

TALES AND TRAVEL.

CESARE AND THE CHINESE.

~~CESARE~~

Cesare was a slim, good-looking young man with dark hair and a delicate, slightly curving nose. He was quite tall, and moved softly and lightly. I used to see him in a trattoria, usually with a woman of Chinese origin. He would smile towards our table most politely, with a little nod of his head. It was impossible to imagine him doing anything abrupt or harsh. In everything he seemed delicate and thoughtful, and perhaps a bit submissive. He lacked the blind, staring quality of other Romans: far from being lost in his senses he seemed inglese, in the Italian meaning of the word---rather cool and formal. In fact, I often wondered if he was wholly Italian, and if perhaps he didn't come from the Veneto or the Alps. But he told me one day, when I asked him, that he was a Roman 'born and bred'. His father was a big landlord and owned several blocks of flats in Naples and Palermo.

Cesare wasn't a very young man. He was in his early forties. But he gave the impression of a youthful shyness and insecurity. I remember when he told me <sup>once</sup> that, ~~during the war, after the armistice had been signed between the allies and the newly formed Italian government,~~ he ~~had~~ walked from one side of Italy to the other, <sup>in the war</sup> mostly along difficult mountain paths, with no money, ~~I remember~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~that the~~ image I already had of him---as innocent of any harshness, and shyly withdrawn from the world---was sustained by his description, as he <sup>had</sup> meant it to be perhaps, so that I saw him as <sup>a</sup> kind of romantic wanderer for a moment, his uniform in rags (he'd been an officer), hatless, but still smooth and trim-looking, strangely beautiful, not sweating or hungry or irritated <sup>as the rest of us</sup> ~~or anything like~~ <sup>would be.</sup> ~~that~~

He and the Chinese woman always sat in a corner of the trattoria, quietly, sometimes never once addressing each other;

and they rarely joined another party. I took them for a married couple who were a bit bored with each other. But then someone told me that they weren't married. And a little <sup>later</sup> he invited us up to his flat. It was an awkward, cold-looking place--- just two rooms. These set out to be artistic, with useless imitation-beams across the ceiling and a bookcase sticking out in the middle of the room with a settee in front of it, all jagged and devised, without any intimacy at all. The Chinese woman was a pale, thin creature with a cracked voice, and she spoke in painfully complicated sentences, trying to use big words and convey pretentious ideas. I couldn't concentrate on anything she said, ~~and had a feeling of sterility from her.~~ She would talk about books or pictures or the latest film, and everything seemed syphoned through a dusty brain. The things she said didn't seem to come from life or people but to be connected with technique or ~~performance or style or~~ machinery of some kind. Her sentences were jagged like his room, and she kept referring to people as being 'sensitised' to things or 'unsensitised'. She said she had a high degree of sensitisation to noise, meaning she couldn't stand the radio in the courtyard; she wasn't sensitised at all to human presence as obstruction of the psyche, meaning she could work with other people in the room. She spoke in a breathless way all the time as if she couldn't get sufficient moisture into her mouth and was trying to whip a dead heart into life again. She had strangely hollow eyes with only a reminiscence of the Chinese in them, darker than the rest of her face; and she sat hunched up, her shoulders angular, her chest caved in. We heard that she'd once been one of the loveliest women in the city, with a plump, rich body that made the Romans gape wherever she went. She'd come to Rome in the war, and had stayed afterwards out of love for the city.

She talked to me about this.

~~A~~ 'It was some city in the war---it's never been the same since---I'm sure it wasn't like it before, either---the streets seemed different---'.

I said I thought this was the glow war put on things. It made everything a glowing scene---the background of death.

She nodded and said, 'I guess I was looking for it to happen again, but short of another war it wouldn't. Anyway, it's been a gradual let-down ever since---', and she cast a slow, narrowed look, so dusty and tired, across at Cesare, who sat talking to my wife, his head back against the settee in a way that gave him a helpless and even frail look.

I asked her when she'd met him and she said just after the war---a long time ago now (with another dusty sideglance at him). Their work had become connected: he was on some trading scheme that involved Shanghai, where she was born. They'd worked for months in the same office---'Then...'<sup>said</sup> she ~~added~~ with a smile, and shrugged her shoulders slowly without adding anything.

There was a silence, and I looked across at him.

'We're talking about you,' I said. 'How you met.'

'Oh, yes' he answered in English, with the same slight American accent as the Chinese woman. For a moment, watching his face, I felt a rush of friendship towards him, for that Italian quality I had <sup>come</sup> to recognise, ~~of~~ a certain clear-bright, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> dazzling yet mysterious intelligence. Then it disappeared, like a brief giddiness.

'I'd just come back from China'.

'Oh, you were in China, too?'

'Yes. For about two years. In Hong Kong.'

'Really? You met Buwei there?'

He paused for a moment---nothing seemed to take him unawares or disturb his delicate calm---and ~~then~~ he nodded gravely. He

could as easily have met her on the street in Naples---I had a sudden impression of him as a liar.

In a curious---perhaps eastern---way the Chinese woman seemed to know everything about him. Sometimes he looked like a child at her side. Apparently, she knew both his wives well---he'd been divorced once and separated once. She even seemed to collect an encyclopædic knowledge about him, all the time storing it up in her peculiar English machine-language, which he may or may not have taught her himself. He liked her to speak in English;  
~~was~~ Italian seemed 'vulgar' to him, ~~sometimes,~~ and he knew no Chinese. Even when she was away from Rome she seemed to be protecting him still, and people said ~~that~~ he never went a day without writing to her: even, that he ~~kept~~ kept a diary for her of his most intimate doings, in symbol-language.

Yet he wouldn't tolerate a mention of her when she was away. He screwed his nose up ~~slightly,~~ with disgust. 'It was an 'old' affair: stale. Yet it had proved itself stable. It had lasted longer than either of his marriages. <sup>But</sup> ~~The two of~~ ~~at~~ ~~them seemed so separate from each other---was the root, in~~ ~~religion and civilisation---that even while they were mutually bored and disgusted they felt some fascination holding them together. That was how it seemed, anyway---~~ they never talked about each other if they could help it, except to show a little sign of disgust. Perhaps she felt proud to use the odd language he'd taught her: it was light and timeless, like a strange western Buddhist tongue---perhaps that was it; it wasn't ugly for her as it was for us, since the language wasn't alive for her in any case.

She gazed at Cesare from a distance, at his corrupt, Roman face <sup>with</sup> ~~making~~ its kindly or delicate or boyish mask, according to the needs of the moment (that is, <sup>according to</sup> what kind of woman there was in

the room). Perhaps the machine-language was the best way of describing the peculiar machinery of his life, <sup>just</sup> as it would have been to describe his room, and the fake art he put on his walls. She seemed to feel an exquisite power over him, but being Chinese she had no taste for power in our sense; ~~she wasn't deliberately exercising anything.~~ <sup>for her.</sup> He was simply an exquisite experience. In fact, she relinquished whatever power she had over him every day, every hour: she grasped at nothing. She stayed in his flat when he wanted her to; left it when he gave the word. The stay might last a week, six months, hardly a day. They led a strange life.

I used to think of them as two people sitting in <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ crazy no-man's-land between two religions, so gripped by what lay on the other side of the frontier than they never came to terms with what lay on their own. Cesare had wanted to be a priest once, but, as he said, demurely, with a flattered glance downwards, <sup>w</sup> 'passion' had stood in his way.

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We saw them several times after that, and they seemed to get more and more irritated with each other. Sometimes he gave her a cold, level glance, or deliberately didn't answer a question, <sup>but</sup> ~~and she always remained undisturbed, as if his rejecting her was a pleasure new.~~ <sup>only</sup> She seemed to smile inwardly, and talked on in her droning voice as if he weren't in the room. They looked too tired of each other ~~even~~ to have a quarrel.

Often she would go away, for weeks on end, to Austria or Switzerland for the cool mountains, and he would eat in the trattoria alone. Then she went to China for many months, and he started up with another woman.

This new woman was a friend of ours: she came from Greece and had a lazy, self-indulgent, morbidly sensuous character, with a handsome but nervous face and childish, light-blue eyes which she ~~sometimes~~ cast down in affected modesty, with the hint of a wry smile, as if she quietly approved of ~~her~~ impropriety but couldn't <sup>say</sup> ~~tell you~~ as much. She was separated from her ~~husband~~ husband, and for nearly four years now she'd been going ~~about~~ <sup>round</sup> with one man after another, sometimes falling in love, or saying she fell in love, and sometimes treating it as <sup>just another</sup> ~~raw~~ sensuous adventure. She had firm, well-rounded hips and a full bosom, and seemed to grow more sensuous in body with every man: until she met Cesare.

Every new affair was ~~always~~ the most important experience she'd ever had, and she liked to give her friends all the details. Then there would be an estrangement, a crisis during which she ~~would~~ look <sup>ed</sup> tired and ill, then there would be another man and the process would start all over again. She was interested in a man most, it seemed, when he was fed up with her, <sup>and</sup> ~~but~~ the moment he seemed to need her she cooled.

Actually she and Cesare had known each other for some years, but not on <sup>intimate</sup> ~~well, bed-going~~ terms. A few weeks after the Chinese woman left he asked her to dine with him---not at the usual trattoria---and they were soon spending the night together at his flat. She had told people openly that she was going to 'make a line for him'.

Sometimes he slept at her flat, sometimes she slept at his. They had dinner together almost every evening, and often he took her to night-clubs. She would <sup>ph</sup> ~~ph~~one him at his office, and he would show impatience if she had <sup>made</sup> an appointment with another man. Then their affair suddenly became secret. They never went to the usual trattoria and for weeks she said nothing about him. He had asked her not to give him publicity, as she'd <sup>given</sup> it so

generously to the other men. For one thing there was the Chinese woman, who mustn't hear of it, and then he had a certain 'position' to keep up. He was shrewd enough to see that her publicity wasn't always flattering.

As always at the beginning of an affair she was demure and girlish, casting her eyes down a lot and looking quietly---even theatrically---happy. But gradually it was clear that anxieties <sup>e</sup> were creeping in. ~~had created~~ The trouble, it seemed, was this: he was ~~so much~~ like her in ~~his~~ character. He was ~~not~~ interested in a woman when she was cool, ~~to him~~ and ~~he cooled~~ ~~he cooled~~ ~~deserted her~~ when she was warm. ~~xxxx~~ His wives, she said, ~~the~~ publicity-service was starting up again) ~~she~~ had made the mistake of showing warmth. ~~also~~ Also she began to find out that he'd <sup>had</sup> quite as many women as she'd had men. I was surprised to hear this, remembering him in the trattoria, so meek and retiring.

Her usual way of giving a man publicity was to ask her friends for 'advice'. And she began to ask us for advice. When she rang Cesare up a great many times in the day, sometimes once every three minutes for three hours or more---there was a lazy persistence about her---or made a scene at his office, or waited outside the palazzo where he lived to see if other women went in, he was brusque and cold with her, and told her not to be 'vulgar'. ~~that he was her only reason~~ But when she made other appointments and stayed out the whole night he would ring her flat repeatedly and leave messages with the maid, and then shout at her furiously for being a 'whore'.

Slowly her body changed. She ~~had~~ lost the round, fleshy look in her hips, and her chest began to look sunken, in the same way as the Chinese woman's. Her eyes took on a paler and dimmer look, ~~and~~ her hair <sup>was</sup> ~~seemed~~ more straggly. She began to wear loose <sup>'sacks'</sup> ~~clothes~~ in the Twenties style, no longer the tight,

erotic, Roman dresses she'd worn before. She spoke softly, always seemed tired. She even began to look schoolmarmish, wearing flat, healthy walking shoes and buttoned blouses.

She told us that Cesare was always 'correcting' her. He could only bear her to wear certain pale colours, and considered most of her clothes 'crude'. And he made her little gifts which subtly suggested the correction he was after. He had a way of looking at a woman with a secretly appreciative warmth in his eyes, as if he saw something in her that the other men hadn't seen. He seemed to say, 'But how strange you never realised before---didn't you really know that you had all these little gifts---is it really true no one told you about them...?' And of course an attractive woman couldn't brush that off. She began to feel that she was dazzling and exquisite, but only if she followed his directions.

It was only one more step for him to use this as blackmail, supposing he hadn't designed it as blackmail from the start. She fell over herself to do whatever he suggested. She rushed out and bought the hideous 'artistic' colours he wanted. She began reading the books he liked, even Proust. He told her he was essentially 'proustian': there were certain vulgarities he couldn't bear, and what could be more Proustian than that? She began to talk more carefully, as he asked for more 'spiritual' forms of conversation.

She told her friends that she'd never had a man like him. He exhilarated and excited her without precisely satisfying her. The more he criticised her and threw up his hands at some 'vulgarity', the more she felt the obscenity of her own person and tried to tone it down in some way. And the pleasure in this was that the moment they were in darkness together again, even if it was only for a few moments, she was a 'shrine' again.

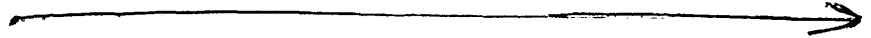
Her other men had given her rounded hips and warm appetites, but she didn't want this any more. By being attractive now she fell short of being a shrine. So she ceased being attractive. It was the most tremendous boon her vanity had ever had.

But the moment she was ready to do anything for him, he cooled and made other appointments. He told her he had to work late at the office. She phoned the office and found he wasn't there. Or he said he was going to work at home; and she found he didn't get home until after midnight that day. She wasn't sure he was going out with other women; he always threw up his hands if she suggested it. But several things happened to make it obvious. He was seen at a night-club with a woman from Bechuanaland, the wife of an official. She was a striking dark woman with thick hips and a provocative, burning gaze. Still she didn't believe it. He was so convincing when she saw him again! He would look at her as if to say, 'And you, with all those gifts I've told you about, you really believe I could be seen out with her?' Of course, he knew the woman, but no more than that. And, being flattered again, the 'shrine' came back into its own, especially if they ~~men~~<sup>men</sup> spent the night together.

He even introduced her to the Bechuanaland lady; ~~whom~~ she found <sup>her</sup> striking but not the 'promiscuous type'; and in any case she had thick hips, which she knew Cesare didn't like. They even became friends in a mild way, <sup>and she went</sup> and she went to the Bechuanaland lady's house for drinks, though they were both careful never to discuss Cesare.

Then she would promise not to spy on him or doubt his word again. He would say, 'Why, yes, she chases me, she's in love with me, but I know my tastes!' And he would lean back and

smile at her lazily, his eyes making a tiny dark sparkling  
movement, and put out his hand in a gesture of compassion---  
compassion for the other



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woman. After all, if she called him a liar, she dethroned herself as well---there was that to think of: <sup>she</sup> ~~she~~ dethrone<sup>d</sup> every little compliment he'd made <sup>her</sup> ~~her~~

But at the same time she played her own game as well. Whenever he seemed to ~~bellying~~ she made an appointment with another man, and when he seemed really cool to her---meaning he didn't even trouble to pay her compliments, but looked at her ~~with~~ bitterly ~~disgust~~ and said, 'My God, you look ghastly tonight!--she would stay away for a day or two. The spying became reciprocal and obsessive. They began to realise that the other <sup>person</sup> was as practised and unscrupulous a liar as ~~for~~ themselves, ~~were~~. A woman who knew them both, after listening to one of her long stories about his lying and treachery, said with a smile, 'Siete fatti l'uno per l'altro'---you are made for each other.

They began to live like man and wife, out of mutual fear, ~~more than anything else~~. He spent nights at her flat, and she nights at his. They agreed to try 'an experimental period of marriage' to see how far they were ~~really~~ compatible. But the blackmail and strategy went on. She began smoking a lot, which she'd never done before. She wandered round from friend to friend. Her face was sallow and drawn, and days at the sea made no difference. Late one night she rang us up saying she had to talk to someone, could we come round at once, otherwise she would throw herself out of the window. I said, No, we were tired and had to work the next day, but rather than throw herself out of the window why didn't she come round to us for a few minutes? She said she couldn't because she had a temperature, and rang off. I began to get anxious and after a few minutes rang her back. But she seemed to have forgotten our conversation. She spoke lazily---Cesare had just talked to her, she said---and she added a little curtly that she was tired now and wanted to

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sleep.

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Number One then came back from China. Everybody expected a crisis, but apparently her affair with Cesare, which had gone on for twelve years now, was at last over. Or so it was thought. But someone who knew her well pointed out that this had often been thought before. Anyway, she and the Greek woman met and found they'd known each other long before, in a vague way. They even breakfasted together at Cesare's flat, after he'd gone to work---to the astonishment of his maid. They didn't talk about him, but both knew the other knew. Number Two remained in sole possession. Or so she thought. The Chinese woman had nowhere to stay yet---she hadn't found a flat, and was constrained to sleep there, fixing up a divan in the sitting room. *Just for a few nights.*

One morning Number Two, after spending the night at her own flat, went to Cesare's 'just to check up', before the maid was due to arrive. No one was there, but under the bed she found a Chinese handkerchief, which she said only a woman, and ~~probably~~ a Chinese woman <sup>at that,</sup> would carry about with her. Then she found Number One's toilet equipment---including a pessary and contraceptive tablets---in the bathroom. This wasn't necessarily a proof of anything but, as she said, it went 'a damned long way.' But then Cesare had told her that his relation with Number One was like that of a brother. Also it didn't seem likely to the Greek woman that he would want her now---after all, she had lost her looks. But the contraceptive apparatus worried her, and in the evening she tackled him about it. He gave her a still gaze and then said slowly and coolly, 'You're quite disgusting. I never wish to see you again.' She went home, and after an

hour or so <sup>a taxi</sup> arrived from Cesare's flat with all her belongings. She at once retaliated by sending her maid with all his belongings. The affair seemed closed, but after two days he rang her up and invited her to dinner as if nothing had happened. The period of the trial-marriage was thus over, and they were back at the lover-stage, seeing each other secretly a few times a week. There was the old thrill of seeming to deceive the Chinese woman. As <sup>our friend</sup> she said, it was <sup>even</sup> better than the trial-marriage.

She spent <sup>a</sup> ~~one~~ night with him at his flat, when Number One was in Torino for a few days, and next morning she was just about to leave, ~~when~~ after he'd gone to the office, when the maid called after her casually, 'You'll be here tomorrow then?' She turned ~~round~~ and, sensing something, said with equal casualness, 'No, why?'

'Oh, it doesn't matter,' the maid said, 'only il signore said to buy enough bread for two tomorrow.'

'For tomorrow's breakfast?'

'Yes.'

The maid didn't seem to realise what she'd said---or perhaps she did. Number Two murmured, 'Oh, he might have made a mistake.' Then she went home and decided to lay a plan, and catch him out once and for all.

She phoned him in the evening because not doing so might have aroused his suspicions. He told her he was going to work at home, on something very important, and she said she wouldn't disturb him, and would go to bed early herself. They spoke politely to each other and agreed to see each other the following day, when the worst of his work would be over. She had the key to his flat, an extra one, and added that she would return it to him the next day.

She was very sleepy and had an early dinner, quite alone, which was unusual for her. She was silent and collected, with-

out her usual restless indecision. Then she went to bed, at about nine o'clock, and set the alarm for two o'clock in the morning. She went to sleep at once and woke up, perfectly clear and energetic, even before the alarm went off. She took a taxi across the river, and dismissed it a hundred metres or so before Cesare's palazzo. She did the rest on foot, keeping close to the massive stone ~~knikding~~ walls in case he saw her from his window. She'd put on soft, low-heeled shoes. There was no light from his window, but she knew he took the precaution of always buying thick curtain material. She didn't take the lift up, in case the noise put him on guard. Outside his door, on the fifth floor, she waited and listened. There wasn't a sound, and no light showed underneath. She turned the key, and went in on tiptoe. There was no movement at all inside. She knew every corner of the flat and needed no light to go straight to the bedroom. The door was open, as it always was at night, to make a breeze from the window of the sitting room. She went swiftly in and waited for her eyes to grow accustomed to the dim light. There were two people. Cesare was in his place, and the head next to him was dark. In fact, it was black. She walked ~~xxxxxx~~ closer. Was it the woman from Bechuanaland? She stepped forward to make sure it was really her---there <sup>were</sup> ~~might be~~ other black-faced women <sup>in Rome, after</sup> ~~he was~~ <sup>erected in</sup> and knocked over a big lamp at the side of the bed. It crashed down, and Cesare woke up at once. She ran to the door, but he'd seen her.

'Vatene via,' he said in a clear voice, 'è non fare una scena.' Go away and don't make a scene.

He said it in a paternal way---firmly, like a doctor ordering a prescription. As it happened it was the best tone he could have adopted. It made her feel ashamed---dethroned and deshrined. The Bechuanaland lady---if it was the Bechuanaland lady---sat up,

blinking, as Number Two ran to the front door shouting 'Bugiar-do!'---liar! at the top of her voice.

Now she knew. And she began to piece together all the other lies he'd told her, wondering if he'd told the same lies ~~about her~~ to the other women. <sup>a</sup> After she'd been back in her own flat for an hour she decided to ring the Bechuanaland lady at her home. <sup>And the Bechuanaland lady was there,</sup> Well, she was there, thought she might just have come in <sup>for</sup> she didn't sound <sup>at all</sup> sleepy. Had it been her after all? There were other dark faced women in Rome, and the bedroom ~~had~~ curtains had been drawn. <sup>She was suddenly unsure of herself.</sup> So she said nothing and put the phone down. ~~But the Bechuanaland lady had certainly had time to leave Cesare's flat and reach home in a taxi. Or did she have access? Cesare would probably have sent her home at once, knowing that Number Two had a key and might cause more trouble. So her reflections went on.~~

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The next day she came to us for 'advice'. Should she ask the Bechuanaland lady point-blank whether she'd slept with him, or should she ask Cesare himself? On the other hand, if the Bechuanaland lady thought there was any doubt in her mind she would ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ at once say no, and Cesare was in any case a liar. So neither of those plans would do. Then she hit on something else: she would phone the Bechuanaland lady and ask her casually, 'Did Cesare say anything about me last night?' And if the other woman said, 'But we weren't together last night!', she could easily reply, 'Oh, I'm sorry, I thought he was going to have dinner with you!x He said something of the sort.' It was rather ingenious. And it was effective.

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The Bechuanaland lady replied at once, 'Of course he did! What do you think?' When Number Two asked how long 'it' had been going on, she said, 'You'd better ask him that, darling.'

She left him alone that day, both at the office and at

home. Instead she phoned the Bechuanaland lady again in the evening and told her with a rush how Cesare had been lying to her all these months, and how he'd told her that she (the Bechuanaland lady) had been chasing him and seemed to be madly in love with him, ~~though she would never betray her husband.~~ The Bechuanaland lady laughed coolly at this, without rancour, and said, 'He worried the life out of me. And he's been doing so for months. Ever since his Chinese woman went away. He used to ring me up every day.' Then she added, 'He told me the same about you. He said he wasn't interested in you at all really, but you kept worrying him, and he was afraid of what you might do to yourself if he suddenly dropped you.'

They began to work on his character reciprocally. Evenings were pieced together over which he had lied either to one of them or to both of them. They even compared him as a lover and reached the <sup>same</sup> conclusion, <sup>that</sup> he 'tried to satisfy many because he never satisfied one', a neat phrase. They found the poor man's diary, which he kept for the Chinese woman, listing his intimate doings. <sup>These</sup> ~~They~~ were certainly intimate. By hard work the two women found the key to the code he was using, <sup>in</sup> ~~to~~ the <sup>diary's</sup> strange hieroglyphics: the <sup>items</sup> ~~diary~~ carefully recorded the women he'd met, those he'd kissed and those he'd spent the night with, using different symbols for each <sup>condition</sup> ~~stage~~. 'S' meant success, they discovered. '2HU' meant two unsuccessful hours; '2HUN' meant two unsuccessful hours with Natalie, the Greek woman; ~~3MN~~ '3MSN' meant three successful minutes with Natalie. How they found the key nobody knew: they said they did it by following his character as <sup>as a ratcatcher follows a rat.</sup> they knew it. They ~~had~~ put certain dates---one '3MSC' (C meant Cynthia, the Bechuanaland lady)---together and looked at their own appointment books. His mistake was to use initials like that. Sometimes there was simply the letter S, with the words che gioia!

and one '4HUN' (four hours-unsuccessful-Natalie)

written after it---how wonderful! And Natalie began to give the book all the publicity she could.

To solve matters, the Chinese woman moved back to his flat completely: she answered all calls for him, and with inscrutable tact laid false trails for him, telling poeple that he was away from Rome when he was in his office, and in his office when he was sitting at home. The Greek woman couldn't penetrate the Eastern barrier she put round him, and gave up soon. <sup>The Chinese woman</sup> ~~Number one~~ could talk her machine-language again: 'the cohabitative urge which in the frustrated ego can become obsessive', a sly dig at Cesare,

<sup>that</sup> ~~this~~ And)

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= Again he was in the trattoria sitting mildly at her side, hardly saying a word, only giving her a look of disgust now and then.

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