

# Keep Me in the Dark

by Guernica

\*Pre-HBP AU\* Severus Snape/Adult!Padma Patil, with a kinky twist. A young woman under pressure from her family to marry and have children meets a stranger in a darkened club ? thus beginning a shadowy love affair of anonymous encounters conducted entirely in the dark. For a time, they are exactly what the other wants and needs. But as the intimacy ? and affection ? grows between her and her unknown lover, she begins to long for a different fate than the one her parents think is best for her... **First Runner-Up for the Multifaceted Fanfic Award for "Aphrodisia ~ The Het Smut Award."**

## Part 1

Chapter 1 of 2

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She hadn't liked the boy, though her parents thought him suitable.

She was twenty-four now, seven years out of school, and still working as a junior editor at *Witch Weekly*. Her age didn't seem old to her, but it was an embarrassment to her parents; not a day went by when she was not reminded that her mother was four years married, with two year-old daughters at her age. At the advanced age of twenty-four, one could not expect a love match like her sister's.

Marriage was destiny to her people, the high point of one's life. A good marriage, abundant in affection, wealth, and children, was a treasure beyond jewels, the best gift life could offer, the cornerstone on which their community was built. So now her parents had asked her permission to help arrange matters for her. They were asking around, chatting up their friends, pestering her to go with them to parties and dinners at their friends' homes, where she might meet a suitable boy of her own age, of good family, who was also in need of a partner for a happy marriage and beautiful children. Her parents were not pressuring her into a purely arranged marriage as some might have, they were much more progressive than that, but they were glad to do their part to help Fate along.

The British Wizard community was small, the Anglo-Indian Wizard community even smaller, and the Anglo-Indian Hindu Wizard community smaller still. As such, there was not a wide field of contenders. Her parents would not have been entirely averse to a white man, provided that she kept to her heritage and raised her children in their culture, but the husband would have to have considerable wealth, and great family, in order to make up for this deficit. Harry Potter would have been acceptable, but alas, she had not seized her opportunity when she was in school with him, even while she had been on a date with him. ("I went to the Yule Ball with his friend Ron Weasley, Mother, not with Harry Potter.") But that was all right, high standards were becoming to an unmarried girl.

*We just want you to have a home, a family,* her parents told her. There was nothing judgmental or cruel in them they genuinely wanted what was best for her, and were convinced that they knew what was best for her. A woman needed a husband and children to take care of; that was what a woman did. She knew her parents loved her,



"What are you suggesting?" came the purring voice of the man in the shadows beside her. She still couldn't quite make out his face, but *damn*, what a voice. Those dulcet tones were unexpectedly making her nipples perk up and take notice. Suddenly she was blushing furiously; she hadn't quite meant to lead him on like this, but now he was clearly interested, and she wasn't sure what to do next.

"It's... it's too loud in here," she said. "I think I'll get some air outside."

With that, she got up and retreated out the club's side door, and away.

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She found a darkened spot to get her breath and be alone in the alley that bordered on the west side of the club.

There was a mural painted on the brick wall in front of her that seemed to cover the entire wall of the club, far down into the alley. The painter had chosen the god Kama as his subject first the god was born to Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and fertility, sired by Vishnu himself. He grew to fine, handsome young manhood (she thought she recognised a certain Bollywood star in the painter's depiction of his countenance), and acquired his bow, created of five kinds of flowers, and his five floral arrows, with which he incited feeling. Kama's first arrow made lovers' hearts glad; to be pierced with the second was to feel attraction. The prick of the third led to passionate infatuation; to feel the sting of the fourth was to be made weak and susceptible. The fifth arrow was always fatal it killed you, but only temporarily, bringing on a tiny, little death.

Kama traversed the wheels of karma with Rati, his wife, his feminine equal, beside him in every incarnation, they always found each other.

"Fascinating, isn't it," murmured a voice from her left the voice of her dark stranger. She turned hard in his direction, startled; in the back of her mind, she had wanted him to follow, but wasn't sure if he would. He was standing in the pocket of darkness between two guttering streetlamps, leaning against the painted wall, his arms folded over his chest, regarding her coolly. It was still too dark to make out his face.

She came closer to him, sliding into the shadows as well. "Decided to take the air yourself?" she asked.

"Yes. You were right, it's entirely too loud inside."

She felt him reach for her in the darkness, felt his hand curl around hers, his fingers stroke down the inside of her palm in a featherlight gesture. A delicate indication of his interest, which she was free to respond to, or ignore, as suited her mood.

He was subtle; she liked that.

She turned toward the silhouette of him, and he toward her, and then she closed the space between them, took the back of his neck in her hand, and kissed him, once, lightly. And then his arms were around her waist and he kissed her, more than once, not lightly. He tasted like a vodka martini: tart, tonic, pleasantly biting. Then her arms were around him, hands slipping under his coat. Moments later she could feel the cool brick of the painted wall behind her back, and the warmth of his body pressed to hers from the front. His black frock coat was voluminous, and partly hid her from sight behind him.

*Damn*, this bloke could kiss he was everything subtle and provocative that her erstwhile date was not. His hands had found the warm slice of supple back bared by her little blouse, were gently kneading the small of her back in a way that sent warmth all through her. He felt wonderful by all the gods, what a body, he was enough to make anyone feel like a randy beast. Her fingers trailed down his taut back onto that perfect arse, curved around it and pulled him closer, which made him shiver slightly. She could tell that he was getting hard, very hard, but even while in the throes of lust and excitement, he held himself in dignified reserve, refusing to just crudely accost her with his desires.

He paused, breathing hard, his forehead pressed to hers. "If you keep that up, my dear, I'm going to want to ravish you right here," he warned.

He may have meant to caution her, but all she heard was consent, an openness to being propositioned, and that elated her. She let a hand slip down onto the erection under his trousers, and was rewarded with a gasp of acute, aching enjoyment and now she just *wanted* him, wanted his flesh, wanted to indulge herself. She tugged open his belt and his fly, her hand seeking hardness and his breath caught hoarsely again as her hand closed around him.

"You're *huge*," she whispered, shameless and delighted. "How can you carry this monster around all day. It must get so... *heavy*." She punctuated that with a long, heated caress to the *monster* in question, rendering it even harder and heavier.

"It does," he said, with a small, amused chuckle. "*Brazen* little hussy, aren't you." He made the words into an exquisite compliment.

"Sorry." But her hand was doing its best to completely justify that description, stroking him even more erect with long, ever-widening caresses.

"Don't be," he sighed. His hands slipped under her silk skirt, caressing her arse over her satin panties, drawing her closer to him. His fingers slid onto the satin V between her legs *So hot*, he whispered then beneath the satin. His forefinger slid between her inner lips, and was instantly drenched, then delved for and found her clitoris, making her moan softly aloud.

*How can you be this wet for me... you don't even know me*, he breathed.

*I don't care. I want you.* She pressed herself against him, wrapped her arms around his neck. All bets were off in this darkness; this felt more like a shameless erotic dream, an encounter with one of the *Gandharvas*, who had stolen away for a time upon earth, rather than a real flesh-and-blood man.

Then her back was against the painted brick wall, his lips devouring hers, his hands slipping her knickers down off her hips, down her thighs and calves. Then he was leaning between her legs, and lifted her up, off her feet, her leg wrapped around his hip, her opposite ankle tucked into the back of his knee. She groaned as she felt him enter her, penetrate her completely, until all of her body's weight was grinding down on her clitoris, the phallus inside her. Her back was against the cool brick of the wall, thick layers of paint under one outflung hand. He bore her slight weight easily, one arm cradled around her head, the other wrapped around her hips, not so much thrusting into her as lifting her and bringing her down onto his cock. He was just a little too big, and it was wonderful.

Then her mouth was open on his and she felt as though that kiss sucked her very breath away; she couldn't breathe, couldn't move, absolutely frozen on *hiinp/lease... harder... so... good*) arms locked around his shoulders, thighs wrapped barnacle-tight around him. She didn't quite believe in herself at that moment a well-brought-up young lady, *a nice girl*, a bride fit for a suitable boy, did not invite a strange man, whose face she had never seen in full light, outside into an alley for sex, but here she was, impaled on him and enjoying him as shamelessly as a quean alley cat with the male who pleased her that hour. Her clit felt impossibly hot and swollen as it clamped against his pelvic bone; her inner muscles were sealing down on him sweetly and eagerly. *Please*, she sobbed, when she could get her lips off his for a split second, *please just make me come.*

*With pleasure*, breathed that voice.

In another second his movements had driven her to bone-shuddering orgasm, then beyond it, spasms she couldn't stand, couldn't endure so much sensation, but she was pinned between the brick wall and his cock, and didn't want to escape. If he had any restraint left at all, it tore loose completely when he heard her soft outcries, felt her muscles clamp down on him as the orgasm took her and then, thrillingly, she felt him start to come as well, in a series of surging, muscular thrusts and the most beautiful, ragged, baritone growl into her neck.

Her knees felt completely boneless afterward; she would have stumbled if he had not been supporting her, his weight pinning her against the brick wall. She was draped



*My dear ~*

*If you would not be averse to a repeat of the other evening's... festivities, I would be more than happy to oblige you. This time, however, let us adjourn to more comfortable surroundings. Although brick walls have their novelty value, I generally prefer pillows and mattresses.*

*Knock on the door of room 511 of the Elysium Hotel Saturday evening at 9 o'clock p.m. I should be happy to receive you.*

*Do not, however, under any circumstances light any of the lamps. Let us keep to the darkness I am finding this to be quite an interesting experiment.*

*Yours,*

*The Bloke with the Admirable Arse*

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She sent a reply with his post owl:

*Dear Admirable One,*

*I have received your invitation, and am delighted to accept.*

*Yes, indeed let us keep to the darkness. What I am now imagining would shock the light.*

*Yours in anticipation,*

*Your Dear*

~~~~~

She accepted his invitation, even as she knew that it was pure madness to keep this assignation.

He was a virtual stranger, not of her race, not of her culture, certainly of questionable moral character for what kind of man would ravish a strange young lady in an alley, even if she was the one who did the offering? What kind of man would leave the young lady he ravished behind, without so much as asking her name, or allowing her to see his face? What kind of man would want to continue the charade of the darkness, just because it was an interesting experiment?

And what sort of girl was she, she asked herself, to be so eager to undertake the experiment with him... ?

Questionable though the circumstances were, there was no denying that they excited her, that he excited her. He seemed odd and eccentric, but sane enough, even gallant, in his own way; and he spoke to everything fierce and rebellious within her. She wanted him again she was trembling at just the idea of another kiss from him.

One more of these strange little trysts couldn't hurt. If he made her at all uncomfortable, it could be the last one.

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Saturday finally arrived. Usually, when she was going off on a date with a man, she would groom herself to be appealing to him visually, put on brightly coloured clothes, perhaps gold ribbons braided in her hair, jewellery, makeup. Now, however, she considered ways to appeal to other senses. She took a long sensuous time shaving her legs, smoothing lotion onto her skin and powdering herself with a big, soft puff, so that her skin would smell sweet, and feel smooth and soft under his hands. There was no need for makeup, but she combed a bit of scented conditioning potion into her hair, to leave it extra silky. He would not see her clothes, but he would feel them, so she put on a silk bra and panties, little kid slippers, a silk dress without beading or embroidery, and then an exquisitely soft little cashmere cardigan with a collar of black mink.

The Elysium Hotel was a pleasant small Edwardian affair with an elegant lobby done in gleaming dark wood and draped in shabby dark velvet. She made her silent way past the grey-haired desk clerk with prosperous jowls, who was deep into the sports section of the *Daily Prophet* when she arrived. As it were, even if he had spotted her, her demure, well-bred appearance would have raised few eyebrows. She made it to the stairs unquestioned and unnoticed, her heart hammering with a thrilling sense of the taboo.

The door to room 511 was slightly ajar when she arrived it swung open a few inches when she knocked.

"Come in, my dear," a voice called his voice. It never rose above a whisper, but somehow she heard every word. She stepped into the soft, welcoming darkness inside, and closed and locked the door behind her.

His hand lightly brushed her shoulder, and she reached up to clasp it in hers. With that hand to orient herself, her arms found their way around his neck, her body found its way to press against his, and from there, she raised her lips to his after a week of aching anticipation, it was just about the most luscious kiss she had ever shared with anyone. "Don't worry, don't be afraid," he whispered, his arms clasping around her waist. "I won't hurt you."

"I know," she said, and sought his lips again.

The kiss progressed and their mutual excitement was contagious. Within moments her tongue was massaging his, and his hand had slid up beneath her skirt and was gently squeezing satiny arseflesh. They said no more instead, he whisked her up and lowered her onto a bed, into what felt like a deep featherbed beneath her back, and then draped himself over her. Gods, this was good her body arched up to his, hot and starved, eager for anything.

"Wait... before this goes any further, here," he whispered, passing a tiny stoppered phial into her hand. "If you please, I would appreciate if you would drink this first."

"What is it?"

"Contraceptus Potion. One dose will last for six months."

"Yes, I know, I took some three months ago."

"Please a second dose won't hurt. It's just for my peace of mind."

"All right, I respect that," she replied. She opened the vial and drank it. Yes, lime-flavoured Wise Witch Contraceptus, with antibiotic STD protection one of the many potions her magazine had reviewed earlier. This little show of practicality and consideration was really charming; she'd never met a man willing to go into an apothecary's and request Contraceptus potion for his lover before. "Thank you."

There, the preliminaries had been properly observed. Now, all she wanted was more of the pleasure he had given her the week before, more of his mouth, his cock, his reckless tenderness.

"What would you like? How do you want me?" she whispered, as he wrapped himself around her again and lowered his lips to her neck. His fingers caressed her forehead, stroked down through her hair, lingered pleasurably on her fur collar, found the buttons of her cardigan and slid it off her shoulders. Then they were under her skirt, as



"What does 'not in your first youth' mean?" she asked, nuzzling his forehead.

"Closer to forty than thirty is all I'll confess to," he replied. "And might I ask your age as well?"

"Twenty-four," she said.

"Yes, I figured. You come like a girl in her twenties."

"Why do you want us to keep this in the dark?" she asked, her hand curving gently around his cheek and jawline.

"Because..." His hand curved around hers; he turned slightly and put a feeling little kiss on the heel of her hand. "Because after we had each other in that alley, I left with a kind of euphoria, a physical high that I had never felt before. It was so powerful that I didn't realise until after I got home last Saturday that we didn't know each other's names and had never really seen each other. The... sensory impression you left was strong enough to completely distract me from any of that sort of nicety. But then as I continued to think about it, I considered that perhaps our encounter was that intense for both of us *because* we didn't know anything about each other. I felt no self-consciousness, no worry I was able to do something that would have been impossible otherwise. Then I thought, it doesn't matter to me if that young lady was beautiful or plain, or what her parents named her her erotic self is overpowering. And suddenly I couldn't wait to duplicate that experience, to feel that kind of freedom again."

She let those words wash over her again *Her erotic self is overpowering*. She felt strong, potent, and unashamed, like a goddess of love and sensuality.

"You're right, it was freeing," she said. "I've never acted like that before, with anyone, ever. But that night, it just seemed like I could. You just... seemed so ready for anything. I just... *liked* you, so much."

He laughed softly. "Then you'd be one of a precious few," he said and kissed her again.

She laughed too, then snuggled up to his shoulder. "So you don't mind this?" she asked softly. "It doesn't offend you?"

"Does it offend me that some brazen little hussy wants to use me for sex, is that what you're asking?" He took her hand and guided it down beneath the sheets, put that overabundance of erect cock into it again. "Does that feel like I'm offended?"

She lowered her lips to his ear and whispered, *Please... I want you inside me again*, and there was perhaps one second between asking and having.

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The next day, and Monday at work, she was all smiles, practically jittering with excitement. She had a secret, and what a delicious secret it was. That Saturday night had been, beyond a doubt, the most satisfying sexual encounter of her life the darkness and anonymity had allowed her to make her desires known without fear or self-consciousness, and her lover had been so pleased by her frankness, happy to oblige her. He had been equally frank about his wishes so few words spoken, but their bodies had been so eloquent together, their mutual pleasure so intense. Her dark lover seemed the fulfillment of her every fantasy, a genie freed from a lamp. She adored him, whoever he was, and hoped that he was feeling the same glowing satisfaction that she was. She imagined him dreaming of her the same way she was now dreaming of him the thought made her shiver deliciously.

"What are you so happy about?" her assistant asked her over lunch, smiling. "Had a good date this weekend?"

*Yes, I did have a good date. I don't know his name, I have only sketchy details of what he looks like, but he's the best lover in the world.*

"No, just got to bed early for once," she replied, bending over her plate again.

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There was a post owl scratching at her office window when she returned from lunch:

*My Dear ~*

*Thank you. Oh, thank you.*

*Please meet me again next week, same place, same room, this Saturday at 9 p.m.?*

*Yours,*

*The Admirable, Grateful One*

~~~~~

Again, she sent a reply with his post owl:

*O My One Most Admirable,*

*I should be honoured to accept your invitation. Gratitude is not necessary when the pleasure is so mutual.*

*~ Your Dear*

*P.S. I smiled so much today that I was asked if I "had a good date" this weekend. If they only knew!*

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It seemed an excruciatingly long time until the next Saturday. She was perhaps a bit distracted at work, as now all her duties seemed to be just something she had to get through until the reward at the end of her week when she could see him again. Or rather, not see him, but feel him, taste him, listen to that wet dream of a voice, enjoy another long session of almost hallucinatory lovemaking with him.

But finally it was Saturday, and she took a long, hot bath, spent half an hour shaving her legs and oiling down her skin with catlike, self-indulgent languor. Once again, the desk clerk at the Elysium was deep into his open newspaper, and she slipped up to room 511 unchallenged. She opened the door quietly, and slipped into the darkness.

"There you are. Come here," came the enticing whisper from the direction of the bed.

She *came there* eagerly, feeling her way along the wall to her left, then slithering onto the bed and draping herself over him, finding him already bare-chested and under the covers. He lost a hand in her thick black hair, then drew her mouth down to his, kissing her ravenously the week's separation had left them hungry for each other. His other hand slid beneath her skirt, closed insistently around her rump.

He pulled away from her after several long, openmouthed minutes *Get undressed*, he whispered.

She hurried to obey somehow this fellow's voice commanded obedience just as efficiently as it conjured excitement and soon she was lying over him naked, her thighs

astride his hips, only the coverlet and sheets between them.

He sat up, one arm lifting the bedclothes, and drew her beneath them. She shivered he seemed in a mood to call the shots tonight. She remembered acutely that she was lying naked and totally accessible in bed with a man she didn't really know, and something in his voice wanted to be obeyed. It was both alarming and knee-meltingly exciting.

"What would you like, darling?" she entreated, as though to defuse his sense of disquiet with a show of complete receptivity.

He turned her onto her back, and his hand slid down between her thighs, parted them insistently. Fingertips teased in the wet cleft between them, stroking her softly. An instant later he had his first two fingers sheathed full length inside her, and the pad of his thumb was circling her clit, slicked with her own moisture.

"I'd like you to tell me something," he said and his tone was half invitation, half command.

"Yes, yes, love... what is it?" It was a tremendous effort to concentrate on what he was saying, with him touching her like that. She groaned, threw her head back on the pillow, and parted her thighs wider for him.

*That night at the club... why did you want me?* He asked, straining forward to hear her answer while at the same time making it so difficult for her to speak.

"You were... oh please yes... you were just so... I just couldn't stop staring at you. I don't know why, not really..." Her body was helplessly bucking against his caresses; she could feel herself drenching his fingers.

*Go on.* His skin was so hot, lightly slick with sweat.

"You just... you made all the others look like such children by comparison... your hands were... and I wanted to grab your arse with both hands and just..."

*And just... what? Tell me,* he insisted, his lips nearly touching hers, his breath coming in shallow little rasps. *Tell me the truth, all of it... even if it makes you sound like a perfect whore...*

"You looked just so... *hot*, that I just wanted... to fuck you," she gasped. She would have hesitated to make such an admission even to herself, but the very idea of holding anything back from him under this exquisite duress was impossible. Her skin was burning with an indescribably sweet humiliation, but it only took another instant to reach that impossible peak of excitement, and she fell back with a harsh little cry. He urged her on when he felt her orgasm beginning, felt her interior muscles clamping down on his hand, coming and coming and coming while that elegant voice purred lewd encouragement in her ear. A moment after her spasms subsided, he threw himself over her and substituted gorged flesh for his hand, thrusting savagely into the body he had just satisfied.

*Is this what you wanted?* His voice was an absolutely feral growl in her ear. Hot breath on her face, bared teeth against her neck. A lithe predatory beast lay inside her, and she was gasping *Yes-yes-please-yes* with each violent stroke. Moments earlier, he had urged her on to her own heights of pleasure, but now he took her selfishly, seeking only his own gratification, and she wanted him to have it, all he could stand.

*Yes, darling,* she breathed in his ear, *yes, give it to me, I want to feel you come...* and then she did feel it, short sharp jabs and gasps of mythic ecstasy. He lay shuddering on her breast for a long time afterward, her arms around him. Oh yes, that felt like it was good, so damned good, for him. Sharing her body with this man was delectable, like finding someone lost in the desert and bringing him to a banquet of the gods.

She stretched beneath him, closely moulding herself to him and luxuriating in his sweat covering her, his spendings filling her belly, the sense of all his tension shattered and replaced with limp satiety. It felt shockingly voluptuous, a bliss like a euphoric drug. Surely this was an intimacy she should only want to feel with her husband, but at this moment, she couldn't have even thought of giving him up. She supposed she would have to end this affair eventually, in the same way she would one day have to stop drinking so many Kingfishers on weekends, but that time seemed a very long way off. Now, she couldn't have done without him, because he was deviant and perverted in exactly the same way she was; his insanity was such a perfect match for hers.

*You're mad, I'm mad, we're all mad here,* she thought.

*You're incredible, I'll never get enough of you,* she breathed into his ear.

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She arrived at her office a half-hour early on Monday, and was ecstatic to hear the rustle-flitter-scratch of a little post owl at her window.

*My dear ~*

*This coming Saturday, do let's have some more of that. Same room, same time?*

*Yours,*

*One You Know Of*

Her reply was just as direct and to the point -

*Dear One I Know Of -*

*I'll be there. I can't bloody wait to see or, not see, but know of you again.*

*Yours in Anticipation,*

*Your Dear*

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Then, it was Saturday again, and she went through what was becoming an accustomed routine of bathing and primping in anticipation of her tryst that night. That evening, lying in the bathtub, she not only shaved her legs smooth, but impulsively trimmed her dark pubic curls to only the lightest peach fuzz of down with a Severing Charm, another pleasant tactile surprise for him to encounter in the dark.

She ran an approving eye over her own body in the mirror as she got dressed. While she had not been dieting or exercising more than usual, it seemed that her own body had somehow grown in beauty recently. Her hair seemed thicker and more lustrous, her eyes clearer, her breasts fuller and posture straighter. Her own physicality seemed richer, somehow. *Her erotic self is overpowering,* her lover had said, and somehow just remembering those words sent a shiver through her body and made warmth start between her thighs.

Again, she slid past the desk clerk, with nary a raised eyebrow, and made her way up to room 511. *Mmmm, there you are,* came the sultry whisper in the dark, and she wasted no time in throwing off her clothes and wrapping herself around him in bed. Just the feel of his slim, receptive, virile body in bed with her was a high like one too



many glasses of champagne; she was kissing him lusciously, her thighs squeezing one of his, her hands sinking beneath the bedclothes to stroke his cock. "Well well well," he murmured. "*Someone's* eager to get started tonight."

"What can I say, you're great in bed," she whispered affectionately. "Can I ask you to do something with me? Or *to me*, more like?"

"Of course you can," he breathed in her ear.

"It's a bit... on the wild side," she told him. "Would that bother you?"

*Just what do you have in mind?* he asked, in a tone that insinuated everything. She could feel the anticipation trembling in that voice.

She raised her lips to his ear, quivering, almost shy, but the darkness let her be bold. "You were so damned sexy last time, when you made me confess why I wanted you," she told him. "You're good at giving orders I've been fantasising about that all week."

*Have you*, he sighed.

"So, just for tonight... I want to be your slave," she whispered. "You give the orders, I obey."

She felt a long tremor go through him, felt him swallow hard. "That... can be arranged," he said. "Let's begin *now*, shall we?"

## Part 2

### Chapter 2 of 2

**\*\*Pre-HBP AU\*\*** Severus Snape/Adult!Padma Patil, with a kinky twist. A young woman under pressure from her family to marry and have children meets a stranger in a darkened club - thus beginning a shadowy love affair of anonymous encounters conducted entirely in the dark. For a time, they are exactly what the other wants and needs. But as the intimacy - and affection - grows between her and her unknown lover, she begins to long for a different fate than the one her parents think is best for her...

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"What would you like?" she whispered, raising her lips to his ear. "How do you want me?"

He lifted the bedclothes back and sat up. *Slide down to the floor by the side of the bed... and then on your knees, my dear* he said.

She obeyed without question and with eagerness, sliding to her knees, listening to the rustle of sheets as he came closer and bent over her. Her right hand found first one knee then the other, and then she tasted silky flesh presented to her lips. "May I... ask something first?" she quavered.

"Yes, of course, what is it?" His fingertips stroked her cheek.

"I've... never done this before, and I want it to be so good, for you. Would you... teach me how you like it?" she asked in the coyest, most breathless voice she could, doing her best to incite him further. She had no idea where all these wanton courtesan's wiles were coming from, but here, they felt natural, thrilling and taboo. She put up her hand, lightly stroked the cock offered to her mouth, then softly and experimentally drew her tongue over its cloven tip, and felt a long shiver go through him. Then she rounded her lips, took him deeper into her mouth; his breath caught in a long, husky sigh.

He brought her hand up to clasp the base of his cock, and his hand closed around hers, showing her the way he wanted her to grip it, tighter than she would have thought. His trembling hand curved around the back of her neck *To start... just keep... doing that for awhile, start lightly, then more strongly... yes... oh yes, just keep doing... that...*

She heard his nails curling against the bed sheets, his breath coming in shallow gasps. There really didn't seem as though there was too much of an art to pleasing him in this manner, other than keeping her hand tight around the base of his cock, taking as much of it as she could in the in-stroke, and keeping her lips snug in the outside. The feel of sucking him into her mouth was making her shiver in other places too, her nipples hardening and clit stiffening in sympathy.

*You're really enjoying this, aren't you*, he whispered, with a subtle thrill in his voice at the very idea, and she could only moan around him in answer, which provoked another deep sigh. *Then I want you to touch yourself, with your other hand...*

Had there been even the dimmest light in that room, or had this man even the slightest inkling of her name or anything of her real life, she would have been humiliated and ashamed beyond belief in such a situation, but here, with him, she could do anything, and enjoy anything. She sighed with relief as her fingers slid into the heat between her thighs, her fingertips massaging her clit as she continued to draw him rhythmically into her mouth. The pleasure only added to her excitement, her arousal feeding his, as the closer she came to orgasm, the more voraciously she drew on him and the harder he became. Finally, the tension crested, her hips jerking in the air with climax, and with a low moan of release muffled by her mouthful of his flesh.

Once the spasms began to subside, she wrapped her other hand, still slick with her own fluids, around the base of his cock. *All right, darling, your turn* her jaw had begun to ache slightly, but she didn't care, didn't want to stop, was enjoying this too much, his trembling and ragged moans it all felt so filthy and animalistic and so damn damn good. She was his slave, but he was at her mercy.

*You... had best stop now*, he gasped. Letting her know what was imminent if she continued, and too much of a gentleman to presume she wished to go that far but she only groaned, fastened on him tighter, quickening her pace. No, she wanted him, all of him

His breath seemed to hush for a second as his muscles tensed, and then he let out a long, heartfelt moan as she brought him to orgasm, heat filling the back of her throat. She clung to him to the last spasm, the last drop, until his spent organ slipped from her hands and lips and they both gasped, exhausted.

*You... shameless, beautiful, luscious...* he breathed. His voice trailed off; apparently he could think of no word superlative enough to describe her at that moment. He was shaking; his hand trembling on her hair. "Nothing can be this good I have to have dreamed you into existence, there's no other explanation for it."

She laughed softly, laid her hand over his and brought it to her lips, then put an open-mouthed kiss on his palm. "And the night's not over yet," she said wickedly and licked his knee. "*Master.*"

"So it isn't." He stood, whisked her back up into bed and into his arms. "Come to bed, slave girl. Master hasn't even begun to force his depraved desires upon you."

*Oh, good,* she breathed.

He sprawled her on her back with a single deft movement *On your back, wench. Reach up and take hold of the headboard,* he commanded. *Stay like that... don't move. Now, spread your legs,* he whispered.

She did, lying back and opening herself to the darkness. He kissed his way down her belly and nuzzled between her thighs, and then she nearly passed out when he got his tongue where he wanted it. That was the first time she had ever had a man go down on her, and the first time she had ever moaned aloud involuntarily. She might have been self-conscious with anyone else, but now she was completely frozen on his tongue, couldn't have even begun to think of anything other than what he was doing. An article that she had recently edited had stated that the female clitoris has the highest concentration of nerve endings anywhere in the human body and it seemed as though that velvety tongue was finding every one of them. Her body was a thrumming circuit between voice and clit, every stroke of his tongue drawing little cries from her. One particularly eloquent circling caress drew a sharp, high-pitched gasp out of her, so loud that she grabbed a pillow and bit down into it, lest they be overheard.

*No, I want to hear you,* he said, reaching up and pulling the pillow away from her. *Scream for me.*

*Yes, my love,* she sighed. *Oh please, please don't stop...*

He groaned, and fell to devouring her again he seemed to thoroughly enjoy this, almost as much as she did. She felt his fingertips delicately penetrating her, the smallest flickering caress just inside the opening, and then each shock of pleasure came faster, one overlapping the other, until they all coalesced, and she nearly tore the sheets from the bed. She didn't have to remember to scream for him; the credit for all the wild maenad's shrieking going on in that room went entirely to him.

Then she was being gathered up into his arms, shaking and boneless, and she could taste herself on his mouth when he kissed her. *Was that nice?* he asked. She could only huddle against him and whimper in answer.

*Now, since you've been well lessoned on how a slave pleasures her lover with her mouth..* His fingers curved around the back of her neck, pushed her head downward, slotted his stiffening sex back into her mouth, so that she was crouching on all fours beside him, naked and compliant. A second later, she gasped as she felt his hand impact with her arse cheek, a light, but stinging spank printing heat on her skin. His hand tensed in her hair, holding her head firmly in place. *Don't you dare stop,* he warned.

But now she couldn't have stopped if she tried. The swats came regularly after that, thickly covering her flesh with heat that seemed to drive directly between her legs like fire. She drew on him more and more ravenously as the arousal built within her, something primal and atavistic set loose she was a submissive creature appeasing the dominant male with a show of eager sexual receptivity, and it felt profane, delicious, natural.

Her supplications met with his approval; the spanking faltered, distracted by the pleasure her mouth was affording him. Then he simply threw her down on her back and sheathed himself deep in her shuddering body an instant later, pounding her mercilessly into the bed. All the sensations seemed to coalesce at once his lips devouring her neck while grinding himself into her painfully aroused body and sore clit, the friction of the velvet comforter on her warm, spanked arse, the suspense and delicious fear at abandoning herself to this harsh, but infinitely trustworthy master so that by the time he couldn't hold back any longer from just *taking* her, she was so primed for him that he drove her to orgasm with a few hard strokes. For a few seconds, she was obliterated and then it was subsiding, warmth spilling from his body into hers, his body collapsing heavily over her. She had been so caught up that she hadn't noticed the spasms of her own release had brought his on as well. He was breathing hard, spent, his lips brushing over her temple and she could only whimper in return.

His damp cheek nestled against hers. *I've died, and been judged worthy of heaven,* he whispered.

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That Monday, she received an owl from her lover

*My Dear Nubile Slave Girl ~*

*Next Saturday, I hereby order you to meet me at the same place at the same time, and then proceed to have as many orgasms as I can afford you until we both keel over from exhaustion.*

*Yours,*

*The Master*

She laughed deliciously oh, he was *adorable*, just charming. She had no idea why any woman would ever have stood this man up for a date. And by all the gods, he was *amazing* in bed, and such a wit as well. She smiled dreamily, drawing his letter over her lips.

However, that Wednesday, she received another owl, this one from her sister. After some nine months and ten days of pregnancy, her sister's doctors had finally decided to induce labour and she had promised to be present at the birth with her brother-in-law.

Birth was supposed to be beautiful, wonderful, a gift from the gods instead her sister thrashed, moaned, and sweated for seven hours, as they waited for her cervix to dilate sufficiently to deliver the child. Finally, as the contractions grew stronger and her sister's moaning turned into agonised shrieks of pain, the doctors told her she was not dilating fast enough, and that vaginal childbirth was no longer an option. An emergency Caesarean section had to be performed. An epidural was swiftly administered and incisions were made as her sister clung to her husband's hands. Then, from behind the white curtains, there came a tearing sound exactly like heavy cloth violently ripping. Not long after came the cry of a newborn baby.

As the purplish, bloody child was laid in the arms of the new parents, she staggered toward one of the medical waste containers in a corner of the room and quietly voided the contents of her stomach into it, so demurely that no one ever heard her in the upheaval following the birth. She shamefacedly took one of the nurses aside and told her about the mess sometime later.

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Her sister brought her new baby daughter home that Saturday morning. Their entire family and several close family friends were present for the joyous homecoming, a party celebrated with much feasting and revelry.

She was expected to help with the cooking and look after her sister's two-year-old son while the grandparents and new father spent the evening hovering over the recovering mother and tiny, fragile, downy-cheeked new addition to the family. As evening came on with no end to the party in sight, she reluctantly opened her notebook and penned a letter:

*My Dear One*

*Elysium Hotel*

*Room 511*



"Horrible," she replied fervently. "It looked like the most painful thing I've ever seen, I was crying and aching just watching her going through it. Seriously, I was sick in a wastebasket, I'm not kidding."

"That bad, really?" he asked, sounding concerned.

"Well, it was a C-section... just... *uhhh*." She gave an almighty shudder recalling it. "I've no idea why women do that, other than they have to. I'm really not looking forward to when I have to do it. I think I'll put it off till I'm a hundred or so."

"To when you *have* to do it?" he asked, mimicking the seriousness of her tone. "Someone is forcing you to have his children? Is that legal?"

"No, of course not, silly. I just, you know. One day I'll have to get married and have children." She shrugged.

"Why?" he asked.

"I don't know. Everyone I've met plans on getting married and having children eventually," she said.

He coughed delicately. "Er... not everyone you know. I'm forty-four and I've done neither."

"You've never been married?" she asked, surprised. "Really?"

"What, you assumed I'm meeting you like this because I'm in a dysfunctional marriage of some sort?" he asked wryly.

"No, no, not at all, I just thought... I thought you must be having this affair because, well, something had ended, and circumstances made you a bit reckless afterward. There's no shame in having a relationship that didn't work out," she assured him quickly. "I just... everyone I know in their forties who isn't married is divorced, is all, and recently divorced men will sometimes go a little wild, and..."

"And do things like have wild lusty affairs with younger women?" His hand stroked down her thigh.

"Well... you know." She was blushing horribly that was exactly what she had assumed he was doing. "I'm... just going to shut up now before I put my foot in my mouth again. Sorry, I didn't mean to offend you."

"No, I'm not recently divorced," he said softly. "I've never been married."

"Well, you know, I thought you might have just broken up with someone who hurt you," she murmured. "You just seemed..."

"Angry?" he asked.

"*Lonesome*, I was going to say." She put her arms fondly around his neck, brushed her lips over his cheek. "And very, *very* randy."

"Well... I'd not been with a woman for rather a long time," he said, relaxing into her embrace. "And I'd missed it. I don't think I realised quite how much I'd missed it until a certain little minx in satin knickers decided to kiss me."

"I don't think I realised how randy I've *ever* been until you first kissed me." Her hands went to the buttons of his shirt.

He only sighed in answer.

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"So you'd never gone down on a man before the other night," he said, when they had both put their clothes aside and were lying naked in each other's arms, the preliminary for what they both knew would come next. "Did you like it?"

"Yes, it was nice. Very sensual. And I *really* liked how much you liked it."

"I'm..." He sighed again. "... *partial* to that, I have to admit."

"Most men probably are," she said, chuckling.

"After the day I'd had at work, you can't imagine how good that felt. My work can be a bit stressful, so to then go from a tremendously frustrating situation to a dark bedroom, with a young lady whispering *I want to be your slave* into my ear was... exhilarating." He stretched luxuriously. She could almost see his shameless smirk in the darkness.

"Would you like to do that again sometime?" she asked saucily, then bent down and licked his shoulder.

He shivered. *As often as you like, my sweet*, came the silken reply.

"What was the problem at work?" she asked. She slid around behind him, brushed his hair away from his neck, and began massaging his shoulders. He leaned back into her hands.

"I have more than twenty years' experience as a wrangler of stupid people," he said, absolutely deadpan. "I have taken as my life's work the unenviable task of keeping a mob of lumpen imbeciles from killing themselves with their own ignorance which is often a task even Sisyphus would find daunting. Really, sometimes I think I'd rather endlessly push a rock up a hill in Hell than face another day of my chosen *vocation*."

She laughed and laughed. "You poor dear," she said, leaning forward to kiss his cheek. "I'm so glad I made your day better. So what's going on with the frustrating situation? The lumpen imbeciles are rioting?" His shoulders were so tight the work tension must be driving him half-mad. Ah well, he seemed to really be enjoying the massage.

"Something like that," he replied. "Don't worry though it's just a mountain of bureaucratic nonsense, and I couldn't imagine how it would interest you. It doesn't interest *me*, and I'm in the thick of it." He stretched under her hands. "You're marvellous at this, by the way."

She laughed. "Thanks. You could tell me about the work situation," she offered. "If you like, if you feel like venting. I don't care if it's sort of tiresome."

"Perhaps later," he replied. "Right now, just the fact that you offered is enough. What I would really like " he turned toward her, stroked a forefinger over her lower lip, then into her mouth, "is a bit more of your own special way of bettering my day."

*As often as you like, my sweet*, she crooned, then slithered down his body to put a lingering kiss on his neck, her hand slipping under the blankets to his rapidly stiffening cock.

She had never had oral sex with a man before him, but he made it so enjoyable that she had begun to crave it during their week apart as much as she craved his kisses, the touch of his cock and his mouth now, it would be a long time before she went away without giving him his weekly dose. It was intoxicating to see this worldly, cynical sensualist reduced to a quivering heap after she drained an orgasm from him. Now, he seemed to enjoy her enthusiasm for it almost as much as he did the pleasure itself











"Professor Snape?" she whispered, thunderstruck.

Yes, she recognised him instantly, even after seven years. Severus Snape... the toughest, least forgiving professor she had ever had. Her sister Parvati had hated him, had complained endlessly about his cruelty, his sarcasm, the way he unfairly persecuted the Gryffindors. She herself hadn't had any real conflicts with him, as the studious Ravenclaws tended not to incur his wrath as much as other Houses, except for the one time she had fallen asleep in his class after a long night studying, and he hadn't let her forget it for weeks, just raking the flesh off her bones with satire. Parvati had once said to her during their seventh year that Snape had to be as much of a bastard as he was because he was compensating for a deficiency "in the manhood department." It occurred to her with a shock that she knew quite certainly that this was not the case at all.

"Miss Patil?" her lover whispered back.

A sudden feeling of self-consciousness washed over her, despite the fact that she had been this man's lover for months, that she had done nearly everything sexually possible with him, had confided everything to him, slept peacefully in his arms. Had been entirely faithful to him, as well.

Her teacher. She was lying in bed with her least favourite teacher. And he was the best lover and this the most intimate relationship she'd ever had in her life. He openly referred to all of his students as dunderheads, but when she kissed him, touched him, and licked him, he quivered.

For the space of several heartbeats, they stared at each other. The match's tiny flame trembled between them.

So dignified, so pantherish, she thought, lying in bed beside her, with his hair rumpled, in nothing but a white sheet. She thought about what her friends would say if she walked down the street holding Professor Snape's hand... then realised the impossibility of ever wanting to go anywhere holding any man's hand, if not his.

"Somehow I knew you would turn out to be a former student," he said softly. "Are you disappointed? Shocked?"

Silently, she shook her head *No*, her eyes never leaving his.

He came closer, bent over her. "You've grown up... very prettily," he murmured, tracing his fingers lightly down her cheek. "Padma."

"We're identical. How did you know?" she whispered.

"Parvati has a shrill, grating laugh you do not. And your sister was a Gryffindor, and Gryffindors are so...*conventionally* virtuous," he replied, with an eloquent little grimace.

For a long moment, she could only stare at him, all that she felt for him naked in her eyes. He bent down and kissed her, almost shyly; it might have been another couple's first.

"May I call you *Severus*?" she asked. She liked saying his name it tasted good in her mouth, like the rest of him. "It sounds like a name I'd like to scream in bed."

The black eyes glinted. *Please*, he said, with longing in his voice.

"I mean it," she whispered. "I love you."

"And I love you," he said. "We'll have to lie about how we met, you know."

Padma laughed laughed really good and hard at that. Severus smiled back at her in amusement the first time she could ever recall having seen this man smile.

She blew out the match, and fell back into his arms.

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*Author's Notes:*

*The couplet Padma quotes when she encounters Snape in the club is by Dorothy Parker, an early 20th-century poet and writer.*

*"... we're all mad here" is a slightly paraphrased line from Alice's conversation with the Cheshire Cat, from "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll.*