

T(H)RUST

The baby sleeps in her cot, oblivious to the world. Her long, rubber, skin-toned doll lies beside her, almost the same length as she. In the baby's arms sits the empty bottle, a scum of milk turning yellow at its bottom. She breathes evenly, peacefully, her eye lids flicking occasionally as the stirrings of her ill-formed dream world work their way through newly formed dendrites reaching for the next synapse. Her head, suffused with sweat and sprinklings of old vomit, rests on the filthy, case-less pillow. A tired fan caresses her with a barely discernable waft of hot air. She coughs, spits up a trickle of bile-flavored milk, whimpers for a few moments and relaxes, mouth dropping open again.

Down the corridor of the scared, wood-floored suburban home, a muted squeaking begins in an adjoining bedroom, the door slightly ajar. A slight judder begins to ripple through the floor as the sound grows. Another sound joins it now – a low moan, almost of pain, but increasingly the moans are modulated with long, low, hissing as the words begin to tumble from the woman's – for it is a woman – mouth.

Oh ... oh ... Bill, yes ... yessssss ... oh, fuck ... oh ... do it, just do it ... ahhhhhhh, yessss, yes ... go on, deeper, soooo ... ah, yes, Bill, so good ... it's, it's ... ah, yes, keep going, don't stop, I know you're there already, always too quick, ain't ya ... but keep ... going, fuck you, keep it *in* ... give it me more, yes, yes, YESSSSSSSS! Ahhh, fuck me, fuck me, fuck me!

You like that, eh, you fuck?

Bill looks up, as she arches back, still moaning. She doesn't answer, but leans forward, holding him around his neck, buttocks heaving.

Want some more, eh, Sheila? Want ... some ... more ... now ... you ... sure?

He pushes hard again, harder, still harder, feeling his *glans penis* pushing against her cervix. He grabs her breasts cruelly, pushing her up to see her face. He's grinning, watching her agonized pleasure, as the door swings open more: the little girl stands looking, the rubber doll gripped in one arm, the other arm extended, frozen.

Her eyes, which are brown, are now wide. She visibly hesitates, but continues to watch as Bill keeps pushing while Sheila, oblivious, increases the speed of her movements. Bill looks at the baby. His grin broadens.

Hey, Sheila, hey – you wanna start the young 'un early do yer? He emits a raucous chuckle now as Sheila glances behind her.

Aaaw, Bill – why didn't yer say something before, yer fuckin' bastard?

She pushes away from Bill, scrambles off the bed, the man yelping. With three quick steps she scoops up the baby and leaves as Bill shouts, Well she just came in *now*, yer dumb fuck.

The baby's rubber doll lies on the floor, abandoned in the rush.

Hey, the little bugger dropped her dolly! Bill reaches for a cigarette, lights up and takes a long drag. Get it outta here, okay! I need more than a rubber doll, y'know – hurry up, fuck it.

In the baby's room, Sheila turns her head and shouts. Yeah, okay – wait a sec. She kisses the baby who holds her around the neck.

There, there, lovey. Nothing for you to worry about. Mummy just having a bit of fun with Billy, y'know.

She lifts the baby's head up to look into her eyes. We all like to have fun, don't we now? Sheila smiles, chucks the baby under the chin. Come on, give mummy a smile.

The baby lowers her head, grips the woman more tightly around the neck.

From the other room, Bill shouts. Hey, Sheila – get that fuckin' cot fixed, like I told yer. That's the third time the little brat's got out and interrupted us, for fuck's sake!

Yeah, yeah, okay. Okay! Sheila sighs, shakes her head, and lifts the baby high above her head. Now, you don't worry, okay, honey? She smiles; the baby smiles now, but her eyes are still uncertain. Mummy will always look after you, okay. But you hafta go back to sleepie-bye now, you know.

She cuddles the baby to her breast, murmuring. Bill's shouting intrudes.

Hey, Sheila, what's the *fuckin'* problem? The kid's only two, yer said, so she knows nothin'. Hardly got a brain yet. Get back here, will ya, I'm dyin'!

She lifts the child and carefully lowers her to the bed, then pulls up the side of the cot and again makes sure it's properly clipped and firm. There, now, just wait while I get dolly for you.

The baby watches a moment as her mother leaves, then pushes herself up to sit, looking at the open door. Seconds later, Sheila enters with the rubber doll and places it beside her daughter. She strokes the child's blonde curls.

That's my baby – you play some more if you like, or just have a little sleepie-bye, there's my honey. She pushes the babe down slowly, smiling, kisses the tips of her fingers and blows across them, down to her daughter. You stay there, now, okay. You be good, now.

As she leaves, the baby quickly sits upright and watches the door, again left slightly open. She reaches for the side of the cot and pulls herself up to rest her chin on the top rail, still watching the door. As she watches, the sounds start again, first low but soon they grow to the same urgency and intensity,

although the child has no concept of such words at all, but feels it juddering through the floors and walls.

Slowly, the babe slides to the darkly stained mattress and looks at her dolly, now supine, with its head on the pillow, as though gazing directly at her. She crawls across to it, and slowly, so slowly, she creeps forward on her hands and knees until she looks into dolly's eyes, her hands now on dolly's shoulders, her legs straddling the rubber body. She leans down to bring her face to within a fraction of the rubber caricature, and pushes forward until her back straightens, relaxes, allowing her bottom to move back, pushes forward once more, head now rising as she opens her eyes more, and she moves again, down and back, holding onto dolly, not a sound coming from her lips, her eyes now gazing into the emptiness of the dirty white wall, as she moves and moves and moves....

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