

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Madam Lydia

Philippa Masters

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THE AWAKENING OF LYDIA
LYDIA IN THE HAREM
LYDIA IN THE BORDELLO

Madam Lydia

Philippa Masters



Foreword

THE STORY OF my Great Aunt Lydia continued to delight and astonish me as I sat reading the neatly written piles of manuscript. In my mind, visions of the lady I had known, a typical example of a prim Victorian lady, strict, and smelling of lavender, alternated and contrasted wildly with the images of the light-hearted, humorous, and deliciously lascivious girl depicted in her saga.

Could these two really be one and the same person? Could the tiny, silver-haired woman who had always filled me with a kind of respectful awe, who was held in high regard by all who knew her, and who looked as though she could never have committed even the tiniest of sins, really be the girl in the story; the girl who debunked what she disparaged as 'proper society', who reveled in the delights of sex, who knew and joyously indulged in every trick and naughtiness there was?

Hard as it was for me to believe, it had to be true, for other evidence confirmed it, and the manuscript was definitely in her own copperplate handwriting.

I had followed her amazing story from when she had been a trembling, innocent sixteen-year-old girl in South Africa, 'awakened' by the tribe of Africans who had kidnapped her. (Told in *The Awakening of Lydia*.) I had shared with her the delights of her shipboard adventures when sailing back to England, and her voluptuous experiences when staying with the local Turkish ruler while the ship's engine underwent repairs (*Lydia in the Harem*).

In the third part of her story, *Lydia in the Bordello*, curiosity, bad luck, good luck, and strength in the face of the hypocrisy she scorned, caused wild and dramatic changes in Lydia's life. From the cherished daughter of a British colonial official, she became an outcast, forced to stand on her own two feet in a hostile and predatory society. With a strength of character and sense of humour I found staggering, she not only met the challenge, but built for herself a whole new life using the only qualification society had provided for her – herself.

That the little old lady I had thought so prim and proper could once have been what she called a *fille de joie* – and to judge from her tale an enthusiastic and popular one – astounded me. Now, as I read on, my astonishment, and my admiration too, grew further.

The circles within which she moved, and the aspects of society she reveals, show that the world of late Victorian and early Edwardian times was far from that which history books suggest. 'Sex societies' for the upper classes; live 'performances' for the enjoyment of salacious audiences; 'house parties', 'private engagements' and flourishing brothels; even the 'training' of upper class teenagers, are all described in simple, common sense and non-judgemental terms. And it is a revelation!

Philippa Masters.

One

I WAS OFF on my first private engagement as a *fille de joie*, one of Lady Amelia Amberson's 'professional girls'. It had been arranged by Karl, my procurer and Lady Amelia's partner in running her bordello, the *Silken Web*. Karl always arranged these engagements, in which we girls went to the home of our client, or to his hotel, for an evening and night of paid pleasuring. He had already sent Kate out on a couple, and this was my debut, as it were.

As was, apparently, often the case, my unknown punter had particular tastes. I was dressed rather young. My skirts came not much below my knees; the lacy edges of my pantalettes showed underneath, and between them and my little button shoes I had on striped cotton hose. My hair was parted in the middle, and held in bunches over my ears, I wore a floppy felt bonnet like a girl hardly out of school, and no cosmetics.

The only feature that made me look other than a young girl was the way my blouse was fitted tightly to play up my breasts, which bobbed and jiggled about beneath the cotton quite visibly, because Karl had forbidden me a corset. That the effect was as naughty as Karl intended was soon shown.

Albert, Amelia's groom, was to drive me to my assignation. He well knew what business I was about. Though he had first seen me as Lady Amelia's guest, he now knew I had become one of her girls. The way he looked at me as he handed me into the carriage told me clearly that any reservations he may have had about trying it on with me when I first came to the house had long disappeared.

His eyes took in every bit of me, and especially my unconstrained breasts. I almost giggled, for I was sure that he was tempted to feel me up as I bent to get into the carriage. He did not, though he did keep turning to look at me through the little trap-door used for communication between passenger and driver as the horses clip-clopped steadily along.

I was quite wound up about my engagement, and what the client would want of me, which Karl had left rather vague, and was not really paying attention to the drive or to Albert. Thus, I was somewhat startled when the carriage came to a stop in the deep shadow of a side-street, and bounced as Albert leapt off the driving seat and climbed into the carriage with me.

I could see next to nothing but I did not need to, for his hands were suddenly everywhere!

‘Oh heavens no, Albert,’ I squealed. ‘Don’t! You’ll mess up my clothes. Oh! Stop it! Get your hand out of there! Oh!’

I was tumbled back across the seat. His hot lips were seeking mine. A hand was scrabbling at my blouse. Another was already under my skirt, pulling at my underwear.

‘Oh, Lily, Lily,’ he panted, using my professional name. ‘I’ve got to have you! You’re a tasty little piece, and I’ve got to have you or burst!’

I had to fight him off. I even had to give his face a slap before he would desist. I could not do with going to my assignation all hot from Albert. I managed to get him off, and cooled him a bit by promising he could have a nice shag later, but it was a sullen Albert who drove me the rest of the way.

With a final smoothing of my blouse and skirt, and pulling my cape close about me, I gave a pull at the bell-handle. I heard the bell ring some way off, and waited. It was a grand, three-storey house in a curving Nash terrace. I ran over in

my head the few things Karl had told me. A rather superior looking footman in a handsome uniform opened the door.

‘Good evening,’ I said, looking down as though I were shy. ‘Pray tell me, is my benefactor Mr John Thomas at home?’

The footman remained impassive, though he obviously knew what business I was about. He stepped back, swung the door wide, and gestured me to enter. At the far end of the palatial, marble-floored lobby, stood my punter. He was a balding man of at least sixty, with a sharp nose upon which were perched brass-framed *pince-nez*. I felt a flush of relief that he was not too unappealing!

He threw his arms wide. ‘Fanny!’ he called. ‘Fanny, my darling! Run to your beloved uncle! Let me see you!’

It was all clear to me now; Karl’s advice, my costume, everything. My punter was, clearly, a man who enjoyed fantasy and play-acting, and in this scenario I was to be coy and call him ‘uncle’ as a young lady might her beloved benefactor. Feeling silly, I scampered with skipping steps across the marble tiles towards him, putting a wide smile on my face, and spreading my arms.

He grabbed me to himself, hugged me tightly and kissed me on my cheek. I noticed that he had been chewing on a *cachou*, so at least his breath would not be off-putting. He put his hands on my shoulders and held me off from him to look at me.

‘My, my, but how you have grown,’ he said, unbuttoning my cape while looking only at where my breasts jiggled against my thin blouse. ‘You are quite the lady now.’

This, I thought, was likely to be an interesting evening. Taking me by the hand, and swinging my arm as though I really were his young friend, ‘Uncle John Thomas’ led me through into a beautifully furnished parlour. Heavy drapes of blue velvet shrouded the windows. Neat little tables stood beside deeply cushioned armchairs and a vast settee. A fire burned brightly in an iron and marble fireplace. Flowers

(Flowers at this time of year! He must be wealthy indeed!) spilled out of vases.

‘Uncle John Thomas’ sat himself down in an armchair, still holding my hand so that I was obliged to stand close.

There was a brief moment of complicity in which he looked at me with no play-acting, for there was business to be conducted. He drew from an inner pocket the envelope which contained my fee. I took it and stowed it in my reticule before once again becoming the fluttering thing he wanted me to be. It was a game he was obviously experienced in, for with a glance to the envelope as I put it away, and another at the way my breasts strained my blouse, he went back to acting.

‘Now, my dear little Fanny,’ he said, smiling almost unctuously, his eyes flicking from my face to my bosom. ‘Tell your uncle what you have been doing with yourself all this while since I last saw you. Have you been a good girl?’

I guessed straightaway that I was in for a game of verbal battledore and shuttlecock, for he was going to talk as though we had known each other for years, and my job, if I was to please him, was to pick up his hints and respond in the right loving-admirer manner.

‘Oh yes, sir. I have been as good as gold.’ I beamed down at him wide eyed, and swung my shoulders from side to side, as a shy young girl might.

His face became stern. ‘A really good girl? Not naughty at all?’

I was in a bit of a quandary. How was I supposed to respond? I ventured that what he wanted was for me to have been at least a little naughty; why else would he have framed his question thus? Therefore I made myself be all shy and guilty, and looked at the floor, and laced my fingers together below my waist, and swung my shoulders more, but said nothing.

A gleam came into his eye.

‘Aha!’ The tone of his voice told me I had ventured right. He was pretending to be strict, but was actually getting stirred up. He went on. ‘So! My little friend has secrets from her benefactor. Come; sit here. You must confess all.’ And he pulled me down on to his lap.

He was keeping his face straight, but his eyes told of his delighted excitement. I knew not where the odd conversation was supposed to go next, so kept silent and pretended to be shy.

He bounced me on his knee a little, incidentally getting me more comfortably settled up against the hardness I could detect within his breeches. One arm was about my waist, and his free hand was on the arm of the chair.

‘Have you been out in the woods with those naughty farm labourers again?’ he said. ‘Have you allowed them liberties?’

I guessed his game. I was to be a naughty girl confessing to a caring elder. He would use the occasion to excuse whatever ‘liberties’ he was himself about to take with me.

‘Yes, sir.’ I said, leaning my head against his shoulder as though in repentance. ‘But only a little bit, honestly!’ It seemed to please him.

‘And did you let them do this?’ The hand that had been on the arm of the chair was suddenly cupping my left breast.

‘Yes, sir,’ I whispered, pleased that I had guessed the game correctly.

‘And this?’ He began to knead my breast, and tease my nipple. ‘Did you let them do this?’

‘Yes, sir. I’m sorry, sir.’

‘Surely you are not going to tell me you let those fellows do this?’ And with admirably skillful fingers, he unbuttoned my blouse, and got to my bare breasts.

It became quite hard to play my assigned role. All his questions demanded a positive response, and he used them to get my blouse pulled out of my skirt and flung wide, and my skirt up above my knees, and his hand rummaging

inside my pantalettes. And all the time I was having to say that, yes, I had let 'those ruffians' – whoever they were supposed to be – do this, and do that.

There was a considerable element of humour in what he was doing, what we were doing, for was I not playing up to him? At the same time, though, the more stirred up he got in playing out his pantomime, the more aroused I was myself becoming.

When his hand became active between my thighs, I parted them for him. When a finger slipped into me, and a thumb teased my cherry, I was hard put to it to respond to his inevitable question with 'Yes, sir, yes! I did, and I am very naughty!'

It was almost a relief to get down to the proper business of the evening; to the real reason he was paying me to be there. He slipped me off his lap to kneel on the rug. My blouse was as much off as on. My felt bonnet had gone I knew not where. He stood up. Our positions ensured that his hips were close above my face.

'Did those fellows show you this?' he barked, his throat tense as he ripped open his breeches. His cock was of moderate size, but circumcised (which I like) and with a shining, purple bulb.

'Oh no, sir,' I squealed in mock horror. 'Well, they did, but theirs were not near as big as yours!'

'You wicked girl!' he hissed. 'You are too naughty for words! What else did you let them do?'

The game ended up with me admitting that, in the woods I had let them put their 'things' up me, and with 'Uncle John Thomas' telling me that I was a strumpet and should be spanked. Then he walked out of the room!

How strange men are!

He had paid for my services, and could have just shagged me; shagged me as many times as he liked, or had the strength for. Instead, he needed to go through this game of

benefactor and grateful beneficiary in order to get stirred up, and had then left me.

How silly! He would not have been a bad shag to look at him, and the cock that had pressed against my bottom when I sat on his lap had not been insignificant. In addition, I was quite ready to stay until morning, as much because I was quite stirred up as because I was being paid for it. He could have had half a dozen shags if he'd liked!

Instead, I was left to gather my rumpled clothes about me, get up off the floor, and seek out the footman. I would need a cab to get me home, for Albert was not due to collect me until morning.

The footman had been very dignified when he had let me in, and his face had borne a hint of disapproval. Now, his expression was very different.

A girl knows instantly when a man's mind is set on being naughty with her. This man had about him that tension, that sort of preening hopefulness, which suggested he was hot for me, and his eyes flicked over my blouse with open salaciousness.

He was quite an imposing figure in his uniform; tall and straight, with broad shoulders and fine legs. Only his complexion, which showed the ravages of acne long cured, detracted from his image.

He stood as tall as he could, and a little closer than strictly necessary. It was obvious what he wanted. I wondered whether being shagged by the footman was included in the fee which was safely tucked into my reticule.

As he led me across the marble floor of the lobby, the footman was edging me towards a large table against the wall and to one side. My mind was working rapidly. He had not said anything, not asked for it. Then again, he knew what sort of girl I was playing; knew what I had come here for. Perhaps he did the same with every girl who came here, for surely I was not the first. Even so, it seemed pretty

impertinent of him to assume that he could get a ride, as it were, on the back of his master's money.

Then I suddenly realised what was really afoot. I noticed that a door, just beyond the table towards which the footman was edging me, was a few inches ajar. Through the gap I espied the glint of *pince-nez*!

The game was not over. My punter had a second game to play. He was going to watch! Mentally, I got myself back into the part of 'Little Fanny'. Obviously, the new game was about the footman having his way with me 'against my wishes' on the table there, for the delectation of his watching master. How was the game to be played? Was I to be such a naughty girl that I fancied the servant? Or was I to play at being sweet and reluctant?

A hand suddenly groping my bottom gave me my answer. I squealed and leapt forward, partly in genuine surprise, for the hand had felt me up very thoroughly between my buttocks. I spun round, putting on an expression of outraged innocence, at the same time getting myself neatly between the corner of the table and the wall so that he had me trapped.

'Sir!' I yelped. 'What has come over you?'

What had come over him was unconcealed lust, for his face showed that although this might be a game, he fully intended to play it to the hilt.

A strong arm went about my waist. I was crushed to him. A big hand landed on my breast. Hot kisses cut off my cries of protest. I pretended to be terrified. I pretended to struggle – and did actually struggle a bit when he tore open my blouse, for that was going a bit too far, I thought – but let him get me against the table.

As I was pushed back on to the polished table top, the punter got an excellent view of my breasts through my torn and gaping blouse. My skirts were thrown up to my waist.

'Oh, please don't! Please don't!' I cried, continuing to play my part as an innocent being ravished. 'Oh, sir, you terrify

me!’

He got my legs up, and was fumbling inside my pantalettes. He began to tug at the waist of my skirt. Then I had an idea to give my punter an even better view than he might have expected.

‘Oh, sir!’ I yelped. ‘Please don’t tear my clothes! You have already ripped my blouse. Don’t tear my skirt too! I will get into awful trouble with Uncle John Thomas. Please don’t tear my clothes. If you will stop molesting me I’ll be a good girl. Honest I will. I’ll take them off for you, I really will. Please get up off me.’

For a moment the footman looked puzzled, then he grinned as he realised my ploy. He let up on me. I tugged at the fastenings of my skirt and pushed it down about my hips. He did the rest, pulling it right off me and tossing it aside. I sat up and undid the few remaining buttons of my blouse.

‘Do I have to?’ I said, all timid and pretending to hesitate. He nodded eagerly, and I slipped the torn garment from my shoulders and held it out to him, looking down shyly, and half covering my exposed breasts with my forearm. ‘You will not be rough with me, will you?’ I asked, reclining again upon the table top, which was cold and hard against my bare back.

He began to untie the laces of my pantalettes, tugging off first the right leg, then the left.

‘Oh no!’ I cried. ‘Not those too! You will have me naked! Oh no! Oh sir, what are you doing! Oh, you are so wicked!’

What he was doing was lifting my legs wide apart and burying his head between them. I adore it when a man does that! And this man was greedy! It was as if he was trying to bury his whole face within me. And he had such a tongue! It got very difficult to remember that all this was for the benefit of the man peeping through the gap in the door.

The footman got my legs over his shoulders. One arm was around my hips, the hand feeling down for my mound. The

other hand was palping my buttocks, spreading and kneading them, even teasing into my bottom-hole.

He rasped his hot tongue the full length of my folds, which were already moist and seeping. He had got his fingers to me by now, and was holding my lips spread. His tongue got to every delicate membrane, even finding and exploring my burning entrance.

I had ceased acting a part. I had already been wound up by the game with 'Uncle John Thomas', but I had not come off. I did now. The footman's tongue and lips were working on me overwhelmingly. I was rolling my head upon the hard table top, and teasing my own nipples. When, at the same shattering instant, he thrust a finger into both my nether orifices and sucked almost painfully hard on my clitoris, I cried aloud, and shuddered into such a come as set my hips bucking.

He did not let up on me, either. When he withdrew his mouth from me so that he could stand up, letting my trembling legs slide off his shoulders and down his arms, his hands continued to work me. Still teasing and fingering me with one hand, he fumbled at his breeches with the other.

His cock bounced forth. It was handsome and stalwart. And heavens how I wanted it! Somehow I managed to remember who I was supposed to be.

'No! Not that!' I cried in a small voice. 'Do not do that to me! It is too big. You will hurt me! Oh, no, you are up me. You wicked man. Oh, you do shove so! It is in me to my ribs! Oh faster, faster! Oh sir! Please! Oh! Oh!'

He was deliciously vigorous, and thrust at me hard and slow. The words I called out had been half false. My continued coming was very real. It had been as good a shag as I had enjoyed in a while. I only hoped that my watching punter had got as much pleasure out of it as I had.

His duty and me thoroughly done, the footman stepped back from me, put himself away and did up his breeches.

‘And let that be a lesson to you for being naughty!’ he said – his only words during the whole engagement.

He walked off with surprising dignity, and I was left to scramble off the table and into my clothes. I guessed that this, too, was part of tonight’s strange game. Thus, I made something of a production of it, pretending to be upset, gathering all my garments together and putting them on the table before beginning to get dressed, staying naked save for my striped hose and boots for as long as possible, so that my punter should benefit.

When at last I was ready to depart, the self-same footman who had just fucked me to a finish was at the door, ready to hand me into the hansom cab that had been sent for to take me home. To see the dispassionate, even superior, manner with which he conducted me to the cab, you would have thought I really was just a visitor, and not a hired girl who had just spent two hours or more playing sex games!

The cab driver at least knew I had not been just a visitor. Perhaps cab drivers see enough of London life after dark to know it all. Perhaps this one had taken girls from my client’s house before. Or it might have been that he knew, from my saying of Amelia’s address, what game I was on.

Whichever it was, my evening ended with him rejecting the idea of the fare, for which I was fumbling in my reticule, and climbing into the cab with me.

‘Don’t worry about that, ducks,’ he said, reaching for his fly. ‘Give us a nice little gobble, and we’ll call it quits!’

I stared at him in amazement. Had I heard right? I had! The cabby had sat himself down beside me, his trousers agape, and a very stiff cock was staring up at me. I stared from the single eye of his ruby plum to the two twinkling eyes in his grinning face. Suddenly the ridiculousness of it all hit me. I burst into a fit of giggles, and it was some while before I recovered myself enough to shuffle round in my seat and bob my head down.

He tasted surprisingly clean and fresh. Towards the end he got a bit too excited and I had to push him back lest he choke me, but I 'paid my fare' to his satisfaction – a great deal of satisfaction, to judge from the amount I had to swallow! – and at last I wended my tired way through the front door of what was now my home.

I compensated Albert, who was meant to collect me, later that afternoon, by the way, and it was rather nice for he is a vigorous chap, although Kate got a little jealous for a while.

With seeming inevitability, Karl was on hand to welcome me. He regarded me quizzically as I entered, but relaxed at my smile and weary shrug.

I found that I had developed a warmth of feeling for Karl. True, he was now what can only be called my procurer. True also that he had arranged this evening's work and knew, if not in detail, what I had been about and what I had done, and had done to me. But his attitude was so different from that of most men I had known.

Not for him the secretive little attempts to get in with a girl. Not for him the treating of a girl as a silly thing who could be conned into a tumble, or if not could be boasted about as if she had. He was perfectly comfortable with the fact that I was now, to all intents and purposes, a whore, a girl who shagged for money, and did not look down on me for it.

We were friends and business partners. More than that, he treated me with a companionable good humour I had rarely come across in a man before.

Now, as I smiled and smoothed a weary hand across my brow, he handed me a glass of brandy as a restorative, and told me that a hot bath was this very minute being drawn for me. Knowing our arrangement, and determined to act professionally, I rummaged in my pocket and pulled out the envelope containing my fee.

It was twenty pounds; four crisp, white fivers. Karl took one, as per my arrangement with Amelia, and smiled as he folded the others back into my hand. He did not say it, but I could see regard and admiration in his face. I had become a 'professional girl', and had come back from my first private engagement with the money, and paid up my dues, and all was well.

I felt almost smug at my success in this new world as I lowered myself into the wonderful, scented bath. This life, I thought, might not be too bad at all.

It was indeed not a bad life, except by the moral standards of so-called proper society, of course. Amelia and Karl were relaxed employers, and stuck to their bargains, and neither Karl nor Paul were over-demanding with regard to sharing my bed. They did visit me at night, of course, and they were welcomed. They were, after all, excellent and sensitive lovers, and always made sure I had at least one come before they left me.

Another sign of their sensitivity and understanding was that they never tried it on if I had spent the evening at the *Silken Web*, Amelia's bordello, or had been out to a private engagement. I was especially grateful for this on my bordello nights, for after a girl has sucked or shagged a dozen men in the course of one short evening, she needs to rest a little.

I became positively happy in my new life, and I know that Emily and Kate did too. We spent a great deal of time together, for our days were pretty well our own.

We would meet for breakfast at about ten in the morning. We would drift down to our meal clad in those self-same Chinese silk robes Amelia had given us, not caring that they slipped about quite a lot, and knowing that those who saw the parts of us which were thus exposed – a breast here, a thigh there – did not care, nor judge, either.

Indeed, one of the most noticeable things about the whole of Amelia's establishment was that everything and anything seemed to be taken in stride. Not the butler, not the footman, not the maid, nor the housekeeper, seemed to care a jot that there were three young women about the place who habitually went around in the most shocking state of undress, whispering and giggling together and generally acting the fool.

And we did indeed act the fool. It was as though we were schoolgirls together. We laughed and whispered and gossiped. We snorted over silly comments about dear old Bailey, the butler, and his slow walk, or some punter with an oddity we had shagged last night. We played tricks on each other, like the time Kate had gone to answer the doorbell, the maid being busy, and just as she threw the door wide, Emily – hiding behind the hall stand – tugged her robe and made it fall right off. Oh how she squealed as she was suddenly naked in front of complete strangers!

It was not all silliness and laughter, of course. Karl made sure of that. Although friendly and as relaxed as could be, he was ever the businessman. After all, he had three new and popular girls on his hands and he made sure we were profitable by arranging private engagements for us whenever he could; they never paid less than twenty pounds, and even a busy night at the bordello might not net more than fifteen.

Even girls as ready for sex as we three were appreciated that twenty pounds for a night with usually just one man was better business, and much less tiring, than fifteen pounds for a dozen quickies – no matter how odd the desires of that one man were!

And some were odd indeed, as you shall learn.

Karl also began to arrange afternoon engagements for us, in hotels or at business or diplomatic premises. These were

shorter than our evening engagements, seldom more than a couple of hours, but paid just as well. One met an odd assortment of punters on such occasions; furtive little men, extravagantly carefree men, men who got you to meet them in a public area before they took you off, so that they could later boast about giving you a good fucking.

The two things they had in common were that they demanded of their girl the most extravagant and noisy comes (pretty well always faked), and most of them avoided her eyes when handing her the envelope with the cash in it before business began.

Let me hasten to add, lest you think me too disparaging of my clients, that most of them were actually rather likeable. As the months passed I found myself, like Kate and Emily, building up a nice clientele of regulars, and developing a pleasant pattern of living.

We always rose late, as I have said, and took our time over breakfast and our preparations for the day. If one or another of us had a client booked for luncheon and the afternoon, she would bathe and dress early, and depart for her assignation, while the others would still drift about half undressed until it was time for them to prepare for their own engagements.

We pretty well decided our own routines, except in so far as Karl arranged our private assignations. We all knew that we owed him a debt, and never refused such engagements. We went decreasingly to Amelia's bordello, though sometimes all three of us felt the need for a night of simple shagging, especially if we had just had a series of odd clients who required acting or other little performances.

Two

THE FIRST MONTHS of the year 1900 were momentous ones. The newly titled and rapturously happy Mrs Felicity Nasserri went off to Egypt with her husband. Somehow, Karl arranged for the solicitor who was my guardian to get papers that gave Tiliu's presence in England legality, and she straight away married her beloved Sharpe, and joined him on his sea voyages. The war in South Africa was on the turn, with Kimberley and Ladysmith, and later on Mafeking, all having their sieges raised.

Not least momentous were the developments in my own life, and what I began to learn about myself.

The party to celebrate my eighteenth birthday, or rather the parties, for there were two of them, were what began to set me off.

On my actual birthday - February 14th, as though St Valentine had chosen it on purpose - I travelled down to Portsmouth. It was lovely to see Alice and Tiliu again, even though I had seen them only a couple of weeks earlier at Felicity's wedding. It was all the more delightful because Captain Prendergast's ship was in port, so Alice had her husband back for a while, Tiliu had her Sharpe, and of course dear William and First Officer Donaldson were also on hand.

We had a splendid supper party, which led to rather naughty revels, and at last to me getting yet another insight into the kind of person I really am.

The thing actually began with Alice's interest in my clothes. They were in the latest London mode, and she

enthused about my narrow waist, bell skirt, and leg-o'-mutton sleeves. Being in the flush of excited friendship and, I have to confess, a little on the tipsy side, the conversation soon got around to my underthings, and it was not long before I was showing them how neat and diaphanous my silk stockings were, and demonstrating how cunning the idea of suspenders rather than garters was.

The face of Alice's husband showed me how universal is the fascination men have for that little gap between the tops of a girl's stockings and the hems of her knickers, especially when it is set off by the line of a lacy black suspender. I found myself oddly thrilled as he dragged his eyes away from what I was displaying to glance meaningfully at his wife. He at least would not be going straight to sleep this night!

Soon, and with no active discouragement from our four male companions you may be sure, I was taking off my frock, and as I did so I found myself becoming more and more stirred up. I was down to my very revealing underthings in the company of people fully dressed. I liked their eyes on me, and especially the way the men were getting hot. I willingly paraded up and down, emphasising the sway of my hips and pulling my shoulders back so that my breasts were prominent.

Even though these were all old friends and lovers, and we knew each other's bodies intimately, I was getting excited by parading for them half naked. Obviously, there is a strong element of the exhibitionist in me!

By the time Alice went off with her husband, and Tiliu with Sharpe, I was as aroused as anybody. Just like old times I was left alone with William and Donaldson. The three of us had spent so many delectable times together aboard ship that there was no urgency, except that I was as randy as my two men obviously were.