

Buttermilk

by Tabatha Stirling

One of the dark and grizzly evenings that only December in London can offer. I remember it was cold enough for my breath to plume but my hands were gloveless and comfortable.

My head was full of the evening's promise.

It was to be a quick dash to the Supermarket and then later, icy and unforgiving martini's with friends. These were my halcyon thirties - 'financial stable, sexual peaking, have-any-man-or-woman-I-wanted' days. I brimmed with sexual energy and it flowed about me like a buttermilk. Rich and thick, musk-laden and fortified with my own particular brand of woman.

I saw them in the smutty, orange haze of the streetlight.

Two of them were smaller than me and one, well, he was much bigger. I say I saw them but I didn't 'think' them. They were in school uniforms and my head was full of an Irish poet that I had spent the weekend fucking in every conceivable way. He was an arrogant man but had a beautiful cock. Sculpted marble but warm to the touch. And hot to the mouth.

I wish there had been some film music to warn me. But the only sound was the trit-trot, trit-trot of my Billy Goat Gruff boots and the flapping of their crepe soles. They parted to let me through and I remember thinking, 'How sweet, they've been brought up properly'. I heard a bit of sniggering but it seemed so innocent I even smiled indulgently.

Then a hand punched under my skirt and banged between my legs, schoolboy fingers thrusting towards my cunt.

And silence. The moments before the whiplash, before the blow upon the bruise and the gasp before the blood.

The moment when you stop breathing. The shock of it. The awe of it. And then the pain.

He really hurt me, this tall boy in his school uniform. I turned and grabbed the nearest Blazer collar. This one was small and had the face of an angel.

My violator ran. He ran fast.

I clung to this small boy, his friend, and called the police. I was laughing and threatening. I was so full of fury and yet, had never felt so small.

The boy who assaulted me was 14 years old.

I felt oddly betrayed by my boots. The buttermilk robe soured and the fear stayed long after the bruises left.

And London died for me that night.

