

Bubble Bath

by Dean West

You wouldn't believe an organ the size of a heart could scream like a nine-year-old sissy girl but mine did.

When I pushed my wife's head under the water, I thought my heart couldn't be more afraid. It begged, pleaded to escape, to run down the hallway, out the front door and into the middle of the street; denying any part of the murder inside.

Martha's legs kicked, her feet walked sideways across the tub's tiles. Her arms flailed in the air until her hands reached my chest and dug deep, finger tips gouging into wrinkled flesh. The proximity of her painted nails made my heart shriek even louder.

Martha took a bubble bath each Saturday night at nine PM sharp. She claimed it made her feel like a young girl again, all tingly. I took her at her word and could set my watch to her baths while I lay in the bed, finishing the horoscopes, reading everything except Capricorn while she lathered up. I skipped Capricorn because I knew my fate but Libra's destiny that night warned: 'Watch out for you may drown in your tub'. I'm positive that's what it said and read it twice to make sure. You should listen to the stars if you've been married more than forty years and I did.

Holding a woman's head under water is easier than I believed possible. So easy that I started to enjoy the experience, wanted to repeat it so I released her throat and she burst to the surface. Her face was as white as the tiles and she spit bubbles all over my blood soaked chest.

"You bastard!" she screamed. "When I get out of this tub, I'm getting a kitchen knife and cutting your balls off."

So I pushed her under again. That time, my heart didn't complain.

I imagined which knife she would pick. A paring knife would remove my testicles cleanly, but I knew she'd select the butcher knife with the wooden handle and spots of rust. I could read her mind after all these years.

My heart, made giddy by adrenaline, begged, 'Let's do it again,' and I agreed and released her throat. But that time she was prepared and she hit the side of my head with a porcelain soap dish. In a daze, I struggled to make some sense out of the world as she climbed over my body and headed to the kitchen.

She's a woman of her word, my Martha, and I heard her going through the kitchen drawers and tightened my legs but I knew it was hopeless. In desperation, I struggled to my feet, pulled her electric hairdryer from the socket, hid behind the bathroom door and waited.

"I'm coming to cut your balls off, dear." I could hear her wet feet slapping the linoleum.

She seemed so happy that I hesitated wrapping the cord around her throat as she entered the bathroom but the size of the knife she carried changed my mind. Caught off guard, she struggled and sliced the towels into ribbons as I held on for life, twisting the cord tighter until I could see her eyes bulge in the mirror.

"After you're dead, Martha, I'm grinding your body up and feeding it to the stray cats in the alley."

My hatred encouraged her to fight harder and she pushed back with all her strength, forcing me into the wall heater. I screamed as the flames burnt my back and I released the cord from around her neck.

On knees, we faced each other like naked predators on the Serengeti plains, ready for the kill, panting, bloody, and exhausted. She spoke first.

“Next week, I get to catch you grilling steaks in the backyard.”

“What will you do to me?” I asked, licking blood from my bruised lips and feeling the bulge in my shorts grow.

“I may push your head into the coals. Would you like that, big boy?” Her eyelids grew heavy and dark.

“God, you're sexy, Martha.”

