

Neale Sournas's HOBBLE [An Adult Fiction]

Chapter 1

(<http://www.neale-sournas.com/interview--1-2003--JDuke.html>)

I literally fell for her; tripped over and fell on her, on the sunny, gritty beach of Virginia Beach. I wasn't spiritually ... emotionally lost, I believe; but, what we "believe" is so very often wrong. I suppose I was inactively, instinctively hunting something ... something I almost felt, but couldn't as yet begin to verbalize.

Anyway, because of muggers, mad dogs, and badly driven cars, I'm always very aware of everything and everyone around me, when I take my morning run; but, it was late in the day. So, maybe because my flight'd been delayed or because I'd become strangely out-of-synch or...?

My mind was ... fixated on a problem, now entirely forgotten, as I turned my head, toward the frightened, anguished cry of a lone sea bird, who sounded ... terribly and despairingly lonely to me ... and, somehow, devastatingly lost. And, in gazing aside at the bird, for all of two blind seconds, I knocked her down, onto the sand-a brown woman, in a long, potato sack, calico dress.

What a face!

An American face of excellently blended African and Native American genes, with a healthy little dollop of

European blood, a terribly agitated face, as she fetally balled up in great pain and wouldn't let me look at her injured ankle.

I explained that she could "trust me", that I knew what I was doing, when I wasn't "knocking defenseless young women to the ground." She didn't laugh, slightly chuckle, or even crack the tiniest of a smile, and from furtive, dark eyes, she gave me a shaky, cursory once over — *at the brown skin over hard-angled facial bones, at my black hair and dimly Asian eyes.*

I have a lot more than "a healthy dollop of European blood" myself, from Dad's side, which explains the beard [*a recent addition*] and the general curliness of my hair, which I've let grow to its own rule for months now. But, despite the Old World genes, I look most like my mother's Peruvian-Incan / Mexican-Mayan, New World genes.

I told my hapless victim my name was Benn, Bennet Gillespie.

She took a more thorough, ill-at-ease view of me into her head, which was covered with tousles of ... dark brown ringlets, which in the sunlight had auburn streaks, speckled with very premature silver. The sterling was incongruous with her physical youthfulness; but, the heartrending glance from those eyes hinted that it was well earned. Finally, she stared into my eyes, then nominally stopped cringing and gazed downward — as her (*"demure" came oddly to mind*) ... as her demure signal permitting me to have my way with her, so to speak.

I checked her injury.

She had the shapely legs of an athlete or dancer, and wore battered out, lowheeled ankle boots, that were slightly Victorian or Edwardian or one of those old "-ian" styles, laced over soft, thick socks. The ankle moved stiffly, painfully. The footwear was in the way, so, I began unlacing to better

ascertain how bad off it was, because sometimes there are hidden breaks and misleading damage.

She abruptly realized I was actually opening her boot and flinched away, shrieking at me; but, the small boot and sock slipped off into my hand. She fell silent, completely mortified, then started crying, wailing, in fact, lying flat back in the sand.

Besides the swelling I'd caused, her ankle had a deep cut. Not an immediately recent cut, that I might have caused her, but a deep, nicely healing, surgical one — *and I know this because my mother was a surgeon and she'd made me take "real" medicine classes and be her assistant, to go with the rest of my training.*

This cut was nicely, cosmetically stitched; but, I bet you, and I'd win, that the seam was there to repair something grossly traumatic.

She was lying there sobbing actual tears. I know because I pulled her hands away from her face and checked. However, whether the tears were also actually genuine...? I glanced up and down the beach and saw absolutely no one else around for continents. The nearest anything was a lonely looking, one-story beachhouse behind us, that was showing no life or interest in us, and I had a little insight.

She attempted stopping me, as she sat up and wordlessly defended her secret, until finally allowing me, in mute, humiliated resignation, to unlace the other boot — *that stiff and pained ankle was also restitched.* Both of them were sewn quite a way around, like a can opener makes a cut around a lid, until it's nearly severed. However the original lacerations had been made, it hadn't been by penknife or train wheel — *I've seen the resulting cuts of both of those on the human body; these'd been done by something in between.*

I asked if she lived nearby, I suggested I call for an ambulance, or I could carry her to my car at the hotel a mile or so back up the beach, and she obviously hated all my ideas. Noisily so. Who'd think so much mournfully, piercing sound could come out of such a perfect mouth. I began considering that she might be completely inarticulate, then, I had another insight — *with her ankles this raw, she had to've come from nearby. I asked her, quite specifically, where she lived.*

She clammed up like a petulant child and really didn't want to answer that, so I told her if I couldn't take her home, I'd have to take her to a hospital. I couldn't just leave her there, like a beached wha—.

"What are you doing to her, young man?"

It was a Scottish accent, hurried and harried, from a probably usually pleasant but now distressed, slimly roundish and handsome, middle-aged woman in her fifties, who glared at me, as if she already hated my very existence.

"I fel-... we bumped into each other and she's bruised, maybe even sprained her ankle. It's a little hard to tell ... with all the other damage."

"My young lady hasn't torn open her wounds, has she?"

"No, ma'am; but she refuses to go to the hospital, or tell me where she lives. Where—?"

"For shame, Ms. Day. You know, quite well, you're not allowed out here alone. Why did you come so far out, without me? And so close to the water?" The Scot wanted to chastise more but apparently felt my rocking and sobbing victim / patient was already in enough piteous grief.

"Is she all right? Can she walk?"

I shook my head "no". The younger woman's leg was ... well. both leas were enough of a problem. but her tremulous

demeanor wouldn't get her anywhere. I told the Scot I'd play beast of burden and carry — "Ms. Day", if I could be pointed in the right direction. I picked the young woman up and she smelled of fruit, of peaches and vanilla; some sort of shampoo, I thought. The weepy thing stiffened, then calmed and relaxed in my arms, as I followed the older woman, carrying her socks and boots, to the same beachhouse I'd spotted behind us.

If it had a style name other than beachhouse, I wouldn't know. I have cousins in the Yucatan with a shack on the beach, at the edge of the jungle where, on our vacations as children, we caught snakes and milked them of their venom for cash from a New York City researcher, who "wasn't good" with poisonous serpents. This house wasn't huge but it was no shack, either. The Scotswoman was its live out housekeeper, as she led us in and found a proper place on the sofa for me to place my shapely charge.

I know that sounds a bit ... but, a man gets a fairly involved idea of a woman's body, when he's carrying it against his own.

"What's this all about, Mrs. Gorbachev?!"

The Scot, Mrs. Gorbachev, explained our situation to the late sixties, early seventy something, Anglo-English master of the house, a Mr. Hopkins, who seemed even more suspicious and disdainful of my presence than the Russian Scot. He didn't want me touching his ... whatever "Ms. Day" was to him. Then, he called her his "daughter"....

Plenty of people don't look anything like their parents; plus ... he could be a foster or step—.

It didn't matter what they were to each other, the logic loving part of my brain reminded me.

I suggested my hosts have someone look at her injury

and in the meanwhile I could make a poultice—.

"A what?"

Yeah, like he wasn't old enough to have heard or probably worn one himself sometime. Probably back during The Blitz, The Great War, or that little altercation between Generals York and Washington even. Something about the man pissed me off. I think it was just him—not because he was English, or much older, but because he was ... him — *whoever he was*. I took a step to leave and Ms. Day grabbed my hand, tightly. She dug her sharp, natural, and hard, little nails into me, not to hurt me, but plainly because she was afraid for some reason.

"Let the man go, Day. He must leave."

She shook her head "no," then began saying "no," over and over, and when I moved, she stood up abruptly, which had to have hurt her legs a great deal. She continued clinging to the flesh of my arm. Her begging me to stay could have been nice, if her nails hadn't been gouging me, nearly to drawing blood, and if the other two people in that uncozy, expensively appointed house hadn't glared at me, as if I'd put her up to it.

I tried peeling her off me and getting her to lie back on the sofa, but she wouldn't heed me, and she certainly wasn't listening to either of them. Actually he was no help at all, and managed to make everything worse, as he barked sharp orders at her. Condescendingly, I felt. I did wonder if Day's middle name were Night. He snapped at her to "behave like an adult" and to let me, "the stranger," go about my business, etc. That sounded condescending, too. It was getting out of hand, and I was losing needed skin cells to her clawing.

Mrs. G, however, had a simple idea.

"You know, sir, how she detests all those doctors you

brought her here to see. Ms. Day, do you want the gentleman to stay?"

Day instantly looked at the woman in relief without letting go of me. Hopkins, old bean, was very pissed at the question. I thought I could, perhaps, help all concerned, and suggested, if I could leave for an hour or less, I could grab some things from my hotel, some herbs—.

"Herbs'?" He pronounced it like a man's name.

I explained to him that I was a curandero, a trained and licensed healer. That got a big harrumph. I also added I was the son of a surgeon. He asked why I wasn't a "doctor" doctor. Maybe it was his stentorian tone of voice that annoyed me. Then again, it was none of his business — *okay, it's a sore point of mine.*

I merely reminded him, instead, that since she was refusing to go to the hospital, her leg might become infected, or at least hurt a hell of a lot, for a hell of a long time, making her more lame. Even in America, gangrene still occurs, which can lead to amputation. Also, as temperamentally highstrung as she'd been since I'd met her, neither of them would get any rest sleeping or fetching and carrying for her every second, which they'd ... which Mrs. G'd most likely had just stopped doing recently, because of the ankle surgery.

I explained that as a well-trained, experienced, and highly sought after curandero, I always carry or can find herbs, oils, and teas to soothe, calm, and take down the swelling of most any infection or injury. The treatments might even urge her to sleep for awhile. I kept it to myself that I thought she was being juvenilely bitchy; however, I suspected the beauty was something of a headcase, or at least terribly spoiled rotten somehow.

What a waste.

Neither of them had a better idea of what to do with her, in order for them to handle her, as she refused to listen to or be touched by them; so, Hopkins, in his extreme reluctance, agreed to let me return. The really hard part came when I tried to extricate myself from Day. Finally, I convinced her I was coming back, "soon," by setting her attention on the ancient gold locket I wore around my neck.

It has a childhood photo of my sister and me, and one of my mother; my dead mother. I was reaching for simpatico involvement from Day, to affect her and get her out of herself and more focused. I slipped the locket, hanging on its black cord, from my neck onto hers. Her possessing it, in payment against my return, seemed to satisfy her enough, and she let me go.

"Dipping into several genres from erotica to mystery, even sprinkling a little comedy into the mix, Sournas created a story like no other. This morbid (yes morbid) tale had me shaking my head in astonishment and I can honestly say I never read anything like Hobbles before.

"Sournas wrote a novel with such a large supply of twist and turns it'll have you dropping your mouth in shock.

"But be forewarned, Hobbles has a crazy mix of characters who made me wish I had some holy water to splash on every single one of them. Some of the sex scenes had me (a person who loves erotica) squirming.

"Although the book is racy, it was an interesting read and should be picked up by anyone who enjoys reading something different from the norm."

--Joy Farrington, Nubian Sistas Review

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Excerpt 2

(<http://www.neale-sourna.com/interview--1-2003--JDuke.html>)

An urgently tense Mrs. Gorbachev was waiting for me in the lobby when I got back to the hotel. It didn't seem appropriate to lead her to my room, so we found a quiet corner in the cozy restaurant. I loosened my tie as she spoke, as the blood vessels in my head throbbed, with what she was saying, because I was and should not have been so deeply involved so soon. She said Day had become distraught to find I was gone, and, after the next thing she told me, I advised....

I often step out of myself, "watch" myself in situations; in this one, I kept smoothing my expensive, imported silk tie, over and over, as if keeping it ordered; it already was, as Mrs. G stated frankly that I was "good medicine" for her frantic charge. A flattering statement, from a woman, who probably never flatters.

I advised that she or Mr. Hopkins "should call professional mental assistance for Day." I could give them several names of worthy people I'd definitely highly recommend, and whenever they got her calm, Mrs. G could please send my mother's locket back to me. I abruptly excused myself, turning my back on her obvious disappointment.

"Mr. Gillespie, he's not her father. 'Not by blood or by law.' That's an unfortunate affectation of his. Ms. Day wanted me to be certain you knew that."

She fell impatiently silent, her reflection in the wall mirror showed plainly that she wasn't certain what else to say to me; to my backside; to convince me. I looked back at her, while still tie smoothing, assessing her motives – *like I would know what a stranger's feelings and thoughts might truly be in all this.*

It was a critical time for her, and she clearly didn't like me making her wait, so, I'm sure she had many interesting words, in English and Scottish Gaelic flashing across her mind; but, she merely watched me, and waited. Waited for pearls, rubies, and diamonds to drop from my lips.

"I'll follow in a few minutes."

I left a voicemail for my sister, on her private number, of where I'd be and that I'd contact her soon.

Day was sitting on the sofa, quiet as that proverbial, little church mouse, as long as no one else approached her. Hopkins sat across the room, smoking, glaring at her, as if he despised her-in his inability to control her, in his inability to take his fatigued eyes off her. I sat beside Day, who had a serrated breadknife in her hands and was holding the deadly sharp point at her throat. Her hands were steady.

"Day, if you don't mind, I don't want blood on my mother's locket."

She held the blade, handle end out, and allowed Mrs. Gorbachev to retrieve it. The poor woman had left it alone a few seconds, while cutting bread, to answer the phone, then turned to find Day had it. It turns out that "Ms. Day's not allowed to handle sharp knives."

I didn't ask about pointy forks. Or hard, plastic sporks.

Hopkins sighed deeply, then retreated to his bedroom. I tended Day's inflamed ankles, and she wasn't happy that I was being wholly professional, emotionally distant, and a bit sullen – *I don't like being manipulated, without my permission.*

[Edit]

Day was only a few yards from me, having gone from her bedroom through the connecting bath and out through the empty adjoining room. She was wet and shivering in a large towel. Taking a few steps to me, she faltered, her towel fell, and I caught her. She smelled of peaches and apple soap or shampoo and was enticingly naked ... closer scrutiny of her body telling me that it was athletic but slightly gone to softness for lack of activity.

Did I mention she was naked, shamelessly, casually naked, which, of course, caught my attention; but, she seemed to take no particular notice of it, while in my arms.

Part of me was thinking of what Hopkins did with her, which was soon flushed from my mind, when she brushed her electrifying hand down my bare chest. She placed one of my very warm hands on her gooseflesh cold, round breast, warming the plump flesh of it, as I ran my thumb tip around its dark brown, hard nipple. She took my other hand and swept it across her soft, damp bush of gentle curls.

Then, I slipped my probing fingers deep into the inviting, warm cleft between her thighs; she was dry there, having just bathed and evidently assiduously douched, until my touch was rewarded by generating liquid heat.

People with heightened, excited minds, like hers, are often unerringly prescient; she preempted my better judgement of stepping back from her, by grabbing me "below the belt," through my boxer briefs, causing me to swell and harden faster in her hand, than I already was. And, like most

men, grabbed by a desirable, naked woman, who's every look and touch most clearly states she greatly wants him, I kissed her. A moment of stray logic halted it, until she smokily spoke.

"Benn, I only want you." That's an ego booster.

I glanced back at the closed door between Hopkins and us, and unlike how so many of us swear — *"one thing" did not just uncontrollably "lead to another," as we quite plainly chose to be seduced by each other.*

I carried her back through the short hallway, past the intimate ... small dining room to my "bed" for the night, the sofa in the front room. Her ankles were cold and uncovered and I asked if the wrappings had come off in the shower. She nodded and said they felt fine. I got a pinprick twinge in my gut, which made me suspect she was probably fibbing a little ... to be with me, which I let go because ... I wanted her ... badly and because she still had that look for me, you know that look.

I kept my fingers swimming in the carpeted, hot pool between her legs, as I kissed her deeply for a long while, because she has an incredible mouth and because her whole body partakes in her kisses. Then, I asked what she wanted me to do to please her; she graciously said whatever I wanted. "Yippee!" was my first mental response, followed by, "Yeah, but does she really mean it, and what exactly does she mean when she says it?"

It's amazing how much miscellaneous ... crap and white noise goes through a person's brain ... at a time and in a situation like that. And how enjoyably and/or annoyingly aware one's senses can get ... ears hearing her quietly tense responses and my hungry responses ... whether or not he's making a response from the back of the house to our not completely silent responses, which he thankfully wasn't, as

he snorted then snored on.

I was kneeling on the floor beside his sofa, making my pleasant dining journey downward; from her responsive lips and tongue, her tantalizing, plump breasts, the little softness of her belly, and ... below, where I was dawdling, before devouring. One hand kneaded a breast-all natural, the best kind-while the other was still happy to be knuckle deep in the oven between her softly peachfuzzed thighs, as I watched her react to me, writhing seductively as a serpent, until she looked at me oddly – *impatiently, breathlessly pouted actually.*

When you're with a woman, especially a new-to-you woman, in such a vulnerable position for you both, it's always best to ask and not imagine exactly what she might be thinking. Then, take what she says with a big grain of salt; depending on the lady and whether you think she says precisely what she means or whether she couches her phrases. I asked her if I were doing something wrong, and her answer....

"You don't like me?"

It was a strangely pleading question and because of the way she said it and the way her face appeared made me reconsider the entire situation, as I removed my hands from her and sat back on my heels.

"How old are you, Day?"

It was her turn for another perplexed look. Then she smiled, as she sat up, and I half realized that even the simple thing of her hand sliding gently up my arm made me want to be hers.

"Old enough for what you want of me." She saw by my expression of suspicion, that that wasn't the best answer to give me. "I'm legal, in every state of the Union. I wouldn't lie

about that, not to you."

I chose to believe her.

We choose everything we do, somewhere along the line — *the stuff we swear we don't want to do, even the stuff we're terrified of, probably even the stuff that kills us, too.* Day'd been a strange girl since I'd met her; but, she hadn't lied to me, not seriously anyway, I was certain of that. Conversely, I didn't ask about the other ... thing hanging about in my mind. I harnessed it, bound and gagged it, and temporarily buried it somewhere — *the ... relationship between her and ... him.*

"I'm old enough, Benn. My people just look young. Really." She peevishly frowned. "I'm not lying ... or is there something else you don't like about me?"

"What makes you thi—?"

"You're not inside me, yet. You're avoiding and stopping, so you don't have to. You even still have your underwear on."

I decided then that even after living, working, and dating in some very large metropolitan cities and traveling the world, rural and otherwise, quite a lot, I hadn't yet heard everything, after all.

"You want me to rush?" She didn't seem to understand; yet, she wanted to answer my somewhat teasing question.

"I... You.... Isn't that what...? It's the way he does it, and the way the—" She stopped, abruptly, censoring herself. Odd girl ... woman. I also took note that I didn't seem to want to face the fact that her mind was....

"Day, do you like me touching and kissing you ... licking you? If you don't, I'll stop."

"No. I mean.... Yes. Yes, I do like it ... a lot. It's ... it's just ... not...."

"What you're used to?" She eventually nodded,

uncertainly, as if fearing I might not like her answer. "I very, very much like and want you; but, if you'll let me take care of you, Day, let me please you, before I take care of me, I'd really love that."

She didn't acknowledge what I'd said at first. It was my impression that no one had ever said such a thing to her before.

No. I didn't ask. About him.

Sometimes asking questions gets you in too much trouble, or at least adds to the searingly hot H2O you're already parboiling your head in. And, yes, I was feeling a little ... a lot selfish ... I really, really wanted this woman — *her body ... her*. I "predewed" my pants then, as a certain smartass cardiologist I know calls it, and Day put her palm on the warm, wet spot. I liked her hand there; but, I sighed deeply and moved it.

"Stop overstimulating me."

I made certain that both my tone and facial expression were playful and light. The innocent tone she gave me back almost spilled me over the edge.

"But, I wasn't doing anything."

I hugged her to me, because I needed to and because I wanted to slow my desire for her down. Although, holding her naked flesh to mine wasn't the best idea, but I didn't want to get up and go way across the room — *not away from her*. I know, I could've just taken her, I achingly wanted to; or one of us could take me manually, to take the edge off; I achingly wanted that too; but, the self-inflicted, excruciating wait for her seemed right, particularly after what she'd just said about him. I'd seen his selfish impatience first hand and I didn't want to be like that, like him, with her.

I wanted to wait for her, so to speak.

I felt her relax against me, then I started over, a little quicker this time, to get back to where I'd stopped. I put my lips and tongue to her natural fruit scented and flavored body and strove to delight her however I could, which plainly was a great deal. She'd been a bit tense before; evidently waiting for me to strip and hurriedly dive in like good ole Hopkins would've. Without there being any joy in it for her. But, this was my game, and when I play it, the way I play it, nobody's better at it.

All modesty aside, of course.

"Hobble is a story of lust and obsessive sex ... I was so moved ... I went back to my (Franklin) dictionary ... hobble means to limp along ... to impede ... to tie-up, shackle or leash ... all of [which] were used in this steamy story, of sex, incest and betrayal!"

—Delores Thornton, www.BlackRefer.com Reviews
