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The Broken Doll

by Garf Collins

“Don’t think me crazy. I want you to save something for me.” Gemma said in the middle of a call to her friend. She didn’t know why it had come into her mind but it suddenly seemed urgent.

“I’ll be happy to but is something wrong? You sound a bit strange.”

“Nothing more than the usual Sarah. Mike’s got another so called PA on board and I’m convinced it’s his latest affair. Anyway, go to our London flat. The housekeeper knows you so she’ll let you in. You’ll find a little red file in my dressing table. If anything happens to me, or us, please send it to the editor of the Daily News. He’s often a guest on the yacht. So say it’s from me.”

“Okay. But aren’t you being a teeny bit dramatic?”

“I don’t think so. In the file I’ve documented all Mike’s affairs. You’re the only one I’ve told about them. So you know they never last and then he’s back on me like a ton of bricks. But one day soon I’ll have had enough. Then I want to make sure he’s exposed for the philandering rat that he is. You’ll know when to send it.”

After they finished chatting Gemma turned over on her sun lounger thinking how tedious it was to maintain a perfect tan at Mike’s bidding. That evening she would be expected to be his perfect wife flirting gently with the rich and famous guests he invited to his yacht. Always men. Mike emphasised the importance of connections in his business and said his aim was to give them a good time networking away from the glare of publicity. As part of this he seemed to enjoy displaying her as his ‘look but

don't touch' trophy. She shuddered as she thought of the Cabinet Minister who had again become much too attentive the night before.

Gemma knew she should leave the beach to start her elaborate preparations for the evening but her conversation with Sarah had focused her increasing despair. Instead, she moved to a bar at the end of a quay. Sitting by the water she was glad to be alone. In the distant marina she could see the super yachts which reminded her how, as an aspiring actress, she used to fill in as a waitress at corporate events. At a party on Mike's yacht he had spotted her and pursued her obsessively. She had been flattered and swept up in the glamour of his life and happily agreed to marry him. Now she realised that she acted only in one part and he complimented it with bit parts for his mistresses.

"You like come for ride?" Her reverie was suddenly interrupted by a young man in a fast looking dinghy.

"No thank you I have to.....," she started to say but was suddenly tempted by this random opportunity which was off the normal script. "Oh. OK thank you," she continued as she slipped into the boat.

After an exhilarating ride he stopped the engine and joined her on the passenger seat.

"We do fishing?" He said as he dropped a line overboard. Then after a pause, "I like kiss you," as he put his arm around her and tentatively kissed her lips. She couldn't understand why, but she found herself responding. Maybe it was just because she had stepped out of her normal role for once. When he slipped her bikini top off and began gently to caress her breasts, the contrast to Mike's rough attentions in between affairs added to her pleasure. But suddenly he pushed her down and crushed her beneath him urgently thrusting himself into her. She screamed and struggled but soon realized that she couldn't repel him, so lay back apathetically looking up at the sky. The cloud temporarily obscuring the sun seemed to emphasise her plight.

"So this is what rape is like," she thought, "but really it's not much different to the way Mike treats me." In her desperation she thought, "I'm just a sacrifice to male lust."

After his climax, he rolled off her, re-started the engine and without speaking took her back.

"Was good yes. You no tell?" He said as she climbed out of the boat. Still deeply shocked she wordlessly returned to the beach.

The sea that she never entered for fear of marring the doll that she had become, now seemed strangely inviting. She walked into the gentle surf. The warmth of the water lapped around her legs and as it rose washed away his residue and eased her pain. She dived and swam underwater with her expensively styled hair streaming behind her.

"The sea loves me and supports me. It wants me," she thought gathering strength as she headed further out. She swam and swam until fatigue overtook her and she willingly succumbed to the waves.

A week later a package containing the red file was delivered to the 'The Editor Daily News.' Two days after that the newspaper carried a comment about Gemma's death.

Tycoon's wife drowns

Emma Braidward 34 the wife of prominent corporate financier Mike Braidward was found dead in the sea off Rhodes on 24th July. There has been speculation about the cause of her death. Braidward couldn't be contacted but his PA Trish Mason gave us this comment;

'Mike is too upset to talk at the moment. He knows of no reason why Gemma should have taken her own life. He asks that his privacy is honoured at this difficult time.'

A month later, the Daily News carried the first of a sequence of expensive adverts for Braidward Corporate Finance.