

VELAY

The Cuddie, the Palliasse an the Sunks

In a wie plece cryed Monastier, in a seil-fu hielaun glen fiftene myll frae Le Puy, a wared aroun a moneth o braw days. Monastier is weill-kent fur the makkin o stringins, fur drouthienes, fur friedome o langage, an fur onparpent poleitically discentioun. The'r adherents o ilkane o the fowre Franche pairties – Legitimiss, Orleaniss, Emperialiss an Republicanes – in this wie hul-toun, an thai aw hett, laith, cry doun an calumpniat ilk the tither. Abies fur purpossis o beisnes, ir ti gie thaim the courdie-likk owre sum whid in a taivern bruilyie, thai hae set by evin the civeilitie o speikin. Its bot a muntain Polonie. In the mids o this Babylon A fand masell a trystin-pynt, ilkane wes thochtie ti be kynd an halpfu ti the fremm. This wesna anerlie frae the naitral mense o hul fowk, nir evin frae the surprise at A wes regairdit as a mannie leivin o hiz ain frie wull in Monastier, whan he mote juist as weill bade oniewhairs ense in this mukkil warld, it arase a guid bittie frae ma projekkit vaige suthlins throu the Cevennes. A traiveller o ma kinkeind wes a sunket kennitna in thon distrik afoir. A wes luikit upo wi sneist, lik a mannie at wuid projek a jurnay til the mune, yit wi a respektfu interess, lik a buddie furth-settin ti the snellryfe Powl. Aw wes reddies ti halp in ma graithins, a bourach o innerlie fowk up-heized me at the craunch maments o a daiker, no a stauw wes taen bot A wes herraldit bi a nip aw roun ir foyed bi a denner ir a brakwast.

It wes awreddies nerr ti October afoir A wes busked an bounded ti set furth. An at the hichts o ma gate the wesna onie Indiane Simmer ti be luikit fur. A wes contermit, gif no ti ligg out, at laist ti hae the moyens o out-liggin in haun, fur the'r naethin mair tribillin til ane caum souch nir the note o wunnin til a beild afoir the glomin, an the mense o clachan inns isna aye ti be rakkont siccar bi thon at trodge afuit. A stent, abune aw fur a traiveller on hiz lei-lane is fykie ti piche, an fykie ti straik an evin on the mairch furms a kenspekkil meith in yer geir. A palliasse on the tither haun, is aye reddies – ye hae anerlie ti git intilt, it serrs a twafauld purposs – a bed bi nicht, a pokmantie bi day, an hit disna advertise yer ettil ti outligg til ivverie by-passer. This is a mukkil pynt. Gif the ligger isna dern, it is bot a tribbilt ristin plece, ye'l becum a



“an ane effir ither gaed heles-agowdie intil the air,”

publict charact; the randie teuchter veisits yer bedsyde eftir ane aire sipper, an ye maun sleip wi ane ei apen, an be up afoir the skreich o day. A dissyded on a palliasse; an efter repetit veisits ti Le Puy, an a guid bittie cadgie leivin fur masell an ma adveisars, a slepin-bullgit wes desinged, constructit an brocht hame, triumphand-lik.

This bairn o ma ain invent wes nerr sax fuit squar, ceptna twa gair lugs ti serr as a codd bi nicht an the tap and boddam o the poke bi day. A cry it “the palliasse” bot it wes nivver a matrass pangfu o strae, anerlie a kinna lang rowe ir sassenger, grene wattir-pruif cairt-claith outsyde an bew sheipie’s-ou ben. It wes skowthie as a cairrie-aw, waarm an dray as a bed. The wes confortabil tirnin ruim fur ane, an at a nip mote serr fur twa. A’l cuid beirie masell in hit up til ma craig, fur ma heid a traistit til a furrie bunnet, wi a huid ti fauld doun owre ma lugs lik a respiratour, an in kess o hivvie renn A proponed ti mak masell a wie stentie wi ma Mackintosh coit, thrie stanes an a cruikit brainch.

It wul eith be conceivit at A cuidna cairrie this palliasse on ma ain shilpit man-buddie’s shouthers. It remaned ti wale a beiss o birn. Nou a horss is a fine leddie amang bastes, skeich, timorsum, dilicat in aitin, o frush hailth; shae is owre hie vaillyiet an owre fykie ti be laed on hir lei-lane sae ye ar cheined ti yeir bruit as til a fellae sklave, a daungeruss rodd pits hir out o hir wutts, in schort, shae is ane oncertane an exactin allyie, an eiks threttie-fauld ti the tribbils o the voger. Whitlik A requered wes a sunket chape an smaw an teuch, an o a dour an pace-fu naitur, an aw thur nedes pyntit til a cuddie.

The’r dwallit ane auld mannie in Monastier, a bittie daft as sum wuid a pit it, mukkil follaed about bi keillies, at wes kent ti histore as Faither Adam. Faither Adam hed a cairtie, an ti draw the cairtie a tottie-wie femall ane, nae mich beigger nir a dug, shae wes the cullour o a mouss, wi a cowshus ei an ane maunnin unner chaft. The wes sunket nate an gentrie-lik, a Quaikeriss bravitie, about the skellum at strak ma lykin richt on the spat. Wir erest intervvyow wes in Monastier mercat-plece. Ti pruive hir guid naitur, ae bairn eftir ane ither wes set on hir bak ti ryde, an ane eftir ither gaed heles-agowdie intil the air, ontill a waant o confidenss begoud ti ring in the ying bosies, an the ettil wes gied owre fur a dert h o subjeks. A wes awreddies upheized bi a core o ma freins, bot gif this wesna eneuch aw the coffars an sellars gaithert roun an halpit me in the trokin, an the cuddie an masell an Faither Adam wes in the mid o a brulyie fur nerr a hauf our. At lang an lest shae passit intil ma



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sairvice fur the considerautioun o saxtie-fyve francs an a gless o brandie. The palliasse hed awreddies coist echtie francs an twa glessis o yill, sae at Modestine as A instantlie baptezid hir wes on aw accompts the chaper airtikil. Atweill, that wes as it suid be, fur shae wes anerlie ane pertenin o ma palliasse, ir sel-akkin bedsteid on fowre whurls. A hed a lest intervow wi Faither Adam in a billiard ruim at the cantrip our o the daw, whan A admeinstert the brandie. He professit hissell grytliche tiched bi the twynin, an declered he hed aften coft whyt breid fur the cuddie whan he bene content wi black breid fur hissell, bot this on the wurd o the best authorities, maun bene a flicht o fantise. He hed a nemm in the toun fur sair mishandlin the ane, yit hit is certaint shuir at he yat a teir, an at the teir makkit a clane ling doun ae cheke.

Bi the aveisement o a fauss local saiddlar, a ledder saiddil wes med fur me wi reings ti festen on ma bunnyel ontill, an A pensie-lik bouned ma geir an arreinged ma claes. Bi wey o airms an outainsells, A tuik a birlin-gunn, a wie sprerit-lamp an pann, a bouet an a curn o ha'pennie caunnils, a jocteg an a mukkil ledder flesk. The main cargae conseistit o twa hale shifts o waarm claes – asyde frae ma traivellin geir o kintra moudie-skane, pylot coit, an k'nittit weskit – sum buiks an ma railway rugg, at wes also in the furm o a poke, med me a twa-fauld castell fur cauld nichts. The aye-bydin spence wes repraisentit bi kakes o jakolet an tinnies o Bologna sasser. Aw this, cept whitlik A cairried about ma pairson, wes eith stawit until the shepe-skane palliasse, an bi guid fortune A flang in ma tuim k'napsek, mair ti mak it eith ti cairrie as frae onie thocht at A'l wuid note it on the jurnay. Fur ma immediat misters, A tuik a shank o cauld lamm, a bottil o Beaujolais, a tuim bottil ti haud mulk, ane eg-bater, an a fair quantitie o blak breid an whyt, lik Faither Adam, fur masell an the cuddie, anerlie in ma skame o things the destinautioun wes ramversit.

Monastrianes, o aw schades o thocht in polateiks, hed grieit wi shorin me wi monies o ludifiein misaventurs, an wi suddent daith in monie surpraisin furms. Cauld, wouffs, reivers, abune aw the nocturne pliskie, wes dailie day an glib-gabbitlie forssit on ma tent. Yit in thur vaticinautiouns, the trew, patent daunger wes levit out. Lik Christiane, it wes frae ma palliasse A wes mertert on ma gate. Afoir tellin ye o ma ain mishanters, lat me in twa wurd gie ye wittins o the lare o ma expairience. Gif the palliasse is weill beltit at the enns, an hingit fu-lenth – no fauldit owre, fur yeir verra lyfe, – acorss the poke-saiddil, the traiveller is sauf. The saiddil wul o certane

no fit, sicna ar the blemishis o wir by-fleitin lyfe, it wul certies tirn tapsalteirie an ettil ti cowp. Bot the'r stanes on ilka rodd-syde, an a buddie sune leirs the ert o richtin onie inklin ti owre-set wi a weill-fettilt stane.

On the day o ma awaw-gaun, A wes up a wie bittie afoir eftir fyve; bi sax we begoud ti lade the cuddie, an ten meinits eftir ma howps wes in the stour. The saiddil wuidna stey on Modestine's rigg fur hauf a mament. A retoured it til its makkar, at A hed sicna bruilyement at the strete outby wes croudit wi clapperdins onluikin an leistenin. The saiddil chynged hauns wi sicna virr, mibbies it bene a guid deskreivin ti say we flang it at ilk the ither's heids, an oniegates wes verra het up an onfreindlie, an spak wi a guid bit friedome.

A hed ordinar cuddie sunks – A 'barde' as thai cry it – set upo Modestine, an aince mair laded hir wi ma geir. The fauldit palliasse, ma pylot coit (fur it wes waarm an A wes ti wauk in ma weskit), a gryte laif o blak breid, an a creill contenin the whyt breid, the lamm an the bottils, wes aw towit thegither in a verra fantoush seistem o k'nots, an A luikit on the eftirins wi brosie-heidit content. Wi sicna enorm fraucht on loft, aw set heich abune the cuddie's shouthers, wi naethin ablo ti ballanss, on brent-nyow sunk at hedna yit bene wurn ti fit the baste, an festent wi brent-nyow girdin at mote be expectit ti streik an slak along the gate, evin a verra tentles traiveller wuid sein mishanter brewin. That fantoush seistem o k'nots, agane, wes the wirk o owre monies o innerlie buddies ti be verra ertfu-lik desinged. Hit is trew thai tichtened the towes wi a wull, as monies as thrie at ae tyme wuid hae a fuit agin Modestine's lirks, an ti be heizin wi clenkit teith, bot A leirit eftirlins at ae thochtie pairson, wiouten onie exerceise o forss, wul can mak a mair solit yokin as hauf a dizen hettit an perfervid gruims. A wes than bot a noviss, evin eftir the mishanter o the sunks naethin cuid disturss ma siccaritie, an A gaed furth frae the staibil duir as ane owse gings ti the slauchter.

The Grene Cuddie Dryvar

The bell o Monastier wes juist chappin nyne as A gat quat o thur preliminarie wanfortuins an gaed doun the hul throu the commontie. As lang as A wes in sicht o the windaes, a secrie sham an feir o sum lauchabil owre-whummilin bak-hauidit me frae middlin wi Modestine.