

THE END OF HIS ROPE

Written by

Michael Hedrick
Mike_hedrick@hotmail.com

Order #31565

EXT. - SEA NAVIGATING YACHT - DAY

A strong, healthy 56 year old GEORGE stares at his wife. His eyes are red from a mix of tears and rage. 50 year old Carla has tears running down her cheek.

GEORGE

My entire life I have been in control. I've seen war. I've seen death. I've known struggle. Is now the time for me to be afraid?

Carla forces a tentative smile through her sadness.

CARLA

George, please. I know what you're feeling. It doesn't scare you, but it scares me. Consider your children. Your grand children.

Both of them are sitting on a couch in the living room of a beautiful private yacht. Large sliding doors are wide open giving us a view of the crystal blue waters beyond the railing.

Carla shifts a little, and we see that her hands are tied behind her back, attached to the wooden frame of the couch.

GEORGE

I'm sorry Carla. No more waiting.

A wind chime jingles from the wind giving an illusion of peace in an obviously troubled situation.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I Spy with my little eye...
Something purple.

Carla looks around. Framed photos, craft wood carvings, Lead crystal decanters. There's only one purple item in the room. A canvas painting of purple grapes. Amazingly painted. Signed "Carla, 1975".

CARLA

No George. Please. There are other options.

GEORGE

I love you, but I can't wait any longer.

Footsteps fast approach and then a SMACK across George's head with the stock of an AK-47.

A dark skinned, sea worn man, scrawny in build but clearly tough as nails glares at George, waiting for a response.

Two other armed men are outside. A small band of three Somali pirates have been holding George and Carla captive.

PIRATE #1

No talk.

George rights himself and spits out a bit of blood. Rage in his eyes.

Pirate #1 whistles a few times before Pirate #2 enters from outside. After a quick discussion in the Maay language, Pirate #1 exits the room leaving Pirate #2 to talk in English.

PIRATE #2

We treat you with fairly. Your government will pay the ransom. Then you will be free. Very soon.

George gathers himself. Realizing there's an opportunity to talk civilized with this one.

GEORGE

I understand now. Thank you. I am sorry.

Exchanging a quick glance to Carla he appeals to the pirate.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

For my wife, nature is calling.

MAN #2

Excuse me?

GEORGE

Nature is calling her. Is it possible to let her use the...

CARLA

George. I'm ok. Please.

George continues. The pirate starts to look confused.

PIRATE #2

What does this mean, nature?

GEORGE

Bathroom. She needs to use the bathroom.

CARLA

You realize that you will only add fuel to the fire?

GEORGE

Maybe so. But every cloud has a silver lining.

She gives a concerned look.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

And a house divided against itself cannot stand. Do you understand?

Carla feels defeated by George's initiative. Her only recourse is to help him.

George talks to the unsuspecting albeit confused pirate.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Please, Sir. She has to use the bathroom very badly.

The Pirate studies Carla who gives him a look of urgency.

PIRATE #2

Ok.

He whistles out to the pirates walking the boat perimeter, finally waving Pirate #1 inside. As Pirate #2 begins to debrief the situation, George and Carla have a moment.

GEORGE

Carla. I love you. You have to trust me.

CARLA

31 years of marriage, but it's today that I trust you the least. Nevertheless, I will always have faith in you.

He gives a comforting smile.

GEORGE

I'm glad you do. It's now or never my dear. I'm at the end of my rope.

Carla is a mix of emotions. Fear, anxiety, excitement, concern, hesitation, all balled up in this poor lady.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Really Carla. I'm at the end of my
rope.

George leads her eyes down to his hands where he shows that he has UNTIED his rope binding. A bit of surprise and perhaps a little relief waves over her. Courage rises and her faith in him strengthens.

Pirate #1 trains his AK-47 directly at George.

PIRATE #2
Ok, I will take her to the
bathroom. He will watch you.

PIRATE #1
(to George)
No talk.

Pirate #2 unties Carla and leads her off to the bathroom.

George looks to the Somali standing guard.

GEORGE
Do you like TV?

PIRATE #1
No talk.

GEORGE
Do you even know about TV?

He glances to the wall and loudly announces.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
TV, connect.

Triggering the voice activated system, a black glass front slides down revealing a big screen TV that quickly powers up. The guard jumps, pointing his weapon at the screen.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Channel 43.

A flicker of the screen, and then... a soccer match.

The pirate's shock is replaced with amazement. Enough for him to let down his guard. The biggest mistake of his life.

PIRATE #1
Ohhh.

George LOOPS the rope around the surprised Pirate's neck. The strength of youth rushing back to him.

Reminiscent of Luca Brasi, the captor is choked into a slump without hardly a struggle.

George quickly drags the man and his AK-47 out of sight. Pirate #3 is still strolling outside, none the wiser.

Quickly, George lifts Carla's GRAPES painting off of the wall. Attached to the back is a holster hiding a small caliber hand gun.

He returns to the couch holding his hands behind his back, pretending to be knocked out cold.

Carla returns with Pirate #2.

CARLA

Oh my God, George?!

Pirate #2 surveys the area. A missing comrade, an unattended but unconscious hostage, and a Gooooalll announcement on TV. Confused, he needs a witness account.

PIRATE #2

Hey.

He leans over to nudge Georges shoulder.

PIRATE #2 (CONT'D)

Hey. Wake up.

A second, harder nudge.

George's eyes open wide as he swings his gun around from behind his back. But it's not quick enough.

The pirate PINS DOWN Georges arm and yells for his cohort who can't be seen. No response. A second yell begins to escape his mouth just as... WHACK! Carla hovers over the pirate with a huge lead crystal decanter. George moves fast to tie him up.

George looks into Carla's eyes lovingly.

GEORGE

He who treads the path of love
walks a thousand meters as if it
were only one.

Kissing Carla on the forehead, he guides her into a closet for safe hiding.

Outside is the last armed Somali Pirate. George reaches down for an AK-47 and stands at the doorway mentally preparing himself for a final battle.