



The Weekend for Sex (extract)

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When Old One asked Ramya if she would go away with him for the weekend to Pondicherry, she said 'Yes' immediately, as if she were only waiting to be asked. He booked a fancy room in a resort and told her he couldn't wait to have her in his arms and that the few days before the weekend would be pure hell.

Ramya imagined the long drive along the East Coast Road, the resort, the city and the entire weekend to be tinged generously with shimmery, lazy shades of gold and white. Like she imagined the sex would be. Shoulderblades golden, her fingertips that clutched his back white, her toes up in the air golden, wisps of eyeballs white, whispery hair on forearms golden, the sheets white, billowing curtains golden, the body warming, hotting up golden, the walls white, the ceiling white.

She had been to Pondicherry just once as a child; she didn't remember much about the place. Just the pin drop silence of the Aurobindo Ashram, its huge flower arrangements, and all the black, hard rocks on the beach. She supposed she would hardly see anything but the walls of their rooms, and the planes of his body. The thought bleached a little of the gold and white from her painting.

She put together outfits meticulously, intent to seduce. Standard black lingerie, a two-second unravellable wraparound skirt to be worn with nothing underneath, a white velcro shirt and a pink whore bra. She had picked up the bra three years ago, when she had gone shopping with her best friend. Both of them had agreed that the bra was 'wicked'. It was a gaudy, satiny, pink and black that would have looked right in *Moulin Rouge*. She loved it on sight, but hadn't worn it even once. She hadn't slept

with anyone with the imagination or the sense of humour to appreciate the bra. It was special. It required the man to look at sex as an adventure, as positively fun. Guilty men wouldn't laugh in bed.

When Old One picked her up, she was wearing the white velcro shirt. She got into the car, shut the door, turned to him and said 'Hi'.

He grinned and said, 'Yumm...'

She couldn't help but smile back.

They hit the East Coast Road. The sun was hiding behind clouds. He was doing a steady sixty with an occasional hand on her thigh between gears. Conversation was limited to what excuses each one had given their respective families.

She had beaded an elaborate lie to get away from her parents. It involved asking her father to get her train tickets to Bangalore, and asking her mother suggestions for a wedding present to a Bengali that would represent Tamil tradition.

His was an office retreat at Karaikudi.

'How on earth did you come up with that place?' she asked.

As an answer, he reached over and slid the tips of his fingers against her earlobe. A swishing, flowing sensation bubbled up from the pit of her stomach and planted goosebumps all over her.

A smile was pasted on her face for the next half hour. She glanced at him often, studied his features. The well-bred posture, the sensitive mouth. She occasionally stroked his hand and kissed his fingers. She decided to put the first phase of the planned seduction into action. She opened the top velcro button of her shirt. The ripping sound made him take his eyes off the road. She looked at him with the hint of a smile, her fingers skimming the top of her breasts. The pink of the bra was just visible.

His hand reached a breast. She pushed it aside. Then, she ripped open the second button. 'What are you doing to me?' he moaned, then turned the car sharply and parked between two trees. Switching off the engine, he reached across and grabbed her.

Eyes closed, her explorations into the rich, soft, well of his mouth made her moan with satisfaction. It wasn't everyday that you got to kiss like this. But when she opened her eyes, she saw him frantically scanning the surroundings through the windows to see if anyone was watching. It became disconcerting to kiss someone who was intently looking out for voyeurs.

She pushed him back and climbed into his lap. Facing him, she ripped her shirt further open, showcasing her glorious tramp bra. But his eyes weren't widening with pleasure and excitement. His eyes weren't on her at all. They were looking around her, through the windows. She slid off him, buttoned up, brushed the hair away from her face.

'What happened, darling?' he asked.

'Nothing. Maybe we'll save this for later. There might be people around.'

'Ok.'

He fired the ignition, and they climbed back on the road. Snatches of grey-tinted scenery fled past. Thatched hovels. Women carrying loaded baskets. Staring children. Stretches of sand. Boats and nets. Teak trees.

She had heard about these woods. Young girls were kidnapped in alarming frequency and raped, killed and buried in these woods by gangs of men. The surrounding fishing villages were unlawful and violent.

Ramya imagined being chased by a gang of ruffians. The clawing of nails, the ripping of clothes, the screams, the dirty language, the hyena laughter... Was real rape just like the scenes in movies? There would be bad breath for sure, and greasy hair. And violence. She imagined being kicked in the stomach or crotch, or being slapped across the face repeatedly till she bled from the corner of her mouth. She forced her attention back to the man next to her.