

Sailing into Allegory

Part Three

Leaving behind all the troubles we'd had, Virg and I began to feel like sailors again. *Sine Spe* slipped through the waters of the Andaman Sea like she had been reborn.. New adventures lay ahead and we were eager to discover them. Dan navigated us in and around groups of islands, but none of them had been what we were looking for. A few miles North of Phuket, we began the search more intently for the islands we'd seen in our dreams.

We thought we found it, when on a hazy afternoon, the blue mist around an island on our bow, lifted to reveal....

Island, Violet

On the horizon we could see two large islands separated by a distance of over a mile. Each large island was surrounded by smaller ones. Whether large or small, they were forested thick with tall palm trees. Rocky hills on the two larger islands, were visible rising out of the verdant growth. Pointing the bow toward the nearest land before us, we sailed into yet another calm and inviting lagoon, and into our next adventure.

Slowly moving into the protected bay, we could see a community of very large buildings. A shoreline of what must be modern apartment or hotel structures. Most were of brick or concrete, decorated in ornate carvings and statuary. Some had tall classical columns fronting the buildings. These "apartments: stood 5 and 6 stories high, and all had gardens on the top floors. It was apparent that these people were wealthy and flaunted that wealth.

A brightly colored and decorated boat pulled away from the side of a modern quay some distance from us. Approaching *Sine Spe*, a richly dress officer stood at its rail, waved and hailed us. "Welcome! I am the lagoon Pilot and will guide you to our marina's guest slip. We are pleased you have come. If you kindly motor as slow a speed as possible, there will be line handlers waiting to help you moor."

A short run brought us into one of the nicest dockages we'd yet seen. Young uniformed men were waiting, as told, for our lines. Standing at the walkway at the head of the slips, Virg and I guessed, was a delegation of local officials. He and I hoped that any Customs fee wouldn't reflect the richness of the group. They wore colored silk robes and each had ropes of gold and silver beads hanging around their necks. We were impressed with the show of "Officialdom". We shook hands all around, then proceeded down the dock and into the streets of the city. As we walked, Each person we met shook our hands and proclaimed that THEIR city was the finest. No matter where we toured, the people came out and each, in their turn, told us just how great they were, how grand their city was, how rich they were. Virg and I began to wonder if their bragging would ever stop. It didn't !

We stayed in this place several days and no matter what we ate, drank or visited, it was always claimed to be the best. When we asked how such grandeur was maintained, they would just smile and say nothing.

It was the third day of our visit when we found out how the city survived..... Slavery. By accident, we stumbled upon a section of the island that we'd not seen before. Scored of small huts had dozens of men, women and children living in them. We asked our hosts "Who are they?" The head man, we had gotten to know well, told us that "They were the finest slaves they had captured". "Captured?" we asked. "Yes, We have the best of everything and sometimes the people of the far away island come to try to take it away. We capture them and they become the best workers. "

Back on our boat, Virg and I had a long discussion about this "Best of all places". How the people had lost their humanity in order to gain what they thought was better. They had told us about their best sport team, best wines and foods. the prettiest women the strongest men and the smartest children. All of this "Better society" had been built on the backs of slave labor.

Early the next morning, we pulled our mooring lines and quietly slipped out of the "Best" harbor of this "Perfect" island.

We knew that if we didn't leave soon, we too would be caught up and trapped by their conceit. The other island lay just ahead. We wanted to discover what caused those natives to risk becoming slaves to the island we were leaving behind.

The Island we named..... ***"Superbia"***.

It took less than an hour to make the approach to the second island. It too had a quiet, inviting harbor waiting just inside a ring of coral reefs. A large opening in the reef allowed us to slip in on a gentle swell.

Before us was.....

Island , Green

Inside the bay we saw what looked like a poor imitation of the island we'd left behind. Brick and stone buildings that were shoddy. There had been an attempt to build them tall, but most had fallen into heaps of rubble. What vegetation we could see, looked withered or dead.. A little boat heading our way was coming from a rickety looking pier, Rough looking men rowing badly seemingly following the orders of a tall thin man who was standing at the bow.. As the boat drew near, the thin man shouted "You got a nice looking boat there. I wish we had one like it". Virg turned to me and whispered, " What the hell is THAT all about?" I shrugged. The man grabbed the toe rail and asked, " Will you be planning to stay here for a while? ". I answered that we were travelers and hope to be there for a very short time. The thin man nodded affirmatively. "Come into town as soon as you wish" he said as the boat pulled away.

After we cleaned up the boat and put on our “Visiting“ clothes, we pushed off in our inflatable and motored toward the pier.

No one met us there, so we began walking toward what we thought must be the center of the village. Occasionally, one of the villagers would lean out of a window or doorway and speak. The comments were almost always the same. A wish they had such “Fine clothes” as we wore, or “How come you got such a beautiful boat? “. They seem to be jealous of everything about us.

Our short walk ended in the village square. The moment we arrived, people poured out of those run down buildings we had seen. The thin man found us again and in a loud voice he asked, “Where do you come from? “. I answered that we were from the United States of America, and were cruising the islands. I went on to say that we’d just come from the nearby island. The crowd began a kind of a moan, then a babble. Virg and I heard words like “Those people have so much”. “Why can’t we be rich like them?” “They always get the best, we get the worst” “We send our finest men there and they never come back”, “They always say they are better than us”

What had been a mumble grew into shouts. A chorus of voices began chanting, “We want what they have ! “

I began to feel very uncomfortable and whispered to Virg, “Let’s get out of here ! “. He answered, “Quickly..Back to the boat, Now”

Slowly at first, then running, we got to our dinghy with the crowd not far behind.

Virg pulled the start cord and the engine roared into life. We left the beach just as the crowd arrived. All the time they were shouting, “We want what you have”.

Virg started *Sine Spe’s* engine and I hauled up the anchor. As we got underway, dozens of small row boats were coming from the pier and shore. We left them in our wake as we made the reef entrance, full throttle.

We were back in the safe and clean sea.

We wrote on our chart and in the Log the island’s name... *Invidia”*

Calm winds met us and we set sail on a broad reach. It was like that for several days.

During those days and nights, Virg and I discussed and digested the events of the past days.

We both agreed that we should be cautious when visiting the next island, If. Indeed, there was another island . Then one day, the wind died.

Off to our Starboard bow rose an island’s sandy shore. An hour past as we motored by a series of small villages. We could see some of the inhabitants doing what seemed to us as... Play.

Both of us agreed that their play could mean a peaceful population.

So.... the course was set for the first promising bay we could find.

Island, Dark Blue

Like the others before, a beautiful lagoon came into view and we turned our boat into the calm waters of an opening in a reef.

Here was a larger village than those we'd sailed past. Rows of quaint huts ran along the length of the bay. We heard music from some kind of harp and voices singing. Perhaps, finally, we'd found the paradise Virg and I had been looking for.

As soon as we were inside the lagoon, the music stopped and laughter rose from the houses and streets. A fleet of canoes broke away from the beach and singing men and women paddled their way to us. We set anchor as soon as we could and just in time. Our boat was "invaded" by laughing and singing people. All were of different nationalities and all were handsome. We were astonished to see they wore little or no clothing. Some totally naked. We felt overdressed and out of place. Both Virg and I became embarrassed when the men and women alike, began to run their hands up and down our bodies. All the time making "Ooo" and "Ahhh" sounds.

Then as things were getting a bit too "steamy", a loud horn sounded from the shore. With a great deal of giggling and singing, every one of those overly friendly natives...jumped back into their canoes and paddled away.

Both of us sat in the cockpit for a few minutes, saying nothing, then from the beach we heard music and laughing begin again. I looked at Virg and he nodded. We launched the inflatable, started the engine and headed for that music.

What met us at the beach could only be called shocking, World travelers we might be, still the sight we saw that evening made us cringe.

Along the length of the beach, nude bodies of both sexes were entwined.

The Kama Sutra, in all of its unrestrained passion was being practiced before our eyes.

Partners changed and new positions were attempted. I could only stare in disbelief.

As Virg and I walked along the beach, some of the "actors" in this carnal display reached out touching, caressing and fondling us. I must admit, I was feeling the effects and looked to Virg for help. He too was beginning to succumb to those advances. Using all the will power I could muster, I grabbed him and we both ran away into the nearby jungle and away from the licentious natives.

Well after dark, we made our way back to the beach. The crowd of revelers had gone and a quiet was in the village. We assumed that the exertions of the day had tired the villagers to the extent that they were now asleep.

As we walked back to our dinghy, what must have been the village elder came out of one of the larger huts. In perfect English he spoke. "Perhaps you gentlemen would like some food and refreshments now?" . We hadn't eaten since earlier that day and were indeed starved. I was terribly thirsty as well. "Follow me into my home and you will be given all that you need" .

With those words, the old man turned and disappeared into the hut. We followed .

The inside of the hut was brightly lit by torches and some kind of oil candles. The candles gave off a perfume that made my head swim. Soon, some of the young we'd seen on the beach earlier that day, came into the room carrying huge plates of fruits and meats of all sorts. Three of the women carried large jars of liquids that we soon found to be some kind of sweet wine.

Everyone sang or recited poetry. It's though we were some kind of special guests and they entertained us late into the night. I'm not sure whether it was that sweet wine or the delicious foods, or that sensuous perfume, but my eyes became heavy and soon I fell asleep

Sounds of laughter and music woke me. I'd slept the night through.

I raised my head and found that I was still in the house of the leader and entangled by many bodies, all stark nude. I too was missing my clothes.

I heard groans and saw the head of Virg come rising out of a pile of similarly unclad humanity. I pulled my arm out from under a woman, pointed the way out of the hut. He and I found our clothes after a quick search under and around the crowd. Quietly we left that hut and ran back to where our inflatable had been. The previous day's carnal circus had already begun again..

As we ran, we heard groans of pleasure and laughing up and down the beach.

He and I found the dinghy, pushed away from the beach and quietly paddled back to,

Sine Spe, our boat.

Raising sails, we ghosted out of the bay and back into the open sea.

While neither Virg nor I would call ourselves "saints" nor are we prudish, but the prospect of spending any amount of time on that shameless island was too much to take. We had escaped a "Prison" of sorts. A prison of perverse pleasures.

Logged and marked on our charts, the island was to be known as.....

"Luxuria"

End- Part Three