

*SAND: an erotic ironic trilogy - Volume 1 : JULIA*  
*by Adam Hobbled*

## Introduction

by Alan Hubbard

“The literature of the future will, I clearly see, be amazing. At last it'll tell the truth, and be indecent, and amusing, and romantic, and even (after about 100 years) be written well. Quelle joie!” To Virginia Woolf, November 8, 1912 *'The Letters of Lytton Strachey'* by Paul Levy. Penguin, 2005

“In many respects, the plotless (“gonzo” porn) cul-de-sac that has been reached in the (San Fernando) Valley (centre of porn film industry) is a fable of our times. What happens when you finally come up against the limit? What happens when there is no more more?” Andrew Anthony. *Observer*. 1.8.04

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When Adam Hobbled asked me to introduce *Sand* my initial inclination was to turn him down. As I glanced through the manuscript it became clear to me, as it will be to the least discerning reader, that here we had a work of... well, I would have said pornography, but in discussions and correspondence with Hobbled he has insisted on the term *Pornerotica*, no doubt in a defensive attempt to hide a natural predilection behind an unnecessary imitation of scholarship. Anyway, that is what we have, and more particularly we have a story which celebrates - if that is the word and Hobbled's intention - or perhaps makes use of DS and SM situations, and one which is likely to offend some people, and certainly some women.

I was certainly not flattered by his request. However, friendship and *some* - I will put it no higher than that - sympathy with his objectives, caused me eventually to agree to it. So here goes.

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Today it is generally acknowledged that erotic thoughts and words and images can stimulate the imaginative extension of an act which was naturally selected for us long before we became aware that it was. The puritan may regret that the devil Imagination lies in wait for the pro-creative instinct, but it is a useless regret. God does not appear to have created the world, and even if one chooses to believe that, at some distance he has, it is Darwin who has revealed it. Natural selection has had its way with us and we are conscious - more than that, we are self-conscious. Sexual congress is now played out on the stage of imagination in the theatre of the mind. That posits infinite variety!

The narrowly ignorant and serenely wise - for surely there are both - puritans of the Torah and the Bible and the Koran may be right. We may be on a Titanic of selfishness and greed. The iceberg may be merely years ahead. I am not dogmatic enough to deny its possibility, or even - for I am old enough, as is Hobbled, for pessimism or realism to live side by side with personal serenity - its probability. However, the realities of violence in our time would not seem to stem from imagination, but from its opposite. From those who live happily within their own blinkered certainties. The preachers of all types of religious and secular fundamentalism. Those who wage war in the name of peace. (Or rather those who send others to wage war in the name of peace... or Jehovah, or Allah or Democracy, or any other god.)<sup>1</sup> Those who, lacking any interest in or understanding of History, posit **Communism** (because and *if*) **Bad therefore Capitalism Good**. The erotic imagination surely cannot be blamed for their *actual* daily crimes or our indifference, our unwanted violence towards one another, or our bigotry. The very people who insist that we must be individually responsible for our own physical welfare, since we have the free will to decide how hard to work (a lunatic connection, of course!) then insist that we are not responsible for our own moral welfare and must fatally succumb to external pressure - not the pressure to enslave ourselves as labouring objects to a work ethic driven by the whips of status consumerism, but the pressure of a sexual interest in one another that may certainly include, among its near infinite manifestations, an interest in handcuffing and whipping one another and all the other 'appalling' practices that go on between consenting individuals!

As for the influence of the sexually explicit in image or print: as Deborah Rider has written:<sup>2</sup> *'We hear of the criminal who pleads "pornography drove me to it". He has been caught. His advisers are seeking to mitigate his sentence. Offer the Establishment a different target (a target which they are delighted to attack) and reduce the offender's culpability at the same time. Neither the accusers nor the accused enquire into the validity of the excuse because neither wants its fallacy exposed.'*

But let us pause a minute at 'its near infinite manifestations'. The spectrum of what is now acceptable within the sexual practice of western(ised) society is manifest everywhere, far beyond the websites and videos of pornography. *'When I was a boy,'* Hobbled wrote to me, *'and indeed up to and in many communities well beyond World War Two, the idea of a 'blow job' would have been considered disgusting and utterly obscene.'* We are of the same age and I must agree with him. Unacknowledged and in many cases not even known about between the extremes of aristocratic sophistication and impoverished bohemia, fellatio was practiced in pre-war english society, when it was practiced at all, only in deep and probably guilt laden secrecy. Yet today the blow job is a part of every couple's at least considered repertoire. Images of the bobbing head appear in many films. Everybody understood what Clinton was doing. The hypocrisies may continue to exist, but the reality and the times have changed - 'changed utterly'. Listen to the radio. Watch television. Listen in the street. In the late 1930's the pornography allowed on the top-shelf consisted of women in non-revealing underclothes and equally concealing one or two-piece swimwear, today it offers everyone the fully frontal naked male and female in every conceivable pose and taking part in every polymorphically 'perverse' activity. The image of the erect phallus, or 'prick' or 'dick', is ubiquitous. The image of the female 'sex' equally - although this is increasingly popularised as 'fanny', 'pussy', etc, and in the right circumstances, happily nominated 'cunt'. Nearly everyone is, to a lesser or greater degree, familiar with fetish and the practices of BDSM, even if they never practice them themselves, and advertisements and popular music videos are redolent with their ideas and images. Psychiatry has increasingly released its clinical grip on what were previously considered perversions and designated them 'normal'

unless they effect performance and self-confidence in the life lived around them. Today the overtly erotic permeates everything. It may be for better or for worse, but it is impossible to deny that it does so.

Hobbled has attempted to take advantage of this climate. When asking me to undertake this introduction, he wrote '*There are enough semi-literate or otherwise inept formulations of fantasy and 'true stories' on the internet. Surely it is time to raise the quality of the erotic writing available to those who want their erotica embedded in the 'suspended disbelief' that fiction offers, rather than knowing that disbelief must certainly surge back in its most bleak and stark form with detumescence.*'<sup>3</sup>

Much published erotica is so specifically directed at the masturbatory fulfillment of its readers - no censure intended! - that it would be unintelligent of its publishers and editors to accept work that lingered too long on the pacing between one explosive sexual event and the next. The Marquis would not have been successful in submissions to *Nexus* or *Silver Moon* - or even, had it been allowed, to *Black Lace*, that most intelligently and imaginatively edited of lists, unfortunately Hobbled tells me, not open to the male author. It is arguable that erotica is as entitled to as much respect as any other genre, and that its publishers might begin to pay more attention to the extra-masturbatory purpose of many of the books they publish. Monotony is particularly inescapable when surfeit intervenes!

There is another reason for admitting erotica to the mainstream of literature and not allowing shame to denigrate its value. It is a reason which points also to a fertile field for the explorations of evolutionary psychologists - of the sensible ones that is! Perusal of pornography on the internet confirms what perusal of all historical and contemporary pornography (and to a lesser extent, if you make the distinction, erotica) seems to indicate: a set of themes around a set of practices that has broadened in public appearance as society has become increasingly openly eroticised, but which remains consistent, and which *seems* to be universal, certainly across classes and probably across cultures. The internet, as well as other evidence, would indicate that there is no distinction (other than in their expression) between the fantasies of the rich and poor, the educated and uneducated or between those of different races. There is some, but less than we once thought,

between men and women, and even in this case it is the emotional reaction to and treatment of various sexual alternatives which differs between the sexes.<sup>4</sup> There is no distinction which may be put down to intelligence. The imagination which plays on sexuality would seem to be controlled by universal images and desires which are exhibited variously along a spectrum of intensity and possibility. Can this be put down to derivation from the needs of our distant ancestors? Now that the freudian is falling beneath the contemporary revival of darwinian causation (though that is a dangerously teleological word!) it would be interesting to have some focus on the *obsessive* demands made by the human libido. Spandrel(s) or selected? Or something else?

Be all that as it may, it will be as clear to the reader, as it is to me, that *Sand* must have arisen out of Hobbled's own particular erotic obsessions. Nor is its theme or form particularly original, since it very much follows one line of the genre (if it may yet be called that) and is a straight-forward story of planetary abduction. So what does it offer beyond a somewhat suspect salaciousness? Hobbled hopes, and I must hope with him, that it is a step on the road, not analogous but similar to the one already taken by science fiction from pulp to genre to 'main stream' inclusion - or perhaps one should say to inclusion in a main-stream which is itself increasingly a kaleidoscope of previous and newly emerging genres.

Hobbled has made his heroine, Julia, an Evolutionary Psychologist. '*Natural selection,*' I have heard him say, '*drove human sexuality along the road to reproduction. That is no longer a necessary function of 'sexuality'. We are only a micro-second in the era of life on earth away from selecting ourselves. Already, with the growth of our understanding of the teleology that is attached to self-consciousness, we are to an increasing extent unnaturally selected. Already the chosen egg can be brought into daylight. The chosen sperm can be directed on its way. One day they may well be constructed. Don't tell me that we won't Hubbard, if we can. Whether it's disastrous or not, if we can we will. Sex? That's already something else now, even if that something else may be moulded, perhaps distorted - it depends on your point of view - by the distant instincts of the forest and the savanna.'*

On another occasion I had a conversation with Hobbled that I can only fictionally recall, since its savour depends upon the alcoholic

context of his thoughts and their then expression. It perhaps approaches the truth more closely in its surrealistic crudity than any more earnest interrogation of his views can do. This, then, is roughly what I remember him saying.

‘There’sh two types shexuality, Hubbsh. Firstsh’s bawdish feashant fishsical humous lushty stuffsh. And secondsh erotish astocratish fuckingsh intellectualls SHERIOUSH fuckingsh shtuffshs. *Yoush* fuckingsh shtuffshs, Hubbsh! *Yoush* secondsh shee.’

‘And you?’ I managed to interject.

‘Hole fuckingsh shpectrumsh coursh. Evryshingsh. Evryfuckingshingsh, cludingsh bidiessemsh’

‘Eh?’

‘Bidee... beedee...Bee Dee Ess Ems, Hubsh.’

We had to leave it there. Or rather I him. Slumped over the table. The usual tenner to the barman for a taxi and I was gone.

The next morning, however, I called him. ‘What were you talking about last night?’ I said.

‘Let’s go to the pub,’ he said. And sometime later, ‘Spectersh of coursh.’

‘Spectre?’ I said. ‘James Bond? Shaken or stirred or something?’

‘No Hubsh godsh shakesh! Trumsh... spectrumsh... specfuckingsh-trumsh. When ish overtsh. Shexsh. Fuckingsh SHEXSH. Peasantsh Hubsh, yoush knowsh. Animalsh. Holidaysh fr’pickingsh fuckingsh carrotsh fuckingsh, sheesh meansh?’ (I did not understand this reference at all.) ‘Peashance, I shay. Jolly smacksh on bumsh. Ho Hoesh! Shtrongsh minded thighsh femalsh, fuckingsh potentsh malesh. Sharishtocratsh ish differentsh. Morsh *Less leeashons dangerous*. Knowsh wash I meansh, Hubsh?’

Many years listening to Hobbled in similar situations perhaps allow me to offer a more coherent version of what I think he was trying to say. That...

...there are two main patterns of sexuality in the coat whose so many different coloured strands are woven between the warp of consciousness and the weft of instinct. The ‘greedy lustful physical humorous lusty’ and the ‘obsessive erotic intellectual serious exploratory’ - I have to improvise here, but this, or something like it, is what I think he was getting at in his babbling analogies of ‘peasant’ and ‘aris-

tocratic'. If so these two dimensions must exist along a spectrum or can presumably be plotted against one another on a graph. His further contention was that both are healthy, or that health doesn't come into it. (He assured me that he was not talking about physical health and that of course he 'had only safe sex in mind'!)

We can now pick up something I think from the ideas he was allowed finally - by the withdrawal of alcohol - to express. 'Peasant' sexuality - and his categories are not literal definitions of course. A 'peasant' may be an 'aristocrat' and vice-versa, and each may be either at different times - Hobbled insists is 'bashically non-BDSMsh' - That was the word he was stumbling for! - it is too quick, too animal, too tied in its inception to the brief intervals and rare holidays originally set by nature in the agricultural year. Ribald laughter. Strong bodied and minded females, strong bodied and usually weak minded males! Hearty thwacks and tickles all round. Let's sweat and fuck and laugh all afternoon or night and then get on with life, a life which includes as much fucking and laughing as work and child bearing and aging (and Authority) will allow. It is redolent with potency - both male and female. Whereas Hobbled's 'aristocratic' erotic strain is, though never far from the physical, much more devious and psychologically concerned - with intrigue, entrapment, *les liasons dangereuses*, the paradox of consensual non-consensuality. It is redolent with the exchange of power - both female and male. It tends to the subtle, the suppressed for excitement's sake, and the devious. It was surely his actual distance from the former and rage at the latter that fueled the tortured genius of D.H.Lawrence.

The bawdiness of the former of Hobbled's two - admittedly artificial - categories is largely represented or misrepresented today in the videos and CDs of sheer performance - physical exuberance, physique as stimulant - which it must be said, in the mechanical excess which they regularly demonstrate, often totter on the fringe between the aphrodisiac and the laughable.<sup>5</sup> It understandably features somewhat less in the reams of written-up personal fantasies and often unfortunately talentless 'stories' on the internet, where the power-play of BDSM is crudely featured much more often. For now that you can see on home video, and increasingly on the web itself, those selectedly sexually attractive bodies and performances why read about them!

The latter of Hobbled's two categories features much more in literature,<sup>6</sup> where however crudely, feelings can be - or very often I think and Hobbled insists, could be! - examined and explored.

This brings me to the question of consensuality. To judge from the articles, correspondence and chat on BDSM internet sites, there seems to be a large degree of agreement about the necessity for this but great confusion about what it means.<sup>7</sup> Since the rationale of BDSM role play, from its confinement in the privacy of a relationship through its public expression in fetish clubs and among 'swingers' to its 'absolute' expression in the most 'fundamental' 24/7 partnerships, depends on consensual non-consensuality, this is not surprising. The very idea has a ring of impossibility and absurdity about it that should make post-modernists leap with delight. Imposed as a moral imperative upon literature it has the same effect as all censorship. Fiction is by definition fantasy and cannot be constrained by considerations that may be appropriate to behaviour. To return to the argument that what happens on the page or screen or stage directly determines what happens off it: of course it may do. The subtlety of interaction between factors of genetic and environmental determinism are such that at sufficient remove everything can be seen to determine everything else. There will be murders 'caused' - actually partially caused within a mesh of other partial causes - by the murderer reading about murder.<sup>8</sup> We cannot live in a risk-free society in which every possible statistically-remote happening is prevented by a further draconian restriction on everybody's freedom. That said, fantasy does not anyway mirror everyday reality - by definition it seeks beyond it. So the violence and ability to absorb violence in stories with a BDSM theme may go far beyond what both writers and readers would find acceptable - if they find any of it acceptable - in real life. However, it seems to me - having followed Hobbled for the purposes of this introduction into the forests of the internet - that this presents even the few 'known by name' authors of (mainly internet) erotica whose work features BDSM, with a dilemma to escape which they deny the necessary subtleties of literature. Domination and submission are continually shown at their extremities, yet consensuality can nowhere be denied. And so every enslaved fictional heroine - it is usually a heroine, but the argument is not gender specific, and is in life more often reversed! - must

announce immediately she encounters out-of-the-blue enslavement that it is all that she had ever really wanted, and that as a willing if previously unconscious submissive she has no interests in life beyond her sexual - in the broadest sense - experiences, and no predilections about whom she might surrender to! Yet consensual non-consensuality is at the root of BDSM communal arguments about practice. It is either a subtle or gross contradiction in terms. Even those who wish to entirely escape this dilemma as inconsistent with their belief and practice insist that there must be an initial consensual agreement to future non-consensuality. (Although this is not of course legally sustainable in a democratic society!) What this amounts to is that there can only be play at enslavement in a free society. And yet many, perhaps most, erotic manuscripts featuring BDSM are fantasies involving abduction, enforced degradation, humiliation, rape etc - either criminally within or beyond, or historically or fantastically outside contemporary society. In such situations the insertion of ubiquitous consensuality in order to be politically-sexually-correct simply becomes artistically enervating and totally implausible.<sup>9</sup>

In the argument between ‘radical’ and ‘liberal’ feminists, those who believe that pornography can be empowering, point out that in consensual BDSM play the submissive wants to be forced, and that his or her situation is - to an agreed point - her or his own scenario. In a consensual situation the submissive individual, since he or she is not under duress, can be said to make the rules. This is the fascinating paradox in BDSM - even an unsatisfactory one for those extremists who wish both to escape it while necessarily remaining within it.

Role play is by definition fantasy. A work of fiction is by definition fantasy. The timidity that denies a manuscript its artistic truth can only lead to its failure as art. As Hobbled wrote to me:

*‘I am fed up with reading about men or women abducted into slavery immediately realising that what they have always wanted is to be willingly thrashed and fucked and buggered and tied up in the sun and half-drowned and pissed-on (at the very least) and impregnated by huge and manifestly ignorant gross, fat and filthy arab sheiks or mediaeval pirates or slave traders or negroes with inconceivably enormous penises. I mean, a little bit of rough is alright, but...’*

And of course he's right. Most of these stories pall rapidly. They have not much more dialogue than 'bitch!', 'slut!', 'thwack!' 'oh!', 'ahh!', 'please!', 'no!'. Even the intricacy of the bondage is hard to follow, since it would demand the most craftsmanlike writing - which it rarely gets - to describe it accurately at anything less than impossible length. The first line of dialogue, which the abductee usually hears on being loosed from the crate or woken up from a drugged sleep, is invariably, 'You will call me, Master,' or less frequently 'Mistress'. (Capitalized, of course). The victim after a few shrieks of protest settles down to the immediate enjoyment of her/his both suddenly and profoundly changed life - unless, in the even more consensual variation, she/he knows all along that he/she wants to be enslaved and perpetually mistreated - an extreme understatement! - by a gang of cigar smoking victorian gents or - in the modern version - porsche driving young financial CEO's. There's really not much more dialogue anyway after that - nor even thought - other than the occasional unimaginative insult or demand from the 'Master' or 'Mistress' and the feeble protests followed by the shrieks of enjoyment of their slaves. All that can be heard - or rather envisaged - is the sound of various descending instruments of punishment and of enormous dildos and penises plunging in and out. There are always buckets of bodily fluids slurping around. And enormous lengths of time hanging upside down or from arms that are never dislocated. But its all thoroughly consensual, you see.

Thoroughly consensual and always the same! Cruising of the internet and the human unconscious<sup>11</sup> quickly establishes the similar and cliched nature of human fantasies - beggar and millionaire, genius and dullard share the same range of obsessions, the same more or less secret dreams of the libido - the repeated situations and attitudes derived by overheated consciousness from the simplicity of animal procreation. Hobbled has included most of them in *Julia* and in his second unpublished volume, *Diane*, with the exception of female domination - which he assures me is reached, late but significantly, in *Sand. Volume Three: The Princess Raoinna*.

There remains one further issue Hobbled has to face: feminist objection. At one point in the book he writes:

*Julia thought: (she is referring to a fellow abductee. AH.) 'Girl? She's some woman.' But then she thought: 'That doesn't make much difference here'.*

*If Julia's feminism was uneasy with the radical emphasis of both some women and some men on a linguistic rationality that mirrored their own irrational denial of difference, leading them - she felt, or had felt back there on earth - to fight a necessary war on the wrong territory, that hardly mattered here. Here she had to abandon any idea of the rational, arguments about its definition were sundered by experience, and as a scientist at least, and a human being at most, she could not deny that fact. Nothing brought with her applied. She would like to have believed she was mad. But she couldn't. And if she wasn't she could only flounder. All the supports of her education, both of biology and history, had been swept away from beneath her by the tsunami of existent impossibility.*

This is obviously Hobbled's view... that 'a linguistic rationality' - by which he clearly means that political correctness which tests all traditional vocabulary against the single criterion of contemporary acceptance - is excessive and may be counter-productive, leading women 'to fight a necessary war on the wrong territory'. In the same way, I am certain that he would consider a denial of the right of women (or men of course) to accept and enjoy a submissive role in a consensual heterosexual (or of course any other) relationship - and equally to enjoy reading about non-consensual submission - not to be useful in the war against domestic violence or lack of child support or inadequate wages. Such a view is not without some strong theoretical support from feminists,<sup>10</sup> though whether it has sufficient relevance to the story Hobbled has written, some - perhaps many - women may doubt.

Whenever I meet him now - in a bar of course - his head most often wavering dangerously above the pool of beer beneath it, he invariably asks me to remind his readers that *Sand* is a fiction. Can he, in his alcoholic reverie, possibly imagine it to be anything else.

'Sh'all fuckingsh madeshupsh, Hubsh,' he says before his face falls forward once again from my sight. 'Sh's onlish ficshionsh sh'know. Tellsh'm Hubsh, tellshs buggersh. Fuckingsh readersh I'sh meansh.'

It always surprises me that he imagines he has any, my poor fallen friend



Which brings me to the question of motivation and belief - shallow or deep according to ones place on the snakes-and-ladder's board of philosophy - or assertion? (But if that is my or your position, is not every other statement assertion, including this one? There is surely no escape - other than a further assertion - from the trap of consciousness.)

I do not think it is special pleading then, in support of apologia, to say that there are ambiguities, both conscious and unconscious, here.

However that may be, perusing Hobbled's distorted, disturbing, possibly intellectually banal or perhaps fiendishly tortuous, even evil, pages - the reader must take her or his choice! - it does now seem to me that there are perhaps some general considerations which affect the writing of erotica. Hobbled is surely right to say that if we have expectations of 'good writing' in other genres then we can have them when we read and judge the 'pornerotic'. Vacuity is not justified by context, though moral judgment may be. Careless, 'amateur' slipshod, 'unbelievable' writing is necessarily formally vacuous, whether or not it resides in an equally hollow story. In erotica it is surely a masturbatory rather than a literary brushing aside which accepts the stiling of dialogue and character in order to unveil the flesh beneath. Moreover, I would agree with Hobbled - who has said this to me in conversation - that plausibility is the daughter - or son - of detail. It is not as if the descriptions of sexual acts in the 'Ooh!', 'Ow!', 'Slurp!' school of pornerotica were any more credible than its faceless characters pursuing their robotic actions and dialogue. One might almost formulate a rule: the greater the absolute implausibility of a situation the greater the importance of plausible detail. I know that Hobbled would agree with this.

Secondly, there is the old problem with humour. It is claimed to be anti-aphrodisiac. Hobbled however denies this. I have a letter from him: *...it isn't anti-aphrodisiac in bed!* - he writes - *And contemporary readers now so accept the switching of tone, the parodying of genres, etc, that the slut and the stud may surely lie down with the clown, pro-*

*vided they don't do so in the same sentence. I believe this also applies to irony. The bawdy tradition anyway denies such a dichotomy. I have attempted to do the same.*

Thirdly... but there is no thirdly. Hobbled tells me this is nothing but an ironic take on his distilled experience of hours on the world and consciousness wide web. But who would believe him? Cutting through such hypocrisy, I - Alan Hubbard - would only say: *Enjoy. If you can.*

Alan Hubbard,  
*Temporarily resident at:  
The Orsoon Estate,  
Beelzia.*

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## Notes to *Introduction*

1 Is the indiscriminate violence in Iraq that we (do not!) see on the screens of our convenience-deep democracy the act of 'swingers' and fetishists? Were the perpetrators of Abhu Graib necessarily members of BDSM communities? They may have been, of course. They may have been plumbers or consultant surgeons or martians. It could even be that they believe - or had been taught to believe by the Murdoch Anti-rational Agency - in *Mom and The Lord* and *America* (or *Great Britain*) and hate *Fags* and *Wogs* and *Whores* and *Anyone Or Thing Different*. Or, if they are the Eichmann CEO's of our infamy, in *The Dow Jones & If Necessary, God* and *When It Comes To It You Have To Admit Your Own Superiority*. Have they been corrupted by reading *The Story of O*, or even some crude variation of *Slaves of the Harem* on the internet, or by a callous and hypocritical Market with its sponsorship of a dismissive non-education and contemptuous tabloid bigotry? For that matter - *Does Al Khaida show its recruits erotica, or does it offer them God as inhuman violence?*

2 *Writing Sado-masochistic Pornography: A Woman's Defence*. By Deborah Ryder. *Libertarian Alliance Pamphlet No. 15*

3 ‘There are currently around five thousands stories (including many multi-part stories) uploaded to [www.bdsmlibrary.com](http://www.bdsmlibrary.com), the largest BDSM fiction site on the web. To read them all would be utterly dispiriting were it not impossible, but a still pretty dispiriting sampling justifies the guess that 1% may be something more than barely literate, .001% may embody something more than masturbatory value, and .0001% may embody some literary value - that value being subject to notoriously subjective definition, but here intended to include both a worthwhile capacity with language and some sense of the relationship of form to content and idea to word.’ *Adam Hobbled in Personal Correspondence*.

4 *Vide Nancy Friday et al!*

5 Though perhaps not as laughable as attempts to embed the gross in a story. See the execrably written, acted, directed and edited, much-vaunted ‘professionally made’ attempt to do so in the cult BDSM video, *The Fashionistas!*

6 There are already ‘minor classics in the erotic genre’, Hobbled asserts. (I hope that such an implication of the canonical will not bring the seething PM house down.) ‘*The Story of O*,’ he usually goes on, ‘is often thought to be one. I would suggest *The Beauty Trilogy*, (A classic not just of erotica, but of literature!) above all, and *maybe* half a dozen more. Apart from the Ancients that is!’

7 Not least because of apprehension about misunderstanding in the wider community.

8 In which case the *Sun* and the *News of the World* are our most irresponsible journals! But who would deny that? Unless to name all the unctuos others.

9 It does not have to be naive. Anne Rice - writing as A.N.Roquelaure - in *The Beauty Trilogy*, for instance, uses the convention of the fairy story brilliantly to make Beauty’s progress both consensual and plausible within that convention. Hobbled would argue that these are not marginal, but as fully committed and realised as her mainstream works.

10 “There are societies that are matrilineal and matrilocal and where women are accorded veneration and respect - but there are no societies which violate the universality of patriarchy defined as ‘a system of organisation in which the overwhelming number of upper positions in hierarchies are occupied by males.’ Such a state of affairs is deplorable but mere denial of the fact will do nothing to alter it. Women’s engagement in the political arena will.” Anne Campbell - *A Mind Of Her Own* - Oxford 2002

11 Freud was at least right that there is one, if it had been known before it was he who so earnestly, so brilliantly and so much a combination of the rhetorician, the charlatan and the guru, emphasised it for us - perhaps as the zeitgeist demanded.

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