

FROG LEGENDS



Noel Gray

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SHAKEN AND STIRRED

Everything in moderation is a boring way to travel round the world. Why not drink four glasses of Italian wine instead of two; eat two Viennese cakes instead of one? Be merry today in Paris and die tomorrow in Beirut, why not? Tomorrows come too quickly, which is the answer to that. To overcome this tension between longevity and happiness most seasoned travellers prefer moderation-in-excess. A bit of everything everywhere but not too often, is an ideal compromise.

Two such practitioners of this clever ruse I have known for many years: Felix Ranadia and his constant companion, Mossie de Rana. They are what you might call, Frogs of Renown. Both are from Venice and are the city's most experienced travellers. The thickness of the worlds they have seen through the bottom of their glasses testifies to the wisdom of their tongue-sipping ways.

Indeed, happiness has never eluded them, nor clarity's bounty ever disappeared in the fog of promises not kept. Instead, by constantly sipping cautiously they have mastered the art of the immediate by making the past and

the future merely the edges of today. Moderately excessive, they continue to stretch out their lives beyond the super nova style favoured by committed tipplers whose days vanish into an ever-narrowing membrane between countless yesterdays and dwindling tomorrows. I also have no doubt my two friends will continue to survive well beyond that other addictive group: absolute abstainers, those retched creatures that endlessly predict doomed futures based on arid pasts.

Although they are barely in their middle to late forties my friends have travelled wisely and far. So wise and far in fact, that many legends have grown down the years concerning their exploits. Each one illustrates the dangers facing those whom, unlike Felix and Mossie, favour the too-little, too-much, too-soon, too-late, or nothing-at-all life style, and all the other kinds in between.

One of these legends, the dangers surrounding the nothing-at-all life style, occurred when Felix and Mossie were going to Genoa to attend a buoyant conference on pesto, its uses and abuses. Rather than go straight to the famous seaside port they decided to stop off in Milan, a city where the traffic rules are not laws, only suggestions. My friends arrived on a sunny day that was drying itself from an early morning shower. They went immediately to the centre of the city.

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Fy-Sy Fables - *Colonising Creativity*

The Dead Gondolier - *and other crimes of Venice*

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The Last Reverse Tale

Fall Of The Ax

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Word World - *The Adventures of Piano and Ditto*

(a story for lonely children)

In The River Of Lost Footsteps

Non-Fiction:

Exits

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Dr. Noel Gray is an independent, international scholar and freelance writer. He has written extensively on the philosophy of geometry, the kaleidoscope, and numerous other subjects relating to science and technology. His fictional works often blend together several literary genres: magical realism, fables, mythology, science fiction, and crime. He is also a pioneer in the new genres: Fy-Sy, and Sotto Realism. He is currently compiling, *The Deranged Dictionary of Fictive Science*. He lives in Italy.

Frog Legends

In their ceaseless travels across the globe, two, moderately inebriated Frogs of Renown have inspired all whom they have met. From the Continent to Asia, and from the Americas to the British Isles, their exploits have literally become the stuff of legend.