

THIS IS A STORY WRITTEN BY A SAILOR IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD 1772. HE WAS ENLISTED IN ADMIRAL NELSON'S FLEET AND THE FOLLOWING IS AN ACCOUNT OF HIS ADVENTURES DURING THE STAY OF THE ROYAL FLOTILLA IN NAPLES, ITALY.

The lazy indifference of Naples did fairly startle me. Methinks no town ever laid down with more utter weariness than this old stronghold as it settled itself drowsily between a stack of towering mountains. This came to pass about the time the Visigoths did rip unheralded into Northern Italy in search of bigger and more seemly vineyards.

Whereas there is little in Naples to ensnare the attention of a visiting sailor except a cathedral or two, numerous relics of art, and an exceeding number of peculiar olive oil wenches, it is befitting to state that these latter are most interesting. They have an annoying way of staring at strangers in an airy manner, waving a languid fan at themselves, beckoning toward sundry neighboring domiciles and then sauntering off on the arm of some gay Italian Lothario just as we a rive in a cloud of dust and a volley of unseemly invectives.

Behold then, myself, entombed by the strangeness of an unknown town, bent on Bacchanalian pursuits, and desirous of physical pleasure. I was led by a garrulous guide into the habititudes of art, vice and relaxation.

And in one of the most unsightly of these dives of Naples an old woman sate, and she sucked the smoke from a long stemmed pipe and spoke at length of the future and that which would in time come to pass.

And the first words she spake foretold the coming of a most unsightly branch of the human family that was to be known to all men as Delta Tau Delta. And this branch was to bear bad fruit, and lo where ripe and luscious herbs were to blossom onions did sprout instead. And of all this unfortunate clan Farrel and Adams, of the sons of man, were to be the basest and the most like to provoke contemporaries to tears. And it was to come to pass that in the thirty-fifth year of his sojourn on earth, this same Farrel was to strain a tendon in his neck from gazing into the depths of a mirror and die thereof, whereas Adams was to strangle in the quicksands of political scandal some time later. A third member of this most unholy clan was to commit suicide because the tong failed to serenade an unannounced sorority. This last was Cunningham and he was foul.

Having committed herself in this wise, the ancient hag fell silent and draped herself in a cloud of vapor, drawing deep gusts from her pipe, and lo it came to pass that the smoke hid the old woman from sight until we were aware of her presence only by spouts of tobacco juice which did issue forth from the smoke at intervals, for she was also addicted to chewing tobacco. Then after some time a voice spake out from the smoke.

"Not even he with a tenfold power of imagination can depict to himself those things which shall be in the future. Behold the extremes to which human sham and hypocrisy will some day drag the race."

Now when we had heard the voice, something that was dark and of a nameless shape was thrown from the smoke. And at first I wist not whether it was another spout of tobacco juice or some organism, but the voice from the smoke gave utterance and said: "John Humphries."

Then that which had appeared as tobacco juice moved and resolved itself into a man of extremely short stature, who yet held his head up like the rooster who crows in the morning, and