



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I have never, really, cared too much for Australians, finding them rather uncouth and vaunty – and that is being very generous to this race, which was descended from rather questionable ancestry. Australians tend to speak in a very strange way, you know, having forgotten real English and, instead, employing some kind of antipodean accent, which is very difficult to understand for educated people, such as I and Grandpa. I suppose that, when one's roots are founded in dirt, one can only be expected to think in terms of worms and slugs and things that people of delicate persuasion would prefer not to consider. I suppose, also, that that is the result and their heritage: Australians are, all, descendents of English criminals, you know. But the latest piece of information that I have on this riff-raff society is that it is going to permit a brothel to become a public company. I mean to say, my dear, what is the world coming to? I assume, my dear Grandchild, that, when one is mendicant, or approaching that unfortunate pecuniary state, one has to be inventive and innovative in order to survive. Hongkong, of course, could never follow the lead of the Australian Government, permitting that Melbourne cathouse, which is called, The Daily Planet, to be listed on an Australian stock market. I wonder at the reason that it is called, The Daily Planet, because, in the comic books of Superman, The Daily Planet was the newspaper on which Clark Kent (who is, really, Superman without his tights – Wow-EE!) worked as a reporter. Hongkong has had, for many years, fish-ball stalls in private clubs, of course. They are bad enough, in my view. A fish-ball place is where little under-developed girls, with very little breasts, sit in very little cubicles and are subjected to being touched up by old men, who refer to the little girls' mammilla as fish balls because they resemble fish balls to the touch, or when one bites into one, floating in a bowl of noodles in soup. Filthy, depraved old men! I think that it is disgusting that fish-ball stalls still exist. I have told Grandpa to close down these horrible places, but he says that they are not illegal because all of the girls of over the age of sixteen years. Anyway, he says that the girls do not perform sexual services, as do the sex workers of The Daily Planet, but just allow the old men to touch them up a little. I just looked at your silly old Grandpa with one of my looks ... and he said that he would do something about the situation. Still, I shall be talking to my friends in Beijing about this matter in the hope of stamping it out in the entire country, not just in Hongkong. There is no prostitution in China, as you know, and there are no homosexuals, there, too. I have it from official Chinese statistics, compiled by the Government – which are, always, very reliable – that such depraved attributes of some societies have been completely eradicated in the most-populous country in the world, in the same way that herpes has been stamped out. So, for what reason should there be fish-ball stalls?

Getting back to The Daily Planet, according to my Shanghainese reflexology lady, the Australians are quite good at economics, nevertheless, and the operations of The Daily Planet are one good example of this. After all, there is no amortization of assets in a cathouse; there is no requirement to depreciate the value of the company's principal assets; and one never has to worry about bad and doubtful debts – because all of the business is cash on the pillow, prior to obtaining the services of the prostitutes. Also, the replacement value of the sex workers is non-existent, it would seem to me. In addition, everything in respect of the operations of this company would be cash, I would presume. This means that one has a certain amount of elasticity when it comes time to filing

annual returns with the Inland Revenue Department of Australia. As Omar Khayyám, the Persian tent-maker, who was said to have been born in about 1050 A.D., once commented:

*'Ah, Take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a distant Drum!
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!'*

It is highly unlikely that a sex worker would tell a john that he could have a freebee, or that he could pay, the next time he came round. Also, I doubt that any samples would be given out. You know what men are like: Once they have shot their load, they just turn over and go to sleep. Hopeless! Like slugs, I call them – Grandpa, being no exception. And it takes at least one hour for a john to recover his composure and strength after he has done his 'thing'. And little is the only way to describe most men. I have come to learn that, once a man has done his 'thing', he is hopeless and worthless, aside from being sweaty and stinky. One thing, though, it would be difficult for The Daily Planet to declare a Turnover that was not pretty accurate because it would be so easy to determine how often the sheets had been changed in the eighteen bedrooms, a count of the number of condoms that had been consumed in the period of one, twenty-four-hour cycle, and to correlate those figures with the income-tax filings of the fifty odd sex workers, employed in the cathouse. It will be interesting to learn what Management will pay as a dividend and in what shape or form. Would the dividends be in cash or in kind? Also, I wonder whether or not the concept of a Christmas Party takes on a completely different meaning to a worker of The Daily Planet?

Must rush, my dear, Grandpa is due home, soon, and I do want to look my best, just in case the sap is rising ... you know what I mean, don't you?

Love you,

Chief Lady of Hongkong

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