

THE KEEPER

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My eyes opened joyfully wide. It was a wonderful sight. Tall and slim, pinkish-white with a thicker reddish top, it was simply magnificent. Never before had I purchased something as delightful as this. Indeed, never before had I purchased anything so expensive, something bound to give me endless pleasure, endless fun. Yes, I couldn't wait to get inside that lovely lighthouse - my lovely lighthouse.

I unlocked the door and stepped inside. A circular staircase wound me giddily from the kitchen, past the bedroom and finally to a ladder leading to the computer controlled lamp at the very top. I didn't climb the ladder but stepped inside the lounge, walked across the carpeted floor and opened the sliding glass door leading to the patio. Taking a deep breath of salty air, I walked onto the circular platform and released a yelp of delight. A strong gust of wind caught my hair and swept it over my face. Hugging the rail beneath the re-enforced windows, I began a slow circuit of the perimeter, taking in the awesome sight of sea, cliffs, fields and countryside village.

The incredible scene was bliss to my hungry eyes, a sheer joy to behold, simply magnificent! "Peace and quiet at last," I sighed.

The sky started to darken when a heavy black cloud began rolling towards the lighthouse. It released a bolt of lightening. Moments later a thunderclap rumbled throughout my body as the bolt rippled across the sky. Hail pellets appeared from nowhere and began to bombard me. Hastily I completed my circuit and moved inside.

Pulling the last cigarette from its pack, I crunched up the empty box and tossed it toward the bin. Lying back on a large sofa, which begged you to fall asleep in its lumpy arms, I lit the cigarette and inhaled deeply. A second, more vigorous clap of thunder caused me to jump as the storm came ever closer. Leaping from the sofa I threw open the curtains so that I could take in its beautiful anger.

As black as night now, I stared into the threatening sky as the storm loomed overhead like the Angel of Death; all the while flashing its daggered teeth and snarling loudly as it spat iced bullets into the double-glazed panes.

It was an awesome sight, frightening and threatening, as the Angel wreaked its wrath upon the sea, churning it wildly, eager to penetrate the lighthouse's very skin and consume all within. Then, as swiftly as it had

begun all was still once more, the sun, in a series of soft shafts, parting the heavens and illuminating the sky.

Moving to the lighthouse base I began to fetch my belongings from the Range Rover - pots and pans, pictures, bedding and the like - finding each a home. After several sweaty hours of grafting, all my worldly possessions had found a place to live.

My picture of a handsome hunk-of-a-black youth hung over the fireplace, my pair of Greek, marble statues either side of it, and my bronze, naked athlete statue, on top of the bedroom cupboard. Other items such as books, CD's, booze and the like, I stowed into fitted cupboards or sat on shelves.

Task complete, I poured myself a scotch and wished myself good luck. I thought I might yet need it, for if the regular clockwise and anticlockwise winding and unwinding of my tired body, as I struggled to the top and back, didn't kill me, then falling drunkenly from the lighthouse patio some dark and dismal night very well might.

The sedating scotch soon had me relaxed and pleased with my purchase, and my efforts. Dragging a deckchair from a storage cupboard deep in the bowels of the lighthouse, to the patio far above, I plonked myself sun-facing, bottle of scotch beside me. That was where I stayed for the remainder of the day, drinking scotch, content to do absolutely nothing.

My first night in the lighthouse was the quietest I'd ever spent. It was a world apart from the hustle and bustle of London's city streets, only the wind and waves lapping over the jagged rocks far below, and the squeals of seagulls as they bobbed and weaved above the ocean, to serenade me as I slumbered.

Daylight arrived with a rush of golden beams streaming through the solitary bedroom window as the October sun lifted itself clear from a flat calm sea and begun its skyward climb. I'd slept like a baby all night long, snugly wrapped in my winter duvet.

Before descending to the kitchen for my obligatory cup of morning coffee, I headed up to the lounge and threw open the door leading to the patio. Yes, it was chilly, winter just over the horizon, but I couldn't resist breathing in that salt sea air, breathing new life into my city poisoned body. Again, I circumnavigated the lighthouse, this time daring to peep over the railings to the shoreline far below.

"This is the life," I sighed, filling my lungs with crisp fresh air while I scanned my surroundings.

Far on the horizon, I spotted several ships, one of which was Royal Navy, speeding from east to west and the reverse. From this distance, they hardly appeared to move. Closer to shore a couple of fishing boats,

bombarded continuously by colonies of gulls, were laying lobster pots or pulling in nets. Over the cliff top, a solitary jogger was doing a roller-coaster run as he climbed and descended hillocks. A couple more sane people casually strolled, circled continually by a yapping dog, its barks rising in the breeze.

Toward the red-roofed village, I could see bluish smoke rising in twisted spirals from early morning fires, while the church clock rang out as it struck the hours, reminding workers and schoolchildren it was time to leave their homes, reminding me I too needed to head that way today.

Breakfast was a simple affair - light, I suppose, was the correct terminology - coffee, buttered toast and cheese. Not marmalade though. I hated that. It was the peel.

I'd have eaten something more substantial had I had it, but bringing food wasn't foremost in my mind upon moving here. My first task, then, would be a stroll to the village to replenish the food cupboard. I also needed stationary and some computer stuff. That was most important. After all, the reason I had moved here was to write my very first novel, become the novelist I'd always dreamt of becoming.

Coffee consumed, weak, barely enough granules for a decent cup, I wrapped up warm, unwound myself to the front door and headed toward Tarring village.

There was little warmth in the sun's rays as I made tracks, constantly cooled by a decent sea breeze that continually swirled about me. A well-worn footpath, hugged by hedgerows, kindly took a mile off the journey as it meandered across fields and skirted farms and guided me toward Tarring. Inside an hour, I'd travelled the two or more miles and was entering the sleepy, though far from dead, village.

Buggy pushing mothers were out early, continuously gossiping, heading, no doubt, for the supermarket or post office, or wherever mothers went at this time of day. Other life consisted of a couple of teenage lads legging it away, late for school no doubt. A horse, one cow and a couple of dogs were also doing their thing.

Three pubs with seafaring names - The Floundering Frigate, The Cabin Boy and The Lighthouse - were the first of the buildings to greet me as I strolled down the main road. Being a drinking person, they wouldn't have gone unnoticed. An early morning dray replenished The Lighthouse. Guessing there was not a lot to do in Tarring, I suspected that was a regular occurrence.

Thankfully, the stationary shop-come-newsagents-come-music shop-come much, much more was practically empty when I entered and set a tiny bell tinkling. Two reams of photocopy paper, ink cartridges for my printer, pens and a box of disks, plus cigarettes, were soon collected and paid for.

The supermarket I gave a miss. I'd always disliked them. Queuing at the checkout caused my aversion. In London, there was no way to avoid buying your food in these massive food churches. Here, however, in this cosy village, small shops were still the norm. Places you could buy decent grub - home baked bread and pies, real sausages made from pigs that had had a life, free-range eggs, farm cheese and the like. More importantly, places to give or get the local gossip.

The butchers I did enter. I wanted to taste a decent sausage for a change. Well, yes! The butcher boy was bright and young, and continually bombarded me with heart-warming smiles as he sliced and wrapped. I must confess, I was a good deal more interested in the intriguing bulge rising beneath his blue and white striped pinny than I was with the pound of extremely thick sausages he was wrapping.

I think at that point whether I was the only gay in the village did cross my mind but, more truthfully, whether my butcher boy was gay.

"You the new owner of the lighthouse?" The surprise question issued from the red-lipped mouth of the continually cheerful youth.

"That's right," I confirmed, wondering how he knew.

"It's a lovely building. I often walk up that way or just sit and read beside it. I love it when it's blowing a bastard and the sea's rough. I've always wanted to stand on the very top."

That was a lot of information for a youth to impart to a stranger. And his possible request for an invite into my home caused me to re-examine his blue and white striped bulge more seriously. One thing for sure, he could sure 'blow this bastard' if he were so inclined.

"The view's breathtaking," I told him, but refrained from telling him he must drop in at the soonest opportunity, even though the temptation was more than strong.

"I'm Spike," he said, his voice all deep and seductive. "Remember, I can always deliver my meat if you don't fancy walking down when the weather's bad or you're not feeling up to it." Passing me a business card, he added, "Just ring your order in and I'll be sitting on your doorstep, meat in hand, in seconds."

An image of Spike sitting on my doorstep - or was that lap - with his meat in his hand flashed into my mind and instantly brought my cock upright. I swung my carrier in front of my crotch to hide it.

"Thanks Spike. I shall remember that." I reached my hand over the counter and took the card. "I'm Luke. Luke Smart."

Spike gripped my palm tightly, a little longer than your usual greeting. "Anything else? We've got some lovely free range chickens on Special." I'm sure he winked when he added. "Do all my own stuffing."

"Thanks. That's enough meat to be getting along with," I replied, but knowing an extra sausage would have completed the order nicely.

Spike gave me a groin-disturbing grin when I lifted my shopping and headed toward the door. "Don't forget, Luke. I'm here to please." He grinned again but went slightly more serious when the Master Butcher - his dad - interrupted his shameless flirting.

The walk along the footpath, all uphill, certainly took the puff out of me as I battled against the south-westerly wind. Indeed, I wished I'd brought the car. Years of London living had definitely taken the fitness from my body. And smoking more fags than an incinerator burns rubbish didn't help.

About halfway I rested my tired body against a rickety, five-bar gate and took a breather. Spike re-entered my mind. Did I look *that* Gay, that available? And were his words evocative and sexually provoking, or were they just friendly chat? Typically, I was most likely reading too much into them. Also, the fact that it had been almost two years since I had any sort of relationship, any sex to speak of, might have had something to do with my excitement, my wishful thinking.

I didn't really want to remember Jeff's premature passing, yet again, or the deep and loving relationship with which we were both blessed, up until his death but Spike had certainly done that, reminding me I would dearly love another. And I have to admit, he was my type - cute, cuddly, polite, pretty, in the boyish use of the word.

I took a deep breath and inwardly scolded myself for revisiting the past. My legs found new energy as they propelled me powerfully up the hill and over the remaining mile. By the time I'd reached my lighthouse, my brain had refreshed and filled with positive thoughts.

A parked Telephone Engineer's van awaited my arrival. In my euphoric state of mind, being in such a serene setting, already I was forgetting the things I'd organised for the day.

The sprightly engineer who greeted me wasn't at all upset at my lateness - the country way, I guess. After serving him coffee, black and no sugar, the chunky youth set about running wires for a telephone in every room. In an hour, his task was complete.

Commenting on what a wonderful way to live, he left me to my solitude, informing me the line would be connected within the half hour. Sure enough, half an hour later and a loud ringing broke the silence. A deeply accented voice on the other end confirmed his promise. I was now connected to the outside world of publishers, Internet and, of course, a butcher boy.

I poured my first scotch of the day, plonked onto the sofa and lit a cigarette. Pleasantly sedated my mind travelled back to Spike and his bulging pinny. Had I forgotten the Sunday joint? Of course I hadn't. I rarely ate beef, didn't eat a great deal of meat at all apart from sausages and bacon.

My grandmother's words suddenly sprang to my mind. "A happy boy is one with a good helping of meat inside of him," she always used to say. Now I'd met the butcher boy, I believe she was absolutely right. A change of diet was definitely on the menu.

I began preparing myself a late, proper breakfast. The smell of bacon carved by cute fingers was soon wafting into my nostrils and causing hungry gurgles to rumble inside my empty tummy. Two large eggs dropped into the pan. They spat in protest as I tossed them in. Soon, I was back in the lounge and tucking into my delicious lapped meal.

Whether it was fact or fantasy, that first lighthouse meal was the best bacon and eggs I'd ever eaten. 'Course, that may have had more to do with the brisk walk building up a healthy appetite, or maybe thoughts of the butcher boy who provided it.

As I washed the dishes, again my mind re-entered the butchers. Did I really want a Sunday joint? What I really wanted was the butcher boy. I released a frustrated sigh after splashing some sudsy water over my increasingly hot face.

I moved back to the lounge. The phone was in my palm - a trembling palm at that. Unlike me, I'd even memorised the number on Spike's business card. I quickly replaced the receiver. What an earth was I doing? Hell, I'd only been in the lighthouse a day and already I was about to proposition a village youth. More importantly, Spike had said he would be pleased to deliver if the weather was foul, and it was hardly that. The only thing that *was* foul was my disgusting mind.

I took a very cold shower!

I needed a task to take my mind off sex. I began to unpack the Apple Mac, setting it on the desk in front of the window. The glorious view would keep my mind tranquil while I worked. Everything in its proper place, I decided I would try writing. A short story to begin with.

I fired up the Mac. It was always a difficult moment, that blank screen staring back at you, awaiting the first word, first sentence, hopefully, paragraph. I'd sort of remedied that by setting up a template, which did at least have 'by Luke Smart' centred at the top of the page.

After an hour of smoking more cigarettes than was good for me, even a title for my story eluded me. Out of frustration, I hastily typed in *The Butcher Boy*. And that was as far as I got.

I decided to take in the sea air. I slid open the door and stepped onto the plantless patio, this time bringing my binoculars with me. I scanned seaward first, zooming in on distant ships before viewing smaller craft sailing closer to shore. The binoculars were a powerful pair for their lightness and size, and I could easily make out the crew on yachts, even the name on an enormous oil tanker some ten miles away.

Done with viewing tankers and tacking crew, I moved around the patio and brought my attention upon the cliff tops. Way off in the distance I spotted a group of ramblers wrapped up well against the possible inclement weather. One of them was pointing toward Tarring. I suspected a pub lunch was on the cards.

Closer by, a solitary figure perched on the edge of the cliff caught my eye. Knees huddled into his chest, arms wrapped about them, smoke rising from a smouldering cigarette, he appeared to be deep in thought. With a couple of tweaks on the focus knob, a clearer image began to emerge. My heart quickened when I realised it was Spike.

Spike's right hand raised and placed the cigarette between his lips. He took a long drag then puffed a smoke ring away from him, puncturing the hole with the cigarette. Then, to my total horror, his left hand raised and appeared to wave in my direction.

I let the binoculars fall to my chest. My breathing increased. "What must he be thinking?" I tortured myself. And answered, "He's thinking you're a pervert."

I wanted to dash inside as the undeserved shame came over me. Instead, I brought the glasses back to my eyes and once again peered in his direction but Spike had gone by the time I'd found the spot where he'd been sitting. "Damn!" I cursed.

I picked him up a few yards away. A shiver of excitement shot up my spine. My god, it looked as though Spike was heading toward the lighthouse, his face grinning knowingly and flushed red from the freshening wind.

My heart went into rapid pulsing and my breathing took on a manic pace. Spike was coming to see me. "Oh, shit!" I cursed with excitement, getting myself into a girlie panic.

Although I wanted to dash below and throw myself into his waiting arms, I just couldn't. What was keeping my feet fixed firmly on the deck and my eyes focussed hungrily upon him, instead of wearing his pinny he was now dressed in the tightest pair of jeans imaginable. What I'd so desperately longed to view in the Butcher's shop was now openly on display, a bulge of appetising proportion.

Unashamedly, I scanned the delightful mound protruding just below his waist-length bomber jacket, focussing intently on its girth and length. The Levis outlined its dimensions perfectly. What's more, that treat hidden so tantalisingly under his pinny, the treat I'd so desperately wished to set my eyes upon only a few hours back, was now heading toward my front door.

"Delightful," was my whispered response as I brought the fabulous swelling from within the tight Levis and fetched it imaginatively into the

sea air. Even the most succulent of sausages he'd recently wrapped for me could never look as appetising as this denim delight.

A second wave from Spike sent my heart skipping again as he drew ever closer. Then, just as I was about to dash below and throw open my door - should that be legs - Spike didn't continue toward my willing entrance but turned toward the footpath and headed toward the village.

I released a gasp of disappointment but with his change of direction came my second treat; firm rounded buttocks, drawn in by the tight denim and divided neatly by the seam, flexing tantalisingly as he strutted away. Again, his arm stretched high into the sky.

My cock exploded my boxers apart. I began to wave. I even called after him. Spike never heard and continued his manly stride toward the village. Not wanting to miss a moment of this delightful lad, I watched every flex and flaunt of his muscular buttocks until he was finally out of view, my stiffened cock dribbling profusely with every seducible stride.

"The little tease," I unfairly accused after I'd lowered the binoculars and walked back inside.

Back in the wardroom, for some reason my lighthouse had taken on a ship's terminology, I once more fired up the Mac. This time I did write, detailing my first meeting with the boy butcher, describing his coal-coloured hair, matching thin eyebrows and fluttering long eyelashes. And his dark sexy eyes that seduced with a softness of a kid's cuddly toy, also his muscular arms with a dusting of black hair on each forearm but especially his lips, those kissable, thickish, plum red sucking lips.

I took a break and made coffee, a spoonful of sugar for energy, then continued at the computer, moving onto Spike's body. I wanted to write immediately about the large bulge of teenage sex hidden teasingly beneath the denim dungeon, but wrote instead about his superb body: fit and fine, crafted by country living, biceps and chest firmly built by chopping joints and carrying carcasses. And those teenage thighs, stout, strong and shapely, easily capable of supporting that scrumptious upper torso and his tapered waist which emphasised his athletic buttocks so splendidly.

My cock was demanding immediate attention. I dashed down to the bedroom, jumped on the bed and withdrew my pulsing cock. Adding lubrication, I began thrashing my palm rapidly along its length. Delighting in my descriptive writing, I mentally moved forward several pages and began pumping myself more urgently as those unwritten paragraphs paraded Spike's nakedness before me.

At the point of pelting my tummy with torrents of spunk, Spike's cock buried deep in the softness of my throat and mine in his, the telephone rang.

Releasing a curse, I grabbed the offending object and stuck it to my ear. Anger turning to delight, Spike's voice greeted me. Deep and masculine, it fired torrents of blood fiercely up the shaft of my cock. I couldn't stop pumping when he told me that he'd seen me standing at the top of the lighthouse and asked whether I'd noticed him. He'd wanted to *come* up but had to return to work. It was the way he fired 'come' at me which caused an increase in speed of foreskin flashing over pulsating cock, accompanied by far too audible heavy breathing.

I shot my load while he continued to speak, visions of the both of us sending spunk sailing into our ravenous mouths filling my mind. I cannot recall the rest of our conversation; although I'm sure I detected a knowing giggle on the end of the line. I didn't even question how he'd gotten my phone number so soon.

I'd been living in the lighthouse for almost a month. Spike still hadn't visited. Regularly I called into the village pubs and got to chat with the over-friendly, sometimes nosy, locals. Spike had become my main conversation companion but I still hadn't plucked up the courage to invite him over, or get him to deliver his meat. He often did his lonely vigils on the cliff edge. My attention would be upon him on those special days, observing him, unseen, behind curtained windows. He remained fantasy sex for my creative mind and more paragraphs of my book than I dared admit had the pair of us in every conceivable sexual scenario. I would invite him over soon, I'd promised myself on his last lonely vigil.

The end of October had arrived - Halloween tomorrow. Over the ocean, a violent storm was well underway. The relentless wind whirled around the lighthouse. I could hear the sea crashing over the rocks below, threatening to tear it from its very foundation. Contentedly, I lay curled up on my lumpy sofa, serenaded by *The Lark Ascending*. It blended remarkably well with the tempest raging outside. Regular sips of rum helped keep me mellow and sleepy.

Whilst gazing thoughtfully into the hypnotic flames of the imitation wood fire, a frantic banging sounded from the base of the lighthouse and echoed up the staircase. Wondering who an earth could be making such a racket at such an hour and in such weather, then wondering if it might be Spike, I speedily spiralled myself to the door below.

The wind almost laid me flat when I opened the heavy door. The sight that greeted my eyes most certainly did!

At first, I thought it was Spike standing before me when my eyes fell upon the bedraggled youth. He was certainly the spitting image of him, the same age but only smaller. Realising it wasn't, and remembering

it was Halloween tomorrow, dressed as he was, I presumed he must have been an early 'trick or treater'.

I opened my mouth to speak. Before I had time to discover if this was so, and inform him that he was a day early, the youth brushed me aside. He was soon halfway up the first flight of stairs, yelling something about a ship as he ran.

I followed quickly in his wake. By the time I'd reached the bedroom the lad was already heading higher. Moments later, he'd gone through the lounge and was now standing on the lighthouse's patio. He was pointing seaward when I reached his side, his tearful eyes scanning the horizon as he sobbed, the wind and rain buffeting his bedraggled body.

I seldom got annoyed but this unexpected intrusion quickly had that effect. Grabbing his shoulder roughly, I dragged him inside and slammed the door against the storm. "What's all this, then?" I questioned, somewhat angrily.

"She's gone fa sure. Sunked. Ta bottom of ocean. All ands, an all."

I hadn't a clue what this ruffian was talking about but he was certainly distressed about something. "Who are you? What are you doing here? Where are you from?" I suppose it was too many questions but they just escaped my mouth.

"Smyke's me name," he sobbed. "From Thunderer." He pointed seaward toward the stricken rocks. "Sunked now. All ands." He sobbed again.

If this was a Halloween trick, it was the best I'd ever seen. But try as I did to contain my annoyance, I just couldn't, believing I was on the receiving end of some teenager's prank.

"Thunderer? Who... What's Thunderer?" I interrogated.

"His Majesty's frigate... Thunderer," he blurted with remarkable pride as he continued to sob. He gripped my arm tightly. "You as to launch the lifeboat. Save the Cap'n!"

"Right, Spi... Smyke?" I said, resting my hand upon his shoulder. "It's a damn good trick and treat, albeit a day early, but it has to stop." I offered up a smile. "Tell you what... I'll give you a treat anyway, but then you'll have to go."

Smyke looked desperately sad and sobbed harder. "Please let me stay, sir. Till mornin. I ain't got no folks. I'ze the Cap'n's boy. Rescued me front workhouse, e did. Ain't got nowheres to go nah." He moved across to the sofa and slumped down, head buried between his knees, arms wrapped around them. "E's sunked wid er, fa sure by na. Drowneded."

Situations seldom fazed me but this one did. I hadn't the faintest notion of what this lad was on about, but something strange was happening which was beyond my sensible reasoning.

Considering my next tack, I began to study Smyke. In the course of events, I hadn't had time to take a good look at him, but now he'd moved onto the sofa I began to examine his attire. He appeared to be wearing breeches - knee length, torn and dirty breeches. His T-shirt, if it was that, was also dirty. Decorated with blue and white stripes, it too was torn to tatters, his frail chest and tummy revealed. Shoeless and grubby footed, I guessed he stood about five-five. I'd also noticed the backside of his breeches had been partly torn away when he'd legged it up the stairs, a bare buttock peeping through. Like his feet and legs, his arms too were grubby and grimy, a bare shoulder revealed through the torn T-shirt.

Smyke continued to sob and shake. He was cold and wet and, by the looks of him, starving. I swung the fire up an extra notch and called him over to sit beside its warmth. I seemed to have forgotten he was nothing more than a very convincing trickster.

"Would you like a hot drink, Smyke? Some food perhaps?" I asked.

"Thank e kindly, sir. I'll av an ot toddy or a tot. Me bones is freezin!" he said, rubbing his grubby palms up and down his breeches.

"Toddy or a tot?" I queried, disbelieving the youth was requesting alcohol.

"Please. Cap'n always giz me an ot toddy or a tot of rum before we beds down.

I glanced at the shivering youth. I was about to tell him that that wasn't on, but seeing how hopeless he looked, snuggled close by the fire, I succumbed and headed toward the drinks cabinet.

I fetched a bottle of Navy Neaters - the proof of which could kill a horse - and poured a good measure into a glass. Smyke grasped the tumbler in trembling fingers, upturned the vessel and sent the whole measure down his throat.

He licked his lips, savouring every droplet, then held out the tumbler. "Thas nice stuff," he said, with some satisfaction, like a man who'd been drinking all of his life. "Thank e kindly, sir. Can I av another?"

I have no idea why, maybe it was the shock of seeing the rum disappear so readily, but I tipped a couple of hefty glugs into the outstretched vessel.

Smyke wiped the back of his hand over his lips after another single swig saw the tumbler emptied. "I feels much betta nah," he sighed

I'm sure you do, I inwardly mused, pouring myself an even larger rum but, unlike him, coughed severely as it tore my throat apart. Smyke

chuckled, a childish laugh, when I coughed. I laughed with him. In fact, we both laughed loudly. And what a joy it was to see that youth's face finally light up.

The rum had begun to take effect, on me at least. I dropped beside Smyke, the two of us caressed by the warmth of the fire. Steam was rising from Smyke's wet clothing and dampened black hair. "Would you like a bath?" I suggested. "It'll thaw you out and make you feel better."

The shock to him of that offer was totally unexpected. Indeed, it was practically one of horror. "Don't make us do that, sir! Bosun sticks me in the tub if I stas to smell igh. Don't like it though." He thought for a moment. "That's right. I ad one a month back. And I'ze just swum the ocean, an all."

It was a natural reaction, placing my arm around his shoulders. "No tub tonight then," I said, reassuringly. I was pleased and relieved when he leant into my body and wrapped his arm around my back and the other around my chest, hugging me lovingly. I gave him a squeeze. "Tell me more about yourself."

Smyke cuddled me tightly. "As I says, I'ze from Thunderer. 'She it the rocks, she did. Sunked by nah." Smyke gripped my hand. I moved my palm into his black hair and gave him comforting strokes. "Like I said, I'ze the Cap'n's boy. I looks afer im. No more. Dead, I reckon. Treated me kindly did the Cap'n."

Smyke glanced at me, tears welling in his eyes again. I brought a finger beneath them and gently brushed away the sorrowful droplets. "S'okay, Smyke," I consoled. Stunning me, he then unexpectedly kissed me full on the lips.

That solitary kiss sent such a sensation throughout my body I knew I would have gladly whisked him up in my arms and taken him to my bed - to love, hold, cuddle and caress, comfort, keep forever.

Sensing my thoughts, Smyke cuddled me tighter still.

My lad looked exhausted; his eyelids constantly fluttering those big black eyelashes over his eyes, his body swaying gently as he came closer to slumber. Cupping his lightweight frame into my arms before he toppled over, I cradled him toward the larger sofa and laid him gently down.

I felt my heart racing as I studied his pretty face. It had been so long since I'd held another person in my arms. The warmth of Smyke's youthful body pressed against mine had filled me with an unhelpful surge of sexual desire. I could barely contain myself as I stroked his slumbering cheek. I knew I wanted to make love to him, make love to him all night long. With a solitary kiss upon his slightly parted lips and another upon his forehead, I bade him good night in a whisper and covered him with a blanket.

It was early morning, close to three, when soft bare arms wrapping around my nakedness disturbed me. “Didn mean to wake e, sir. Can’t sleep on me own. I always sleeps wiv the Cap’n.”

“Smyke,” I whispered, my lips caressing his ear when he leant into me. “You okay?”

“Am now. You gonna av me now, sir?”

“Have you, Smyke? What do you mean?”

“Av me like the Cap’n do. I likes that. As I says, I’m is boy. Is Moll.”

My mind raced excitedly as Smyke’s words filtered into my sleepy mind. He was the Captain’s boy. His moll. I thought for a moment. Moll? Goodness! Smyke was the Captain’s lover!

“Smyke,” I sighed, pulling him comfortingly close to my body.

“Take me, sir. Please let me be your moll tonight,” he pleaded, arching his bottom into my crotch.

I hadn’t noticed until that moment but Smyke was totally naked, his silk smooth skin fitting snugly into my shape as it pressed against me. Predictably, my cock was stiff with excitement, with the joy of having a youth’s flesh touching my own.

I breathed deeply, excitedly, brushing my lips over the nape of his neck and bare shoulders, my cock caressing his smooth buttocks, my palms pressing on his tummy.

I sucked his odour into my eager nostrils. He smelt of the sea, gunpowder, ropes, even tar and oak. He smelt delicious!

My palm moved onto his sex and cupped it gently, stroking the spheres beneath before moving over the sturdy young shaft. Smyke whimpered as I caressed his cock. Moving between the warmth of his softened buttock cheeks, we began to make love.

Oh-so-gently, I guided my cock deep into the softness of his buttocks. Smyke wriggled excitedly. Turning his head to one side, he whispered for me to kiss him. Our mouths pressed together as I pushed deeper, all the while our tongues exploring inside the other’s mouth.

My buttocks clenched tightly together. Frantically, I began thrusting deep, deep and deeper still, into the softness of my cabin boy’s covetous cheeks.

“Cap’n,” Smyke whimpered, sending spunk squirting from his cock, over flat and tender tummy and onto my working palm.

“Smyke. Beautiful Smyke,” I sighed, shivering sensationally as I sent surge after surge of my own spunk sailing into those treasured depths.

We kissed and caressed, cuddled and stroked, for an hour after that most wondrous and welcome lovemaking. We made love again. This time

it was more loving, more beautiful. Smyke was the youth I had been searching for, for two lonely years. Now I had found him I would never let him go. He could be my cabin boy, my moll, forever.

A lightning strike, a direct hit on the lighthouse, brought me from my trance when it crashed into the tall structure with the force of a twenty-megaton bomb. As I came to full awareness, I glimpsed the fire blazing away before me. Memories of the incredible but strange wet dream were still fresh in my mind. I reached for a pad and pen and began scribbling down important details before they had gone forever. In less than five minutes most of the dream had dissolved.

I moved over to the window and glanced toward the rocks. I think I was expecting to see something. I decided I'd bed down. With any luck, I might be able to relive my dream, make love to my cabin boy again.

When my head hit the pillow, a strange kind of sadness came over me, as if I'd just lost someone dear to me. I remembered Smyke mentioning the frigate Thunderer, his distress. It had all seemed so real. Although I suspected my imagination might be running away with me, I decided I needed some answers. Later in the day, I would head into Tarring and visit the library. Maybe there was an answer in the archives.

Leaving my Range Rover behind and braving the foul weather in order to clear my boozy head, I cut along the muddy footpath and down toward the village. Bypassing the butcher's shop, even though Spike had acknowledged me with a seductive grin and a wave, I headed directly to the library. Thankfully, it wasn't busy at this time of day, and with the help of a youthful assistant several volumes of old records, which detailed the Village's history, soon sat before me. In the solitude of the quiet room, I began my search through the first of the heavily bound books - for what, I wasn't sure.

After a long time searching, deep within one of the books ancient pages the word Thunderer leapt out at me. Beautifully hand-written, beside the date in the margin, it told of His Majesty's Frigate Thunderer, which floundered on the rocks and had sunk in stormy seas. A cabin boy had managed to get ashore and raise the alarm, alerting the lighthouse keeper. Because of his bravery, all hands were saved. Sadly, the cabin boy never knew this. He was swept overboard from the lifeboat when they rowed out to Thunderer, and had drowned. His name was Smyke.

I checked the date of the entry. It was today's date, albeit a hundred years back. My body shivered cold and hot. I couldn't believe what I'd just read. Thunderer was real. Smyke, too, a hero who'd saved his ship's crew, whose actions had saved his beloved Captain. Incredible!

I gently closed the book as the revelation began to sink in. Had my dream been a dream or had this unfortunate cabin boy really visited me? Was my beloved lighthouse haunted by a beautiful youth named Smyke? It was only then that the enormity of what I'd just discovered hit me. Jesus, had I had sex with a ghost!

I began my thoughtful journey home. A shout from Spike, as I approached the butcher's shop, jarred me away from my thoughts and reminded me I needed meat.

"You okay, Luke?" inquired this most scrumptious lad, who provided me with equally scrumptious sausages. "You look pale." I nodded I was fine; ordering sausages, bacon and chops.

Spike continued to chat as he made up the order, while I resumed my trance-like thoughts of Smyke and Thunderer. I briefly smiled when I contemplated whether Spike's own tasty sausage might be among the six fat ones he'd wrapped. Free-range farm eggs were added to the order, along with fresh butter and milk.

"Tell you what, Luke," said Spike, swinging the bag onto the counter and jolting me from my thoughts. "Why don't you let me bring these over this afternoon? It's early closing, so it's no trouble. No point in struggling all the way up that hill with a heavy bag in this foul weather. It's a lot easier on my bike."

"Sure," I said, without even realising I'd agreed to his offer and even forgetting to pay for the goods before I left the shop.

I don't recall much of the homeward leg, my subconscious releasing bits of my dream as I walked. Once in the lighthouse I fixed myself a decent shot of rum while I studied what I'd written about the night's events. I slept the rest of the afternoon and well into the evening. I was too tired to do anything else.

My ringing doorbell, as loud as any fire station's alarm, catapulted my body from the bed and sent my drowsy body dizzily down the staircase.

"Trick or treat!" greeted a cheerful Spike when I opened the door. Seeing my tired state, he promptly apologised for being late.

Quickly realising this was the opportunity I'd been longing for, I dumped the food in the kitchen and invited him up to the lounge, allowing him to climb the spiral staircase before me. Until that moment, I hadn't really seen my butcher boy's body close to, especially his fantastic bum, apart from when hidden beneath a pinny or through magnifying lenses. And how delightful that teenage bottom was, those tightly clad buttocks divided tantalisingly by the seam of his jeans as it burrowed into his crotch. Already it was beckoning me to bite the cheeks tenderly, to burrow my tongue between them, to...

“Tasty,” said Spike as he entered the lounge and sat on the very sofa on which Smyke had huddled last night. How right he was, ‘tasty’ had been the very thought running through my mind on our ascent.

“Thanks,” I replied, my voice strangely nervous, my gaze having landed between his parted legs and onto the incredible teenage bulge tempting me to fall on my knees and shove my face deep into its mustiness.

“I put the meat on your tab,” said Spike, shifting closer to the arm of the sofa, gesturing subconsciously for me to join him.

“Didn’t know I had one,” I told him as I inched closer.

Spike smiled. “Have now.”

“Thanks,” I said, plonking myself beside him, causing him to bounce.

He winked and patted my thigh. “No problem, Luke. You can have anything on tick. I know you’ll always come up with the goods.”

He was feeding me a line, dangling the bait teasingly, waiting to reel me in when I took it. So why wasn’t I biting? It wasn’t because I thought he was going to charge me. He certainly wasn’t a rent boy. It might have been this close-knit village thing creating the barrier. Then again, it might have been visions of his Master Butcher dad chasing me up and down the cliffs with a cleaver in his hand.

I made myself more comfortable on the sofa, desperately controlling my urges, torturing myself by wanting to touch Spike, touch any part of him. Thoughts of Smyke kept flitting through my mind. I was amazed by Spike’s resemblance to him. They were almost identical, though I suspect Smyke were a year younger. And having made wet dream love to Smyke, I was also wondering if Spike’s naked body might look just as beautiful when stripped of his attire, whether he’d make love just as wonderfully.

We chatted about this and that as we sat close enough to be lovers - the village, music, food, TV - just getting to know one another kind of chat. I was tempted to bring Smyke into the conversation but resisted.

After half an hour of swapping information, rum replaced coffee, and the gas fire set aflame, a more relaxed atmosphere taking hold. I asked myself whether I had done this last night. Spike’s familiar features of black hair, rosy cheeks and soulful eyes certainly made it feel so. Again, I was tempted to ask Spike if he knew of Thunderer. Again, I decided to leave well alone. I didn’t want to spook him on our first date, or for him to think I was one rasher of bacon short of a pig.

“You might think this strange, Luke, but I feel I’ve been here before. The lighthouse seems so familiar. I think I’ve told you, for some reason I always seem to be drawn here,” said Spike.

“You certainly seem at home.”

Spike nodded agreement. “This is the first time I’ve been inside, though. The miserable old bugger who used to live here wouldn’t let anyone get within a hundred yards of his precious lighthouse, even tried to move me off the cliff.” He took a sup of rum. “Yep, sure seems familiar.”

Spike couldn’t have put my own thoughts any better but I was on a slightly different tack, convinced I was doing a rerun of yesterday. And if that was the case, did this mean within a few hours the pair of us would be huddled in my bed together, making love? I could hardly control my excitement when that thought surfaced, and I definitely couldn’t control my stiffening cock when it agreed.

“A past life, perhaps?” I suggested, surprising myself.

Spike stood. “You mind if I go out on the Crow’s Nest? Always wanted to see the view from up here.”

I followed him to the door, stepping into the belting wind when he slid it open. “Crows Nest, eh? I call it my patio.”

Spike laughed. “You can’t call it a patio. This isn’t your little London pad. This is a lighthouse, with atmosphere. It has history! He pointed seaward. “Just look at it out there, raw energy, magnificent. This ain’t no city garden.”

“Crow’s Nest it is then,” I agreed, placing my arm on his shoulder.

Spike’s response was more than a surprise when he unexpectedly cupped my flushed face in his palms, bent toward me and kissed my mouth. My heart skipped a couple of beats and my cock stiffened painfully.

I didn’t speak, couldn’t. Spike pressed my body against the thick glass window, weighting me down with his. A more passionate embrace and kiss followed. His hand skilfully sought my cock and began caressing. Our breathing increased when we pressed our bodies together, rubbed cock against cock through clothing.

Bordering on the frantic, T-shirts quickly came over heads and were tossed on the deck, bare chests buffeted by the chilly wind. Flesh smoothed against flesh when our chests melted together. In an instant, he’d freed my cock.

It was with such a start, the way in which I pulled away, it caused Spike to believe he’d made a terrible mistake. “What’s up?” he asked.

I stared mesmerised by the rocks beyond and what I could see. “A ship. My God! She’s sinking!”

Spike turned and peered into the howling wind. “Where?”

My whole body shivered. I stared intently into the darkened sea beyond but this time could see absolutely nothing. Then I heard it!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

BANG! BANG!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

My head swung toward the door leading to the spiral staircase. My body froze and my face felt like ice as a bedraggled youth rushed toward us. "Smyke?" I murmured.

"Yes?" said Spike.

I didn't speak. I became frozen to the spot. I watched my cabin boy head desperately toward us, or rather, toward Spike. At the precise moment of impact with Spike's body, Smyke appeared to glance toward me. His face all joyful, he beamed the broadest of smiles, mouthed something, then vanished into thin air.

"You okay, Luke?" asked Spike, calmly, appearing totally unaware of events.

I sucked in a deep breath, for I'd not breathed for those startling seconds. "Did you see that!"

"See what?"

"That ship. Smy..." I stopped my sentence short. I'd had too much rum. Yes, that was it; I'd had too much rum.

Spike laughed. "Reckon you've just seen Thunderer. Don't worry, grandpa says he's seen it loads of times. Never seen her myself though. Anyways, storms can play tricks on your eyes."

I rubbed my freezing chest. "That so?"

"Old wives tale. Come on, let's carry on where we left off," Spike suggested, hugging me tightly as we moved back into the lounge. Spike laughed. "You'll be telling me you believe in ghosts next."

I laughed. "Ghosts?"

Spike gave my cock a squeeze. "Trick or treat?"

"Treat," I said, giving him a kiss.

We resumed our lovemaking, arousing each other with caresses. Spike suggested he spend the night. Soon we were snuggled beneath blankets, exploring each other's nakedness for the first time.

Spike slid his willing bottom into my lap. His smiling face turned toward mine. There was a strange sparkle in his eyes. "You gonna have me, Luke? Let me be your moll?" I heard a voice softly whisper.

"Smyke?" I inwardly gasped.