

## She was nervous about the future

by Vera Gajic

She'd been nervous about the future for the last 4 years and she was getting more nervous with each passing day. Since the virus had struck it had become intense anxiety keeping her awake at night. She was having to apply extra make up during the day to cover up her drawn face and deep circles under her eyes. Did her husband notice? He hadn't said anything on his weekly nuptial visits.

She'd hoped these regular visits would stop with social distancing but that was wishful thinking and unrealistic. She now worried they might increase as he wouldn't have access to other women with the lock down. Not that she was absolutely sure he had other women but as she got older she realised that people don't change.

At least the virus had stopped the trophy wife outings she hated so much. Pretending to listen avidly to the ridiculous things that her husband said and play the role of the dutiful wife. The last year had been particularly hard as every time he opened his mouth she felt like cringing, some utterances so mad she had to bite her tongue not to give herself away.

She'd started trying not to listen to what he was saying so as not to react but that was hard, particularly as everyone else hung on every word. Sometimes she would catch someone's eye for a second too long when they were out at some event or other. She never spoke to his colleagues and "staff" or subordinates as he liked to call them. Too risky. Easier to keep quiet but she did get so very lonely.

She had her son of course, but she had to keep up the charade with him or he'd be the first to tell. He loved his father, as most sons do until they realise what they are really like at about the time that their voices break hairs start to appear on their chin. She had no friends, they were all too scared.

How had she got here? It still made her catch her breath sometimes when she thought about where she grew up in the tiny town in a tiny country that most people had never heard of. She knew from a young age she was pretty, everyone kept telling her mum, "your daughter will go a long way with a face like that Madam Knave."

So her mother had entered her for beauty contests and modelling shoots and it had worked. A pretty face can get you into places that nothing else can unless you are a man with lots of money of course. What she didn't know then was that powerful men want to own beautiful women and that it was really hard to be free. Choosing the right man was so important.

What is going to happen now? Everything was so unstable, her husband most of all. The best thing would be if he caught the virus and died, he must be vulnerable, he was well over 70, a man, not fit. It would be a service to everyone. When she heard someone who worked in the kitchens had got the virus she went down there at night and ran her fingers over all the surfaces and then licked them, she might become a carrier.

But what if he survived? She couldn't imagine how she could keep going after November. If he won the election he'd be unbearably scary, he'd try to rule the world. God knows he might even press the button. If he lost he would be so angry she would be terrified. She couldn't stay with him. But Presidents or even ex-Presidents don't get divorced. Look at Hilary.