

It is twenty years since we first came to this 'Bai Formosa' - Beautiful bay. Then it had few houses, one shop, and the hotel had just been built. It was a quiet little fishing village; the fishing boats beached on the sand, taking the breakers perilously, and we bought fish straight from the boats, so cheap and so delicious that we could never have enough of it. Over the other side of Beacon Island was a deserted beach that stretched to Robberg for four miles without any sign of life, where we walked and picked up shells with little holes in them ready to be strung into necklaces.

We had passed through Plettenberg Bay a few times since then, each time noting how it was growing. We camped one year at Keurbooms, even lonelier and wilder than the Bay.

Now it is a rich-man's playground. Houses have been built all down the road to the Bay, and over the Look-out side, with incomparable views of sea, river and mountain. New shops - even a bookshop, and curio shop, and a hairdresser, charging exorbitant prices to the Johannesburg women. Cars - I've never seen so many expensive cars in such a small area - big, opulent cars, German Mercedes, English Jaguars and Bentleys, and the bigger, but flashier newest American models, making up in glitter what they lack in class. There are new wooden boat-sheds on the beach, not because the fishing industry and grown, but because the wealthy visitors with their big houses also own ski-boats, with their powerful motors and upright seats, to take them out fishing for the bigger stuff. Cars, ~~xxx~~ ski-boats, fishing tackle, water-skis, speed-boats, caravans, a bottle-store. Queues at the post-office, which can barely cope with its seasonal rush; holiday-makers impatiently waiting in the crowded stores for the village-pace service. Brilliant umbrellas on the beach. Surf-boards and li-los and every possible type of beach equipment.

KAJEE

He came to Knysna ten years ago to go into business with Patel, who owned the only Indian store. Then there were just two Indian families. When Patel died, Kajee took over the store and Mrs. Patel with it. Now he has a flourishing business, two houses next door to each other, a wife to do the hard work, a mistress to entertain his guests.

He is a handsome, light-skinned man, in his early fifties; strong, beaked face, and courteous, sophisticated manners. We arrive at the Kajee house, and are greeted by Kajee and his pretty daughter, who is married and has come from Johannesburg with her child to visit him. We are taken into the Kajee house, then walk through the house into Mrs. Patel's house, where drinks and snacks, olives and nuts and canapés are laid out for us; Mrs. Patel - Coloured, attractive, vivacious, plump, with an excellent command of English, is our hostess. After we have been entertained there for some time, we are escorted back to the Kajee house, where Mrs. Kajee has been toiling in the kitchen to prepare us a superb Indian meal, curried chicken with long-grained rice, spicy fish. Mrs. Kajee does not eat with us, but stays in the kitchen like any Indian wife, while Mrs. Patel presides at the table.

Kajee says he is very happy in Knysna; he has everything he wants; they are not lonely; every week-end they have visitors, as people are always passing through, and use their house as a hotel. The Knysna authorities have had difficulties in arranging a 'Group Area' for one Indian. Therefore, they are giving him a special license to continue trading where he is, although it is being proclaimed a white area. He would not mind being grouped with the coloureds, and moved with them,

as the coloured population is much bigger than the white, and constitutes most of his trade. We are shown a huge album - My Wedding; the first Moslem wedding in Knysna; hundreds of guests, white and Indian; detailed descriptions of the clothes in the local press.

MRS. VON H.

After dinner, we return to Mrs. Patel's house, and sit on the pleasant, cool verandah. A car draws up, and Mrs. von H. arrives. In the dim light one cannot quite make out if she is white or not. She looks like a white woman, speaks with a refined voice, slightly-nervous, extremely polite. Conversation becomes a bit stilted, while we discuss with her the beauties of Knysna, the fishing (her son is a keen fisherman) etc. We are told Mrs. von H. has a house on the hill with a wonderful view of the Knysna lagoon and the heads. Somehow we are manoeuvred into cars, against our will, and taken to Mrs. von H's house. It is high up on the hillside, the highest house. We mount steps between a lush garden, thick with flowering bushes and plants.

This is the house of a woman with artistic inclinations and talents that she had channelled into the only available outlets. In the hall, pictures made of shells, beautifully selected and grouped into flowers; they are clever, artistic, and well-done; in the main room, evidence of this talent everywhere: figurines made of shells; embroidered cloths, with designs I recognise; embroidered pictures; and all over the house, pots with trailing plants, rows on the kitchen window-sill; the kitchen bright, beautifully fitted out, with a window with a wonderful view over the night-filled lake.

Mrs. Von H. is dithering and nervous with all her guests; preparing coffee, making drinks; we see now she is a light-skinned coloured woman, who could pass if she wished for white. Her son, who comes in, is a white teenager with the appearance and mannerisms of any young man, slightly Jewish; blond curly hair, blue eyes. Her daughter is a ballet dancer and singer; she is proud of her achievements.

On hearing I wanted garlic, she produces a monster root, home-grown, proudly displays it, compares it with the normal-sized clove, ~~cuts~~ cuts half of the giant for me, takes it into the room to show the others, cannot find the ordinary clove

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