

Lucky Dress

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HE FOLLOWS HER into the petrol station and parks up nearby. He walks towards the kiosk and as he passes she swears as she fumbles with the petrol cap. He thinks she's perfect, fat and old, her thin dress pulled tight over her body, the straps of her bra cutting into her flesh. He stands in the queue and watches her through the window as she replaces the hose and tightens the cap. When she bends down to reach for her bag on the passenger seat her dress rides up exposing bare, dimpled flesh. She walks towards the kiosk. It's late; the only other customers are men, most of them taxi drivers. A few look her up and down; one of them smiles at her. She lowers her head and walks by.

He picks up some chewing gum and hands the money to the man behind the counter. When he turns back around she is coming through the door. He walks towards her and drops his keys at her feet. He bends to get them, looks up, smiles and says sorry for getting in her way. She blushes, says its OK. He starts to walk out then turns back and catches her watching him. She turns away quickly and pays for her petrol.

Back outside he reaches into his pocket then drops down by her car pretending to tie his shoelace. He plunges a knife into the wall of her tyre and hears a slight hiss as the air begins to slowly leak out. He gets back into his car and waits for her to climb into hers. She looks over to him and smiles. He smiles back waiting for her to pull away and follows. She doesn't drive far before she notices her tyre is flat. She pulls over, puts her

hazard lights on and gets out of the car. She looks at the damage. He pulls alongside her, rolls down the window, says can he help. Her face lights up; she's thrilled its him, a friendly face. He parks up in front of her car, climbs out and walks towards her. He says she's lucky, he's a mechanic; it's no bother at all to help her out. He's changed hundreds of tyres in his time. If he had a pound for every one he'd be a rich man.

She opens the boot and shows him the spare. Do me a favour he says, go and get the torch out of the glove box. She hurries off. He takes the knife from his pocket and stabs the spare several times; the air hisses out. She hands him the torch. Bad news, he says; looks like the spare's flat, nothing he can do tonight. He says he can tow it for her first thing in the morning. I can give you a lift home, he says; can't have a lovely lady like her stranded in the middle of nowhere, wouldn't want her husband worrying. Yes please, she says, if its no trouble. No trouble at all, he says. He can see she can't believe it's happening to her. She's not married, she says, just her and the cat at home. That's a lovely dress, he says. She blushes. She'll have to call it her lucky dress from now on.

She locks her car and climbs into his passenger seat. When she turns to pull over the seatbelt her dress rides up her bare thighs. She doesn't pull it back down. Where to, he says. Just carry on to the next village and she'll tell him where to turn, she says.