always there for him! I hope he knows where he's standing. I wouldn't be as courageous if I were him. He is walking on the tightrope and yet, he grants himself the freedom of doing whatever he pleases. I thought I had made my point across with that imbecile friend of his, but now I realise I should do more to make him acknowledge that his duties are not a choice. I just hope that he had a good excuse for this. A simple apology for his sister's death or a broken arm won't suffice."

Porfirio decided to mount his mule and look for the young man. By asking around he realised that he hadn't gone to his usual places. More worried

than upset, he went to the citadel's gate and asked the guards if they had seen a boy matching his description. It was a busy route and lots of wagons, carts, and people were passing by. "Did you see a boy with a handsome face passing through the gate earlier?..." he wished he could ask; that would save him the hassle of using many words to attain the same outcome. "With the body of an athletic gladiator..." he continued thinking to himself, "and a perfect smile like no other?" Only then, did Porfirio realise that he was in distress as never before. "What if my boy, my beloved handsome boy has run away?," he thought and he began to hyperventilate. There were people coming and going in all directions. "No. It can't be. This can only be a nightmare. I won't go to France but I will send somebody who will find you."

Unsuccessful in his mission to find the boy, Porfirio went back. On his way, to his dismay, he saw Fortunata, carrying a basket with apples. "But it can't be," he thought. He looked at her semblance and realised that she was grieving. It couldn't be a ploy; they didn't know Porfirio would be around looking for him. "What happened to my boy?," he wondered in anguish. He approached the young lady and asked her, "Where is Beauvis? He didn't come to help me at church this morning." Fortunata didn't expect such a bold question so suddenly. "I don't know," she said. "You do know, young lady," said the cleric, "now you better tell me and don't make me lose my precious time." She began weeping and said, "He left. He didn't tell me where."

Porfirio sensed that Beauvis' plan was to come back and take Fortunata with him. He couldn't let that happen. In his mind, Beauvis deserved no happiness if it wasn't with him. "Only merchants are allowed to travel. I will place an order of arrest against him. And you will be held in contempt for concealing his whereabouts." The lady was shocked; she was aware of the creative methods used for making people confess. She still loved him deeply, but she didn't want to continue to suffer further from his mess. "He is going to the Indies," she said, "they are sailing west." "I knew you were a reasonable woman," replied the cleric, and rushed on his mule to the docks. When he arrived, Porfirio realised that the ships going on the expedition to the Indies had left earlier that morning.

Porfirio could easily get a place on board the main ship of the expedition, Santa Maria. The church had enough power to incentivise being on good terms with the clerics. More than one person would be glad to do an exchange with him. But he was afraid that the Earth was flat and not spherical, as some people presumed. He wasn't willing to take such a risk.

Asking around, the cleric found that the ships would make a stop in the Canary Islands before their long voyage. He had a bit of hope, knowing that there was an opportunity to find Beauvis there. But his faith disappeared after learning that Beauvis had become a rich merchant's protégé, the one who had gotten him a spot on one ship. Porfirio wasn't furious; he was tired. He opened his eyes and realised that there was nothing he could do to keep the boy with him. He sat on the dock, looking at the sea and thought, "Yesterday it was a young lady, the one Beauvis wanted to go away with. Today, it was a rich merchant. Tomorrow... There won't be tomorrow. I give up on him." He felt a thorn in his heart as he made that decision. He felt pathetic having been abandoned by the person to whom he had given everything. He remembered when his family did the same thing in the past. People around him were unappreciative of his endless gifts. Only God was pure. In no one but Him, had he found justice. Omnipotent God was able and always willing to punish evil, including ungratefulness. Porfirio used to pray for his family's eternal suffering; he was impatient to go back to the church and pray for Beauvis' fate, too.

Porfirio mounted his mule and went to the open fields to pray to God. Surrounded by nothing but nature, he immersed himself into his own thoughts and remembered the path that had led him to Beauvis.

When Porfirio was young, he used to drink milk from young mother dogs. When he learnt through his older fellows that male dogs were able to produce it too, he got curious and went to explore that for himself. His immaturity rendered him unable to make the analogy between a man's capacity to do so and that of a male animal. But he was old enough to acknowledge that close interactions with animals were considered an offence in Christian law. After having learnt that

his friends' claims were right, he kept doing his new discovery in neighbouring farms.

Porfirio was an intelligent boy. When he realised that his new finding had turned into an addiction, he knew it was time to build a solid plan for his life. He became a rural ecclesiastic. It was a perfect career for his needs; he enjoyed the endless opportunities to be alone with male fellows who shared the same preference.

Later in his career, Porfirio got transferred to serve as the town cleric of Palos de la Frontera, a town known for its important commercial activity. He missed his old work environment; he requested money from the higher Christian authorities to buy neighbouring properties in which he could keep some farm animals. The Christian church was collecting tithe, on top of all other ways it had to make money; Porfirio was granted his request. He spent numerous years of prosperity holding his position. He became renowned and was promoted to represent the whole province of Huelva. He was a powerful man, often involved in dirty political matters; his negative influence was significant in religious Hispania.

One day, a talented boy arrived in Palos de la Frontera to stay. He was able to read and write, reason for which Porfirio had hired him to help at church. He rapidly grew fond of the young man, who showed his gratitude by fulfilling the cleric's immoralities. Porfirio had never loved and neither had anybody taken care of him before. His own family had turned their back at him due to his inflated image of himself. He didn't know how to handle his emotions when something was born in his heart. Only one thing he was certain of; he wanted to keep him and he would do everything within his means to do so.

Today, however, things had changed. Porfirio was ready to let go of Beauvis and the most precious time of his life altogether. There in the field, he kneeled down and made prayers. From the bottom of his heart, he asked

God to make Beauvis suffer, and to make him live in pain every single day of his still young life.

Chapter 5

Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Hispania, Friday the 3rd of August, 1492

While everybody on Columbus' expedition felt they were leaving the safety of solid soil, Beauvis was relieved to be on the ship. He felt lucky to have been able to escape from the claws of evil, and to be granted a second opportunity to live his life right. He promised himself he would learn from his past and wouldn't commit the same mistakes. He looked to the horizon. Europe was barely visible, and he would be back after months. He wished that he would remain on board the caravel for years. There he was safe; he had shelter, food, and a friend.

Rene looked at the magnificent Santa Maria. He thought of how much he would like to be on the carrack instead, if he hadn't exchanged his spot with Gelmiro. But Rene knew he had made the right choice, accompanying Beauvis on board. Since they had been the last ones to get onto the ship, Rene hadn't had the chance to introduce Beauvis to the rest of the crew. It was part of Rene's plan to have met the young man last minute and join the crew right when it was ready to leave.

Eight days was the normal expected sailing time to get to the Canary Islands. Unfortunately the rudder of Pinta's got damaged, which delayed the arrival for some more days. Some people, including the Admiral Columbus himself, claimed that it had been sabotaged. Both Rene and Beauvis were relieved that they were travelling on Santa Clara caravel, in case the rumors were true. The trip to the Canary Islands was mostly calm. Beauvis got introduced to those in the same ship, making it easy for him to forget his troubled past and surrender his soul to the adventure.

Real de las Palmas, Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Sunday the 12th of August, 1492

It was Sunday the twelfth of August when all three ships had arrived in Real de las Palmas in the Canary Islands. It became known that Pinta's rudder had been damaged and the stop in town would be longer than anticipated. To rush their departure, Rene offered himself to get the required supplies to repair Pinta from Telde, the neighbouring town on the same island. He negotiated a fair deal and rushed with Beauvis to get a trade wagon pulled by mules. They left for Telde as soon as they found one. A local paid them for transporting goods from Real de las Palmas to their new destination.

The conversation between Rene and Beauvis was pleasant; the man got so absorbed with it that he didn't notice a hole on the road. One wheel of the cart came off, and so did some of the merchandise they had on it. With much effort, they were able to put the wheel back, but the axle of the cart was damaged. They realised they would be able to continue the trip on the cart in short intervals, stopping often to fix the wheel in place again. The other alternative would be to have one man stay on site while the other would go get help. Neither Rene nor Beauvis wanted to wait on site; furthermore, it would be expensive to get a replacement cart to transport everything. The temperature was to rise significantly at noon and there was no guarantee that help would arrive by then. Abandoning such valuable merchandise was absolutely out of the question.

They decided to continue the trip travelling only short distances at a time. The axle was so damaged that it would call for a stop very often. Sometimes they couldn't go on for more than 50 meters without a stop to fix the wheel. Only where the path was more even could they go straight for 500 meters. Such distance would be completed in less than three minutes; each stop would take between two and six minutes, depending on the terrain. At noon, four hours after having started their two-hour planned trip, they were only halfway through.

Luckily, they found a house on their path. The man knew the area and offered them help, shelter, and water, in exchange for some goods they were transporting and a very expensive sum compared to what an inn would charge. He measured Rene's cart and said:

"I can get you a strong metal bar you can use as an axle" the man said; "but your cart won't be repaired overnight. I need to get it from Telde. If I go get it right now, your cart will be ready in the afternoon before it is dark. That would give you plenty of time to complete your trip safely." "I don't need to wait here for the cart to be finished," said Beauvis to Rene; "you have shown me the path before. Save some money; I will walk and run my way to town."

It was a very hot summer day. The sun at noon was burning everything it touched, but Beauvis enjoyed the feeling of the sun upon his skin. He drank plenty of water and took enough with him as he got en route to the original destination. His long and strong legs allowed him to move twice as fast as carts, especially when he didn't have a heavy outfit on. He was often able to run instead of using another means of transportation. Due to this reason, his legs were strong, and so was his muscular butt.

Rene decided to wait there at the man's house, while the metal bar was brought. He could have gone with him but he didn't want to leave the cart alone, and Beauvis had already left.

Beauvis began his way towards town. He removed his shirt to feel the sun in every single spot of his shoulders. His already tanned skin, grabbed a deeper pigmentation after being under the sun for some time. Sweat appeared all around his body, helping him to stay cool while he ran. The smell of olive scent was everywhere in the air. After about one hour, he decided to grab some rest under a broad olive tree he found on the way. It was even hotter than he expected so his water supplies were already depleted.

There was a small creek nearby but the water wasn't very clean. He left his shirt under the shade of the olive tree, and followed the creek upstream. Beauvis was in search of a spot with clearer water from which he could drink.

Still not satisfied with the water quality, he kept going further and further. He had walked for more than half an hour, when he heard the sound of a waterfall in the distance. Intrigued, he tried to find it. When he did, he shouted in excitement. He was delighted to have found a source of freshwater on such a hot day. Not only had he run a significant distance, but he was also tired from fixing the wheel each time the cart had to stop.

He approached the waterfall and got his hand in to test the temperature. It was perfect but it was directly exposed to the sun. Below the mainstream, there was another section of the waterfall; it had cooler water, as it was located below the main one. Its natural offset to the ground level made it a very private spot surrounded by big rocks. It was more inviting than the one at ground level, so Beauvis removed his clothes here. He originally thought of placing them in a cool spot away from direct exposure to the sun; he then realised it would be a better idea to wash them and let them dry right under the sunlight. To do so, he went back up to the main waterfall. He noticed how isolated the place was; he screamed “hello” as loud as he could, to make sure there was nobody around. The place was deserted, indeed. He washed his clothes and then hung them from a tree nearby, so that they would be dry by the time he would get dressed again. He regretted having left his shirt behind, but it would be a very long way back just to retrieve it, so he would simply wash it some other time.

He went down to the enclosed space below the ground level. He approached the fresh water and got in. One million transparent droplets surrounded every cell of his naked body. The clear fresh water felt sublime to his touch. Striking his head first, every molecule of water continued descending through his strong trapezius, down through his back and butt. Then the water would split ways on each leg. Beauvis faced the stream and opened his mouth to satisfy his thirst. Soon, the soothing effect of the cool water flow transported him to another dimension. He admired the magnificence of the universe in that little place of his own. He contemplated the perfection of the black rocks in front of him, and the green trees above.

He felt the magic of the intermittent hit of droplets on his body. It was even more intense after having been exposed to the sun for so long. He noticed the sharp contrast between his burnt skin above his waistline and his skin below, which was always covered from the sun. He thought of going outside to expose his full nudity to the sun, but he was in such a state of relaxation, that he preferred to prolong his pleasure in that secret sanctuary where he was one with nature. He reached a point when he felt in perfect balance with his life: he had as many aspirations to attain, as he had contentment with what he had.

He thought of every goal he wanted to attain: he was not very ambitious but rather an adventurous man. His goals were not very clear yet but he did know he would be among the first men to ever reach the Indies from the east side. It couldn't have been a coincidence that he had escaped from Perpignan, settled in Palos de la Frontera, been spotted by Rene, and then invited to join the voyage. It was clear that destiny had something marvelous prepared for him. He knew he would return back home with lots of new adventures to tell, a rich network of men as hard-working as he was, wonderful exotic spices he had only heard of, and lots of bizarre antiquities that most of the people didn't even know existed.

He had the dream of becoming a renowned and well-respected merchant. He was seeking financial comfort they were known to have; he wanted to live for travelling and he wanted to travel for a living. His intent suited that profession perfectly. He wanted to break free from the monotony of living in one single place and seeing the very same people. Most importantly, he wanted a life away from vice, decadence, and corruption. He had the feeling that sedentary people tend to lose focus on their own dreams and begin to deviate from the path of goodness; as a result of their own boredom, they commit the most outrageous crimes and immoral acts. He wanted a life of virtue and he was willing to sacrifice his comfort in order to take the path of rectitude. He wanted to build and sustain a well-respected family, and he would choose as his wife the most caring and adventurous woman he could find. He would become a father soon after coming back to Europe. He would have ten children.

After thinking of all his main dreams, he continued with the banalities he would get: he would have a white horse, he would get a golden ring, and a nice house, with olive trees by the entrance ...

Beauvis was thankful that nature had provided him this little space for his enjoyment. That very same nature that had taken him from Perpignan all the way south to Palos, was now about to take him to the opposite side of the world. Beauvis was hypnotised both by the feel of water and its beautiful melody. The sound of it as it crashed against everything on its way surrounded and enveloped him until he lost track of time. One hour went by in that state of trance. He began to feel cold but he didn't want to abandon that place of tranquility quite yet; he decided to continue his shower above, where the water was warmer and it was exposed to the sunlight. He went up and positioned himself right under the main waterfall, facing away from the sun. The warmth of the water was comforting; the sun touching his back was splendid.

It was magnificent to have the strong summer sun in direct contact with his butt, which was usually covered and pale in comparison with the rest of his body. Nudity wasn't uncommon and yet, a certain decency always accompanied it. There was an inherent apprehension in conjunction with it. It was reassuring to be there and feel that his body was no source of shame. Nature was truly indulgent, as it showed a singular redemption to the exposure of his bare skin. His nakedness was unchained. Being in such a secret place all by himself was magical. He stayed in that reverie for a long time.

After that long meditation, he proceeded to wash his body. He started from the top with his wet hair, down to his face, and then his back. He gently brought his hands to his buttock. He grabbed both cheeks with each hand, and exposed his hole to let the clean water slide throughout the path between them. He rubbed it with one hand slowly, while the other held one cheek strongly.

Suddenly, he heard a quiet sound behind him. Like a light, subtle, tentative step on the ground. A small animal, perhaps? He had previously made sure that there was nobody around, but more than two hours had gone by ever since. Enthralled by the deep meditation, he had lost track of time.

He was facing away from the sun, and there was no shadow in his vision span. That was good news, as it would be neither something very tall, nor something very close to him. But it was relatively close, judging from the level of the noise. He let go of his buttock, which he was holding with one hand, and brought the other one to the front. With his body fixed, he turned his head gently towards the place where the noise came from. It was Rene.

Chapter 6

Beauvis was relieved to learn that it was Rene, whose steps he had heard. He wasn't shocked to see him there: It was now obvious that he had found him because he had forgotten his shirt near the main road. And being Rene as familiar with Canary as he was, he probably knew the existence of such a wonderful place. Yes: it wasn't surprising to see him there, but Beauvis was perplexed that he had appeared so suddenly, and that close to him without calling him first from the distance. Beauvis wondered how long Rene had been there. He evaluated his peer's stance and quickly realised that he wasn't simply walking. He was rather secretly approaching Beauvis, hoping to go unnoticed. His equilibrium was not perfect, suggesting a mild drunkenness.

In a very short period of time, Beauvis' mind was full of questions. What were Rene's intentions? Was he simply playing and willing to startle him suddenly? Did he want to knock him down and take advantage of being in an isolated place? Was Rene willing to hide somewhere and continue to look at him secretly? Or maybe the noise hadn't been a mistake and he actually wanted him to notice his being secretive around him.

Rene had no armaments with him. Not even the knife he always had in a sheath by his waist. It was evident that he had taken it off so that Beauvis wouldn't be scared of his intentions. He didn't seem to have a malicious intent. But he was not smiling, which suggested this wasn't a failed joke either. Beauvis could see Rene's mule in the distance. He had purposely left it tied to a tree, far enough so that its noise wouldn't distract Beauvis. It all looked like an elaborated plan.

Beauvis was trying to establish eye contact to know how to react to the situation. Rene was looking right in the direction where Beauvis was, but he wouldn't bring his sight up to match the level of Beauvis' eyes. Beauvis smiled, hoping to relieve the tension of the enigmatic situation. His smile was so attractive, that Rene finally raised his gaze, taking his eyes off Beauvis'

butt to finally attain a mutual gaze. Rene smirked back at him. It finally made sense to the younger fellow.

Beauvis turned his head away from Rene, back to its initial position. He continued his shower right where he had left it, as if nothing had occurred. Rene was a respectable merchant; he had a very nice lady as a wife, with whom he had eight children. He was often lonely, as all his travelling would exile him from his family and close friends. He was used to finding consolation in casual discreet liaisons, especially with young girls at low-profile bordellos away from people's sight. He was a top customer but also, a very demanding one. His taste was very specific and his expectations were often very high. Only the most mesmerizing and captivating mademoiselles were able to please his demands. While these flings were concealed from public knowledge to avoid scandals, it was very well known among the merchant and sailing crew. Beauvis was flattered to meet such high standards.

Beauvis was aware that his butt was very well shaped. Contrary to this being an entitlement to comfort when being nude in public bath houses and other occasions, it was in fact one of the main reasons for which he would have more decorum than normal. Due to past experiences, Beauvis always tried to conceal the nudity of his behind to avoid surreptitious jokes, indecorous subtle solicitations, and sometimes even unrestrained clamoring.

The outcome of showing his bare butt was different depending on the occasion: when there were women around, as in bath houses, it would be men making jokes to assert their superiority and to denigrate Beauvis' masculinity. It was also a way for men to interact with women without talking to them directly, as if they were saying all that to impress them and to entertain them. "Hey, Beauvis, you are lucky it is illegal to use your ass for my pleasure", they would say sometimes. Their creativity to play with the words would always absolve them from the homosexual desires implied within. "If you were a woman, you would have my tool inside all the time". "If you didn't have balls, I'd ask you to bend over in front of me".

There were times when there were only men around. Under this setting, the jokes were more elevated. There was a thin line between proving supremacy and virility, and making subtle propositions. “I wish you were a courtesan so I could hire that ass”, did somebody say in an all-men crew once, causing everybody to break out in laughter. “Let Beauvis alone”, another one said, “he is so manly that he has four balls when he bends over to count them...”. Incredulous, the crowd wouldn’t know how to react to that, but he would immediately continue “of course only one pair is his, but still.” Everybody would rejoice at that hoax. “I’m joking. He doesn’t like men’s swords. He wishes he didn’t have one himself.” It wasn’t easy to simply dismiss such comments. If he tried to, they would only grow more confrontational: “don’t fool yourself, Beauvis. You only run to keep your butt round and fleshy, so men want to sodomize it”. The commotion used to get to a point in which even friends would follow suit. “He has a point, Beauvis, I only befriended you so that the day you decide to transform, I am the first one to use your ass.”

The logic behind targeting Beauvis to make fun of him was not because he lacked masculinity. And it wasn’t that he was weak either. He could, in fact, beat most men easily if he wanted to. Yes: he secretly liked men so he was not against that propaganda. Especially because it gave him a free alibi. Since everybody knew the existence of such claims being fake, he could get away with it if there was ever the need. But the true reason for which he was indulgent to the bullies was because he was a human with a very kind soul, and he knew they were self-conscious around his attractive nudity. Men only machinate jokes about his buttocks to divert the attention from the fact that the instrument of their manhood was most of the time smaller than Beauvis’ endowment.

He had tried to claim that fact. Indeed; he had tried. But there was always a way to win over him, as it was a whole multitude all against himself. When there were only other nude men around, some would say “you’re disgusting. Your tool is only bigger because you are getting aroused watching naked men”. Others would add “I wonder how you have gotten away with not being incarcerated, being the homosexual abomination you are.” More used to tell

him “If I were you, I would have turned myself in to pay for my sins”. And when there were also women sharing the full nudity-friendly territory, they would detract the attention from Beauvis' tool by making jokes about his butt and lack of manhood.

Anyway, the message was clear: men were annoyed by the perfection of his bare body. That's what caused him to be more prudish in those environments. His physique was impossible to overlook, so clothes were always a helpful disguise. In the middle of all the risqué jokes, however, everybody's minds had taken a trip to that fictitious reality. Some of them would eventually bring it home, and relinquish all efforts to keep themselves away from craving the forbidden intercourse. Rene was one of them. All that joking he had participated in, had slowly grown into fantasizing...

Beauvis' growing decency was a barrier that restrained the exhibit of a live sculpture. But Rene's recollections from the time when Beauvis was more liberal perdured in his memory. He had never accomplished a physical interaction with Beauvis. Neither had he ever dared to manifest that his joking had evolved into imagination; imagination into curiosity; and curiosity into desire. The image of Beauvis was secretly one of Rene's instruments for self-pleasure when nobody was watching; when nobody was judging.

Rene glorified that day, that very same moment in which he found Beauvis in the nude completely alone, all for himself. He was grateful to have been granted the chance of enjoying that broad back of his for more than one hour. Rene was no less entranced than Beauvis was. The time he had spent looking at him also seemed like it had been a fleeting blink. He wanted to have the power to freeze time so he could stare at Beauvis' ass. It was even more beautiful than he remembered; it had gotten reddish under the sun. He wished he had never made Beauvis feel self-conscious about his nudity, and that he had never upset him. But, most importantly, he wished he had never participated in that bullying against Beauvis, so that he wouldn't have grown as lustful about him as he was today.

Rene knew his limits. He was shy and he would never have the audacity to proceed with a first step himself. The situation was already risky as it was, and there was no need to make it more dangerous. Beauvis was more intrigued by the whole thing, than he was thirsty for a sexual encounter. He released his tension very often so that he wouldn't be very thirsty all day. While he would have gone ahead with whatever Rene would have suggested, he was a relatively inexperienced boy, who had never taken the lead before. Rene knew that the distance between the two wouldn't get any shorter. He regretted having tried to approach further in search of a better spot to look at him. He simply wanted to position himself right behind Beauvis the moment he had grabbed his buttocks to expose its middle point. Rene's attempt to see in real life what he had dreamt of so many times, had been unsuccessful.

Under normal circumstances, two men could have shared the water on a wild territory without any sexual connotation. This was, however, not a normal situation. With all the tension, Beauvis got out of the water quickly. He dressed up rapidly, and they were soon ready to go.

Beauvis was wondering how Rene managed to continue the trip on his mule, leaving the merchandise behind at that man's house. Since he was still shy about what had just occurred, he didn't ask. Rene was still uneasy and nervous from the encounter. Willing to relieve some tension, he started talking. "Marcus happened to be on our same track. He said he could utilize the 'hostellerie' to relax for the rest of the day. He will wait for the man's axle and he will pull both our load and his with his mules." Beauvis turned his head towards him showing disapproval. Rene continued immediately, "ohh don't worry about it, Beauvis. He doesn't like being under the midday sun for long. He won't hit the road anytime soon. He can be rather lazy. You will see when you meet him tomorrow." Beauvis didn't say a word. Who was he to question Rene's decisions anyway?

The rest of the trip was inconsequential. Beauvis walked all the way to town, while Rene rode his mule. Rene offered him the mule a couple of times. "Thank you, but I'd prefer to walk today". His butt was usually hidden from

the sun, and a tingling sensation in both his buttocks suggested it was a better idea to continue walking. Rene and Beauvis didn't talk much.

Rene was impatient to get to town and get his desires satisfied; he feared that his libido would drive him into committing imprudent actions. He wasn't afraid that Beauvis would tattle on him for what he had tried to do earlier. Nobody would believe young Beauvis; in fact, he would be the one in trouble if he began any allegation. Rene was worried, however, about having found himself doing what he did. Beauvis was safe in those regards but if Rene had tried the same thing with somebody else, he could have gotten into serious problems.

Rene was embarrassed for what had happened. He didn't really have a plan to excuse his actions at the waterfall, but he was willing to make things right and clear the image Beauvis may have had of him. And the solution appeared right in front of his eyes. "Hey, Beauvis", he said, "I believe it would be a good idea to make a quick stop at Victoria's. It will be a quick stop on our way before we enter the town of Telde. I have been away from my wife too long, and I haven't visited the courtesans lately. I'm not myself when I don't go visit my Cecilia."

Chapter 7

Beauvis turned his head towards Rene and replied to his invitation mournfully, “alright, let’s go.” Beauvis was not very excited with the idea because he didn’t have enough money to pay a service for himself. “What’s the problem, young man?”, Rene asked. Beauvis explained the situation to him. “Here you go”, Rene said to him and gave him enough money to pay for one service and maybe even some wine. Beauvis was thrilled. His face of enthusiasm was the most genuine ‘thank you’ that he could pronounce.

It was Sunday, a very unusual day to find a courtesan available at any bordello on Catholic land. Everybody would attend mass, and most bordellos would allow their courtesans to leave the place for the day. Rene was aware that they may not have any luck finding one girl working that day. Due to the circumstances, however, he decided to go ahead and give it a try. Rene was an exclusive customer of Cecilia, the most demanded girl at that place due to her outstanding beauty. She was a devoted girl and she never missed mass on a Sunday. She loved the stories of the life of Maria Magdalena, and she was never denied communion due to her will to reform herself in the future. Such a future had not come in more than seven years. She never lost hope, though, and neither did the priests, who would visit her often to enjoy some private time together. Rene was determined to break his loyalty to Cecilia that day due to his urgent need to release his lust. If she was to find out, he would blame it on not having found her that day.

They arrived and knocked at the door. Rene was relieved to hear a woman’s voice inside, who later approached to let them in. They were received warmly by Ms. Victoria and her husband, Martin. She was an older lady who had married a younger man. They were not the owners but they had been in charge of the brothel for quite some years now. Even though they had enough money to own the premises themselves, it was not allowed. The government knew that it was a profitable business; they would always own the place so that they would receive money from both its leasing, and from its taxes.

The idea of starting a new one was no more appealing than it was to abide by the established rules; they wouldn't be granted a license and they would be persecuted. Even though normal businesses would not be subject to the double burdens of lease and taxes, the entrepreneurial couple was happy to be in charge of such a colourful, joyous place full of stories and bustle. Throughout their extensive lobbying, they had gotten a good deal with the authorities: their tax cut was not excessive, and the contract was not overly lenient to their workers' rights. That had allowed them to thrive in the business without taking advantage of every woman to the limit.

They were no saints, though. Some people in charge of regulating the jurisdiction, especially those with clerical ties, wouldn't be very happy with them opening their business in days when sex was not allowed. On Sundays, ceremonial days, Advent, Easter, and holy days, they would usually have at least one woman around, plus a minimum of a couple 'on-call'. They wouldn't keep their workers captive, but they would charge their girls a higher rental fee for appointments they believed to be of higher profit even if they weren't in reality. Such appointments included longer visits, and those in which the visitor was known for tipping or giving away small gifts; Victoria was a reasonable lady, but she was an entrepreneur, as well. On Sunday, business was slow and courtesans knew it. Most of them would prefer to save on rental fees and not work at the bordello on that day of the week.

"It's been a while since you have come to visit, Mr. Rene," Victoria said with her very feminine hypnotizing voice and slow speech. "Yes. I have found myself spending more time in Castile lately. My friend and I happened to be on our way to Telde and we decided to drop by and say hello." "We are so pleased that you did. Welcome," said Martin. "Thank you", said Rene in exchange, "I know Cecilia is usually not around on Sundays but I decided to come check." "I am sorry to tell you she is still not coming on Sundays," he responded. Victoria interrupted quickly, "but we do have Miss Katherine around, one precious gem. She will be more than happy to help you relax." Victoria knew that Rene was always there to see Cecilia exclusively, but she decided to offer the services of Miss Katherine, in case that Rene's young

companion was interested. "I would like to see her", said Rene to Victoria's dismay. She tried to hide her shock but she stuttered while she responded "yes, of course. Please make yourselves at home while I go tell her that you are here."

Victoria had already turned her back to head toward the courtesan, when Rene continued "please tell her that my friend Beauvis, this young man here, will see her too after we are done". Victoria nodded and left; her walk was slow and enticing. Her curves were accentuated by a more liberal clothing than the usual for a woman of her age. She was very good looking, too. Even though she was not a courtesan herself, rumors said that she had been in the past, and that it was the reason for which she used to take care of the working ladies. Some men used to go visit the place just to see her and chat with her, particularly those who were married and didn't feel like cheating. Martin exchanged a couple of words with the travellers and led them to the main waiting area.

The lobby was big, as it was usually frequented by many travellers during normal days. Sometimes, a big group of men would come together, but only one or two would get a service. All others would patiently wait outside and buy drinks. The furniture was made from elegant wood, and the decor made the whole atmosphere exceptionally inviting. Ms. Victoria had done a great job making the place beautiful. It was a place meant for lonely men who had stayed away from their house and wives for a long time. The feminine touch made the environment more pleasant. There was incense for when there were customers waiting their turn to visit a girl. Victoria had lit a jasmine incense on her way to speak to Katherine. A water container had been set up near the ceiling purposely, so that it leaked constantly to make noise. Outside, an air mill cracked often, filling the acoustic space nicely. Rene had never really had the chance to enjoy the place, as he was usually there during weekdays, when there were more men around. Beauvis was impressed with the whole place, especially as he knew that the experience was only getting started. They grabbed a seat and waited. Martin excused himself and left.

Victoria came back “I apologise,” she said, “but we miscalculated the demand we would have today. Katherine is just about to begin one session. But please, don’t leave yet. It would be a pity to waste the exotic jasmine incense I have started. Let me bring you a drink, on the house.” Rene was annoyed by the wait but he knew he had no alternative; it was Sunday and it was as much as they could do if they wanted to have some intimacy that day.

“Alright. Alright,” said Rene. “We will wait. May I have some mead, please?” “Indeed”, said Doña Victoria. “And what can I offer you, handsome man?” She inquired of Beauvis. “I would like to have a beer, please,” he said. Doña Victoria nodded and left. There was a small cellar, located at a level slightly lower than the ground. It was sheltered from heat so that the beverages would be as cool as they could naturally be, on such hot summer days. Doña Victoria came back with the two drinks. They were very generous for being ‘free’. She left Beauvis and Rene alone.

“Well, cheers!” did Beauvis say and continued, “you better drink slowly so you don't get as drunk as you were earlier today. You don’t seem to handle being turnd while lustful very well.” Rene smiled at him and they made a toast. The older merchant was relieved to learn that Beauvis did believe him when he used his sexual needs as an excuse for having misbehaved earlier. Furthermore, he had also noticed his being alcoholized; that also alleviated a degree of responsibility from it. Soon it was to become a harmless inside joke between two friends. After a couple of sips, they began to talk as they were used to. They finished their drinks very slowly, while chatting.

It felt like Katherine’s current session had taken longer than normal. There was no way to know how much time had elapsed since they had first arrived. Doña Victoria knew that men spent more on drinks at the waiting area when they lost track of time. Rene had visited many bordellos throughout his life; he had developed an outstanding awareness of time when it came to how long a session normally lasted.

It was, of course, impossible to have the duration of a session miscalculated. Time was measured by some very creative means. The new owners,

however, had kept the old but reliable sand clock instead of the more popular water dripping device. They didn't display the session time to the public but they were always honest when it came to the duration of them.

Rene knew there was something wrong with that long wait; if that one client had asked his session to be extended, Doña Victoria would have offered Katherine's time to him if he bid higher. Furthermore, she hadn't come back to offer them another round of drinks long after they had finished the first ones. Rene stood up and called the Doña from the aisle. She came back promptly, at a fast pace and said, "Sirs, I must apologise again. We have had our Katherine all by herself today; she was with her fifth traveller just now and she wants to have some rest before she is ready to welcome you. I tried very hard to convince her to meet you, but she doesn't seem to be reasonable. Please be patient while I bring you another round of drinks; my dear Martin is getting his horse ready to go get Romina. She is on-call today."

Rene was no more annoyed than he was libidinous, so he asked "I have an idea, Doña Victoria. I am confident that I can convince her to meet us. Please let me go talk to Katherine. If you do, I will pay for my session regardless of what she decides to do." Doña Victoria took good care of her workers, but she would never let that get in her way to make more money. She had nothing to lose, so she accepted Rene's offer. She would later charge Katherine an extra rental fee. An already generous customer willing to tip extra to persuade a lady to entertain a session, was not an everyday occurrence.

Chapter 8

Rene paid Doña Victoria for his visit and walked his way towards Katherine's bedroom. All by himself, he walked from the waiting room down the vestibule, which connected a beautiful alcázar. The blue sky was visible from the open space. As it was always exposed to the sun, the healthy garden combined the Moorish architecture with nature in perfect balance. The walls resembled more of a fortress than a venue of indecorum. It was strategically located away from town, and surrounded by thick walls; Victoria's bordello was as discreet as a place could be. Being a place of joy and delight, it had been very well kept through many generations. Doña Victoria and Don Martin allocated a fair share of the profit to maintain the place and keep it neat, just as it had always been. There were eight rooms, including a cleaning room with water and soap available. All rooms were accessible from there. Cecilia, Rene's favourite, would only rent one of the two fanciest ones, located on one corner each. All eight doors were open that day; Katherine was sitting on a bench at one of the luxurious chambers. Her previous client had finished cleaning himself and getting dressed; he was just leaving.

That was the very first time that Rene was not visiting Cecilia at that place. Katherine was, indeed, a gem. Even in light clothes she was elegant. As if she was posing for a portrait, she was sitting on a bench. As soon as she saw him walk in, she knew Rene was not a poor man; she changed her mind about having her shift finished, and greeted him, "hello, traveller. So you feel like falling into sin today?" Rene smiled at her as he approached and said, "it is impossible not to, being in front of such a gorgeous lady like you." "Well, it is a pity that I am just going home right now", she said, expecting Rene to convince her to stay. "I would love to have the opportunity to meet you," he said, "is there anything I can do to be conceded some time with you?" She was happy that he was cooperating and making things easier. Katherine was also relieved to learn that Rene had experience in that environment, so that he knew what to say. "Well, Doña Victoria doesn't pay extra hours," she said, "in fact, she charges us a higher rental fee for the room when we are visited by wealthy merchants." "Then, let me fix that little problem," he said and

handed her a generous extra tip. "Wait," Katherine said, "please give that money to my son." Rene kept the money on his hand, waiting for her instructions to make that happen. "Thank you for considering my plea," she continued, "I will give you the instructions and details after we are more relaxed. Doña Victoria and Don Martin will take my tip otherwise. They keep all tips to themselves and I know how to count..."

Rene interrupted her before she could continue. "Miss Katherine," he said, "please be aware that I won't be your last client today." He knew how courtesans played being talkative to skip their 'responsibilities' with their clients. He was paying for his session and wanted to make use of his time wisely. "My friend Beauvis is out at the waiting room," he continued, "he is waiting for our appointment to be over. He is a young, handsome, and charming man. He won't be difficult to please." "I am very sorry," she said, "but I don't think I will be able to handle an energetic man after my long shift today."

Rene was about to show her some extra coins he had with him, but she said kindly, "please save your money. I have just had one session and it will be two with ours already. Being my third in a row, I won't be able to give him the attention he would expect in one session." Rene was a man of solutions; he was also an experienced merchant. He quickly made Katherine an offer: "alright, Miss Katherine. I will double the original tip I offered you. And I will deliver it directly to your son, if you let me share half of this session's time with my friend. I promised him I would take him to Victoria's today. Mind that Doña Victoria is already counting our time; our session hasn't started and yet, but we will not ask any more of your time; we are very considerate men. Please, let us take care of you."

Without saying a word, she removed her clothes, exhibiting the beauty of her curved body. Rene felt himself like a real man, having conquered a woman. Katherine's shape was very attractive, worth spending hours just looking at her. Nonetheless, there was no time to lose. Rene approached her and placed his arms around her from one side; Katherine turned her body so that they both faced towards the beautiful sunny garden. They both knew there

was nobody else coming that day, so they kept the door open to enjoy the magnificent view. Katherine's slender body looked even smaller in comparison with Rene's weight and strength. Her black hair delineated her pale skin face beautifully. By simply feeling his legs against the nude skin of her, Rene felt how his soft tool began throbbing behind his pants.

Katherine moaned when Rene put his hands over her breast, while kissing her neck from behind. His tool was small so it grew firm very quickly. Katherine felt it through his client's pants. She led him towards the mirror in the chamber. Rene was burning from watching this gorgeous lady aroused with the feeling of his manhood behind her. She got on her knees and got Rene's pants down. She began to perform a deep fellatio while playing with his balls. Katherine looked so innocent and depraved at the same time. She would only stop to breathe in between each time in which she would get his tool deep inside her throat. Rene was excited to see in a mirror what he would never see otherwise; church had prohibited oral sex, along with any non-procreative sexual engagement. He got Katherine to lay onto the bed on her stomach. Respectable women, his wife included, only had sex in missionary position. All other positions were banned by church too, and being with a courtesan was a big opportunity to explore sex in more creative ways. Rene got rid of his pants and positioned his tool near Katherine's two entrances to her body.

Rene's tool was small so Katherine didn't bother to lead its head towards her bigger cavity. She was always prepared for that during her work shift. Furthermore, she knew that a man of that size could not achieve penetration using that position otherwise.

Rene took advantage of her disposition to allow him to use her smaller hole for his pleasure. Since Katherine had already lubricated Rene's tool, it slid easily inside her. It didn't get long for him to feel close to getting the act finished. He pulled out and made Katherine turn around. In missionary position, he inserted his tool inside her usual hole this time. Facing her, and looking her in the eyes he continued until he released his liquid of life inside her. More than ten palpitations did Katherine feel inside her, along with warm

sperm touching every point of her cavity. She knew it wasn't going to be a small amount.

Rene was finally satisfied. He was particularly happy that Katherine had let him be 'playful'. He had finished just in perfect time to let Beauvis have the rest of the session with her. While they washed themselves in the neighbouring room, Katherine gave him the instructions of how to find her son in town, Roman, to give him the tips. "Thank you very much for this incredible experience," said Rene, "I hope we can meet again in the future." He dressed up, kissed her hand, and left. He came back to the waiting area, very excited to tell Beauvis the great news.

"Katherine is ready to see you," Rene said to him, "you have half a session's worth of time with her. All has been paid for. Beauvis was very excited. He could say nothing but he smiled at Rene. He accessed the *zaguán* through the vestibule. He found himself in the most beautiful place he had ever seen. It was as if even the birds were happier in that place. Never had he been that close to paradise. As he walked closer to the center area, he found Katherine in the distance, smiling, and waving hello to him; she had a smirk on. She was mysteriously hiding her body under a white translucent blanket, revealing two beautiful nipples at the tip of her breast.

"Hello, young boy," she said playfully, "do you want me to make a man out of you today?" He was as nervous as he was excited, even though it wasn't Beauvis' first time with a courtesan. He had been to several brothels before, but never to the fanciest chamber of a high-end one such as this one. Katherine was also more beautiful than any other courtesan Beauvis had ever been with before. "Hello, Miss Katherine. You are even more gorgeous than in my fancy." She was flattered. The compliment felt even more natural without the typical 'you must hear this very often, but...' "Thank you, young man," she said kindly and continued, "you don't speak as the normal Castilian. How far are you from home?"

Beauvis was not nearly as experienced with courtesans as Rene was, but speaking about their encounters with them, was a popular talk in the

merchant and sailing communities. Beauvis did know their chatting was a useful trick to reduce the time they spent in the actual physical interaction. On the other hand, however, Beauvis was a young man and he wouldn't be able to last the whole session in physical intimacy. His being so fast would make him be subject of bullying among other crew members. It was convenient to have a nice chat first instead of going straight to action.

"I was born in Perpignan, France," he said. "It is a town in southern France, neighbouring the principality of Catalonia, which is part of Aragon, Hispania. My grandparents were from Paris but they lost everything and moved there due to the black death." "I'm impressed," she said. "You are very young for being that far from home. You must love adventure so much." "I do," he said, "my sister got married and moved to Palos de la Frontera, in Sevilla, some years ago. Her husband was very well connected so he got me a job at the docks; I moved there too." "Your accent is very attractive," she said, "and you should be full of stories. You should have lots of lovers everywhere." "I haven't been travelling that much," he continued, "we are going to the Indies. That will be my longest trip ever. And the longest trip ever done in a ship, of course. About twenty to thirty days sailing, they say." "I am so happy for you," she said; "there was a time in my life in which I was married to a sailor merchant, just like you. Your face resembles that of his remarkably... I hope you use your youthness and strength in favour of virtue." "I do," said Beauvis, "was your husband not a man of virtue?, If I may ask." "You may," she said, "I'm glad you asked. I love to remember that chapter of my life which led me to this place where I am today.

Chapter 9

"I was a respectable woman. I got married to a sailor merchant, named Rahoul. I was in love, and we had one child. I didn't have many ambitions; all I wanted was to be the mother of a beautiful family. Him being a busy merchant, he was often away from home. I was happy with him, and I thought we were both happy together." One morning I left home to go take care of my dying mother. She passed away at noon so I headed back home that same day. My husband's constant absence had made me think of what any wife would fear: I feared that he was having an affair with the woman next door. She was a widow and rumors about their hidden rendezvous had spread all over. I entered the house quietly, and my heart broke into pieces when I saw him being unfaithful to me. I was relieved to learn it wasn't that woman, as she was very friendly to me. But it was another acquaintance of mine with whom my husband was cheating on me: Johan, a cousin of mine. I truly wanted Rahoul to be happy. I didn't do anything. I left unnoticed while lots of thoughts invaded my mind. It finally made sense why he wanted to be away from home as often as he could. And why my cousin was so close to Rahoul, even if he wasn't a merchant himself. I let it be. I let it be."

Katherine looked away into the distance, as she repeated that last sentence. She stayed quiet for a whole minute without bringing her gaze back. Beauvis was aware that they didn't have infinite time to talk, but he genuinely wanted to know more about it. Beauvis had always had an innate interest in stories of that nature. Plus, it was magic to be able to build real intimacy in the form of getting to know Katherine better. He let her speak. He was intrigued. Katherine continued,

"Apparently, I wasn't the only one who had seen their indecency. Rumors about my husband's and my cousin's sodomy acts began to spread in town. Soon, there was a whole persecution against them. He used his being married to escape from the allegations, but Johan was single. The case had escalated so much that people wanted somebody to pay. My husband and I had enough money to pay the fine and get

the case dismissed. But that meant he would have to plead guilty; his ego was so big that he wouldn't confess his wrongdoing. He became friends with the cleric, instead, and they took my cousin as a scapegoat. Thank God that it was Johan's first offence so they only made him pay a fine and forced him to deeply regret his sin. Praying, fasting, and money bought his redemption.

"The persecution stopped, by the cleric's orders, but my husband didn't stop living that licentious lifestyle. And neither did he care to cover his new indiscretions. Some years after, new allegations began to arise. He wasn't as lucky this time, as the other men involved had a higher social status than himself. They bought their redemption easily. People were outraged: Rahoul had been given a second chance and he had disobeyed the law once again. They wanted him to pay, badly.

"He ordered me to stand in front of the judge and lie to save his life. He wanted me to say that we had sexual relations often, as we were trying to have a bigger family. I did want a bigger family but he had stopped being intimate with me a long time ago. Yet, I wanted to help him and I was going to. Having intimacy with his wife was, indeed, a strong argument to prove his innocence. He was under so much pressure. Being accused of that same thing again meant that both of his hands could be chopped off, at the very least, if found guilty. He saw me as his only way out of it so he stopped asking and began threatening me. He told me he would pay somebody to kill me if he was sent to jail. He said he would make sure I was dead if he was pronounced guilty.

"Only then did I open my eyes. The same man who had stopped any physical contact with me, who had taken away my dream of becoming the mother of a big family, who had cheated on me in our own bed with my own cousin, was now threatening me and making me responsible for his own actions. I told him I was going to help him but I already had another plan in mind.

"I stood in front of the judge, as he had asked me to do. Then, I confessed it all. I said that I had found him myself cheating on me with my cousin several years ago. I despised him so much that I even gave all the details away. The most important factor was his being receptive of his lover's tool. I was happy to know he would be punished for all the sorrow he had caused, but God had other plans. He was still friends with the cleric, and they managed to twist the whole story against me. They invented that I was the one having an affair and that I simply needed him away from my life.

"After some struggles, their plan worked. The authorities pronounced me guilty of adultery. Even though there was no proof. Under the presumption that one man in my life wasn't enough, I was sentenced to working as a prostitute for five years, or up to the time when I could pay a fine of 10000 maravedis. I still remember my husband's face when he said 'that's where you must be; women like you belong to the public'."

Beauvis hadn't said a single word all along, but he used his body language to express how eager he was to learn what the denouement of such a dramatic story was.

"At the beginning," she continued, "I thought it would be hell. All the stories I knew from prostitutes were sad and obscure. But I talked to God and everything became clear. This is where I belong because God wanted it this way, not because life is unjust. He is my salvation. Very quickly I understand why God wanted me here. The first man I served was an angel he sent to me. He treated me like a queen." Katherine smiled and she began to speak faster. She couldn't hide her emotion. "I reached a new dimension of happiness," she continued, "one that I didn't even know existed. The next two men I met only made it better. I realised that it had never been happiness that I felt with my husband; it was merely comfort. Three men in my new life as Katherine quickly became ten. One day I realised I had been the queen of more than one hundred men. And I remember all and each one of them. I remember

each one's voice, touch, and desires. I can no longer conceive of living my life as I did before I was Katherine.

"Now I feel cared about. Now I can finally please a man's desires, something I had never been successful at when I was married. God gave me this opportunity to bring cheer and joy to the world. By doing so, I am also fulfilled and content. Knowing that I help men from falling into rape and sodomy gives me a reason to exist.

"I won't lie. When I first started working at Victoria's, I thought that my mild lustfulness wouldn't be enough to keep up with the demand. My body, however, rapidly adapted to my new beautiful life. I wish I could give all men the level of attention they all deserve when they come here. It is, unfortunately, difficult to enjoy a meaningful connection when sessions are monitored by Doña Victoria.

"The day I finish my sentence, I will be the best courtesan. I simply want to live this life for as long as God allows me to do so. They know how good I am. They have tried to sabotage me, but they haven't been successful at it. I have been prohibited from attending mass on Sundays; Doña Victoria confiscates all the tips that are meant for me. She overcharges us for everything. I know how to count, and she thinks I don't. She changes the numbers in her favour all the time. I would have paid my 10000-maravedis fine twice, otherwise."

It was Katherine's third year in business, and she was already acclaimed. Her beauty was said to be, in fact, the reason for which they had sentenced her to be a prostitute. It was Victoria's gold mine and they wouldn't let her go easily.

Beauvis was truly impressed. His older self would never imagine that a person like her existed. In the very same way as Katherine had before becoming a prostitute herself, Beauvis had always thought of sex workers as women with an sad life, full of regrets and remorse. Katherine had shown Beauvis a new reality: if there was something she regretted profoundly, it

was not having become a courtesan before. He was touched by hearing her say she remembered all and each one of her encounters. It was clear that she was passionate about her profession. That was probably the secret for which she was so good at it. In a matter of seconds, lots of questions came to his mind. “How many ‘Katherines’ are out there? How many of these ladies are in love with what they do, as Katherine is? Why have we assumed that prostitution is something obscure, that every woman in tries to get away from?”

“Thank you for sharing your story with me,” said Beauvis, “We were meant to be together today. It was fate that my resemblance to your husband invited you to revive your story. I have been through betrayal; I know what it feels like. It was that deception for which I am sailing far from Europe. There isn’t enough time for me to tell you my story with words. But let me touch the deepest point in your body, and our connection will ever live in both of us.”

Beauvis was a very intelligent man. He was eager to share his story with her, but he knew how risky it was to give away any insinuation of his past experiences with Porfirio. Katherine seemed like the most trustworthy person, but her past experiences suggested that she had a negative stance towards homosexuality.

Katherine smiled suggestively at Beauvis and said, “Your words have already touched me deeply; I can only imagine how your touch would feel deep inside me.” Beauvis came closer. He placed one hand on Katherine’s thigh, who was still covering her body in the translucent blanket, and said to her, “I will do anything to treat you like the queen you are.”

Chapter 10

Katherine felt how her body was getting anxious to get intimate with him. Having been with many men in her life, their physique was not the trait she liked the most; she found beauty in what was behind the body. She had noticed Beauvis' handsomeness as he first walked in, indeed. But it was only now, after having spoken with him, that she had become captivated by him. Only then did she notice Beauvis' sculptural body. Katherine had already enjoyed a mutual connection with six men that day; but she had a very strong sexual drive, and her numerous contacts only made her lust grow bigger. Her being tired didn't prevent her from enjoying her sexual encounters.

“Come on closer. I want your touch here,” she said, guiding Beauvis' hands towards her breast. Beauvis rubbed his fingers against the thin blanket, right above Katherine's nipples. Her bits got hard with Beauvis' touch. She noticed Beauvis was not very experienced in making physical contact; Katherine was the perfect one for making him lose his introversion. She stood up and dropped her blanket to the floor. Beauvis looking at the most beautiful body he had ever seen in a sexual way. Her small nipples and modest but firm breast, invited to focus the gaze there, to appreciate the perfection of her shape. Her waist was narrow, and her hips were at the level of her shoulders. There was a perfect balance of hair and smooth skin around her pubis. After appreciating the perfection of her body, Beauvis came closer, and placed his mouth in Katherine's neck. He began to kiss her while his hands touched her back. He removed his shirt; his hands travelled all the way to her waist, and then further down to the side of her hips. His hands against her soft skin got Beauvis aroused quickly.

“I can feel your desire to get inside me,” she said, touching Beauvis' tool with her right hand. “You have a true object of virtue,” she added. Then, she placed her knees over the blanket she had previously dropped to the floor. She got Beauvis' pants out of the way, to find herself in front of a piece of art. A generous foreskin covered his very big tool nicely. Katherine placed one hand around it. She realised there was enough space to place her other hand around it, as well. She grabbed Beauvis' tool with both hands, and looked up

at him still on her knees. Beauvis was excited. His penis began to involuntarily palpitate. Katherine was impressed and said, "You have the strongest tool I've ever seen. I can't wait to have it closer." As she pronounced these words, she stroked it gently using both hands at once. Beauvis' responsive tool didn't stop throbbing the whole time, as if he was flexing his muscle for her. She quickly smelled the precursor of the liquid of life, as it got Beauvis' head completely wet and lubricated. Katherine wanted it badly. She approached her face in an attempt to kiss it, but Beauvis grabbed her by the neck to stop her and said, "I can barely hold myself from losing control. Your perfection is incredible and I don't want to get over-excited without touching you as deep as I can. I know there isn't much time left to take it slowly, but I want to be where you are most sensitive."

Katherine knew that Beauvis, being as young as he was, would easily abandon himself to the moment and spill his liquid of life quickly. There wasn't enough time for him to do it twice in the remaining time of the half session. Plus they had spent lots of time chatting already. She lied on her back on the bed and spread her legs, inviting Beauvis' tool to explore inside her. Beauvis positioned himself on top of her, ready to insert his tool. It was a very conventional position but it was the perfect one, as they wanted to face each other while their bodies were in deep contact. Katherine would normally get her partner's tool lubricated before letting them in. That was particularly necessary in those with a bigger piece, let alone Beauvis'. However, Beauvis' tool was self lubricated; that was the best substance to reduce friction on its way in.

Katherine sensed that her vagina was already as wet as it could be. She knew herself; there was no possible way she could produce that much fluid, especially after having completed many sessions that day. As soon as she realised the reason why that was happening, she said, "Ohh, wait. Please excuse me for a moment. I will be back shortly." Beauvis looked down thinking that he would find blood traces. That was of course unlikely, as courtesans were prohibited from working during their period; also, she had worked all day without a problem. How could she have worked such a long shift if she had her period approaching? It was something else. Beauvis

quickly understood why she wanted to be excused. He held her wrists, laid all his weight on her, and said, "Leave it." Katherine thought he had said that to save time but then realised he really wanted it there.

Katherine had cleaned herself after Rene's session. But his generous load of thick sperm had remained inside her, and it had begun to liquidize. The only obstacle against shoving his tool all the way was Beauvis' tool size. Katherine moaned of pleasure. She was finally able to host Beauvis inside her. The last couple of inches of Beauvis' shaft wouldn't go any further. Rene's fluid, mixed with Katherine's, created the most pleasant sensation on Beauvis' tool. He had never been that close to Rene; sharing the receptacle of their 'liquid of life' was a glorious attainment of brotherhood.

Beauvis tried to hold his desire to explode for as long as he could. But the smell of both male and female sexual discharge was intense. He had a rush with the thought of Katherine letting any man go inside her, if they had enough money to use her. He wanted to fill her, hoping that there was another client waiting for his turn. If there was one ready to come see her, he would find her vagina lubricated by both male and female fluids, as Beauvis had found her. All these thoughts made Beauvis reach the climax of their act quickly. He flooded her with his liquid of life, while they both were at the highest level of pleasure. The oversize member inside her did barely have enough space to unload its stream. Katherine moaned loudly, as she was in the middle of her orgasm too. Being the sexual slave of a man who treated her like a queen, fulfilled her fantasies.

Beauvis' limp body stayed on top of Katherine's for a moment. But it wasn't long until Doña Victoria rang the bell. The session's time was over. Beauvis removed his semi hard tool with difficulty, as Katherine's space had become narrower. As the tip of it left her vagina, mixed semen from both Rene and Beauvis slid out of her too, all the way to her other orifice.

Beauvis touched her face gently and went to the washroom with his clothes. Katherine followed him and helped him clean his body. He got dressed, kissed her hand, and left.

Rene greeted Beauvis as he passed through the waiting room and said, "Lucky you; you used more than half a session's time to enjoy with Katherine. I hope it was worth the wait." Beauvis' desires had been both satisfied and augmented. He knew that it wouldn't be long till he would remember his time at Victoria's to please himself privately. "I had the time of my life," said Beauvis, "thank you for making it happen. I owe you one."

The trip towards town was inconsequential. Beauvis was relieved that their needs had been pleased, so that the interaction between them was back to normal. Beauvis was not absorbed in his own mind, but he couldn't stop asking himself many questions about his recent experience. "Where in the world did I ever hear the idea that courtesans were miserable? Why didn't I challenge that fact when I first heard it?" He had opened his eyes to reality, after having lived in a lie for all his life.

He remembered each one of the occasions when somebody spread rumors about women doing sex work. He felt he had been chosen by God to bring Katherine's story to light, and he had accepted the mission. When they arrived in town, Beauvis thought they were heading west, towards the location of the inn where they were to be accommodated. "We are running a quick errand first," Rene said, "if we do it before we head to the inn, it won't take us one hour." Beauvis followed him. They arrived at the local church. Beauvis was surprised to learn Rene was looking for a little boy. As soon as he saw him, Beauvis realised it was Katherine's son. Rene was a man of word, and he had taken the extra effort to give Katherine's tip directly to him. Beauvis understood why she wanted it that way, and why Rene would fulfill his moral responsibilities. "If you are a man of virtue," he said to him, "the world will be yours, Beauvis." Beauvis didn't feel bad for Katherine's son. On the contrary, he wished that the little boy was intelligent enough to take pride in her mother's profession, and how hard she worked for giving him the fruits of her efforts. "I hope he is thankful for having such a passionate and loving mother in his life," he thought for himself.

After having completed their task, the two merchants headed to the inn, where they would be accommodated until it was time to continue their voyage to the Indies. The place was very modest; it was a hostellerie with several big bedrooms. Most of them were full of beds; others didn't have anything inside, as merchants were supposed to provide their own blankets and other sleeping items.

The merchandise that Rene and Beauvis were transporting arrived after some time. Earlier that day, when Rene had found Marcus on his way to Telde, he had instructed him to bring the goods to that hostellerie, where he usually stayed. Rene paid for a room to be shared with three other persons; Beauvis got a room shared by twelve. There wasn't much to do, as the other sailors were working at Columbus's fleet back in Real de las Palmas. They had some mead, chatted, and played. They went to bed soon after it was dark. When Beauvis closed his eyes, he thought of Katherine for the one thousandth time. He sent her an angel, as any good person deserved. Reciprocally, Beauvis was Katherine's last thought before falling asleep that night.

Chapter 11

Telde, Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Monday the 13th of August, 1492

The inclement heat of that Monday morning of August 13th, 1492, woke everybody up earlier than the sunrise. The waning crescent was still up in the sky when there was nobody sleeping anymore. Candles illuminated the hostellerie, and people were already rushing to begin their activities early. “Let’s eat and get ready quickly, Beauvis. I have a task for you to make some coins.” Beauvis nodded. As they left the hostellerie, Beauvis noticed Rene didn’t take his mule; they were going somewhere nearby.

Clerics were in an exceptional cheer; they were only two days away from August 15th, when the Assumption of Virgin Mary would be celebrated. On the occasion of it, a fair would be held till Saturday too. They rang **Lauds** at 6:00am, slightly earlier than the actual dawn, which would take place some minutes afterwards.

People were already preparing for the big feast. They knew how crowded the river and the bath houses would be on Wednesday, so they were flocking to have their bath in advance. By the time **Prime** rang, around 6:30am, there was a big queue of more than twenty people at the closest bathhouse. It was owned and operated by Jean, who was friends with Rene. Rene and Beauvis were last in line.

“Beauvis,” said Rene, “please follow my instructions if you want to make your time seem more valuable. Don’t say anything unless I tell you to do so. That old man, Jean, is stingy and he will pay less if he knows you have come here to work. It is crucial that you act as if you were coming with me for a bath, only.” “yes, Sir,” said the young fellow.

Both Beauvis and Rene knew that the payment on such a casual job was not very high, but it was competitive for a person with little financial responsibilities. Furthermore, bath houses were known for providing a good

environment, and it was preferable than simply staying at the hostellerie while waiting for the merchandise load to be ready to be taken to Real de las Palmas.

Jean opened the doors, and people began clamoring. He quickly recognised Rene in the queue and waved hello at him. He began to let customers in, took their payments and assigned spots. When it was Rene's turn, he greeted Jean warmly: "Perfect season for business here at the bath house, right?" "Ohh, yes," he responded, "I got up with *Matins* to get the bath water and everything ready. **Prime** has just rung and I could use some help already." "Oh, is that right? Did you hear that, Beauvis?," said Rene to the young man; then, he faced Jean again and said to him, "this boy is also part of Admiral Columbus' crew back in Real de las Palmas. We are here for a bath, but if you need help you can borrow him; he could use some coins."

"That may work," said the owner, "but how strong is he? I need somebody who is able to lift heavy bucks of water." Beauvis was very strong, but it was hard to notice how muscular he was when he had clothes on. He removed his shirt so quickly that Rene didn't have time to answer. Jean was impressed with what he saw. He faced back at Rene and told him, "I have this other boy willing to help today but I'd keep yours if you are staying till the Assumption of Mary at least. That way I don't have to train two times."

There was no possible way Rene's load of goods would be ready before Wednesday. To be able to leave for the Indies, Columbus' crew needed La Pinta's rudder repaired first; such a task wouldn't be possible without the merchandise Rene was bringing from Telde. "Yes. We are staying for five days at least," said Rene. "I am very happy to learn that," said Jean. "These lazy local boys. All they want is to ride horses all day. They don't know how to earn their bread. Come follow me."

Jean took their payment, and he placed one medium-sized sand clock on one of the compartments of a rack. Next to it, he wrote Rene's name, and 'Rene's friend'. Subsequently, he led them to the main room. That area was located between two other sections, where the private rooms were located.

He assigned Rene a spot, and the one next to him, to Beauvis. "Alright, Sirs," Jean said, "you are all set. I will come tell you when your time is up." Rene put his belongings next to him, and so did Beauvis. When Jean had left, Rene told him, "Alright, Beauvis, we are safe. You can stop holding your breath and talk." Beauvis laughed and said, "did I do it right, Sir?" "Perfectly," he replied. "He will pay you a fair amount. The best way to see how to work here is to see it from a customer's perspective. Make sure you pay attention to every detail." Rene got undressed and got into his bath. Beauvis didn't get completely undressed, as his full nudity would make him go very high profile.

Beauvis was impressed with how clean the whole place was. He wondered how messy and dirty it would get with the overflow of people they were expecting. Obviously, Jean wanted him to make it as clean as it was now when the day had just begun. Jean's bathhouse was more inviting than any other Beauvis had been to. It was his first time he was visiting one in Canary. He wondered if they were all like that or if it was a mere coincidence it was better than any other he had been to in France and Hispania. Some baths had herbal flowers in them: lavender and lemon were the ones saturating the environment. In the floor, there were wood slats, spaced out discreetly, so that water would go down to the bottom; it then went out of the place by means of gravity.

The water was taken from the main river, four hundred meters away. A wooden canal had been installed to bring water to a cistern. It was currently unhooked from the upstream, as the water reservoir was full. Jean was very devoted to his business. As people came and left, he cleaned the bath tubs and barrels nonstop. He also heated water up by burning wood and using big heavy iron containers as boilers. It was a very hot day but people still wanted to regulate their baths' temperature. Beauvis was paying attention to everything he was doing, so that he would know what to do when it was time to work, after their time was up. Rene and Beauvis enjoyed the rest of their bath. Jean didn't stop running all around the place in the meantime; there was a real bustle taking place that day.

When the sand clock finished its course, Jean came to give them the notice. Rene dressed up and excused himself: "I will come back some time this afternoon or evening. If you finish earlier, go to the inn and I will meet you there." Beauvis' shift had begun. He put dry shorts on, and continued shirtless. He noticed the cistern was about to run out of water. Jean was very busy welcoming clients and warming up the water, so Beauvis proactively said to Jean "I can go connect the canal. I run very fast." "Please do," said Jean.

Beauvis got en route to connect the pipe upstream. He didn't run as fast as he could, as he was saving energy for the long day at work. By the river, there were lots of people, as well. They were some people who wouldn't have the patience to line up for a bath, but mostly those who couldn't afford the luxury of visiting a bathhouse. Since water was taken further upstream, it was way cleaner than the one at the river. People were more prudish outdoors than they were behind walls: only children would be completely naked, while the rest of the people would keep at least minor clothes on.

Beauvis completed his task of connecting the last piece of the pipe. Water began to flow to Jean's bathhouse. One man who was nearby asked Beauvis, "Was the cistern full when you guys opened today?" He was obviously impressed by how fast the cistern had become empty. "Yes," Beauvis responded to him and ran back to his workplace. There were more than thirty people inside now, and there was still a big queue outside.

Beauvis didn't ask Jean what to do next. He had seen him work while he was taking his bath. He began to clean the spots of people leaving, so that they would be ready for the next customers. He drained water from containers that were too dirty to be used, and he warmed water up in the boiler room. Everybody would call him at the same time. They asked for all sorts of things: soap, sponges, warm water, fresh water, a cleaner spot, a nicer spot, lemon, lavender, etc.

There was no room for more than thirty people at a time; as rush hour approached, more than one hundred people had visited the bathhouse.

Most clients came in groups: two parents with five children was the most common group visiting. Children took their baths completely nude, and so did their fathers. Women were always accompanied, usually by their husbands, and sometimes by other family members such as sisters. Women were more conservative; they only rented private chambers, even if that meant waiting longer in the queue. Some men came by themselves and others came in male-only groups; they were clamorous and completely shameless. In fact, it was almost only men at the bathhouse around festivities' season. Women knew that, and they would try to avoid such places. During the times when there were no significant festivities and during the colder season, women took baths more regularly. Due to the August heat and the disproportionate share of men at that place, about three quarters of the people were taking their bath completely naked.

By rush hour Jean had run out of clocks to measure clients' time. There were so many people outside waiting, that he was no longer offering full half-hour sessions but only halves and quarters for the same price as full ones. People who didn't want to go to the dirtier water of the river would still wait and pay that price. They preferred to do so especially after seeing that there was a young fellow working at Jean's so that they wouldn't have to get up to get stuff themselves.

Beauvis was impressed by how difficult the job had ended up being. He was a young strong man, but lifting heavy buckets of water in his shoulders back and forth was a demanding task. Some people at the private chambers had their doors closed, while others would keep it open for Beauvis to bring soap, towels, and warmer water when they wanted.

Women were shy, but in the private rooms, Beauvis got to see nude breasts. By midday, he had seen around 16 pairs of nipples. There weren't as many as to make a beautiful full collection of sizes and colours, especially because one third of them were not very appealing. It was still more than enough to make the hard work be worth it. For those who appreciated the male shape, it was easy to get distracted by the overwhelming amount of penises, balls, and strong butts all around.

From the innocent prudishness of women concealing their nipples while unable to cover their full breasts, to the careless bending over of men to pick up stuff from the floor: it was a full colour spectacle. No young man could control his body to conceal his excitement; Beauvis knew that. Beauvis was not new to seeing nude bodies, but he was as distracted as if it was his first time. Being working, as opposed to having a bath instead, made it easier for him to stay focused. It was the extra granted access to females' nudity which offset that easiness.

He avoided any eye contact. He looked away when there was an attractive body right in front of him. He made his mind pay extra attention to stepping carefully to avoid slipping or tripping on the wet floors. He tried and stayed busy at any time so that his mind wouldn't betray him. It worked. No foreskin being pulled from the tip to expose a beautifully shaped penis head would get him distracted. No woman's satisfaction or whimpering sounds when getting wet would make him lose his concentration.

Rush hour passed. The place was still as full as it had been all day, but the queue outside had finally begun to dwindle. Jean allowed full half-hour sessions again. Jean received and accommodated a family of nine in a private chamber they rented and had waited for. He took charge of them for the most part, until they asked for a bucket of hot water. Jean called Beauvis to do the heavy job for him. The young man filled two containers with water and went straight to their chamber with them on his shoulders. A quick chill invaded his body as he pushed the ajar door wide open and found the most beautiful nymphet standing there. "Am I dreaming?," he thought.

Chapter 12

Her pale skin was perfectly smooth, and it made a sharp contrast with her long dark hair. With her freckles she looked like the most innocent girl. Her sapphire eyes had wide limbal rings that conveyed her youth. She had a slender body, and her breast had barely begun to develop. Beauvis considered for a moment that she may still be a child, but he quickly discarded that possibility. She was covering herself in a dress as would only more mature women when their parents were around.

Many thoughts arrived in Beauvis' mind. He was anxious that he may not get the opportunity to see the beauty hidden behind that dress. She wasn't young enough to take her bath naked, and neither was she old enough to be nude comfortably. She was, however, at a perfect age for being careless, which gave Beauvis a light of hope.

“Vladislava,” her father said to her, “get out of the way, please.” Yes: he was a nymphet. At no other age could a father speak to her daughter like that. “Vla-dis-la-va,” Beauvis babbled in complete silence and careful enough to not be seen by her parents, who were behind her. She saw him pronouncing her name and moved to the side, graciously. Beauvis placed the two buckets of water over two pedestals especially designed for doing so without losing equilibrium.

As he squatted to position the buckets, he looked around and saw Vladislava's six younger siblings, who were being bath nude, her mother, and her father. Her mother was a very attractive lady, and her father was no less attractive than both ladies were. They all had that slender body. The man was tall and tanned all over except around his legs; Vladislava's mother had her same pale skin and freckles.

His distraction made one of Beauvis' feet slip; luckily, he was still grabbing the bar in between the two buckets so that he didn't fall. The man saw that, and smiled gently. He had a symmetrical attractive smile, and his waist was

narrow compared to the average man of that age. Beauvis could only think of such beautiful features on her Vladislava. He only had to make her smile.

Beauvis didn't want to catch too much attention so he didn't introduce himself; he excused himself and left. Her name and her innocent face remained on Beauvis' mind. He couldn't wait for the moment to be called to that chamber again but he feared that Jean would continue to take care of them now that he had delivered the hot water. He made a plan to pass by there more often. He began to deliver smaller buckets of water in that area so that they would call him more. The plan was so simple that it worked perfectly fine.

The first time he passed by, the door was still open. It was mandatory to go unnoticed so that the girl's parents wouldn't do anything about it. He peeked discreetly. He walked slower than he normally did, in order to get to see her. She was standing near the door, facing towards the aisle where Beauvis was walking. Beauvis was hypnotised by her virginal look. He smiled without thinking about it. The girl smiled back at him without opening her mouth. She was hiding her expression from her parents. Beauvis' heart was rushing. He continued his path and found himself even more absorbed into that precious symphet.

When he was away from her chamber, he would rush to finish his errands and be back quickly near her again. She saw him every time he passed by. They exchanged gazes on every opportunity they had. Beauvis was being careless on the other side of the bathhouse to have more time around her. Beauvis' inattention got his trousers wetter and wetter each time he would visit Vladislava. She was so inexperienced as to know why she had found herself staring less at Beauvis' face and more at his genital area. Beauvis passed by her once again. This time, his clothes were so wet, that the outline of his penis was completely noticeable. Vladislava felt the response of her body to it. She didn't know what it was but she felt something: it was as if her body wanted to tell her something.

“Make them disappear,” her mind told her, “Get rid of everybody at this place and hug that guy.” It made no sense. There was no force on Earth that could make that happen. “Excuse yourself saying that you will go use the latrine outside, and approach him.” As much as she wanted to make that happen, she was in fright of what may result out of it. Her body was telling her to do something about it, but she didn’t know what to do.

“Vladislava,” her father called her, “it is your turn and your mother’s. Unless you want to spend all day standing up there like you’re mental.” She was ashamed that she had not been as discreet as she had meant to be, but her instinct had taken her too far against her will. Her father left the room and waited by the door for Beauvis to ask for more hot water. He noticed him from the distance. The door was now closed; he feared that he wouldn’t get to see the nymphet again. He approached him promptly so that Jean wouldn’t go first. He maintained his slow pace, consistent with how it had been all along, in order to prevent suspicions.

“More hot water, Sir?,” he said. “Yes,” the slender tall man responded, “Also. May I get a place in the shared area? It is only for myself while the rest of my family finish their bath.” There was still a queue outside but it was more convenient to get the man a place so that he wouldn’t have to wait for a spot again. “Yes, of course,” said Beauvis. He got him a spot in the main area, and took the payment from him. He was going to give him his change when the man said, “Please keep the change. I have seen how hard you’ve been working, coming back and forth non-stop.” Beauvis felt a little bad for having gotten him to believe that he really needed to walk the aisle that often. He did, of course, not say anything but, “thank you, Sir.”

Beauvis loaded hot water buckets on his shoulders and went directly to Vladislava’s chamber. He was stressed that this may be the last excuse he would have to come see her. Furthermore, the door was closed so there was no guarantee that it would be her opening the door for him. He knocked on the door for them to let him in. It was heartbreaking for him to find the nymphet’s mother opening the door for him. Fortunately, she was not able to take the buckets herself so she let him in. The woman was covering herself

in a towel. Beauvis positioned himself to leave the buckets at the stands; he faced towards the room's bath area. Only one thing could excel his recent finding of the most precious girl: encountering her taking her bath. Vladislava was still wearing light garments but she looked like a goddess.

She knew he was coming and she had deliberately gotten her clothes wet. From her little breast, the outline of her small nipples was now visible through the fabric. Down in her crotch a two-inch section of the fabric naturally folded into two, as dictated by the girl's beautiful vertical line right in the middle. Beauvis experienced the same urge to have everybody gone that the girl had felt when she first saw the outline of Beauvis' penis.

The moment was no more divine than it was fleeting. He had to leave as his obligation there had been completed. The girl's mother thanked him as he left. Not even a single word had he gotten to hear from the young girl.

As Beauvis rushed to the other side of the bathhouse to complete clients' demands, he could only fancy the sweetness of the voice that matched her angelical features. He had barely finished his tasks at the main area, when he saw Vladislava's father get up. He had been fast, indeed. Beauvis had already noticed the man's narrow waist when he had first seen him in the room, but it looked even narrower from behind on full nudity. The increased wideness of the upper body and his lower part was the very same pattern as that of Vladislava. Her flawless physique could only be the result of a magnificent male parent and an indefectible female progenitor. Hence, the idolisation of her came along with admiring him, as well. Human perfection can only be acknowledged through the duality of appreciating the attributes of two genders.

The girl's father got dressed and went back to his family's room. Everybody was ready so they began to leave. As they passed by the main area, Beauvis saw the nymphet once more. As she walked her way out, she smiled at him for the first time. He was afraid that this would be the last time he would see her angelic face. His intuition was telling him that even if he did get to see her again, she wouldn't be as obliging as she had been today. Being relations

outside marriage proscribed and women temperamental, girls were most of the time a pleasure for the eyes, only. Beauvis was very sad to see her get away, but he was conscious of how that was the way it was deemed to be. After hesitating a little, he decided to go look for her outside. Unfortunately, she was fading into the distance.

The afternoon quickly became evening, surrounded by too much work at the bathhouse. Jean dismissed Beauvis after having done the last call for hot water. He didn't keep the place open after dark, as it was difficult to keep candles on where water was splashing all over. "Thank you," said the older man to him, "you have been very helpful today. Your proactivity will take you far, young man." He subsequently gave Beauvis his payment. It was more generous than it was meant to be. Beauvis was flattered that he had noticed his extra efforts to please the clientele's demands. Jean continued, "If Rene trusts you so much, so do I. Here is the key. Feel free to come any time tomorrow. The earlier, the better, so that we can receive lots of visitors." "I'm honoured," said the young man, "I will be here tomorrow by *lauds*." He took the key and left.

Back at the hostellerie, Rene was there already. "How did it go, Beauvis," he asked. "It is a very demanding job," he responded, "but it is very rewarding. Thank you very much, Rene, for making it happen." Beauvis was very austere with his words, but inside he was burning. Her name and image hadn't left his mind all day: Vladislava. He had seen lots of sculptures at Jean's, but only one was as majestic as that of hers.

When *vespers* rang, some people at the inn went to bed. By *compline*, everybody was ready to go to sleep. Beauvis waited until those around him were no longer awake. The room was being shared with more than ten other

travellers at a time so it took some time till all of them fell asleep. To make sure they were indeed sleeping, he whispered “help;” nobody responded. He was determined to sleep upside down on Vladislava’s honour.

Back in Palos de la Frontera, clerics reminded boys to not sleep in that position, as God mandated. Being Beauvis the very curious boy he was, he had questioned himself why they had to follow that de-facto rule. The night he first disobeyed that order, he only did it to find out why, and he experienced the most vivid dream he had ever had:

He saw Marina, the girl who lived next door. She entered his house while there was nobody else at the time, only Beauvis. She was strangely cheery and playful. In the middle of the games, she suddenly said, “Beauvis. I came to visit because I knew you were alone. Before anybody comes back, please show me that thing you have in between your legs.”

Beauvis was completely new to sex back then, and that dream caused him to reach an intense orgasm in the form of a wet dream. He woke up right after, to discover his sheets wet and an unfamiliar smell in them. Only then did he understand why the church had banned men from sleeping upside down.

Beauvis tried at all times to be a good citizen. He had been told not to do it, and once his curiosity was satisfied, he tried to avoid it as much as he could. That was a big struggle for him, especially because such a rule was not really enforced. Nobody would say anything about it; yet, Beauvis did try his best to stay away from violating instructions.

He was always very apologetic when it came to self-assessing his misdemeanours. “It is a special occasion today”, he said to himself. He flipped over and began thinking of Vladislava’s memory. She was smiling at him as her family was leaving. She approached Beauvis and said “I will meet them later today. Let’s go to the private room and bath together.” She held Beauvis’ hand and led him to that chamber. The beautiful nymphet had her

clothes wet; it was a thin white fabric that became very transparent in contact with water. Her nipples were hard and prominent through her clothing. Beauvis was so tired from all the hard work he had done, that his thoughts began to become dreams. As they progressed for some more seconds, he felt the climax in the centre of his body. The layer of thick fluid between Beauvis' penis and his blankets was quickly absorbed into the fabric. Only then did he allow himself to sleep profoundly.

Chapter 13

Telde, Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Tuesday the 14th of August, 1492

Beauvis woke up earlier the following morning. He heard the bells calling for *matins*. He tried to sleep a bit longer, but he couldn't fall asleep again. He was thinking of all the things that could happen at Jean's. Rene was sleeping profoundly, and so was everybody at the inn. He simply got up, grabbed his stuff and got en route to Jean's. The moon was on its waning phase; it was currently in its third quarter. There wasn't much natural light but it was enough to see one's own steps. Beauvis walked his way without the use of a candle.

Lauds hadn't been rung yet when he had opened the door with the key Jean gave him the day before. "Hello," he shouted. Nobody responded. It was too early even for the owner to be there already. Beauvis entered; he lit up some candles and began cleaning the place. He realised that the cistern was empty; they could save lots of time by getting the water ready for the clientele. The connecting pipe was not very far from there, but he was careful enough to lock the door as he went upstream to connect the line as he had done yesterday.

He came back and continued cleaning. *Lauds* rang with dawn and, slightly afterwards, Jean came to the bathhouse. He greeted Beauvis, "Good morning, young man. I am impressed you were able to make it earlier than I did. I feared that you'd be so tired from yesterday, that you wouldn't show up early, if at all." "Well, here I am," he responded. "The cistern is being refilled and the place will be completely clean shortly." They finished cleaning very fast. Jean was particularly energised by having someone that strong helping him. He 'opened' earlier. Jean offered Beauvis some bread and eggs, which Beauvis ate with no restraints.

The neighbours began to wake up. They realised the bathhouse was open, so they flocked to the place earlier than they had yesterday. The great event would start tomorrow, so they reached their full capacity earlier and there was a longer queue than that of the previous day. The people's rush to bath was clearly visible. Some of them would offer to pay their entrance for a bath that would take less than five minutes.

Those customers who didn't plan to be fully nude, had the proper clothes to take their bath comfortably. Due to this reason, one boy caught Beauvis' attention: he was bathing with heavy trousers on. Obviously, he hadn't planned on it; furthermore, men were not shy about their nudity. As Beauvis looked closer, he realised why he didn't want to cover his genital area. The boy was clearly trying to conceal an erection. He even reminded Beauvis of himself, being so self aware of his nakedness.

Since it was peak hour, the boy had paid for a very short visit. It was a pity that he had waited in line and spent much money to end up not being able to bath properly. Beauvis felt for him. Younger people wouldn't have much money to waste it like that. His penis was not like that when he got in; else, he would have waited for a more appropriate moment. He had probably gotten distracted with all the nakedness he saw once inside the place; such distraction had caused his organ to express his sexual necessities.

Beauvis deliberately allowed him to stay some more extra time without telling him, expecting that he would eventually calm down and be able to bath properly. It didn't seem to get any better. Beauvis approached him and said, "your time is up." The boy was nervous to have Beauvis that close. He was afraid that he would notice his condition, which Beauvis had already done. The boy nodded and Beauvis faced away; then, he turned towards him again and added, "I don't believe that you have been able to complete your bath. Feel free to use the latrine outside, and come back to finish your bath."

The boy was embarrassed. He didn't understand what that meant exactly. He was so sure of having hidden his erection very well, that he thought Beauvis was referring to resolving a digestive disturbance. In any case, he

knew he could use some privacy to release his needs. Yes, according to church it was forbidden, but no sin could ever be a sin if there is nobody to witness it. He accepted Beauvis' offer. There was another queue to use the latrine, but he waited patiently, as it would be worth it.

While he was waiting for his turn, the boy held his sack of stuff in front of him to conceal his bulge. He didn't look very manly but he didn't have many options. When it was finally his turn, he entered the booth and took advantage of the privacy to please himself; he was as quick as if he had gone peeing. It was not the best place to satisfy himself, but he waited for a moment and did it again; he was at that age in which physiological reactions are unpredictable, and he wanted to make sure there wouldn't be any. To avoid leaving traces behind, he was careful enough to contain his body fluids using his clothes.

When he came back to the main area, Beauvis was happy to see he was more comfortable. The boy was taking his bath as he had originally planned when he first came in: naked. He had placed his habiliments and all his belongings on a bench nearby. "Thank you," he said to Beauvis as he passed by, "I feel better now." "You are welcome," he responded.

Beauvis was placing another customer who had just entered. He pushed the boy's belongings to the edge of the bench so that there was enough space to sit. When doing so, he noticed the scent of the boy's freshly released semen on his clothes. Beauvis laughed by himself at how funny it was to be concerned about an erection and not be so about that certain aroma. No man was so naïve as to not recognise such a smell, but it was peak hour so they would probably disregard it. Beauvis was reassured whenever he saw he was not the only man whose sexual impulses were stronger than the will to abide by ecclesiastic statutes.

Beauvis took the payment from the man and continued his never-ending tasks at the bathhouse. As expected, the man going by himself disrobed. To have the whole bench for him alone, he placed them on the opposite side of where the boy's dirty clothes were, and he positioned himself in the middle. His look made him seem a little unfriendly: he was slightly heavier than the average man and he had an unkempt beard. It looked like there was no space for another person there. The man, however, didn't start taking his bath. As Beauvis completed a whole lap around the place, the man stared at him with a very serious look. It was as if he wanted something, and he wanted it right away.

Beauvis approached when he was finally able to. The bulky man was serious, but polite when he said to him, "Excuse me, mister. I would like to get a private room, please." Beauvis got nervous. He could only think of one thing that could have upset him: the odour of the neighbouring garments. It was not Beauvis' capacity to make clients be respectful of others, but he knew he had been the one who had caused it. Since he didn't expect that request, Beauvis took a long time to respond. The man noticed and added, "I will pay the whole amount even if it is for myself only. If you allow me to remain there for one hour, I will pay twice the rate." Beauvis knew that Jean would be very happy to earn more money for less work. "It is peak hour and we are struggling to accommodate everybody at the queue, but we will accept your generous offer. Please follow me."

Beauvis led the man to one of the private chambers, careful enough to not let people in line notice. The man paid 200 maravedis with special coins from the kingdom of Naples. He was very likely a sailor-merchant, as well. "Thank you, Sir," said Beauvis, "I will bring your change and hot water shortly." The young man left, and closed the door behind him.

"That young man works here," the unfriendly looking man said to himself. "Had I known, I would have come here every day since I arrived in Telde." When Beauvis came back with the hot water and his change from the 200-maravedis payment, he found the door he had closed, open. He thought it

was very considerate from him to have opened the door Beauvis had closed, as he would be back with heavy buckets of water over his shoulders.

“Thank you,” the man said to him, “You are a very strong man. I hope it isn’t an inconvenience to ask you to bring me hot water as much as you can. And, please, keep the change. You will make better use of it than I would.” “I’m flattered. Thank you,” replied the young man, “I will make sure to keep enough hot water here for you.” The older man had begun to take his bath, but he wasn’t very focused on it. It seemed like he wanted to ask Beauvis for more stuff; he kept looking at him at all times. Beauvis left and closed the door once more.

When Beauvis came back again with more hot water, he found the door open again. The man’s consideration was remarkable. Moreover, the man’s consideration was strange and so were his demands. He called Beauvis to come every time he needed the smallest thing. While it was a bit annoying, it was still a very good pay so Beauvis didn’t complain about it. His conversation had also become weird. He even asked more personal questions: “where are you from?; how old are you?; is the pay fair working here?” Beauvis was very reserved. He replied in clever ways to maintain himself distanced from him. It wasn’t that easy: it was as if the man could hold a conversation all by himself.

Beauvis was not very used to men being that talkative, and he was not very talkative himself. But it was at least good that the man didn’t really want to establish a conversation; he rather just wanted to speak. He said he was going on a very long voyage with a big crew of almost one-hundred members and that he was worried about the completion of the trip not happening at all. He began explaining how to estimate the Earth size, a ship’s position, common mistakes when calculating long distances. He seemed to be very knowledgeable about that topic.

In the middle of one of these monologues, Beauvis realised that the man didn’t ever notice the intense smell on the clothes next to him when he was in the middle of the bench; he was talking about the most annoying

disturbances that made a person request a change of spot at a bathhouse, and he didn't mention such a reason at all. Not even in a censored way he said it, so it was not about prudishness. Furthermore, he was not shy about his nudity; there had to be a deeper reason for which he had paid so much for a private room for himself. Whatever that motive was, Beauvis was excited to have earned the big tip he had provided.

Beauvis was overloaded with work. It was already too much before that man came in; now, he couldn't stop for one single moment without people getting desperate to get soap, a change of spots, hot water, sponges, cleaning supplies, etc. Beauvis' carefulness decreased. When he was squatting to place a pair of water bucks over their designated blocks, he lost his balance and fell on his bum. The damp trousers stuck to his skin, making it harder to walk around.

When he got back to the room of the extra attentive man, he noticed Beauvis was walking funny and asked, "What happened to you?" "Nothing," Beauvis replied, "I just fell when I was delivering some water." "Well, it certainly doesn't look very comfortable for working at a place where you need to walk this much. Help yourself: grab one belt and any of my trousers. They are dry and you are so thin that size won't be a problem." Beauvis could use a dry attire, but he decided not to accept the offer; the man was getting too involved for being just a customer. "Thank you," he said in response to the proposal, "but I managed to work like this all day yesterday. It isn't that difficult." After having placed the buckets where they belonged, Beauvis was on his way out; the man looked at him from behind. The new incident was a descriptive instrument of Beauvis' lower half.

After this last visit, Beauvis noticed that the man didn't call him in a while. "He should have been offended by my reluctance to use his clothes," he thought to himself. He had no intention to find out; he had noticed the reduction of the workload and he was enjoying it. The true reason why the man's calls had paused, however, was the same as that of the young boy.

There was an explanation to the man's indisposition: he had gotten inspired with how he had seen Beauvis earlier, and he wanted to keep his decency. Even in a private room, he was still in a public place. Beauvis was friendly but he was still a total stranger; there was no way for him to know how the young man would react to this new state of his. The excitement he was determined to keep to himself would simply not go away. He decided to get up and go close the door for some privacy.

With great difficulty to cover that revealing part of him, as it was, he managed to reach the door. He looked for Beauvis from there, willing to rationalise the inflated image he had of him. He finally walked nearby; unfortunately, he was no less attractive than the man remembered. It was as if his trousers were revealing all of him. The man shut the door, fearing that he may go too far if he continued looking. He took advantage of his privacy to give his body the attention it needed.

A large group of loud men came to the bathhouse. There were around fifteen of them queuing; they were coming all together from a construction site nearby. Beauvis was overwhelmed with all the work already so he asked Jean to be allowed a quick lunch break before the place got frantic. Jean approved his request and asked him to come back soon, as it would be impossible for him to deal with that crowd himself.

Once the man at the private room had attained his serenity again, he opened the door and waited for Beauvis to come tell him whenever his time was over. It was Jean who came, as Beauvis had left to grab lunch. The owner said to him kindly, "Your time is up, Sir. There are lots of people waiting; it would be greatly appreciated if you allowed them to enjoy their baths, too." "What time will your new boy be here on Friday?," he inquired of Jean, "He is very efficient and I would love to come back when he is around." "Ohh, that boy," the owner of the bathhouse responded. "He is only helping me till tomorrow" "What a pity," exclaimed the customer, "I will come back tomorrow, then. Thank you very much."

Very satisfied with his experience, he left. It was abnormal to go have two baths in consecutive days, let alone pay for them in an expensive private chamber during peak days, but he was determined to go see Beauvis once again. Furthermore, very few people knew him there, so it wouldn't be suspicious at all.

Chapter 14

Beauvis went to have lunch as prompted: as fast as he could. He did it at the closest bakery he found, and bought whatever they had readily available: tasteless bread with boiled eggs, and a banana. When he came back to the bathhouse, he was relieved that the chamber where the exigent man had been was empty. Jean was dealing with the loud crowd in line. Their clamoring echoed everywhere. Mixed with all the other voices, the noise of the water, and steps all over, there was a familiar voice too. That same tone of an old acquaintance of Beauvis'. He disregarded. There was no point in getting distracted while there was too much work to do.

It was ironic that a place where water was the main commodity could get so dirty. But that was the whole reason for which people paid to have a bath: to get rid of their dirtiness. In non-peak days it was easy to make sure that clients didn't mess up the clean water in the bigger containers. Right now, however, it was difficult to keep a barrel of water clean for more than three customers. Keeping water clean was not the only issue. Mud quickly spreaded all over the floor; it blocked the spaces between wood slats, preventing the used water from flushing naturally. If not cleaned properly to be drained, there would be spots where muddy water would reach up to five inches. It wouldn't be possible to wear clean shoes, and people wouldn't pay for such spots.

Time passed by fast with all the things that needed to be taken care of. He was efficient. Jean was efficient too. But there was still too much to be done. When people were left in line unattended, one or two would come in without paying. If the rented spots weren't clean, people would complain and stay longer to make up for the time they had paid for and weren't able to make use of. When they asked for supplies such as soap and towels, they expected their request fulfilled immediately. Hot water needed to be burning hot; otherwise, clients would wait longer to be served water like that. It was a never-ending battle against time.

While performing his tasks, Beauvis heard that familiar voice once again. This time he listened to it more clearly. He was chatting with his crew in a very casual way. Beauvis had been, of course, mistaken by thinking that it was somebody he knew. "It should have been my will to be among friends that got me thinking it was a friend of mine," he thought. Working at that bathhouse in Telde was as social as it was solitary: he saw and talked to lots of people but no conversation was really deep and meaningful, and there were no known faces. Beauvis was not miserable, though. He was excited with the whole idea of the long voyage to the Indies. Furthermore, he was relieved to have gotten away from Palos de la Frontera and all the problems he had left behind. He was merely willing to make new friends with whom he could share his happiness, in the same way as that mysterious voice seemed to be doing.

Beauvis came to the queue to let the big group of men in. He got spots for five of them in the main area; six guys paid for a private room, as they would have to wait more, otherwise. The rest of those guys continued to wait for their turn. It was in the last five of them that Beauvis found the face of the one whose voice he had listened to before. His voice was as similar as his looks to an old acquaintance of Beauvis': Anton. It wasn't him; Anton's heterochromia and height were striking. Beauvis remembered the first time he ever saw him:

Before Beauvis moved to Castille, when he lived in Perpignan, France, he used to go take a bath at a public bathhouse every weekend, in the evening. That place was conveniently close to his father's blacksmith, and clear clean water was offered on the weekends. One day, a guy with a very distinctive feature came in: one of his eyes was hazel colour, while the other one was blue. He didn't know his name at the time but he would learn it later on, as the guy began to visit the place in the late evenings every second weekend. He worked at a leather shop, and he was several years older than Beauvis was.

This client at Jean's reminded Beauvis of Anton. His interaction with that guy back in France had been ephemeral, but he had grown fond of him. Anton

had been the very first male to whom he had been attracted to. A family of seven was waiting in line next to the last five guys from the group. One private room had become unoccupied. Beauvis approached and said, "A private chamber is now available. It isn't one of the bigger ones but it can accommodate three persons at a time." "We would rather wait for some spots in the general area," said one of the guys. "We will take it then," said the father of the family, "We will be three at a time." Beauvis led the first three members of the family to their spot. Meanwhile, some people who were in one corner of the main area were collecting their stuff and leaving.

Beauvis remembered how Anton always turned around before leaving, to ensure he wasn't forgetting anything. Anton used to wait for the spot on the furthest corner to take his bath; there were no private chambers at that bathhouse they used to go to in Perpignan.

Beauvis went to clean the corner spot as soon as he got the chance. He was on it, when the guys from the group began to call him. He went and asked them, "what's going on?," to which the guy with the familiar voice responded, "We would like to take that spot as it is. We will clean it ourselves if we are allowed to go in now." Such an attitude only accentuated this guy's similitude with Anton.

Beauvis was glad that the guys weren't choosy about the cleanliness of the spots they wanted. He accompanied them, with buckets of hot water, which he placed there for them. "Please bring us some soap and a sponge," asked the client. Beauvis left and completed a round trip around the bathhouse before he was able to bring the supplies to them. When he came back, he found the guy facing away. His back had that very same shape as that of Omar: a beautiful V shape. Beauvis approached to hand him the soap and sponge, and as the guy turned towards him to reach out for it, his armpits expelled one particular smell. Being the sense of smell the one that causes memories to be brought back most vividly, Beauvis was transported to that bathhouse in Perpignan unequivocally.

There was a reason for which Anton preferred a corner spot there. Being older than Beauvis was at the time, he utilised the privacy of that place to release the tension from his body. Anton was very discreet, but being Beauvis as shy as he was, he would always grab a spot as far as he could from him to be able to look at him without him knowing. The older boy always stayed later than Beauvis, and later than everybody, so that nobody would visit that spot until the next day at least.

One day, however, Anton left earlier, and he had finished his 'usual ritual' at the place. Ever since he saw it for the first time, Beauvis had always been so curious to know what that creamy white fluid was, for he wasn't able to get such a thing from his immature body. He moved to the corner spot. He was surprised to see how messy the spot was: stains of that fluid were everywhere. The smell of armpit was mixed with that particular smell of such a liquid. He touched it, to test its consistency. It was surprisingly viscous for being a kind of urine. It had an unfamiliar smell, but it wasn't disgusting as that of pee.

His curiosity didn't stop there. He wanted to know if it had the same taste as the smell suggested. He found the biggest splash trapped in an indent of a rock. He tried to grab some with his fingers but it was slippery, so he stuck his mouth to the rock, and sucked it all in one single shot. He didn't breathe until he had swallowed the sample. The taste wasn't disgusting for being a discharge of the penis, but it wasn't very inviting either. Beauvis was content with his new discovery, so he tried to retain the taste of it for as long as he could. He was unaware at the time that such a substance was a common occurrence in males, and that his own body would later become able to produce it too.

Beauvis was so absorbed with his new finding, that he didn't see that Anton had come back. He was standing by his side; when the young boy finally realised his presence, Anton asked, "may I?" He was pointing at his spot. Beauvis was as embarrassed as he had never been before. He got up quickly and began leaving. Anton grabbed him

by one arm and said to him kindly, "I meant 'may I sit by your side?', since there is enough space for both of us here."

Beauvis was uneasy about the whole situation. His shyness and inexperience turned it into what it was meant to be: a sexual interaction from afar with no physical contact. A complicity between two male fellows, to be spoken of never again, and to be forgotten in the annals of history.

Anton became friendly to Beauvis ever since. He began to speak with him casually. And he invited him to find a spot closer to his whenever the older boy saw him at the bathhouse. Beauvis found one thousand excuses not to do it. Anton's 'typical routine' began to be more explicit when the young boy was around. Beauvis tried to hide his curiosity, but he always ended up watching Anton from the distance. Anton's father happened to be away on business one of those weekends. He went all the way to the bathhouse to see Beauvis and to invite him to come over to his father's shop. His efforts to convince him were unsuccessful.

Anton left the bathhouse earlier than Beauvis many times after that one incident, leaving his 'habitual mess' behind him; the young fellow never dared to take the risk he had taken that one time ever again. After that one occurrence, though, Beauvis looked forward to the day in which he could repeat those actions without being frightened by the consequences of doing it.

Chapter 15

Beauvis was impatient to revive his memoires with Anton once again. To do so, he had to finish his work shift first. Fortunately, time flew trying to maintain the fire to heat the water up, and doing all the other tasks at the bathhouse. Even after peak time, as people began to go home, there was no time to be bored at that place. When it was time for Jean to close, he paid Beauvis and told him the same as the day before, "Keep the key, and feel free to come any time tomorrow. Even better if you come earlier." "Thank you," said Beauvis, "I will be here by lauds."

Beauvis stayed at the bathhouse and did some cleaning for tomorrow, which would be his last day of work there. He subsequently locked all doors and went to the main area, where the memory of Anton had been waiting for him. He imagined a retroactive parallel world; one so perfect to have been true, but fantasy was more gratifying than the inaction of reality.

He was in the corner spot, as usual. His bi-coloured eyes gave him a mysterious look, even from afar. "Come closer, Beauvis," he said. "Don't be shy. I know you like to look at me when I'm all nude, playing with my tool." Young Beauvis walked some steps forward. As he approached, Anton's image became clearer. He was smiling at him. "That's better," said the older boy. "I know you are timid. It's ok if you don't want to go any further. Just make sure you grab a good spot to see how my penis grows bigger and how it shoots that liquid that you love. I know you do, ever since I caught you drinking from it."

Young Beauvis was more quiet than he was now, so he didn't say anything. Anton was so eloquent, mild, and straightforward in his speech, that he just wanted him to go on with it. "Do you see how small my penis is now?," he continued. "Look how it grows as I stroke it."

Anton was sitting straight on a bench. He moved his butt forward and laid some weight of his upper body over his right forearm to reach a

more comfortable position. He began to rub his tool using his right hand, and it did as he had told Beauvis it would: it increased its size. Little by little, it reached its maximum size when it was hard as a bone.

Beauvis was not unfamiliar with that reaction in the male body, as he had experienced that himself. But it was a delight to be looking at a more mature organ doing so. Not only was it significantly bigger than his, but it had hair around it, which delineated his genital area perfectly. Anton's whole apparatus was so developed in comparison to that of Beauvis that the sack wasn't 'flat'; the outline of two symmetrical balls was visible through it. They went up and down with the rhythm of Anton's left hand massaging his tool. The older boy enjoyed masturbating in front of a younger one so much, that it didn't take him long to reach orgasm and splash his white sperm all over. The more viscous portion of it covered his own penis, while the lighter share ended up everywhere around and on himself.

"Thank you for watching, Beauvis," said Anton. He slid his left hand all the way from the shaft to the head of his tool, to clean as much semen from it as he could. It ended up on the bench, along with the rest of it, which had been pumped up into the air before falling onto it. Anton dressed up, smiled at Beauvis one more time, and left. It was unusual for him to leave before everybody else, but he had begun doing it ever since he had discovered that Beauvis liked to visit his spot after he had performed his 'customary routine'.

Beauvis had never visited Anton's spot again after having been caught by him that one time. But tonight, he was determined to do it. Beauvis walked forward towards the bench and licked it all from it. Contrary to what he had done the first time, he drank the mysterious fluid without holding his breath, for he knew its flavour now and wanted to taste it as it was.

After he had cleaned after Anton's mess, young Beauvis relaxed and took a hot bath while still wondering what the secret to releasing such

a substance was. Thinking of many theories that came to his mind, he fell asleep. The sound of steps around him woke him up. He was unaware of how much time had passed, but it felt like he had spent the whole night there. "Good morning, Beauvis," he listened to the friendly voice of Anton say. "I didn't come here to have a bath today. I came to tell you that my father is away on a business trip. He left me in charge of his shop and I thought you would like to come and see it, catch lizards, throw rocks at birds on the fence... It isn't very far from here; see? I was able to come from there to invite you."

*Young Beauvis was afraid and yet, very curious. He loved spending time with his friends, and discovering the world together. Doing so with an older fellow suggested that the experience would be even more interesting. Not only would he get to see Anton's father's leather shop, but he may also have the opportunity to ask him questions regarding how he was able to create that strange liquid. "Let's go," said Beauvis. "I just have to be back by noon to help my father at the blacksmith." "Don't worry," said the older mate, "we will be back before **sext** if we make haste."*

They got en route to the shop. It wasn't very far, but Beauvis was so anxious to get there that it felt like a very long walk. Furthermore, Anton's chatting was very casual, and there didn't seem to be a proper topic for Beauvis' questions. He was worried that he wouldn't get to do it at all, but he kept hope; maybe the empty shop would make the environment more confidential. They reached what seemed to be the back door of it. "Go ahead," said Anton, "It is more discreet to use this pathway than the main entrance." It didn't look very inviting, especially when Anton was a casual acquaintance and not an old friend, but young Beauvis did as prompted.

Beauvis found himself in the darkness of Jean's boiler room, surrounded by tools and equipment that resembled a shop: scissors, axes, fire utensils, wood, metal, boilers, oil, etc. It made his recall more realistic. He heard the back door closed shut, and the steps of his friend approaching.

“This is it,” said Anton, “This is where my father and I work. Let me give you a tour around it.” The place was not very big but it had lots of intricate equipment, and substances Beauvis had never seen before. He began to grab everything on his way, asking Anton what each thing was for. The older boy was very knowledgeable at his trade, and explained everything in much detail. Time went by quickly with all the new items and tools; it was time for Beauvis to leave and go help his father.

His friend had answered all his questions, but Beauvis was worried that they hadn’t brought the topic he was most interested in to the conversation. It was now or never; he grabbed all his courage and said to him, “I’m disappointed. I thought there would be a bottle with that liquid you are able to produce.” Since Anton wasn’t expecting it, he didn’t catch the innuendo right away and replied, “What do you mean? We produce all the liquids I showed you. Only when we don’t have supplies we buy them from another leather shop...” Then he got the hint. He was afraid that it was too late to respond to it, as Beauvis had blushed, yet he continued, “Unless you mean the white cream that I can get through my penis. That one I haven’t shown you, yet. Do you want to see it?”

Beauvis was still embarrassed about having been the one who opened the door to it, but he was happy to see his plan working. He tried to calm down and get rid of that red face he had. “Don’t be ashamed. I was also a very curious boy when I was your age. I wish I had had somebody, as you have me now, to have explained to me what it is and how to obtain it.”

Young Beauvis had calmed down. “You are the best friend, Anton,” he said. “I have tried doing the same thing you do, but nothing comes out of my penis. Maybe I’m not doing it well.” “Well,” responded the older boy, “you may be doing something wrong; or maybe your body is still

undeveloped. Let's make sure it is not the former; try using your hands to get my tool to pump it out."

The younger boy was excited with the idea. The theory made sense: he was doing things right if he was able to get Anton's liquid flowing. That didn't explain what that liquid was, but knowing that such a phenomenon was an occurrence in 'developed males' was a big progress against Beauvis' ignorance. His friend unbuttoned his trousers, and dropped them to the floor. He then leaned against the wall and made signals to Beauvis to go ahead with it.

Beauvis didn't know how to put his hand in the right position. He had done it exactly as he had only seen Anton do it: the 'proper' way. It was that in which the thumb and the index finger were around the penis' head, followed by the middle, the ring, and the pinky fingers all the way to the beginning of the shaft. It was hard to reproduce that setting being in front of him, rather than being in the back. Anton's signals and his leaning against the wall didn't suggest Beauvis to go behind him. Beauvis was very confident that he knew what the 'proper' way was, for he had seen it before so many times; therefore, he positioned himself by Anton's side so that they were both facing in the same direction. This allowed Beauvis to put his hand around his friend's tool in a more natural way.

Beauvis had never touched another person's genitals before. It felt surreal to be doing so. He didn't know anything about sexuality back then, but he did know that such a part of the body was called "private" for a reason. Maybe Anton knew the answer to that, as well. As he stroked his mate's organ, Beauvis felt it grow in his hand. He had to adjust his grip around it, as it increased in diameter. Since it was also longer, Beauvis found himself doing a longer displacement of his hand back and forth than he used to do when he had performed that on himself. Doing those movements with his hand around his friend's tool was slightly easier than using his own, as Anton's was completely straight and not curved upwards gently, like Beauvis'.

Beauvis turned his gaze towards Anton's face in order to find in the boy's expression his approval or dislike. The expression was hard to read. It seemed to be a mix of pleasure and pain, so it made Beauvis question himself, "Am I doing it properly?" Tout de suite he realised he was, indeed, doing it right; the white viscous substance was pumping through his friend's penis, as it throbbed inside Beauvis' hand. The younger fellow let go of it, as to allow the liquid to flow. Anton quickly grabbed Beauvis' hand with his, and put it back where it was. Without releasing his friend's hand, the rapt boy dictated a new rhythm; it was faster with less displacement, and the grip was less tight. Beauvis felt the surge of each independent stream of liquid, as they were ejaculated from Anton's penis. For the first time of his life he felt how the intense pressure within caused the fluid to travel from the shaft, where Beauvis' pinky and ring fingers wrapped the organ, to the head, where Beauvis' thumb and index were.

The lighter portion of the liquid flew and ended up everywhere around them, while the heavier one leaked from the tip down to their hands. They became sticky and messy. Beauvis felt fulfilled with their encounter but he was also sad of learning that his body was not developed yet. "It was great, Beauvis," said his colleague. "Be patient. Your body will soon be producing the same substance too. Sleep upside down and one day you'll find your sheet damp wet from it when you wake up." If he did that, Beauvis knew he would disobey the clerics' order to avoid it, but it was a good piece of advice to keep in mind.

As they cleaned their hands using some clothes they had nearby, Beauvis asked his intimate friend, "What is this sticky liquid, anyways? And why can it only be obtained via the private parts of the body?" Anton was not an expert at it but he shared the little knowledge he had, "It contains the seed of life, which is planted in a woman's womb to become a mother. That's why only grown up men can produce it. Private parts are meant for procreation, and they are private because you should only procreate children with your spouse."

Anton's explanation was very clear. And yet, it made Beauvis wonder why were such parts private in persons that were not able to procreate anymore, or in those who were not able to procreate yet? The information he had gotten from his friend had been so enlightening that he decided to resolve those paradoxes some other time.

Beauvis was very satisfied with his experience. The remembrance of Anton was as neat and lucid as if he really had been there with him; he cleaned the stuff around him from the stains of semen, and got ready to leave for the inn. It was so late and he was so tired, that he barely exchanged words with Rene. He ate a heavy dinner; he went straight to bed even before **compline** had rung, knowing that he had to wake up early tomorrow for his last day of work at Jean's bathhouse.

Chapter 16

Telde, Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Wednesday the 15th of August, 1492

Lauds rang that Wednesday the fifteen of August. All people were particularly upbeat and cheerful about the festivity that would take place that day. Rene was all dressed up, and so were everybody. Beauvis had left for the bathhouse; they would meet at the festival after attending mass **Terce**. Rene still didn't have any commitment, as he only remained in Telde to wait for the merchandise to be taken to Real de las Palmas. Hence, he arrived in the town's square early; mass was to take place at **Prime** there due to the overflow of people attending the event.

"Brothers and sisters," said the father after the mass was over, "we are happy to declare the festivities in honour of Virgin Mary's Assumption commenced. It has been a christian tradition for over one thousand years, and we are pleased to be invited to join the feast this year." People applauded and clamored joyfully. The chorus began singing 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo', while one boy collected tips from the attendees. Rene gave a generous one, as it was customary for him. The chorus then sang 'The Magnificat', while Rene explored the fairgrounds.

Magnificat ánima mea Dóminum.

Et exultávit spíritus meus: in Deo salutári meo.

Quia respéxit humilitátem ancíllae suae:

Ecce enim ex hoc beátam me dicent omnes generatiónes.

Quia fécit mihi mágna qui pótens est: et sánctum nómen eius.

Et misericórdia eius in progénies et progénies tíméntibus eum.

Fécit poténtiam in bráchio suo: dispérsit supérbos mente cordis sui.

Depósuit poténtes de sede: et exaltávit húmiles.

Esuriéntes implévit bonis: et dívites dimísit inánes.

Suscépit Ísrael púerum suum: recordátus misericórdiae suae.

Sicut locútus est ad patres nostros: Ábraham, et sémini eius in saecula.

Glória Patri, et Fílio, et Spirítui Sancto,

Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculórum.
Amen.

There were competitions and demonstrative events to take place over the next few days. Rene had signed in for the archery tourney, which would last three days. He didn't know falconry but he was looking forward to seeing those competitions, too, as he was a big fan of it. Horse racing was one of people's big favourites too, and Rene was no exception. There were many other tournaments to take place over the next few days too: free fight, fight with sword, fight with spear, sportive contests, cockfights, bullfighting, etc.

At this time, there were still some people setting their booths up. There was something for everybody: music and theatre performances; egg shells full of flour for the children; exotic and new foods and drinks such as cheese, wine, mead, beer, liqueur, dried meat, and bread; art expositions including paintings and crafts; curiosities; engineered new inventions, printing press, and new materials for ships included; medicinal herbs; weapons; aromatic bark, soap, and other substances; mushrooms; clothing in many different materials like leather, starched fabrics, linen, cotton, etc; bath sponges;

natural dyes for fabrics such as woad, madder, and weld; glass and silver work and art; rugs and tapestries; furniture exposition; animal exposition; etc.

More than a simple christian festivity, it was a special occasion for people to show their trades, meet other people, bring their families, and have fun. It started that Wednesday the 15th of August, and would prolong till Saturday the 18th. The warmth of the summer sun only made the environment more inviting to attend and to enjoy everything it had to offer.

Rene walked around the fair. It was entertaining to watch people set their stalls up; children were mad at their fathers and fathers were mad at them, as they obligated them to help them at the fair. Food carts were already installed in place, and selling many different foods to choose from. Rene got himself fresh meat with bread, one of the most expensive plates being offered; most of the people would buy bread only, for it was the cheapest meal. He ate his delicious meal while he continued walking. A magician was setting up his table, and he seemed to be very serious about his gig; he had got himself a well designed outfit, and his spot didn't seem to be the cheapest at the fair. The merchant man was eager to see his performance but he decided to give him enough time to prepare, and he continued exploring.

He found one stall in which the vendor was selling metal ornaments, weapons, and utensils. He was already installed; he should have come there very early, as all even the small objects were meticulously arranged for a good exhibition. "Approach, Sir," said the energetic vendor. "What are you looking for? These are all my items for sale of trade, and my brother is also setting up his booth over there." As Rene looked towards where the man was pointing, a few meters away, he cringed to see the man struggling to install a small blanket on top of his little table. The brother didn't seem to have nearly the same quality objects that this man was selling; he looked back at the vendor with such a face that it made him say, "I apologise, Sir. I didn't mean you were interested in that. He is still learning the trade. Anyways. What would you like to see?" The main reason for which Rene was a merchant was that he liked quality stuff; he was an elegant man, and he liked

to be treated as such. He was not offended when people did differently but it was awkward, as his clothing and manners were those of a fancy person.

Rene liked to collect, keep, trade, and sell new objects and curiosities that he found in his trips. He looked at several items. "That seems like a very interesting piece," he said to the vendor, "may I take a closer look at it?" "Of course," did the other man say, "This dagger is a precious antiquity obtained from China many centuries ago. Please handle it with care." As he passed the dagger to his client, Rene looked at him and said, "you really don't want to sell, do you?" The man smiled and responded, "Sometimes customers do not understand the value of such pieces. I apologise. I have no doubt you are very conscious of what these things are. Feel free to hold any object you like in your hands."

"I wouldn't be so sure of this object's origin being China," said Rene, "These characters seem to be rather Japanese." "Ohh, I have heard that before," said the other man, "It is possible that it is from Japan, indeed. I got it from my travels to the Middle East. I bought it from merchants coming back from the silk road before it was dangerous to do it, which makes it even more valuable today. I have estimated its age to be around four to six hundred years old. Its blade is made of real silver; hence, the luster. The leather handgrip was changed some time circa 1350's in Roman Constantinople before falling to the ottoman empire. That explains why it reads 'Manuel II Palaeologus' and the different languages between the two parts of it. It is a true relic, which I am very proud to have in my possession."

"And yet, here you are, willing to sell it or trade it," said Rene. "That's right," he responded, "but only to something of the same sort of value or the right amount of money." "Well, I hope we get to do a fair exchange, as I am very interested in this piece. I am part of Admiral Christopher Columbus' crew, and we are travelling west to reach the Indies. While it isn't exactly useful to spend much on an item that we could easily get there by lots, I believe we could utilise it as a means of 'communication' if we end up further north than where we are planning to be." The man was shocked. "Travelling west to reach the Indies?!", he exclaimed. "But that's impossible. Nobody has ever

done that before. Ships sink in the vast ocean before they're even able to come back." "That's not the first time I heard that. But here we are, eager for adventure and to make history in the name of the Catholic Monarchs of Hispania, Queen Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand II of Aragon." "Respect to you, sailors. I admire your courage. I bet you will be interested in seeing my collection of artifacts from the Indies and China." "I am, indeed."

The man took the dagger back, and put it where it originally was. He then put several other interesting items on the table. "This is an assortment of silver flatware from China, and this is a silver bracelet from the Indies. If you are familiar with such characters, you may be able to recognise the genuineness of the inscriptions on them." Rene took a closer look at them. He was an expert trader; not only was it real silver, but the engravings were also authentic. It was a truly sterling stack of units. More than being a mere means of communication with the local Indians, as it would portray them as pacific legitimate traders, silver was of particular importance in long voyages to prolong the life of drinking water.

Rene was a very intelligent man and an experienced sailor; he was aware of the importance of maintaining water on board clean. There may not be a supply of fresh water soon, if at all. If they experienced drought, unfavourable winds, and the trip dragged on, they would have to drink water with alcohol for weeks. It was always preferable to have as much fresh water as possible, at least at the beginning of the expedition, up to the point in which mixing it with alcohol was the only option to prevent stomach diseases. Silver was known to be a natural water disinfectant, used to clean water for surgeries and to keep it clean when stored for long periods of time. Columbus was an obstinate man, and he wouldn't approve of spending money in silver, regardless of being indispensable; he would rather allocate that money to buy more alcohol-diluted water. It served the same purpose after all.

"I am interested in the dagger, the bracelet, and one of the spoons," said Rene. "Here's my offer. I only want to borrow them for my trip to the Indies. I will give you 2000-maravedis worth of gold coins as a warranty in the remote case I can't complete the round trip alive. But we will, and I will bring

you the three items. You can have them back for 1600-maravedis worth of the gold coins, or declare the deal as an official sale instead. I am Rene de Moguer, a man of his word. Ask for references and you will be surprised by the renown I have regarding my mercantile deals.” The man was just looking at him without saying a word; Rene continued, “You don’t have to decide right now. I will be in Telde for some more days. Shall you be willing to go ahead with it, let me know.”

The merchant liked the offer so far. It was easy to calculate the items’ worth due to its silver content: 1200 maravedis. But there was, in fact, no way to quantify their intrinsic value, and that seemed like a fair deal. “I am staying at Rodrigo’s inn,” said the customer. Then, he left and continued exploring the fair.

Chapter 17

Rene completed a round trip around the fair, when he heard the **Terce** ring. The second mass of the day had begun. There were even more people this time. It was hard to walk with people everywhere. He saw Marcus and Angel there at mass. He managed to make his way to join them. They exchanged 'hello' with their gaze, keeping silent as for being respectful of the ongoing ceremony. Once mass was over, Rene took the opportunity to thank Marcus for having helped him transport his merchandise on Sunday. "It would have been a long wait otherwise," said Rene to him.

"Have you gotten your axle repaired by now?," asked Marcus. "Yes," responded Rene, "I have been working on it these days and it is functional again. I am just waiting for a whole load of goods to be taken back to Real de las Palmas before I make my way back." "You are so lazy," said Marcus, "I already made another round trip. I even brought this annoyance with me on this last trip," said he as he pointed to his other colleague. Angel laughed at Marcus' joke about him and said, "A cartographer can't do anything in a ship repair."

"You are sure going to get rich with all that work," said Rene to Marcus, "How is La Pinta's rudder repair going?" "It is going," he responded, "but it won't be completed until they try all the different material proposals first. They are waiting for the metal sample from Telde before they make the decision on which one to use. I'm glad it isn't ready yet; otherwise, we wouldn't be enjoying this vacation. This is a great fair. I look forward to setting up a booth with my older son here next summer." "I wouldn't be making any plans if I were you," interrupted Angel and continued ironically, "we may all die on this trip." "Of course we won't," said Marcus, "we will bring enough provisions to last for up to eighty days for a ninety-men crew."

"And that may not be enough," continued Angel, "Columbus is an obstinate man; he simply won't listen to a divergent opinion, regardless of having grounds. Earth, being as spherical as the Moon and the Sun, has the same

distance North to South, as West to East. We know very well what the distance from the Equator to the North Pole is; hence, we know the very long distance between Europe and the Indies via west. If we have provisions for eighty days, it means we would have to reach our destination by day fortieth; else, we will have to sail back if we want to live.”

“If you are so pessimistic about the whole voyage,” said Marcus, “then why are you coming at all?” “I don’t believe there is only water in between. We are blessed; we will be lucky, and we will find new islands. Tropical and beautiful land as the one we are in right now.” “I want to believe we will reach the Indies,” Marcus continued. “There is no exact measure of the distance between Europe and the Far East. Even if you are right about the Earth being that big, it doesn’t necessarily mean that we won’t make it.”

“That’s right; there is no exact measure of such distance, but neither do we need one that precise to know a fair approximation. The Earth completes a rotation every twenty-three hours and fifty-six minutes. Move yourself one twenty-fourth of the Earth’s circumference, clock in hand or two if you want to double check, and read the noon offset.

”That’s how much distance there is in one twenty-fourth of the Earth’s circumference is: about 850 miles. Yes, clocks become less reliable when being transported from A to B, but the same measurement done by lots of people can’t be wrong after all. There’s roughly 5000 feet to 7000 feet per mile, depending on the type of mile used. Mind that the distance is narrower as it approaches the poles, but we will be very close to the equator line: the longest. Travelling east all the way from Tenerife to Japan, the time difference is closer to ten hours. There are at least six sailors in the crew who can attest to that. Admiral Columbus prefers to believe that such noon offset travelling east is closer to fourteen hours.

”This all means we would have to sail fourteen sections of 850 miles each to arrive in Japan from the east. More than the Earth’s circumference, which is closer to 10000 miles. Our beloved leader is convinced that the Earth’s circumference is smaller than that.

"Truth is that even if the real measurements were wrong by a staggering 50% in our favour, that would still be a 5000 miles voyage to Japan, and about 7000 miles to the Indies. Pray to God that the mile in question is the shorter one. The captain is very optimistic and affirms maps refer to the shorter one.

"Admiral Columbus is expecting a 3000-mile voyage of about twenty-five days. At our ship speed, we would complete the actual trip closer to one hundred days in perfect conditions. Longer of course, shall we experience inclement weather. We are bringing provisions for eighty days, while we should be looking at two hundred days, to make the round trip if we aren't successful. To bring that much food and water with alcohol, we would need to get rid of 50% of the crew. This would create more space for supplies and less demand for them at the same time."

"So why don't you make us all a favour and stay here, instead," said Marcus to him. Rene laughed at Marcus' joke. Angel responded, "Because I believe that I, a cartographer, am more useful than you. Why don't you volunteer to stay instead?" "I am considering it," replied Marcus, "so I wouldn't have to deal with your annoyance again." Rene was enjoying the free show. Marcus and Angel have been friends for many years. Their fights to over-power one another was amusing. There was a healthy competition feeling between the two of them. Rene would, in fact, be worried the day they wouldn't treat each other that way.

"Let's leave it right there," said Rene, trying to calm down the discomposure, "We are all going, regardless of the big risk we are taking. If we find land, we succeed; if we find islands, we succeed too; if we don't find anything, we turn around when we have used 40% of the provisions and make it back alive. Everybody knows how ambitious our captain is; he will do anything to get free financing for his sailing. The Catholic Monarchs, being so eager to expand this new kingdom of ours, will say yes to any senseless proposal."

"Yes. Let's leave it right there," replied the cartographer fellow, "And you're right. Everybody knows what this is all about. Anyhow. I am already finding

supporters for a mutiny, shall Mister Captain be willing to go on with less than 60% of our supply reserves. Some twenty-five to thirty-five days will 40% last." "Count with me," said Rene, "if that happens, I will command the crew myself!" "I'm optimistic we will reach the Indies," said Marcus, "But I'm not stupid. Shall that occur, I will lead the riot proudly." Angel was relieved that his two closest friends on board were reasonable about his plan in case it was absolutely necessary. Due to having exchanged his spot before, Rene belonged to the crew on board of Santa Clara, while Angel and Marcus were on Santa Maria, where The Admiral Christopher Columbus was. To Angel, it was of particular importance that Rene, being in another ship, was also willing to join the prospective mutiny.

"This talk has gotten me a bit stressed. Please excuse me. I will go have a bath," said Angel. "No. Please wait," said Rene, "I haven't introduced you to Beauvis, a sailor guy who is part of our crew. He is exceptionally energetic; you may want to talk to him about your plans if we seem to run out of supplies. He is coming with me on board of Santa Clara." Angel was suddenly willing to be in two places at once. His urge to go have a bath was not about a need for relaxation; he had visited the bathhouse just yesterday and he wanted to see his new acquaintance again. On the other hand, he was indeed eager to meet that fellow. It was not just another sailor to share his plans with but rather someone trustworthy, as he had Rene's recommendation.

"Beauvis said he would attend mass at **Terce**," continued Rene, "We are supposed to meet at the northeast corner of the square afterwards, where it is less crowded. Let's go." The two fellows from Santa Maria followed him to the meeting point. "Beauvis!," called Rene from the distance as he saw the young man standing there, facing away. Beauvis turned around and began to walk his way through the crowd towards Rene and the two unknown men.

Angel recognised the boy's face as he walked towards them. "No way this can be true," he thought to himself. The cartographer became more nervous as Beauvis approached. "Let me introduce you to Beauvis," said Rene, "He will be coming with us to the Indies. Beauvis, this is Angel, a cartographer by profession; and this is Marcus, a merchant like myself." "Nice to meet you," said the young man facing Marcus. He then turned towards Angel. He recognised him, but before he could say a thing, Angel said immediately, "It is very nice to meet you, young fellow."

Beauvis quickly understood that the man was preventing him from mentioning their acquaintance at the bathhouse the day before. Their gaze exchange was like a whole conversation. After a long moment of silence, Rene finally encouraged Angel to tell him about his plans, "Why don't you tell Beauvis your theories and what your plan is in case Mister Captain goes crazy about his exploration frenzy?"

Angel got nervous; he had already explained his cartography thesis when they had first met. "There is no need to go through all the details," said he, "But basically, we are planning on taking over the ship if the captain wants to continue sailing after our food and reserves are less than 60%." "Oh, you must be very tired," said his friend Marcus, "This is the very first time you don't make me hear the same long thing all over again. But that was very clear. Mission accomplished. Now you can go have your bath, you stinky man."

Angel blushed. Marcus and Rene thought it was about his friend having pointed out Angel's over excitement about cartography. In reality, however, he was embarrassed because Beauvis didn't know he was planning on visiting the bathhouse again; and Angel didn't know that the boy, whom he had been talking to yesterday, was part of the same crew. He was shocked; he thought a guy working there would be a local one for sure, someone

whom he would see never again. Angel liked sailing partly due to his passion about cartography but mostly because it made it easy to have casual homosexual encounters. Visiting places where people didn't know him, would prevent a scandal from happening. Angel got upset that Beauvis had not told him anything about himself, while he had given away every detail of his expedition. But more than being mad at the boy, he was mad at himself, for having gotten carried away and having been so talkative to a total stranger.

Beauvis knew what Angel had blushed for. He didn't want his friends to know what he had been up to: visiting the bathhouse twice in two consecutive peak days, being a man whose profession does not involve dirt at all; renting a private chamber for a long time with the goal of chatting with the 'server'; and even offering his dry trousers to appreciate him in full nudity while the boy changed the wet one. Beauvis was relieved that he hadn't done anything to suggest the man he was into the same thing. And it was this reason for which Angel had gotten so nervous: if the guy wanted, he could tattle on him and damage his reputation with his friends. This would never be Beauvis' intention but Angel couldn't know, as he didn't know the boy yet.

"Why don't we let the boy speak at least," said Angel. Beauvis grabbed the chance to show Angel his friendliness and said, "I love cartography. I would like to know all the details about the voyage." Angel was relieved to see Beauvis was helping him. He imagined the annoyance it was for the boy to have to hear the things he had already told him the day before; the man was determined to compensate him for the trouble. He explained all the technical details again. The other two men didn't pay much attention to him, as they had just heard them. Beauvis had also heard them, but he pretended not to. At the end of the talk, which seemed to be another monologue of his, Angel said to the boy, "Thank you for listening to me. I know I took too much of your lunch time. Here is a coin so you can buy yourself something at the fair."

"Thank you very much, Sir," said Beauvis as he grabbed the money, "It has been very nice to meet you two. Count with me on your plans." He left the group and got en route back to work. Deep inside, Beauvis knew that Angel's

consideration was not about the amount of time he had been away from work to listen to him; it was to buy his silence. Such a big sum of money wouldn't make sense otherwise.

When Beauvis left, Angel felt at ease again. He was so anxious with the whole situation, that he hadn't had one second to think of how grateful he was that such a handsome guy was travelling with them. Even if the new guy didn't seem to be into homosexual acts, it was still very exciting to know he would be around. "Good thing I didn't propose anything yesterday," thought Angel to himself, "Straight men feel very comfortable being naked around other heterosexual fellows. I may have a chance to see his nude body if he doesn't suspect anything about my attraction to him."

Angel was thrilled with the new traveller. He was looking forward to being with him in private again, but he was aware that he needed to give him some space if he didn't want to overwhelm him with his presence. Therefore, he changed his mind about going to the bathhouse. "I feel more relaxed now that I know we have extra support in another ship," said Angel to his fellows, "I will have my bath some other day."

PART II