

RANDOM HOUSE *e*BOOKS



The Old Perversity Shop

Aishling Morgan

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About the Book

A shiver passed through her body as she thought of what favours she might offer, and how she could hint at what she desired, yet still feign reluctance, allowing herself to be slowly coaxed out of her clothes and into the most delightfully improper acts. She knew enough to populate her imagination with highly vivid scenes. A man was not strictly necessary, although she wanted one very badly indeed.

In a foggy Victorian London, gambler Edward Trent manages to lose all his worldly goods and the right to Nell's virginity to the money lender Daniel Quilty. Charles Truscott rescues Nell from her fate but cannot resist taking advantage of both her innocence and her voluptuous body, as does just about everybody she meets as she flees London for Plymouth with Quilty in pursuit.

About the Author

Aishling Morgan is an established author of erotic fiction.

By the same author:

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CRUEL SHADOW
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SIN'S APPRENTICE
WHIPPING GIRL
SCARLET VICE
WENCHES, WITCHES AND STRUMPETS

The Old Perversity Shop

Aishling Morgan



A Pastiche

With apologies to Charles Dickens and thanks to Himadri
Chatterjee.

Glossary

A Parcel of Old Crams - *Devon equivalent of stuff and nonsense, literally information that is as much use as rotten crab apples.*

Bear-lead - *a society expression meaning to escort younger friends or relatives, most often female, in order to make introductions.*

Biter - *in full, a wench whose cunt is ready to bite her arse - meaning a rampantly lascivious girl. Biter might be deemed complimentary in some circumstances, bitch biter definitely would not, much as a highly sexed modern girl might enjoy being called dirty, but not a dirty dog.*

Bobtail - *any willing girl, but especially one who wiggles her bottom to excite male admiration.*

Brown Bess - *originally the British Army musket but later a slang expression for the anus.*

Brummagem - *literally, made in Birmingham, but quickly adapted to cover all cheap or mass produced goods.*

Buttock Ball - *sex, and in particular lewd, unabashed sex.*

Dell - *a young, but ripe girl, in some contexts a virgin. 'No deeper than a dell's doodle sack' - the depth of a vagina with hymen intact, i.e. very shallow.*

Greenhorn - *an inexperienced or naïve person, one easily tricked. Later contracted to green in the adjectival form.*

Laced mutton - *a prostitute.*

Mawk - *a foolishly sentimental person.*

Mort - *a woman, and generally a woman of the lower classes.*

Mr Sharps - *any con artist, but particularly one adept at cards or billiards. To sharp was not necessarily to cheat,*

but more often to pretend ineptitude in order to lull the mark into making high bets.

Peelers - *a slang term for the Metropolitan police, a force largely created by Sir Robert Peel in 1828.*

Saunt - *Devon dialect for smooth, particularly in reference to the motion of a carriage or the function of a machine.*

To tip the double - *to run away from debt, particularly as part of a deliberate scam.*

Traps - *watchmen and thief takers in general. The term pigs was also in use at the time, but later disappeared from common slang, only to re-emerge after about a century.*

One

CHARLES TRUSCOTT TOOK hold of his erection as his eyes fixed on the enormous pink and white flower created by Sally's bottom and upturned petticoats. Her upper body was entirely invisible, lost beyond the mass of material, while her stockinged feet alone protruded at either side of his torso where she was knelt across him. The petals of this imagined flower were composed of an irregular circular of puffs of lace and net, folds of cotton and taffeta, stiff bulges of crinoline support, widespread drawers, with her plump pink bottom for the heart and, at the very centre, her deeply puckered anus and well furred quim.

She was wet, satisfyingly wet, the mouth of her cunt made glistening and sticky by her natural juices, and little sign of the whorish disinterest that could so spoil a coupling. Smiling, he pressed his cock head between her sex lips, rubbing it in the wet mush of her flesh to provoke a low groan of pleasure.

'You've not been long in the game, Sally, I'll venture,' he remarked, rubbing with greater vigour.

Her answer was a grunt, repeated as she began to wiggle her bottom. Charles chuckled and reached out to touch, slapping at one meaty cheek before running his fingers down the groove between them, brushing her anus to make the tight little ring twitch and pout. A sob escaped her lips as he slid a finger into the tiny hole and a thumb into the other. She was coming, his cock now pressed firmly to the bump between her sex lips, his fingers working inside her as she squirmed and shook, panting, shivering, and at last crying out in ecstasy.

Charles was jerking hard at his cock before the urgent contractions of her buttocks and thighs had begun to die down, and had come before she was entirely still, spattering the fat pink globe of her bottom with semen. His eyes remained fixed to her rear view and his fingers deep in her body until he had quite finished, only then releasing his cock and setting her bum flesh quivering with another well placed slap.

‘Much obliged,’ he thanked her.

She began to climb off, casting Charles a single glance from beneath the over-fanciful ringlets of her hair before suddenly beginning to talk, a stream of words at once inconsequential and earnest, very different from the flirtatious remarks and mock-coy compliments with which she’d enticed him and helped bring his cock to erection. Charles listened with half an ear as he adjusted his clothing in the long mirror of her wardrobe, adding only the occasional polite interjection. When he had returned his appearance to its normally immaculate condition, he retrieved his walking cane from where he had dropped it after applying a few encouraging cuts to her rump, also his gloves.

Pulling her curtains wide to the London dusk, he discovered that a thick yellow fog was forming oily droplets on the window pane, so dense that he could barely see the houses on the far side of Cleveland Street. Directly opposite, the square panes of a shop window glowed dull gold with gaslight, abruptly extinguished. With his recent bed mate still chattering happily in the background, Charles watched the proprietor emerge, an old man, tall but now stooped, with a straggle of white hair escaping from beneath the rim of a battered top hat. Wondering vaguely what to do with himself for the rest of the evening, he turned back to the room.

‘Care for a bite at the Cremorne1?’ he asked.

She looked up from where she was sponging down her buttocks in the mirror, her face showing pleased surprise but also disappointment.

'I couldn't,' she answered him, 'not now. Mrs Jones won't have it, not with Major Reynolds needing his birching. Nine o'clock sharp, he takes it, regular.'

'Couldn't somebody else do that?' Charles suggested.

'Oh no, it has to be me, on account of he likes my bobbies.'

'A man of taste, clearly,' Charles responded, allowing his gaze to move to where her heavy breasts lolled forward within the confines of her chemise, 'although I'd rather take the birch to you than from you.'

'Two shillings and four pence, sir, if you've a mind, but it's not me who gives Major Reynolds his whipping. My place is to sit under the horse and pull his pudding for him while Mrs Jones does the business.'

'I see, yes,' Charles replied, 'that would explain his appreciation of your chest. Is this a private affair, or can other fellows pay to watch?'

'Private, sir,' she answered him, 'but there's a peephole for a shilling a throw if you've a mind to look on.'

'I rather think I will,' Charles replied, 'and perhaps another tumble after. Nine o'clock, you say?'

'Nine sharp,' she assured him, 'but I'll have to speak to Mrs Jones.'

'Do, by all means. Is there gaming tonight?'

She hesitated before replying, perhaps wondering if he was what he claimed but evidently deciding he was.

'The billiards room, sir, should be just about getting started,' she told him.

'Then I shall be in the billiards room,' he answered.

He favoured her with a nod, collected his hat and made for the door, now looking forward to an entertaining evening. An hour and a trifle more at billiards, or perhaps a few hands of cards with the house sharps, and he would be

ready to enjoy the amusing spectacle of the Major being whipped. Outside on the landing he caught the full raucous noise of the brothel, with trade beginning to pick up for the evening. Little if any effort was being made to conceal what was going on, and it seemed that Mrs Jones' reputation for keeping the police at arm's length was well deserved.

Charles descended the stairs, to find a party of swells flirting with girls in the hall, two older, somewhat shamefaced men with Mrs Jones, and also the ancient he had seen leave the shop opposite in earnest conversation with another, a dwarfish man in a worn plum-coloured coat and possibly the least well-favoured person Charles had ever seen.

Both stood in the door to the gaming room, which showed brightly lit beyond them, with a group of men already gathered around a circular table, the only one visible. Charles approached, nodding affably as he edged past the two men and trying not to stare at the dwarf, who was so studiously ugly he might well have been a circus grotesque. In height he stood considerably under five foot, but might have been six inches more had it not been for his hunched and twisted spine, while his narrow flanks and spindly legs gave an impression of withered deformity. His head was unnaturally large and rested directly on his shoulders, with only a short length of wiry neck showing where his dirty white neckerchief hung loose and crumpled. Coarse dirty hands armed with broken yellow fingernails gave him a disturbingly feral manner, while his face did nothing to soften the effect of his body. Hard features and a forbidding aspect combined with two sharp villainous eyes peering out from beneath heavy brows. His balding pate was surrounded by a stiff brush of grizzled hair and his pockmarked cheeks showed an unhealthy greyish pallor. A final and horrible touch was added by what on another human being might have passed for a smile, but showed no trace of humour or complacency, instead revealing the few discoloured fangs

that still held on in his mouth and gave him the look of a panting dog.

The billiard table was occupied, with a group of men playing for girls' clothing against sixpenny wagers. Charles paused to watch, as one of the girls was already down to her drawers and chemise, making a fine display of rounded backside as she stretched to take a shot. Still satiated after his time upstairs, he quickly turned back to the gaming table, where a group of three men were busy with what appeared to be a serious game of cards.

One was clearly a house man, his sharp-cut bottle-green coat and the large amethyst pinning his cravat too flash for any gentleman, too expensive for an ordinary gambler. He was also dealing, with fast practised motions too fast for the eye to follow at all easily. Opposite him was a young man, his nervous manner and fluffy moustache betraying him as an obvious greenhorn, perhaps too obvious. The third man was more typical, well enough dressed and self-assured, with a gold watch chain on open display, except in that he was so monstrously fat that he was obliged to sit some way back from the table in order to accommodate his belly.

Charles counted the pot as the hand was played out. Shilling stakes rose quickly to over a pound, enough to make the game interesting without any real risk. Drawing closer, he addressed the house man.

'And so, Mr Sharps, is this a private game or do you have room for another?'

The man gave Charles a brief glance before replying, his expression at first suspicious, then mild.

'Always room for a swell like yourself, sir.'

Charles sat down, placing his hat beneath his chair as the man went on.

'Now here's the company and here's the game. The well-fed gentleman is Mr Samuel Brass, a lawyer, so you'd do well to keep a hand on your pocket. Across is Mr

Wilberforce, a Cherrypicker no less, and myself I'm Icarus Teague.'

'Pleased to meet you,' Charles replied. 'Charles Truscott.'

'Any relation to Sir John Truscott?' the young soldier asked.

'The Pater,' Charles replied, speaking across Teague's unbroken patter.

'... the game, now the game is a simple matter, Hoyle's ranks and a plain deal of five, the best man wins and Devil take the hindmost. Shilling stakes. Is that plain, sir?'

'Plain enough to me,' a bass rasp sounded from behind Charles and he turned to see the dwarf approaching, along with the man from the shop, who wore an eager expression Charles knew only too well.

'You'll show us your brass before you join us, Edward Trent,' Teague stated firmly as the old man made to sit down. 'No more credit, so says Mrs Jones.'

'It's well,' the dwarf put in, 'I've bought his debt and something over, fifty shillings.'

He tossed a bag of coins in front of the old man, who took them eagerly, his bright little eyes shining as he began to count them into piles. The dwarf spoke as he sat down, addressing both Charles and the young soldier, Wilberforce.

'Daniel Quilty, at your service, sirs, willing to lend coin should you find yourselves in straights to Mr Teague, or in need of one of Mrs Jones' dollymops once you've been fleeced. Sam Brass here will vouch that I'm the man for it.'

The fat lawyer responded with an oddly high-pitched squeak of assent as Teague began to deal out the cards.

'I have no call for your services, thank you,' Charles said, not troubling to mask his contempt.

'You may before the evening's out,' Quilty answered him. 'Come then, in with your shillings.'

'I notice your own is not out,' Charles remarked, pushing his coin into place.

Quilty responded with a wary glance as he took up his cards. Charles looked at his own, determined not to be distracted from the game. The rules Teague had chosen, with no cards substituted, made for fast play and gave little opportunity for guessing how the cards lay. Teague, he suspected, would already know pretty well what each man held.

Pretending to study his cards and ignoring the incessant patter from both Teague and Quilty, Charles flicked his gaze between the faces of his fellow players. Wilberforce was biting his lip, excited, a trifle nervous and probably playing only because he had failed to pluck up the courage to ask Mrs Jones for a girl. Brass looked calm, amused, his pig-like eyes twinkling in the fleshy recesses of his face, hardly the look of somebody who was taking a risk. Quilty was hard to read, his patter and the sheer ugliness of his face making his expression unclear. Teague was easy, his experience plain. Trent showed the half-truculent, half-nervous expression of the true addict. Without question the game was fixed, probably well in advance, with Trent the mark, Wilberforce and himself as make-weights and the others in the know.

Amused to see what the sport would be, he sat back in his chair and laid his cards face down, feigning nonchalance. He had been dealt a pair of tens, enough to prick his interest and risk a little money in the pot. Tossing one of the new florins on to the table, he reached back to tweak the bare buttock of one of the girls who had been playing billiards and was now stripped nude but for her stockings.

‘I’ll chance two,’ he told Teague. ‘Fetch a jug of claret would you, girl, and as many glasses as needs.’

Wilberforce and Brass accepted, Teague explained that he only drank porter. Trent threw Charles a look of irritation.

‘Must you drink, sir?’

‘Why, yes,’ Charles answered, ‘and should I become drunk, all the better for your chances of winning. Now who

will match me? Lieutenant Wilberforce?’

The young man shook his head and threw his cards down on the table.

‘Not I.’

Trent pushed five of his shillings into the centre of the table without speaking. Quilty hesitated, then did the same. Brass made a face and threw his cards down. Teague put in his own five shillings and Charles shook his head.

‘Not for me, not now.’

He put his own cards down. Trent pushed in another five shillings and Quilty five more, again after a flicker of hesitation. Teague threw in and Trent doubled the bet, forcing Quilty to raise his own stakes still higher. The dwarf shook his head as he counted out the coins, four newly minted crown pieces.

‘That’s to see your cards,’ he demanded.

Trent’s face was working with agitation as he spread out his hand on the table.

‘Deuces and jacks, let’s see you top that, Dan Quilty!’ Teague called out.

‘I can’t,’ the dwarf snarled, throwing his cards down.

Edward Trent gathered in his winnings, his eyes burning with pleasure, and he immediately began to divide the coins into stacks. Charles pulled a fistful of change from his pocket and spread it in front of him as Teague dealt once more, sending the cards fluttering out on to the table with sudden precise motions. The girl had come back, now with a jug of garnet-red claret and three glasses. After putting his shilling down at the centre of the table, Charles reached out to gather her in by her bottom, squeezing the soft flesh as he spoke and offering a coin from the pile in front of him.

‘Here’s a florin, just to keep my glass full and stand by my chair. Perhaps you’ll bring me luck?’

Her response was a giggle as Charles continued to knead her bottom and picked up his cards, ignoring a second glance of annoyance from Edward Trent. Three queens

showed in his hand, perhaps luck, perhaps not, but he made no attempt to hide his satisfaction, smiling happily as he pushed five shillings into the centre of the table. Wilberforce gave him a doubtful look, Trent a calculating one, but Icarus Teague reacted not at all.

‘Five shillings?’ Wilberforce said, frowning. ‘Yes, why not? Why not indeed?’

Trent added his own money after no more than a brief pause, and Quilty, then Brass. Teague alone threw in his hand, and Charles pushed the pot up with another five shillings, now thoroughly enjoying himself, and more than happy to lose a pound or more in order to watch the fun as the old man was fleeced. As it was, he took the hand, and the next, making him wonder if Teague had changed his tactics and was aiming at him instead of Trent.

Now well ahead of the game, he began to bet more cautiously, drinking claret and idly fondling the girl’s bottom as hand followed hand. She was less than helpful, laughing happily at Teague’s patter and responding to changes in Charles’ luck with cries of delight and sighs of disappointment. It made little difference: his pile of coin gradually diminished as Trent’s grew ever greater. She was also having a marked effect on Wilberforce, who was close enough for her bare hip to touch his arm each time she gave a little wiggle of excitement for the ups and downs of the game. Finally, pink faced and some thirty shillings to the worse, he declined a hand.

‘Not for me, thanking you all the same. I’ve a more manly game in mind.’

He rose, doing his best to strut as he left the table to speak with Mrs Jones. A tall red-faced man had arrived in the lobby, who Charles guessed to be the flagellant Major Reynolds, but a glance at his watch showed he had plenty of time before the show. His cock had begun to swell once more from the scent and feel of his companion, and he wondered if it might be fun to fuck her as he watched the

whipping, or perhaps to take on the two girls together once it was done.

Once more, Teague dealt out the cards, and once more Charles' luck went against him, but this time it was Brass who scooped the pot, taking in twenty-five shillings from the now confident Edward Trent. The next hand went the other way, Trent raking in a full thirty shillings, and Charles once more glanced at his watch as Mrs Jones approached the table, smiling broadly from beneath her huge coiffure of gold ringlets. One of her bullies was behind her, a surly young man with the look of an unsuccessful boxer, his nose broken and his fists scarred.

'Good fortune tonight, Mr Trent?' she said, eyeing his piles of coins. 'Now what is it you owe? Four pound, eight shilling and a thre'penny if memory serves.'

Trent looked up in irritation.

'I will pay in full at the end of the evening, Mrs Jones,' he said. 'I have ample funds.'

'For the now you do,' Mrs Jones answered him, 'but if it's all the same with you I prefer hard coin now to promises later.'

She held out her hand, the bully moved closer and Edward Trent began to count out the coins with short angry motions. By the time he was done his winnings had been reduced to less than a pound and his manner was more nervous and more truculent than ever. Charles noted that Mrs Jones gave a nod both to Teague and to Quilty as she withdrew. Taking a swallow of claret and refilling his glass as Teague dealt the cards out, Charles decided to stay on even if it meant missing the whipping.

Play resumed, Sam Brass now red-faced with wine and seeming more interested in his cigar than the game, Teague still full of distracting patter, Quilty now serious, and Edward Trent ever more angry and determined. Charles kept his bets low, watching as the luck of the game seemed to flow one way and another. When Quilty exhausted his funds on

an ill-judged bluff, Brass advanced him more, twenty bright new shillings in rolls that could only have been drawn from the bank that day.

Charles' pile fell slowly, from over two pounds to thirty shillings, and from thirty shillings to a pound, before he took a hand at Edward Trent's expense, leaving him once more flush and the old man with a pitifully small pile of coins. His attention had fixed on the game, and the girl wandered away to find a more worthwhile client, the sight of her sweetly rotating rump as she walked from the room provoking a last dash of lust in Charles before he turned back to the cards.

Edward Trent was tight-lipped as he pushed out his shilling, promptly lost as Teague dealt out what was clearly a hopeless hand. Twice more the same happened, small pots going to Charles and Quilty, and the old man was down to his last four coins. As Charles took his cards he found he had a pair of kings, but threw in on his stake money alone, very sure of what was about to happen. Sure enough, Trent kept his expression carefully blank and raised the bet before turning to Samuel Brass.

'Would you advance me a further pound, Mr Brass?' he asked.

'Against what surety?' Brass demanded. 'You've debts piled to your ears as it is.'

'I'll stand for him,' Quilty put in, 'it's me he owes, and the odd few shillings'll make little odds on half his shop.'

'That's said fairly,' Brass agreed, pulling another rouleau of new shillings from his pocket.

Trent's face worked for a moment, but he took the money and matched the bet. Quilty hesitated before matching it in turn. Brass doubled and Teague threw in his cards. Trent looked up, his eyes flickering from one man to another before he pushed what remained of his money into the centre of the table. With the house sharp thrown in it

seemed likely the hand was honest, and yet Charles was glad to be out of the betting.

Quilty matched Trent's bet, but Brass threw in his hand, leaving Trent with a problem.

'Two pound, two shilling to see what I have,' Quilty said to Trent, 'two pound, two shilling you don't have.'

'I can cover it!' Trent answered, clutching his cards so hard they had bent.

'With what, old man?' Quilty sneered. 'Unless you want to put up what remains of the lease on your shop?'

'My shop!?' Trent exclaimed. 'Even when you've had your cut my lease is worth some hundred pounds!'

'Eighty, so says the agent,' Quilty sneered, 'but if you've no stomach for it, throw in your cards.'

Trent's face began to work, between greed and despair, going gradually redder. He was going to throw in, but Quilty laughed, a chuckle of infinite disdain and malice.

'I'll take your bet, damn you!' Trent blurted out. 'Let me see your cards!'

Quilty took his time, exchanging a look of triumph with Sam Brass before he fanned out his cards on the table. All four jacks stared up at Edward Trent, whose skin had turned an ugly grey as the blood drained from his face. He dropped his own cards, and all five fluttered down on to the table, three aces and a pair of fours.

'I'd have tried the same, with that,' Charles said, his remark going unheeded as Edward Trent began to climb unsteadily to his feet.

'Are you done, Edward?' Sam Brass enquired casually, his fat face now split into an evil smirk.

'You ask am I done?' Trent demanded. 'You know I am done, Mr Brass . . .'

'Now that's a lie,' Quilty put in, 'you have one thing of great value.'

'Enough of your taunts,' Trent answered. 'I have nothing, and you know it. You have taken it all, Quilty, all I have

worked for these long years, all I had meant to pass on to my poor dear Nell when I lay my old bones in the soil . . .’

‘Now there you have my meaning,’ Quilty cut in. ‘What you have lost may be a blow, but you still have your Nell.’

‘That is true,’ Trent responded, now softly. ‘Nell at the least is a blessing, a true blessing.’

‘A fine girl, your Nellie,’ Teague remarked.

‘A fine girl indeed,’ Brass agreed, ‘tits like footballs and a good sturdy arse.’

‘How dare you!’ Trent blazed. ‘By God, if I were a younger man –’

‘But you are not,’ Quilty interrupted him. ‘You are old and weak and a fool, but I’m a gambler too, and I’ll give you one last chance.’

‘What’s that?’ Trent demanded, his voice thick with suspicion.

‘Here’s my wager,’ Quilty replied. ‘I’ll lay your shop back, with everything I’ve taken from you and a guinea in the pot, against your Nell’s sweet cunt. One hand, two chances to buy, no holding back and everything on the call.’

The expression on the old man’s face turned to outrage still deeper than before and a muscle in one cheek began to twitch. Charles sat back, amused, intrigued, yet now with a touch of sympathy.

‘Take it, Edward,’ Teague advised. ‘What’s the loss in one more rogered trollop? Besides, when she’s done she can work for us here, and no doubt earn enough to keep you in your dotage, more anyway than you get from that rotten little shop.’

Trent turned on the sharp, his face black with rage, his fists clenched tight. Icarus Teague merely shrugged.

‘There’s sense in what the fellow says,’ Charles pointed out. ‘I’ll shuffle and deal if it pleases you.’

Teague gave a chuckle of amusement and passed Charles the pack. Trent had turned his furious gaze on to Charles, but now looked down at the floor. He had looked old before,