

Devotion to Aphrodite

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The legionnaire was very hairy. The hair on his broad back was long enough for Diana to get her fingers tangled right inside. But at least he spoke Greek. Of a sort. Not like the Roman centurion who'd fucked Diana for so long just a couple of hours ago. He'd spoken Vulgar Latin and some words of Aramaic from where he'd been stationed before being relocated to Smyrna. But even though she could hardly understand half what he said, he'd been a pretty good fuck. The sort that reminded Diana of why she'd chosen to dedicate herself to the service of Aphrodite. Or 'Venus' as the Roman had called the divine goddess. Typical of the Romans. They steal your religion and then they rename all the Gods. But at least they hadn't abandoned the true Gods like some people in the city had done.

The legionnaire's cock was thick and hairy and a kind of olive colour just like the rest of him. The glans had a small kink in it, but Diana licked it and watched as it became hard and shiny. She leaned over and dipped her fingers into a tub of olive oil, while her tongue nibbled and chewed at the scrotum, which tightened as his cock got larger. Then she pulled it out of her mouth and sat up. She smeared the olive oil all over the cock and testicles. And as she did so, she intoned a prayer to the Divine Aphrodite. This was standard procedure for a temple prostitute, and one way that distinguished her from the common prostitutes she so despised: who sold their bodies not for the greatest service of the gods, and in particular for the Divine Goddess Aphrodite, but for their own selfish pecuniary gain. And, furthermore, as was obvious when you saw these sorry creatures as they loitered outside the hovels where they provided their services, these women had none of the style, expertise or even the looks

of a temple prostitute. No wonder the Temple of Aphrodite felt able to charge its services at a premium rate.

After the prayers were done, Diana poured sands into the uppermost of two conical vessels, so that the grains would slowly drop out into the vessel below through the small hole at its base and mark the passing of the time for which the legionnaire had paid for Diana's service. As was her duty to the Divine Goddess she would ensure that the legionnaire would benefit from the arts of Aphrodite as taught her by the other temple prostitutes and which further distinguished a temple prostitute from the common sort that the legionnaire could so much more easily afford.

However dedicated as Diana was to her craft, as her mouth closed over the tip of the legionnaire's penis, and she sucked in her cheeks, while slopping her tongue beneath the thick weight of the penis's girth, she could still contemplate the monetary worth of her endeavours. Not that one prostitute received more wealth in the temple than any other. Her services were for the good of the temple, which would safeguard not only the upkeep of the icons and statues, but also the long-term welfare of those older prostitutes who were no longer able to work in such a physical capacity. And the welfare of the children who were the fruit of the prostitutes' endeavours and who had to be cared for before they were old enough to be sold as indentured servants or, if they were female, to work as prostitutes in the temple.

The legionnaire's cock was soon at its maximum size, and there was still much more than half the volume of sand to go. Diana didn't want the legionnaire to be disappointed by too brief a love-making, but she sensed that he was very keen to enter

her vagina, which was scented and perfumed according to the rituals, her pubic hair combed and plaited, and a ceremonial bronze ring threaded through her clitoris. She leaned on her back. This was a legionnaire who had undoubtedly raped and pillaged in the service of the empire and had learnt some bad habits with regard to how best to treat a woman. He pushed Diana's legs apart rudely, with his erect penis above him, and then plunged it straight into her without any more ceremony. Diana had got rather used to that. Soldiers were a rough lot, and those who'd come back from the furthest borders of the empire, where maltreatment and rape of captured women was common practice, were usually the worst. But Diana was a professional in the service of her Goddess and her role was to satisfy the man's lust, not to comment on his roughness. Clearly, the way he was going, it'd all be over well before half the sands were gone.

Diana applied her skills to slow down and extend the legionnaire's passion, avoiding his slobbery kisses on her cheeks and face (that wasn't part of the transaction!), and gripping his floppy, hairy buttocks in her hands. The inflation that was rife throughout the empire meant that the legionnaire was going to pay rather more sestertii for her services than he would have done a couple of years earlier when his legion was last in Smyrna. But Diana knew that those sestertii bought rather fewer goods in the market than the fee a few years earlier would have done. All was not well in the empire, as the soldiers would so often tell her, despite the assurances of the local officials who'd have her believe that nothing could injure the Empire under the wise governance of the Emperor. There were so many pagans and barbarians attacking the borders of civilisation, people who worshipped Gods other than those who reigned

from Mount Olympus. There were the Goths, the Huns and the Persians. And the pagans tolerated inside the very borders of the empire, who sought to overthrow the divine order from within. How could the empire survive if its very spiritual basis was threatened?

“Now your arse!” grunted the legionnaire, pulling his still erect penis out of Diana’s vagina.

“By the Great Goddess, no!” Diana responded. “I’m not a common whore. And you’re not in a heathen land where barbarians are so depraved that they cannot tell apart a boy from a girl. Aphrodite has granted men and women the bounty of love, and she has decreed that it is to be done in the right and proper way. If you wish to besmirch your penis in an unclean receptacle then there are many sluts at the forum or the amphitheatre who will be pleased to help.”

The legionnaire looked put out. He’d clearly forgotten that he was in a temple and that due respect needed to be given to its servants. “Forgive me, sister. I forgot myself. You’re right. In the border land of Britain where the Pictish barbarians are massed, there is indeed no true decency. I have fucked many a pagan woman’s arse, and, yes, I admit, a pagan man’s too. I have not yet adjusted to civilised life. May I be permitted to re-enter the receptacle of Aphrodite’s benison?”

Diana smiled. This legionnaire wasn’t so rough and ill mannered after all. “Yes, of course, but first I shall lick your manhood again. It has lost some of the edge of its fervour.”

Today was not an especially busy day. There were no festivals being

celebrated. No public holidays. The soldiers in the city had arrived several weeks earlier and had learnt to be less free with their sestertii than they had earlier been. Days such as this were days of rest and recuperation for Diana. Less than a handful of men to service. She felt that the goddess Aphrodite had hardly been properly served today, and so when more than an hour had passed since the legionnaire had departed, Diana took leave of her chamber and entered the main body of the temple to pray to the goddess she served.

She entered the temple naked, as all servants of Aphrodite had to be within its hallowed walls. It would not be right to deny the worshippers of the Goddess of Love the sight of the object of love's devotion. Clothes were denied the temple prostitutes, except on those rare occasions when they should leave the temple estate. In fact, it was this very presence of clothing on Andromeda that alerted Diana that something had changed for her closest friend.

Diana bowed to the marble statue of Aphrodite that graced the temple, the Venus of Smyrna as the Romans called it. It was not much larger than an ordinary woman and it had the perfect proportions of the great goddess. The straight nose. The womanly bosom. The full buttocks. Diana sighed. If only her body was more like the Aphrodisiac ideal. Instead of being so very thin. To look at her slender thighs, no one could have imagined Diana as a woman of childbearing capability – even though she had borne two children for the service of the Great Goddess who were being cared for by the elderly temple matrons.

She had intended to masturbate in front of the great statue, thereby

demonstrating the extent of her devotion and how much she loved the Goddess. She had always believed that it was necessary to worship Aphrodite in this traditional manner as often as one could, and then smear the juice of her passion, which would ease out of her vagina, onto the ceremonial candles so that they would burn with the scent of her sex. When masturbating, Diana would fantasise about the goddess Aphrodite coming down from Mount Olympus to be with her, as the gods were wont to occasionally do. And then she would take Diana as Zeus had with Leda and Europa, and the two would make wild sapphic love. Aphrodite's tongue deep in her vagina, while she would worship the labial folds of the great goddess. That would be the greatest honour for any servant of a deity. Sometimes she fantasised that Aphrodite had perhaps already come to her. Maybe in the guise of one of her clients. Or in the guise of one of the other temple prostitutes with whom she so often made love. She hoped, however, that she would not be as mischievous as the Father of the Gods, Zeus himself, and come as a swan or a bull. This was a habit of the Olympians that Diana couldn't really understand or appreciate.

But such devotion was not to be. She felt that before offering her juices to Aphrodite, she should learn why Andromeda had so chosen to disregard the spirit of the great goddess and enter her temple in clothes, and such modest clothes too. Diana wasn't sure she'd ever seen Andromeda in clothing before. All the time they spent together in the temple, ever since they were children and Andromeda had joined the temple after the unfortunate death of her parents in a plague, giggling together, playing games together, making love together, not once could Diana recall a time

when she'd seen Andromeda cover her flesh. And such a shame to hide her beautiful body! The only body other than that of Aphrodite that Diana had truly loved with passion and emotion. Those full womanly breasts, the large thighs, the rounded folds of motherly flesh, the delicate fingers and toes; surely blessed by Aphrodite herself so as to provide her with better service in her duties to the temple.

And where were those breasts and that darling vagina now? Hidden under a dress that came down nearly to her ankles, and showed only the glimpse of her bosom. Her hair was tied back with a hairpin, and she carried a basket under her bared arm. Diana recalled their last lovemaking, just days before. There had been no hint then that Andromeda should so soon dishonour the reputation of the goddess of love. Indeed it was to love that she and Diana were the most true servants at that occasion. Truly, Cupid's arrow had been shot with great accuracy that day. Diana sighed as she recalled the rich sour odours of Andromeda's cunt. Her own vagina became slightly itchy and moist at the very recollection.

"Andromeda!" she called out in an urgent hiss. "Quickly! Take off your clothes! You don't want the temple mother to know of your discourtesy to the Great Goddess!"

Andromeda looked away from the mural on the wall, which depicted one of the triumphs of Aphrodite's passion over those who would deny the potency of her love. It was a mural that Diana and she had studied for many hours, tracing the details of the erect penises as they penetrated the virgins who had denied the services of Aphrodite for the sake of their selfish devotion to chastity. Why would Andromeda

find such a painting so very fascinating today?

“Diana!” laughed Andromeda. “You haven’t heard? I spoke to the temple mother just a couple of days ago. As of today, I am no longer a servant of the goddess Aphrodite.”

Diana wasn’t sure she’d heard right. She gasped, and walked backwards into a huge candle, the very one she intended to anoint with her vaginal juices.

“So, the mother hasn’t spoken. It’s true! I am no longer a temple prostitute. I no longer serve Aphrodite.”

Diana gathered her wits about her. Defections from the temple were not unknown. Sisters sometimes left to marry their clients. Sometimes, though this was less often, they left because they no longer felt able to offer their body for sexual gratification perhaps as much as a dozen times a day. “Why? Why?”

“Because I no longer follow the goddess. She is no longer the one whom I serve. I have become a Christian.”

“A Christian!” This was the worst news possible. Andromeda’s soul was now lost. She would descend to the region of Hades, as did all unbelievers, destined to suffer eternal torment. “It’s not too late, Andromeda. The goddess Aphrodite is forgiving and merciful. She can see that you are misled. She will allow you back into the fold. Please, Andromeda! Divest yourself of your clothes and return again to the service of the Goddess who so loves and cares for you!”

“Diana!” laughed Andromeda. “You don’t understand. I have converted. I have been baptised in the name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. I have

chosen to follow the dictates of the one true God, who is so Merciful that his own Son died so that our souls may be saved.”

“Andromeda. Andromeda. This is profanity most foul. And spoken within the sacred confines of the great temple of Aphrodite. How has this happened? How have you been tempted away from the only true way? How have you become a pagan?”

Andromeda laughed again. She leaned out and placed her hand on Diana’s bare shoulder, reminding her again of the passion they had shared so recently. She hoped that perhaps her love would persuade Andromeda to return to the service of Aphrodite and forget about this nonsense that the people of the sign of the fish had spread. Rue the day that the emperors had become so soft and tolerant that they permitted these pagans to spread their faith amongst the devout!

“Diana. It is you who is misled. I have heard the bishops and vicars of Christ speak. I have even seen the great patriarch of Smyrna himself. The true way is the way of Jesus Christ. He who is the Light and the Way. He who is Alpha and Omega.” Andromeda made the sign of Alpha in the air, which looked so much like the shape of a fish. “I have struggled for many years with my faith. I have often thought that the religion of our Hellenic forebears has lost its way. It has been perverted by the Romans, who even assigned deity to their emperors, and it no longer carries its old authority.”

“But Christianity? Does it not come from the Semitic nations of the Desert? The people of Palestine, Samaria and Assyria. How can a god worshipped by those savages be a god for civilised people?”

“Have you not heard? It is rumoured that even some of the senators in Rome may be Christian. And very many people throughout the Empire have been converted. With the momentum of so many conversions, it is surely only time until the Roman Empire becomes a Christian Empire.”

Diana didn't want to hear more. All she could think of was the eternal suffering that her dearest Andromeda would suffer. Her genitals would be torn from her. Hot irons would brand her flesh. She would be lost forever on the further shores of the Styx. She pulled Andromeda to her naked body, feeling the unfamiliar cloth against her skin, and wept on her shoulder. Andromeda held her close to her bosom and kissed her full on the mouth. Diana responded eagerly. She grasped Andromeda's head in her hands and pulled her face to hers, to smother her with kisses and tears, in the hope that she could seduce her close friend and in this way encourage her to make love in the temple. To take off her hated clothes and to stretch out on the rush mats on the temple floor, and to put out the fire of burning passion that was inflaming her cunt. If she could just get her tongue to her friend's clitoris under the watchful eye of the statue of Aphrodite, then perhaps Andromeda would see the error of her ways and return to the Aphrodisiac fold.

But Andromeda was too strong. “Not here, Diana. Perhaps tonight. Please visit me in my new home and we can make love there.”

“What? Leave the confines of the temple?”

“Why not? You're not a prisoner. I'm sure you can borrow a gown so that you can walk the city streets without being molested by the brutish soldiers garrisoned

within the city walls. Please, Diana. And then we not only can make love. Again. We can talk together.”

Diana nodded. Her hope was that she might persuade Andromeda to abandon her newfound obsession and return to the service of Aphrodite. And it was this hope that she took with her, not long after Andromeda quit the temple, her shapely ankles only just visible under the confining length of her dress. And this was the hope that she presented to the great temple mother when she asked for consent to see her past lover.

Agatha, the temple mother, was very understanding but also very sorrowful. “We are truly sad to lose Andromeda. She has been a good servant to the temple. She has brought in many sestertii to our cause. Although she has not blessed the temple with her own children, she has blessed it with her love. I was very unhappy when she told me that she would be leaving. I shall pray to Aphrodite for her soul.”

Diana nodded. “I have been masturbating in front of the statue of the Great Goddess for over an hour, asking that she should be saved.”

Agatha smiled understandingly. She was an old woman, a grandmother, perhaps nearly fifty years old, her skin tight and crinkled, her naked breasts now drooping rather than full and firm. But Diana loved her, as it was her duty to love those sisters who had served the goddess Aphrodite for more than a generation. She knelt down in front of Agatha and demonstrated her love by licking, sucking and chewing the lips and clitoris and folds of her vagina. An old woman’s vagina was slack, and the hair was coarse, and may no longer offer proof of fecundity once in the

lunar cycle, but this vagina belonged to the temple mother and for that reason Diana sincerely loved it. She hoped that one day she might become the temple mother, and then she too could receive the tongue and lips of the sisters when they came to speak with her.

When Agatha was satisfied by Diana's tongue, she bade her go, but advised her that she would almost certainly be unsuccessful in her hope that she may be able to save Andromeda's soul. "These Christians. They are a persistent lot. They love to make martyrs of themselves so as to gain sympathy. They practise the strangest rituals where they pretend to eat human flesh and drink human blood. They have initiation ceremonies where they pretend to drown each other. But despite their strangeness and their denial of the Olympian gods, their faith continues to grow. I fear that one day they may even threaten the temples of the true gods."

"Surely, that cannot be! Zeus would strike them dead with bolts of divine thunder. Heracles would return from Olympus to kill the pagans with his lion's jaw."

Agatha sighed. "I hope you are right. I do so hope you are right. But not all is well in the empire. Even the Romans may choose to abandon their spiritual traditions. I fear that these Christians are as much a threat to the empire's future as the Huns, Goths and Vandals that amass at the empire's borders."

The streets and avenues leading to Andromeda's new home were dark and unfamiliar. It had been a long time since Diana had last ventured so far from the temple. She strode in the centre of the road, dodging the donkeys and oxen-carts that carried out the commerce of the city of Smyrna, seeing the men who stood by the

taverns and stalls not as potential customers, but as possible threats. She was glad that the gown she wore hid her breasts and crotch so well. She didn't wish to attract a man's attention unless he was to pay for it. And the only right and proper place for that was in the temple.

And when, at last, Diana was outside the hovel that Andromeda had described as hers, she was shocked. It was just a single room whose door was no more than a woollen blanket. And around her were many idle men, but also women, who, Diana could see from their painted faces and bare breasts, were the common sort of whore that she abhorred. But it was one of these sluts she had to ask which one of the rundown clay and wattle buildings housed Andromeda.

"Oh the new girl? The posh one from the temple. The cunt who's taking my custom. I hope you're taking her back with you. We don't want her here."

Diana smiled as politely as she could at the woman. She must be almost forty. No wonder she had to wear such thick paint over her face. And her breasts were cracked and leathery after years of exposure to the sun. But surely she wasn't suggesting that her beloved Andromeda had become a common whore herself. How obscene! But Diana's abhorrence wasn't any lessened when she entered the room that the whore had indicated, and saw her lover. But not by herself. She was stretched out on the straw mattress while a squat balding man plied away at her, his cock deep within her anus.

Diana gasped. She had often seen Andromeda with men. It was normal for temple prostitutes to see each other in such company. Often she and Andromeda had

served the wealthier clients of more adventurous habits as a couple, taking joy from making love to each other as well as taking joint responsibility for their client's passion. But to see Andromeda serving a client outside the temple, and, what's worse, permitting her unclean orifice to be taken as a channel of love... This was surely too much!

Andromeda grinned at Diana as she came in, with that old friendly smile of hers that the girls had exchanged over the years, while not breaking at all into her gasps and moans as she urgently pushed her buttocks up and down on the bald man's cock. He also noticed Diana standing there, but judging that she had not come to also satisfy his lust, he only nodded at her, and then returned to his thrusting.

At least Andromeda wasn't wearing any clothes, Diana reflected. Although, seeing as she wasn't in the temple and was now a common prostitute, was that now a good thing or a bad thing? And Diana was fascinated to see how relatively large Andromeda's anus was. She'd never thought that it could so easily accommodate such a big fat thing as a cock. After all, it was not Aphrodite who had blessed women with an anus. If that were so then it would not have been a feature shared by men. And when the bald man withdrew his fat thick penis, a trail of creamy viscous sperm trailing from its glans to the orifice it had been pounding so vigorously, Diana was fascinated to see how the anus had become so wide and round, with a trail of semen drooping down to tangle in the hairs of her vagina. Diana guessed from the ease by which Andromeda had admitted the organ that she may have been tempted by the pleadings of some of the temple clients to permit them a license not normally

sanctioned within a sacred temple.

Andromeda's client soon left, leaving her with a handful of coins on the faces of which was the clear head of the emperor. Diana eased off her dress as soon as she was sure that he had gone, and leaned down lengthways besides her lover. Andromeda kissed her tenderly on the lips and didn't seem at all put out that Diana didn't immediately commence making love with her. When they lived together in the temple, they would normally have already slumped into the slippery, sweaty heap of passion, so great had been their mutual love. Instead now, Diana was content to lay on her back with one arm around Andromeda's bare back, while her lover leaned over her and stroked her nipples.

"I can't lie, Andromeda. I came here in the hope of persuading you to return to the true faith. But now I've seen the horrors to which you have allowed yourself to descend, I'm not sure that you may not already be beyond saving. You have not only become a Christian, which defies the natural order, you have also become a common whore. Is this how it is in your new religion? Do women who serve Christ also sell themselves in such a demeaning way? Proffering their arses to any pervert who wishes to take them?"

Diana laughed. "Don't confuse my profession with the religion I profess. I had no choice when I left the temple but to become a whore. But one who works for herself. Not for the upkeep of a huge marble temple. But my faith is a separate issue. I left the temple not because I no longer wished to make a living by having sex with strangers, but because I truly believe in Jesus Christ."

“So you work for yourself, now? You have sex for money? Not as a service to the great goddess Aphrodite?”

“I always did have sex for money, Diana. How else could I have afforded to leave the temple? Don’t say you don’t also make money by offering satisfaction to the clients outside of the normal remit?”

“Like anal sex? No. Never.”

Andromeda laughed. “You’re such a prude, Diana! You really *do* believe in Aphrodite!”

“Of course. As so did you. Until recently.”

“I’m not sure that’s true. I don’t think I really believed in anything before now. But Jesus Christ is a god who forgives and condones. He feasts with prostitutes and moneylenders. One of his disciples, Mary Magdalene, it is said, was a common prostitute. But there are so many different stories of Jesus Christ. Some people say that He believes in chastity and virginity. That He Himself was a virgin until He died. I can’t believe that! He was a man, so He must have had sex. Someone should gather all these different stories together in one book so that people can agree on who is the real Jesus Christ. And what He taught.”

“So what did he teach? I heard he was some kind of doctor or something.”

“He performed miracles. He turned water into wine. He fed a multitude on a single fish. He brought people back from the dead. And He even came back from the dead Himself.”

“That’s nothing! The gods performed much greater miracles than that. Zeus

throws thunderbolts. Apollo carries the Sun on a chariot. Athena brought wisdom to the world. Aphrodite brings love, the greatest of all virtues.”

“But, Diana, I don’t believe that stuff. It just seems like myth. Fairy Tales. Legends. Where are the centaurs, fauns and dryads of your faith? The Roman Empire stretches to the limits of civilisation and yet no one has found the gods on the top of Mount Olympus or navigated the River Styx or even found the places mentioned in the epic poetry of Homer and Virgil. I don’t believe all that. But Christianity has the ring of authenticity. It’s about ordinary people, not kings and queens, tyrants and monsters. And it’s hardly two hundred years since Jesus Christ lived and died. Not thousands of years ago, like Heracles and Theseus and Odysseus. And the message of Christianity is forgiveness. If you agree to follow the Christian religion, then whatever you do, however bad your crimes, you will be forgiven, and go to Paradise. Do you think Aphrodite can do that?”

“That’s not fair. Aphrodite is the Goddess of Love. If you serve her, she will protect you both in this life and the next.”

“Oh, Diana. Do you really believe in Aphrodite? Do you really think that there is a family of deities who bicker amongst themselves but also have the time to help people who serve them? What happens when, like Paris, you serve the wrong god and lose out in the cosmic politics? With Jesus Christ I know that if I am baptised, if I confess my sins, and if I attend religious services, I shall go to Heaven.”

“But what are these religious services? I’ve heard that Christians are cannibals and eat human flesh and drink human blood.”

“That’s the mystery of Christ. Transubstantiation. Anyway, that’s what the priest says. So come on, Diana. Can’t you see that your faith is misled and that the true faith is that of Jesus Christ? After all, there are so many Christians in the Empire now, that Christ may indeed have already triumphed.”

At that moment Diana didn’t feel so confident in her beliefs. But as she nestled in against Andromeda’s body, she found that however much she might start doubting the substance of her faith, she was becoming more and more certain of its spirit. She worshipped the Goddess of Love, and whether she could be sure of its historical veracity, which was surely the proper matter for debate by the scholars, she knew that she believed in love itself.

And here in Andromeda was the object of her love. As it had been for so many years. And so it was to be again that night and through to the early morning. The two girls soon bowed to the urgency of their physical passion: Diana for the softness and smoothness of Andromeda’s womanly body and Andromeda for her lover’s more slender, almost adolescent frame. Diana’s mouth and lips ventured again to Andromeda’s cunt, taking those lips again in her teeth, her tongue deep inside the slightly roughened flesh of her vulva, while her nostrils luxuriated again in that rich sour taste she so loved. While her own vagina was lapped and licked and soaked by Andromeda’s tongue, her vaginal juices mixed with her lover’s saliva.

But in amongst the saltiness of the sweat and saliva, and the pungency of the sexual juices, and the odour of passion, as the two girls’ bodies slid over and about each other, there was also the trace of Diana’s tears. She knew now that although she

served the Goddess of Love, that very service that she so deeply believed in would now mean that she would be parted from the object of her love. Much as she enjoyed her sex with her clients, and enjoyed her lovemaking with the other temple prostitutes, and would joyfully service the temple mother as often as was required, nobody in her life had given her the passion and depth of love that Andromeda had given her. And she felt sure that nobody had ever received the intensity of love that Diana was giving to Andromeda.

And now, for the love of the Goddess of Love, she would now be parted from the object of her love. It saddened her so much to know that her darling Andromeda was now a pagan and a common whore, and who would be destined for an eternity at the pleasure of Hades. But Diana had her beliefs. They were sincerely and profoundly felt. And nothing would part her from her faith. Not even the love of another woman.