

Beggars Banquet

by niceguyted

I am come from the shores of Perelandra, where the soft honeyed fruits drip their nectar on my lips with naught but the slightest pressure from my fingertips. It is the place called Elysium by some, and I speak now of ambrosia. Others call it Venus, though I know not their word for its fruit.

"But Perelandra is an ocean world," you say, "though there be fruits of flavour divine in that place, there are no shores."

And I would say that you speak true, but that I still come from the shores, for the shores are where the seas end and I am not welcome there on Perelandra. For there are but two who dwell in that place: a King and a Queen and they are innocence personified. They know neither clothing nor pain, wisdom nor shame; they are the untouched. Vice does not exist on Perelandra, except that which dwelt within me; nor is virtue known in that place.

So come, sit: your hearth is warm enough tonight to hold back the cold, the candles' golden glow is enough to hold back the darkness — for a little while longer - and I've the time and inclination to spin for you a yarn.

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"Melt your fucken face, man, I'll tell you *what!*"

"Huh?"

"This fucken squeeze, man, what's it fucken called again?"

"What?"

"The *drug*, man, the *drug* we've been doing all night. What's it *called??*"

"No idea."

"Well I'll tell ya, it's fucken good. What were we talking about again?"

"Huh?"

"Dude, you were telling me about banging that chick — the one from Venus or wherever. The dream you had. She was hot. A queen

or something, and you were like totally raping her in front of her boyfriend."

"The King?"

"Yeah, yeah, the king. You were like fucking this queenie chick against her will in front of her king-man boyfriend and she was all like 'ooh ooh, give it to me.' God*damn* this is good shit. What did you call it again?"

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When I was a boy and just out of seminary school, I went to a Doors concert and heard Jim Morrison sing his song 'Soft Parade' — it changed my life. I was raised to be a good Christian man and enrolled to become a priest just as I was hitting puberty. I was uneasy with the thoughts and feelings I was having. Maybe 'uneasy' isn't a strong enough term. The feelings, I just knew they were *evil* and I didn't know what to do about them. I prayed and prayed, but it just didn't seem to be working. I would kneel at the foot of my bed for hours, head bent and hands folded, my knees bruising on the hard wood beneath them, and pray as I had been taught. I begged the Holy Father to remove the evilness growing inside and outside of me and try not to think about the gap between my mattress and box spring. It was hard, I mean really *hard* to go to sleep some nights with the evilness that seemed to be raging everywhere. I could barely sit through class and I can't tell you how many pencils broke in my balled fist as I attempted to keep my eyes on my book or on the blackboard, instead of askance at my classmates. After I had been studying for the priesthood for about three years, I left. I told them that I was going to take a sabbatical, but the truth was that I was succumbing to the evil. It never left me, even as I poured my tainted heart and soul into my studies, begging the Lord take it from me or to help me understand why the evil plagued me so. But those answers never came, and I am but a man, full of weakness. I wandered about for a while, eventually stopping at a gathering in Gold Creek Park, where I heard Morrison's voice and words, forever changing me. That was July 25, 1969: the Seattle Pop Festival in Woodinville WA. I took my first drink that night and did

my first drug during that Doors show. Shortly after I lost my virginity in front of more people than I can remember, Led Zeppelin took the stage and the rest of my life is but a footnote to that night.

