

Classic Poetry Series

Pietro Aretino

- poems -

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Dialogues

ANTONIA What did you see? Tell me, please!

NANNA In the cell I saw four sisters, the General, and the three milky-white and ruby-red young friars, who were taking off the reverend father's cassock and garbing him in a big velvet coat. Then hid his tonsure under a small golden skullcap, over which they placed a velvet cap ornamented with crystal droplets and surmounted by a white plume. Then, having buckled his sword at his side, the blissful General, to speak frankly, started strutting back and forth with the big-balled stride of a Bartolomeo Colleoni. In the meantime the sisters removed their habits and the friars took off their tunics. The latter put on the sisters' robes and the sisters that is, three of them put on the friars'. The fourth nun rolled herself up in General's cassock, seated herself pontifically, and began to imitate a superior laying down the law for the convent.

ANTONIA What pretty pranks!

NANNA Now it becomes prettier.

ANTONIA Why?

NANNA Because the reverend father summoned the three friars and leaning on the shoulder of one of them, a tall, soft-skinned rascal who had shot up prematurely, he ordered the others to take his little sparrow, which was resting quietly, out of its nest. Then the most adept and attractive young fellow of the bunch cradled the General's songster in the palm of his hand and began stroking its back, as one strokes the tail of a cat which first purrs, then pants, and soon cannot keep still. The sparrow lifted its crest, and then the doughty General grabbed hold of the youngest, prettiest nun, threw her tunic over her head, and made her rest her forehead against the back of the bed. Then, deliberately prying open with his fingers the leaves of her ass-hole Missal and wholly rapt his thoughts, he contemplated her crotch, whose form was neither close to bone with leanness nor puffed out with fat, but something in between — rounded, quivering, glistening like a piece of ivory that seems instinct with life.

Those tiny dimples one sees on pretty women's chins and cheeks could also be seen on her dainty buttocks, whose softness was softer than that of a mill mouse born and raised in flour, and that nuns limbs were all so smooth that a hand placed gently on her loins would have slid down her leg as quickly as a foot slides on ice, and hair no more dared grow on her than it would on an egg.

ANTONIA So the father General consumed his day in contemplation, eh?

NANNA: No, I wouldn't say he consumed it, because placing his paintbrush, which he first moistened with spit, in her tiny color cup, he made her twist and turn as women do in the birth throes or the mother's malady. And to be doubly sure that his nail would be driven more tightly into her slit, he motioned to his back and his favorite punk pulled his breeches down to his heels and applied his clyster to the reverend's visibilium, while all the time the General himself kept his eyes fixed on the two other young louts, who, having settled the sisters neatly and comfortably on the bed, were now pounding the sauce in the mortar to the great despair of the last little sister. Poor thing, she was so squint-eyed and swarthy that she had been spurned by all. So, she filled the glass tool with water heated to wash the messer's hands, sat on a pillow on the floor, pushed the soles of her feet against the cell wall, and then came straight down on that great crozier, burying in her body as a sword is thrust into a scabbard. Overcome by the scent of pleasure, I was more worn out than pawns are frayed by usury, and began rubbing my dear little monkey with my hand like cats in January rub their backsides on a roof.

Pietro Aretino