

# I've Heard That Song Before

## by Gayathri Kandiah

I was listening to the radio and suddenly I heard the most unearthly song and it reminded me vividly of a night I would never forget...

I was tossing and turning in bed and the yellowish dim light from the street lamps told me it was well past midnight. I shut my eyes tightly and tried counting backwards from one hundred but immediately my mind began to wander. Just then I heard the most unearthly sound I had ever heard in my life. It was like a woman singing a song that filled me with a wonderful elation but at the same time it filled me with the feeling of terrible grief and made the hairs at the back of my neck stand up. It was like it was calling me and it seemed to be coming from the abandoned house across the road. The mystifying tune gave me the strength to follow it. I walked up the path towards the door, hanging off its hinges and the shutters flapping pointlessly and pathetically against the rotting window panes. The door creaked open and I saw a live adder slither in. My nerves kicked in. I creaked open the door and stepped in. A split second silence then I was falling, falling, falling...

I landed softly and I nearly laughed with relief but I found my breath constricted and I saw that thick vines were twisting round my body and were slowly constricting all movement. I heard the voice more strongly now that I was fighting for my life and it was telling me to kick my right leg. Why? Just do it. I stretched out my right leg and used up all my energy to kick and a shutter burst open revealing dim rays of moonlight. The plants shrivelled up and disappeared. I walked shakily up towards the next dark, dimly lit corridor and I saw something that nearly made me pass out. The voice was fading out slightly as if it was scared and at that moment my impulse to run was becoming stronger. A gargantuan spider was creeping towards me, the voice was telling me to stay quiet and as I looked up I saw that the spider had eight milky eyes and it was blind. It had obviously not yet become aware of a human presence and just then I sneezed. It clicked its pincers that sounded

like applause but applause did not usually make me feel sick when I heard it. It was gargantuan and took up the whole space between the floor and the ceiling and it gave a roar that shook the building and it was advancing on me, pincers aloft.

Just then these spectral beings swooped in front of the beast and I nearly died of shock. "Don't be afraid," said a beautiful woman with long, flowing hair and with deep eyes like pools of molten lava. She had a sympathetic and almost loving look on her face that made me trust her and she was singing that song that filled me with such a variety of emotions. There was also a girl who was an exact replica of her mother and a father with dark hair that was thick but stuck up oddly at the back and he seemed to have a habit of ruffling it as if to stop it getting too tidy. "We bought this house many years ago but we were not told that it was built over the underground, secret lab of a mad scientist and he was making a recipe for growth syrup. One day his entire stock was vandalised and a spider living in the darkest corner of the lab drank it when he went home in disappointment and the spider swelled to an elephantine size and devoured him. Later we found a basement and ... and. The woman dissolved into tears and the next few words were incoherent. I, who had already grown fond of this woman tried to comfort her but as I tried to pat her shoulder my hand passed through her and I got the unpleasant sensation of feeling that my hand had just been plunged in cold water. When she had recovered herself she said very seriously "Now child, listen to us. We can hold the beast off for a few seconds but that's all. You must run home and shut the basement door behind you as you go. Don't worry we'll be fine.

I hurried out of the basement and I saw a mass of white attack the terrible arachnid. In my haste I slammed the door of the basement and it immediately began to crumble I ran out just in time to see the house collapse and the last piercing screech of the monster which was clearly dying from the crash. Just then I saw four entwined figures moving silkily towards the stars and they were singing the song and saying "Thank you. We are at rest." I cannot remember what happened after that until the next morning apart from the song and that song I was sure I would never forget.

Slow and Sweet  
lent et douce

The Song

