



## CASTLE TERRACE CAR PARK

Laura Hird

Ken. Perfect name for the bastard. If he wasn't English, he'd say it all the time — ken this, ken that, ken what you mean. Always something to fucking say. Always some meaningless fact or opinion to share. But he's my boss, so every two months we have to go through this round-for-dinner crap. I don't know why we bother. I haven't had so much as a sniff at promotion for nearly five years. Ken. Love him. Love to boot him to oblivion. God knows what Barbara sees in him. He's got a face like an aborted pig's foetus.

He's on his second plate of Karen's monkfish in a dill batter. The first helpings were Desperate Dan-sized but the rotund one obviously doesn't get fed properly at home, so is making the most of it. From what I hear, Barbara doesn't take any of her wifely obligations too seriously. Who can blame her? Living with that human wheelie-bin.

‘Uh, Karen, this is really delicious. The batter’s just perfect. What’s the herb? That really nice flavour?’

Karen rewards his culinary compliment, by topping up his glass. He puts his hand over it as it nears the brim and she pours some red wine on it. Stupid prick.

‘Oh, sorry,’ she wipes it with a napkin, giggling like a teenager, ‘it’s dill. Just dill and a little bit of sea salt.’

Of course it’s fucking dill. It’s monkfish in a dill batter as she’s already told him about five times. Why are they having this non-conversation? Jesus, must he eat with his mouth full? I feel like I can see every calorie making its journey to join his already prodigious blubber.

The wine-spilling incident has Barbara giggling away as well now. It’s like a bloody chimp’s tea party. I quite fancied Barbara as well, but I hate seeing people laughing about nothing. They’re like lemmings. And now Ken’s started as well. That’s it. It’s like that old Smash commercial from the seventies. For Mash get Smashed. I hate the fact he’s got both of them laughing. I feel like sticking my fork in his eye.

Once Ken’s finished his second, mammoth, helping, Karen clears the plates away and the room descends into a silence, punctuated only by him still fannying on about how wonderful the meal was. We agree to have a break before pudding. It probably breaks Ken’s heart, but he’s already proved himself to be a supreme greedy arsehole, so goes with the status quo. We go through to the living room, so we can open up the patio door for Barbara to have a cigarette. I suggest putting on some music, so I have something decent to listen to. Ken’s on his feet and over at the CD player.

‘I’ll pick something, d’you mind? Or any requests?’

That he drops dead. I hate having my choice of music undermined. He knows how sensitive I am about it. I spend more than £70 a week in Fopp. I read Select, NME, Mojo, Q. I download music endlessly on Imesh. I pride myself on keeping my finger on the musical pulse. All for that fat twat to barge in and put on this pure pish 60's compilation I only parted with £1.99 for in the post office because it had Peter Sarstedt's 'Where Do you Go to my Lovely' on it, and that jumps. Christ. A few thousand quid's worth of up-to-the-minute compact discs and I'm going to be branded a Gerry and the Pacemakers fan. How much do I hate this man?

It's not even the original recordings. It's one of these, Now-We-Are-Sixty efforts where the artistes that haven't, in the intervening years either died of Parkinsons or alcoholism, get invited in to re-record their hits in an unrecognisable fashion for the price of a packet of incontinence pads. Fucking hell. Gerry Marsden. 'I Like It.'

Ken and Karen take an armchair each. I bring a dining room chair through and sit behind them, so I can see Barbara. There's a breeze and she keeps having to push her hair out her eyes. She's got these amazingly intense eyes. She sucks on her cigarette, in a dream. I glance at her, trying to work out if she's wearing a bra, wondering who goes on top with her and fat boy. She's so hot. I decide at that moment that I'm going to fuck her. That will be my next project. My last one was Karen's sister. Frigid bitch that she was, I shouldn't have wasted my time.

In conjunction with me silently pledging to fuck his wife, Ken croons, badly, the intro to Billy J Kramer's 'Bad To Me.'

*If you ever leave me,  
I'll be sad and blue,*

*don't you ever leave me,  
I'm so in love with you,*

he warbles, eyebrows raised hopefully at Barbara. She nods her head, obviously embarrassed. Twat.

With Barbara completely disinterested, Ken goes back to talking to Karen, about some company he's bought shares in that's doing well. Never thought to let me in on who they were when it was only 28p a share. He's made about twenty grand in the last month. Won't shut up about it. I hope the stock market crashes again.

Barbara stubs her fag under the toe of her black, leather boot, then comes back in and locks the patio doors. I'd complain to anyone else for making the place look like a Wester Hailes bus stop, but like the idea of having her lipstick on a fag butt in my garden. I stand up to go over and sit on the settee beside her, but she hunches down in front of Ken and sits between his legs. It's repugnant. What the hell's she playing at? She's not been giving him the goods for months. He told me himself. I hate couples that put on some loved-up act in public but in private wank themselves raw and don't speak to each other for weeks on end. I feel quietly gutted. Still, her undignified position on the floor forces the slit in her skirt open, so I just sit in silence and imagine sliding my head between those strong, beefy thighs, as Ken waffles on.

The only person who actually seems to be listening to him is Karen. Karen, for some unfathomable reason, appears to like the guy. She laughs at the feeblest so-called funny anecdotes and observations, always finds some alternative thread to pull out of all his conversations and they seem to have a lot of wee in-jokes together. I

work with the guy, but she seems closer to him; more intimate.

Karen's like that though. She let's very few people into her world, but when she does, she quickly creates an individual little cosmos with that person. Like a magnet that only has the power to attract one thing at a time. Subsequently, Barbara's a bit left out and has a wonderful, off-fucking-someone-else-in-her-head, look about her. It makes me feel better about her sitting between Ken's flabby thighs. Well, not exactly better. Just less worse. I catch her eye a few times and she gives me a non-committal smile. She wants me. It's not like Ken's getting any. Hot woman like that must be getting it somewhere, you know. She must be fair game. The split skirt says it all.

She must be a handful in one way or another. Why else would Ken tell me, and anyone else at work that would listen, that she wouldn't let him touch her? His gonads are obviously so full, it's affecting his sense of decorum and common decency. Jesus, if I was married to a sexy whore like that, and she wasn't giving me the goods, d'you think I'd be admitting it to people? She'd be getting it up the arse on a daily basis as far as anyone else I knew was concerned. Imagine admitting that your wife doesn't even fancy you. How can you respect someone like that?

Barbara gets up to go to the toilet. Her skirt opens wide so I can see right up to the top of her leg. She's not wearing stockings or anything, but it still gives me a semi. In a split second, I imagine that big arse of hers squashed on every part of my body. Jesus. She's so hot I feel like just grabbing her in front of them and giving her one. Don't even give anyone time to protest. Just for a moment, I want her so much, I'd risk my job, marriage, home, getting charged with rape, to just fuck her over the Omni Pine coffee table. Karen and Ken watching

would just make it better. That's the ironic thing. How does life have to be full of such boring rules and conventions? How fantastic would it be if I could just fuck any woman, whenever and wherever I felt like it?

Ken's leaning over her now, arms round her from behind, kissing her hair.

'It's our seventh anniversary tomorrow, isn't it love?'

Barbara wriggles forward for some space. Pulls a face that implies tolerance, but I read loathing.

'So that's what that itch is,' she sneers, then spoils it all by turning round and kissing the bastard. It makes me feel like I've stubbed my toe; my little toe. The same rush of rage you get. I look at Karen to ground myself. She looks as pissed off as me. What for, I'm not too sure. Nah, she'd never fancy him. What am I thinking? Gut-bucket like that. It's just her weird way. Why I can still be bothered with her after all these years, I suppose. It's never boring cos she's so fucking weird. Plus, she just hates that couple shite as well. It's always just a cover for profound antagonism.

I need to break my sense of him being the focus of the whole room. The only track I like on the CD, the Peter Sarstedt one is on and I don't want my liking of it violated by an image of whale-boy fondling my next fuck. I fill up my glass, no-one else's, take it over to the CD rack with me, and pull out some Beethoven sonatas CD I've not played in years. Make Billy-fucking-Fury feel a bit inadequate. Though Karen's started flirting with him again while she thinks my back's turned, so I'm not so sure.

The settee's empty, but I go back over and sit on the dining chair, so I can keep my delightful vigil on Barbara's slit.

'The Pathetique, isn't it?' says Ken suddenly, like a spider

running across my face and waking me up.

I know it is, or probably is, because there's only 3 sonatas on that CD and that's probably one of them, but the fact that Ken knows this scunners me. I probably pull the sort of face you would when you're told after 37 years that your father was really Hughie Green. How does that do-wah-diddy-diddy tosser know that anyway? He's pathetic. Christ, I almost said it out loud there. How much wine have I had. Three quarters of a bottle. Nah, I'm fine.

I refill my own glass, then go through to the kitchen for another bottle. I just need away from that prick for a minute or two. God, what's wrong with me tonight? He doesn't usually wind my up this much. We spend all day at work together, and in that environment, he's alright. I actually do quite like him, within reason. It's just when he's on my own territory he automatically puts my back up. My stomach's starting to churn now. Better take some Bisodol.

I've just taken a swig, and let out a belch, when Barbara comes into the kitchen, wanting pain-killers. Well, supposedly wanting pain-killers, but she's giving me that direct stare of hers and her hands are on the back of her hips. I start rummaging through cupboards, knowing full well that the Nurofen are in the kitchen drawer.

'It's him gives me the headaches. Not the booze. See when he gets going on a subject, he just seems to lose all sense of how boring he can be,' she whispers, smiling at our little secret.

I stop hunting pills and lean against the sink beside her. She looks slightly surprised at my suddenly standing so close to her but doesn't move away, just keeps flashing that come-on of a smile of hers. I reason quickly in my head. I only see her when Karen and I have dinner with the pair of them, she's offering me it on a plate here,

and I want to get my own back on her old man, anyway. Plus wine always helps.

‘Well, if it ever gets too boring and you want someone to talk to...’

‘How d’you mean?’

Bitch, she’s going to make me work for it.

‘You know. Just to chat, or more, or whatever. I only ever get the chance to see you on nights like this. I’d like to see you on your own, sometime.’

She looks bemused, but her defences are down. She’s leaning against the bunker now, breasts pointing at me. The only part of her showing the slightest resistance is her gob.

‘Chat, or more? What do you mean exactly?’

‘Whatever you want it to mean. No pressure or anything. Just, I think there’s something going on between us, and we should maybe meet up and talk about it.’

I take a slug of my wine, buoyed by my nerve in just coming out with it. Women love that. They hate when a man beats about the bush and expects them to do all the running.

‘Between us? You mean you and me?’

‘C’mon Barbara, tell me its my imagination we’ve been eyeing each other up through there for the past three hours.’

Her smile warms again and I know I’ve hit a raw nerve.

‘I thought I had something on my chin,’ she giggles, boring into me with these incredible bloody blue eyes of hers. Someone’s going to come through in a minute if I don’t do something quick. I grab her hand and pull her towards me, aiming my lips at hers. Next thing I’m aware of is a pain in my cheekbone, a mug clattering on the floor and her vanished back through. Fuck. She fucking hit me. I can’t believe it.



I'm reeling, not so much from being hit, but from the shock of her response. My cock's straining in my pants. Now I really want her.

But I need to get myself together. What if she's through there at this moment, telling them all I just made a grab at her. I put my hand up to my face to check for blood but it seems ok. It was just a dunt. If she'd meant it, I'd be out cold.

I'm just about to go back through and face the music, when Karen comes barging in with a look that requires an explanation from me.

'What are you doing through here? Don't leave me with Ken, eh? He's your boss. How come I always end up with him bending my ear?'

Phew.

'You seem to like it. I can't get a word in edgeways once you pair start your mutual appreciation society crap.'

'Oh, come off it, eh. I'm just being polite. Someone around here has to. We're just trying to keep the conversation going because you're not making any bloody effort. And stop snapping at the poor guy, for God's sake.'

I drain my glass, and pour another. 'Yeah, Karen, sure. Just doing your good hostess bit. Of course. How didn't I realise? How could I think you were just slobbering over each other?'

Karen grabs the bottle off me and pours herself another. 'Oh yeah, Brian. Spot on. Obesity in a man really makes me moist. Get a life, eh?' and she storms back through.

Getting a couple of Nurofen from the kitchen drawer, I follow her. Ken is still talking, oblivious. Barbara is sitting behind him in the dining room chair I was sitting in earlier. Her legs are out again. Is it a peace offering, or is she just offering me a piece? Karen's hunched up

on the settee in a grand huff. I just want to go to bed and have a wank, but instead, I take the armchair and go into a dream as one of Ken's soliloquies drones on in the background. Karen says very little and leaves the few brief awkward silences there are, for me to fill in. Barbara just looks pissed off, but she never usually says much anyway. You must just get past it after a while, living with that non-stop gobshite. She doesn't smile again for the rest of the evening, though. She doesn't look as attractive when she's not smiling. She just looks like a sour-faced, craggy dyke like the rest of them. I can't stand moody bitches like that. Maybe I got off lightly. I shouldn't imagine she'll tell him about our fracas in the kitchen, but even if she did, the bastard's so soft, he'll probably think she was just over-reacting.

We all suffer about another two hours of it, then Ken says they better go, work in the morning and all that shit. It's only 10.30 but I suppose something that big needs a lot of rest. We see them off at the door. Barbara looks radiant in the fresh, night air, it must be said. I think about fucking her over the bonnet of my car in Castle Terrace car park, then say goodnight and close the door.

Karen's gives me the silent treatment as we clean up. The dishes just go in the microwave, to hide them. I blitz the living room with a bin bag then put it outside for the morning. When I go back in, Karen's sitting on the settee, with her head back and a large gin and tonic in her hand.

'Jesus, can that man talk. I don't know how Barbara can put up with him? Is he like that all the time? At work and that?'

I get myself a bottle of Becks and sit on the settee beside her with my legs over hers.

'I think it's just the captive audience sets him off.'

She looks at me daggers.

‘Hey, don’t start that again. Bloody cheek you’ve got, honestly, Brian. Leave me to entertain your bloody boss, then accuse me of coming on to him because I bothered to try and engage him in conversation.’

I stroke her hair, ‘I know. I know. I’m just winding you up. Thanks for that. It’s more than that torn-faced bitch, Barbara did. She barely spoke all night. Is she catatonic or something?’

Karen sips her drink.

‘I quite like her. I like her take on things.’

‘But you hardly spoke to her all night. Nah, Karen. She’s a prize bitch. Best avoided.’

She shrugs, finishes her drink and goes through to the bedroom. I generally spend a wee while on the chatrooms to unwind before bed, but I’m still quite horny from Ms Ice Queen going sadistic on me. I already have my fantasy worked out. I’ve been honing it to perfection for the last two hours.

I clean my teeth, then strip in the bathroom and go through to join Karen. She’s lying on her stomach. The light’s already off. I enter the duvet from the bottom, crawling underneath until I’m hunched round her back.

‘Fuck!’

‘What?’

‘I forgot to give them the rhubarb compote.’

Whilst it’s not the most alluring pre-love talk I’ve ever heard, I bite at her shoulders a bit, then push into her regardless. As usual, she’s soon on her knees and pushing back to meet me. I can hear her slurping as I slide in and out. I’m back in Castle Terrace car park.

Barbara's just getting out her car, and I grab her from behind. She struggles in my grasp and elbows me in the eye, but it just gives me a rush of adrenalin and extra strength to push her, face down, over the car bonnet, pull her knickers to the side and ram it up her arse. I have to put my hand over her mouth to stifle her screams. She bites at my fingers as her sphincter tugs at my cock. I pull them away, push them up her blouse and squeeze her nipples until she screams, then pull out and shoot my load up the back of her raincoat.

I fall off Karen onto my back, come still oozing from me. She finishes off, then calls me a bastard. A minute later she's snoring. Selfish bitches. The lot of them.

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