

THE BARGAIN STORE

by

Brandi Self

writerbself@yahoo.com
Los Angeles, CA 90036
323 - 382 - 3114

EXT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

A beat up car sputters into the parking lot. Jerks.

INT. CAR - SAME

GEORGIA SPRINGS, late 40s, small-town with an innocent side ponytail to match, pulls the emergency brake up with all her might. The car stops.

She puts the car into park and shuts it off. Looks up at the Bargain Store's cheery sign. She frowns, resigned.

She tries to roll the window up. It doesn't go.

EXT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

Georgia gets out of the car, cola bottles and empty cigarette packs falling out after her. She slams the door.

INT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

A tiny bell rings at the top as Georgia hurries through the door.

She tries to ignore the loud, sexual moaning coming from her boss, HAROLD's phone. He glances up at her, a smirk growing on his sweaty, round face.

HAROLD

Well, look who decided to grace us with her presence, the Queen of England.

GEORGIA

(puts her apron on)
I'm sorry, Harold... I had car trouble.

HAROLD

Excuses are just nails used to build a house of failure.

GEORGIA

I still don't know what that means.

HAROLD

It means... I'm docking your paycheck.

GEORGIA
I can work later.

HAROLD
How much later are we talking
about?

He comes from behind the counter. Eyes her as he sucks his
teeth.

GEORGIA
Forget it.

HAROLD
No, no, I think we can work
something out.

He grabs her around the waist. She pulls away.

GEORGIA
I... I have a boyfriend.

HAROLD
(laughs)
A boyfriend? Yeah right, who'd
have you?

GEORGIA
I could have a boyfriend.

HAROLD
Have you looked in the mirror
lately, gal? You aren't a teenager
anymore. Not in the best shape
either.

She stares at his grotesque belly rising through his shirt
with every breath.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Come on.
(whispers in her ear)
Get that car fixed, maybe even get
your hair done.

GEORGIA
(backs away)
I'm going to start inventory.

HAROLD
Yeah... you do that.

He sucks his teeth as he leers after her.

INT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

Georgia separates cheap items into boxes.

She reaches for a box on a high shelf. It falls on top of her, spilling everything out onto the floor. She sighs. Kicks the box.

INT. BARGAIN STORE - LATER

Georgia pulls a box into the aisle, ripping it. She pushes it the rest of the way.

She starts putting boxed toys on the shelf, halfheartedly.

She hears the tiny bell ring. She looks up as a SOLDIER, 30s, handsome and self-assured walks in.

He walks past Harold, who doesn't look up from the porn on his phone. He checks out some things on the shelf.

Georgia drops what she is doing. Goes around the aisle, hiding as she stares at him from a distance.

He studies items on the shelf. Turns, almost catching her. She ducks out of view.

When she goes back he is gone. She looks around the store. Empty. Her face falls.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Georgia slams the door, causing the window to fall down more. She shivers. Tries to start the car. It doesn't turn over. She tries again. Nothing.

She spots Harold coming out. Sighs.

INT. HAROLD'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Harold sucks his teeth as he looks her over. She closes her eyes as his hand inches towards her thigh.

EXT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

Underneath the hood of her car, Georgia wipes her forehead, leaving a streak of grease.

Harold comes outside, stares at her ass as she works.

HAROLD

Georgia, you ain't half bad to look at back here, but I don't pay you to work on cars.

GEORGIA

I almost got it, just got to try it out real quick.

HAROLD

Get into the store and get to work before I have you and this wreck hauled off!

GEORGIA

But, Harold--

HAROLD

"But, Harold"... nothing. Inside!

He walks inside. She closes the hood. Goes to open the store door but the soldier's hand opens it for her.

She looks up. He smiles.

SOLDIER

After you.

She grows self-conscious. Wipes her face. Tries to say something, but fails as she goes inside.

He smiles again. Goes in to browse the store.

She keeps an eye on him, following him down the aisle, but loses him halfway.

Georgia runs into Harold, who is breathing heavily and sweating.

HAROLD

Look how you got me going.

He takes her hand. Puts it against his crotch. Sucks his teeth.

She tries to pull away, but he grips her closer. Whispers in her ear.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Give you another ride tonight?

She looks down the aisle. Sees the soldier watching them. She hangs her head in shame.

INT. BARGAIN STORE - BATHROOM - DAY

Georgia bursts in. Turns the water on. Rubs herself roughly with soap. Tries to get it all off, her mascara streaming down her face.

INT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

Georgia grabs toys, shoving them onto the shelf. The soldier's voice suddenly comes from behind her.

SOLDIER (O.S.)

How much?

GEORGIA

Look, buddy, I don't know what you think you saw, or what kind of--

She turns to find him holding up a boxed doll in his hands.

SOLDIER

The doll? She doesn't have a price.

GEORGIA

Oh. Everything is nine ninety-nine.

SOLDIER

(stares at it)

She kind of looks like you, doesn't she?

GEORGIA

She looks like a doll. Just a cheap, shitty bargain store doll.

She throws down the toys she was putting on the shelf.

SOLDIER

Why do you let him treat you like that?

GEORGIA

What else am I going to do?

SOLDIER

You could leave.

GEORGIA

Just like that, huh?

SOLDIER
At least you wouldn't cry yourself
to sleep every night.

GEORGIA
How did you--

SOLDIER
Remember what your mother said,
"don't ever let a man...

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
"Determine your worth."

GEORGIA
"Determine your worth."

GEORGIA
Who are you?

SOLDIER
A very observant off-duty soldier.

GEORGIA
That's real funny...
(picks up items)
A great trick, what are you--

She turns. The soldier is gone. She stands confused.

She turns again and he's there, staring at Harold, who is
rubbing his crotch as he looks at his phone.

SOLDIER
Look at him. He's disgusting, a
real pig.

GEORGIA
I've had nightmares about that man.

SOLDIER
Horrible nightmares where you're--

GEORGIA
Trapped in the store... his grimy
hands all over my body.

SOLDIER
It makes you angry, doesn't it?

GEORGIA
Furious.

SOLDIER
You don't deserve it.

GEORGIA
No... no, I don't.

SOLDIER
So, go over there and tell him to
shove this job up his nasty ass.

GEORGIA
Yeah, I think I will.

SOLDIER
You can do it.

Georgia gathers herself. Charges over, the soldier right
behind her.

GEORGIA
Hey, Harold. Get your hand off
your dick, we've got to talk.

HAROLD
(looks up, startled)
Wha... What?

GEORGIA
You're a disgusting pig and you
know what you can do with this job?

HAROLD
What?

GEORGIA
You can shove it up your nasty ass!

SOLDIER
There you go, doesn't that feel
good?

GEORGIA
It feels great.

HAROLD
Get out of my store, you washed up
bitch.

SOLDIER
Tell him, "gladly" and tell him to
fuck off.

GEORGIA
Gladly! And you can fuck right
off!

HAROLD
Watch yourself, now, girly.

SOLDIER
Knock the stuff off the counter,
show him who's boss.

Georgia knocks everything off, causing Harold's phone to crash to the ground. The porn moans cuts off.

GEORGIA
You aren't the boss of me!
(to Soldier)
Right?

HAROLD
Who the hell are you talking to?

She turns. The soldier is gone. She looks down at a boxed toy soldier that she is holding in her hands.

Rage grows in her eyes, giving her more strength.

GEORGIA
(to Harold)
I'm talking to you, you disgusting,
porn-obsessed, pervert!

She throws the toy soldier on top of the counter in front of him.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
And I'm letting all the ladies in
town know what a creep are.

She breaths in as she walks off, the little bell ringing one last time signaling her exit.

His face a mask of shock, Harold looks down at the toy soldier, who seems to have a smirk on his face.

EXT. BARGAIN STORE - DAY

Georgia drives away, watching as the Bargain Store sign gets further away in her rearview mirror.

THE END