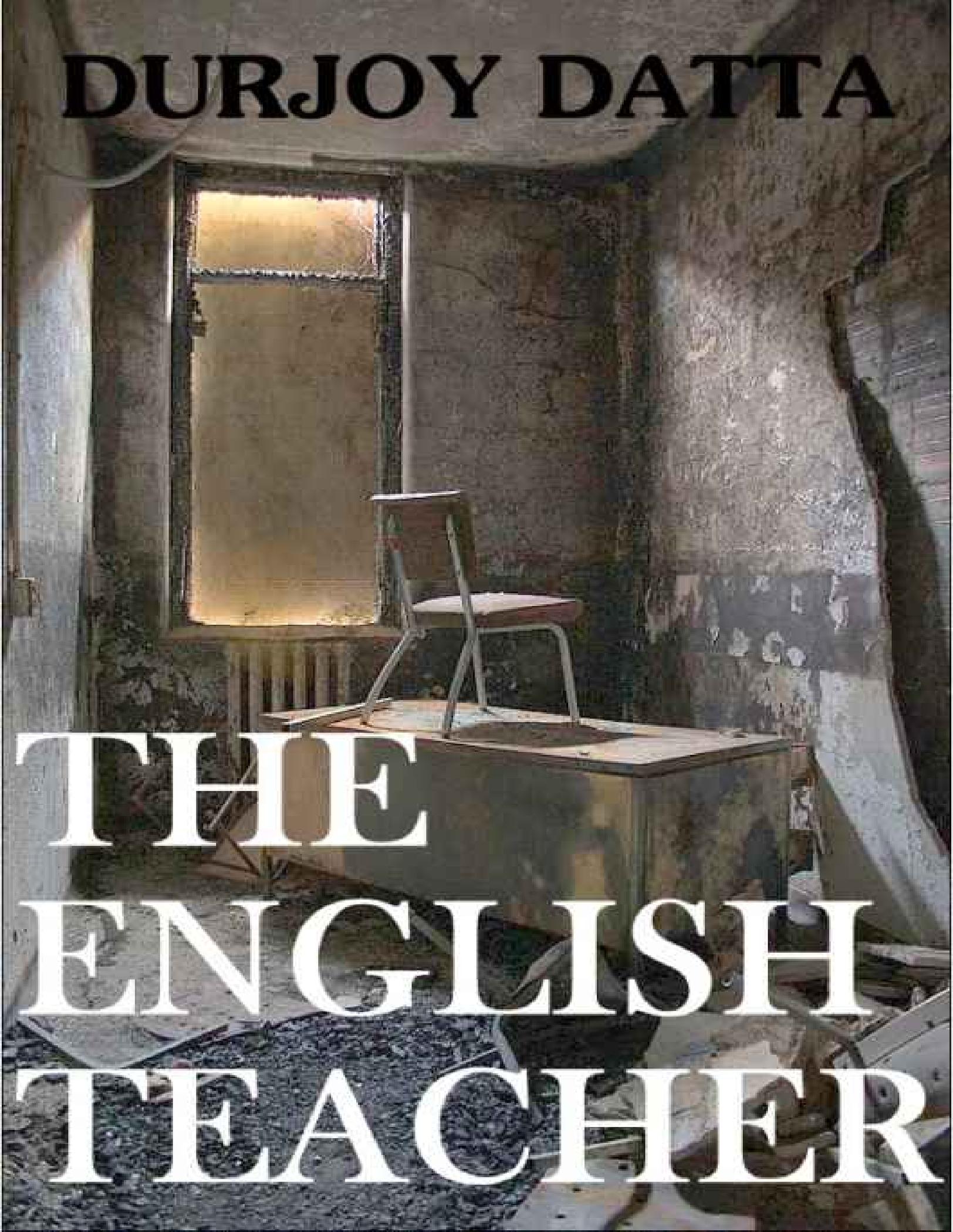


DURJOY DATTA

A photograph of a dilapidated classroom. In the center, a simple wooden desk with a metal frame stands in front of a window. A wooden chair with a metal frame is tucked under the desk. The walls are dark and peeling, and the floor is covered in debris. The overall atmosphere is one of neglect and decay.

**THE
ENGLISH
TEACHER**

The English Teacher

Durjoy Datta

Since time immemorial, English teachers in Indian schools have been the subject of erotic fantasy of hundreds of hormonally charged students, even as they explain without success why two past tenses can't be used in a single sentence. Kunal Roy was no different. As his English teacher, Mrs Ravina Sharma, bent over to pick the answer sheets from the rickety table in front of her, her succulent bosom staring right at his face, he was filled to his brim in primal, sexual energy. Clad in a *saree* that clung to her hour glass figure, accentuating her generous breasts and the ample hips, she looked like the porn cartoon version of the quintessential Indian housewife — bored, horny and curvy.

Behind Kunal's short cropped hair and thick skull, the class was empty. He was perched precariously over Mrs Ravina on the teacher's table and was going at his teacher's breasts with unmatched ferocity, his football-hardened body chafing against the porcelain smooth skin of his English teacher, six years his senior and married. Newly married women, like Mrs Ravina, give off an obvious sexual vibe, maybe because they are in the most sexual part of their lives. They radiate sex, they smell of sex, and they look like they did it just moments ago. The glowing skin, the excessive make-up, the dutiful desire to satisfy their husbands by doing whatever is needed, gives them a hallowed space in the darkest areas of men's fantasies. A demure princess on her knees, admitting to every wish of yours, no matter how eerie, is an adrenaline rush for any guy in his right senses.

Kunal had never been a teacher's pet, even though he had always been an above average student who kept his nosy, academically inclined parents more than happy. He was too sweaty, too rough, and too sportsman-like to hang around staff rooms while inside the teachers discussed the latest issues of glossy female magazines, their sagging breasts, and the waning interests of their husbands in them. But Kunal knew Mrs Ravina was different. She was young, and had just completed her M.Phil. in English literature a few years back. She was younger — a fact supported by her

perky breasts and taut skin over her high cheekbones — and didn't look the type who would aim for the gossip queen title amongst teachers. Moreover, she was just an ad hoc teacher who could be asked to leave anytime the old teacher joined back after her maternity leave.

Mrs Ravina distributed the answer sheets, her slender hands in constant motion. Her parted lips read out the names on the answer sheets and smiled to acknowledge the good performances in the class. Kunal Roy's performance had dipped further and it became clear that he would have to give at least a few improvement tests before the board examinations. *A cleverly executed plan*.

'Kunal,' she said, 'meet me after the lunch break in the staff room.' She looked away and praised students who had managed to reproduce on the answer sheets what they had mugged with Yoda-like efficiency the night before the exam. But Kunal Roy was smiling the widest, much like the famous stammering Indian superstar who said, 'To lose is to win' or something like that.

'She is so sweet, isn't she? I wish I can have her forever,' Kunal said to his desk partner, who was busy gloating about the totalling mistake in his answer sheet.

The coaches were thinking of retiring Kunal Roy's jersey number next year as a mark of respect to the laurels he had brought the school in the last five years. It was his last year on the football field and he had done more for the game than the whole team combined. As a puny eighth grader, he had single-handedly powered the team to seven straight victories in the championship and ended the preoccupation of the school with cricket, along with the jock-status of cricketers. He, alone, was responsible for the now vibrant sex life of every new entrant to the football team.

But that day, things were different. What would have been three easy goals had ended up warming up opposing team's goalie's padded gloves. He was clearly distracted, his mind elsewhere. Every few seconds, he would

check his watch, counting seconds backwards to the time he would be alone in a closed space with Mrs Ravina , only a yard separating his heaving body from hers. It was high time. For the last month, starting from exactly three days after Mrs Ravina had joined, Kunal had followed her everywhere.

‘Bad game, skip,’ the goalie of Kunal ’s team said as h e went past him. He didn’t mind; he had bigger things to worry about. After packing his sports gear, but still in his sullied football uniform, he walked in to the men’s washroom closest to her staff room. Shirtless, he studied himself in the mirror. He didn’t look seventeen. The previous year, in the game against the Salwan Boys, a referee had called foul play since he thought Kunal was not a student, but a local club player, and a lot older than the seventeen years he claimed on the fact sheet.

He wiped the sweat of f his body and stood there , admiring the muscle he had gained in the past few years. Still no match for his hunky, model-like classmates who were regulars at the school gym, but none of the m had abs as well defined as his . He put his football T -shirt on, having seen in numerous “*My First Sex Teacher*” porn that students who play sports are often the subject of a dark fantasy of strict - teachers -with- horn-rimmed - glasses.

He fought with the streaming images in his head; images of Mrs Ravina’s long, wavy black hair grasped firmly in his hands as hers crept up his nylon football shorts to spring his manhood free, and of her playful eyelashes batting while she flirts coquettishly with his member down south. Knockin g those images out of his head, and after spraying himself with copious quantities of deodorant, he walked out of the washroom.

The sweat came screaming down from his temples as he flitted nervously outside the staff room. With trembling hands , he knocked on the door and aske d, ‘May I come in?’

‘Yes, come in,’ the sugary voice from the other side said.

‘Good afternoon, ma’am,’ he stammered as his eyes met the big almond shaped brown eyes of Mrs Ravina . Her smooth, shiny, flat as a washboard

stomach lay in full view and he struggled to tear his eyes off it.

‘Sit,’ she said and pointed out to a chair. He felt the blood rush downwards.

‘Thank you.’

‘Kunal, you know why I have called you. Your performance has been steadily dipping. At the beginning of the year, you were one of the highest scorers and now you’re finding it difficult to even pass your exams? What’s the problem?’ she asked.

This is going well, he thought. In the porn movies he had watched, it all starts with a problem and ends in animal grunts, moans, rhythmic pelvic thrusts, cries to go harder, and the teacher’s promise that sex will go on secretly in abandoned classrooms and stuffy washrooms.

‘I have been distracted. With the football practice and —’ he stopped.

‘And me?’ she asked, batting her eyelids rather unnaturally.

‘Umm . . . yes, ma’am?’

‘Tell me about it,’ she said, arching forward, the tiny cleavage behind the blue *saree* spiked a surge in testosterone in his body giving him sexual gooseflesh. *This is going perfect!* ‘Am I not a good teacher?’ she asked, chewing the pencil in her hand, biting it and almost suckling on it. ‘The other teachers say so. They say I am not good enough.’ She swirled the pencil in her mouth, her tongue wrapped around the rubber end of it making it wet. Her lips were parted wide open, her hands brushing against the side of her soft mounds. The sight of her fingers, long and slender, sent him into throes of frenzy as he imagined her nails scratching against his body.

‘Your teaching skills are par excellence,’ he assured her. He figured the other teachers were just jealous for she was someone their potbellied husbands would fancy them turning into during the last mile of their pathetic, monotonous, missionary style orgasms. She was what they imagined themselves to be, and wished they could be. Their criticism was

nothing but cleverly concealed soap opera jealousy , reserved for younger sister-in-laws with glowing skins and gravity defying breasts.

‘Then what’s bothering you?’ she queried, leaning over more, her bosom inches away from him.

‘I can’t help . . . but fantasize about you . You’re all I think about , ma’am . Ever since I saw you, I have followed you everywhere. You live in Gangotri Apartments, opposite to the MCD School. You wake at six thirty every morning and go for a morning walk at the DDA Park nearby. Mostly, you wear your pink track pants and a black razor back. Sometimes, your husband accompanies you. He has a small business of spare parts in Chandni Chowk . The lights go out of twelve every night . . . ’ he said. His voice trailed off before he could tell her how he had climbed up the drain pipe in an unsuccessful attempt to place a spy cam he had bought of f the internet. Before he could tell her that he had spent sleepless nights thinking about her, that he had once bought movie tickets close of their seats and had felt like killing himself after seeing her face buried in her husband’s lap . There were times he felt murderous seeing her husband wrap himself around her. The urge was not to see him vanish, but to see him suffer, to make him pay for every time he had touched Mrs Ravina. But he stopped himself before he could tell her that . Blood rushed to his face, his palms started to sweat and he started to look everywhere but at her . He readied himself for an onslaught of harsh words for his perversion, but was caught off-guard when he felt her hands grasp his shoulder . He blanked out and felt out of breath as he felt her body against his. Her heaving breasts strafed against his chest and he struggled for air. Her lips hovered around his ears and he could feel her warm breath. Her tongue snaked to his ear lobe and it sent jitters down his spine . Trembling, he put his hands around her tiny waist. The feeling of her naked skin in his hands felt like an out of body experience. All the years of deprivation accumulated in that single moment as he grew inside his pants. Beads of sweat rolled down his forehead on to his nose and he looked at the growing bump in his nylon shorts. She followed his eyes to the bump and met his gaze, her eyes wide and wielding an inexplicable expression.

‘Close the door,’ she said, her voice suddenly husky.

He got up with a start, almost as a reflex and bolted towards the door. He latched it shut. Mrs Ravina giggled and in a second, her lips parted and her demeanour changed to sexy as she leaned far back into her chair. Kunal’s entire pornographic history flashed in front of his eyes.

‘Come here,’ she said. *‘Why are you looking at me like that? What’s going on? Kunal? Are you there? Kunal Roy!’*

The sound finally registered. He snapped out of his fantasy. He was still outside the staff room.

Days had passed after that uneventful afternoon in the school staff room and Kunal was listless how to control his growing obsession with her. He knew he had to control his rising urges. He went a week without fantasizing about her in his morning showers. When he gave in, he did it nineteen times in a single day. His condition worsened as he found himself stationed outside her house 24/7. Often, it felt as if someone else controlled his body and his actions. Sometimes, he realized he had no recollection of how he got to stone hard benches of the park she used to go to for her morning walks. His extreme dislike for Mrs Ravina’s husband grew exponentially. Their love seemed to strengthen with time, the hugs became longer, the kisses now seemed more out of love than rabid lust, and they took out more time to experience the little joys of life together.

The boards came and went. He did well in all the subjects barring English, in which he barely passed. Luckily, he got through a government engineering college. Without a second thought, he shifted to a hostel and chalked out an elaborate schedule to track Mrs Ravina’s whereabouts. His fantasies, which earlier were based out of Mills & Boons books — naked, passionate and gratifying, were now more about domination and kink. In his dreams, he could see her lying helplessly on her back, bound in chains and submitting to all his desires. The more he saw the love between the married couple blossom, the more violent his dreams became. Her husband became a common feature in his dreams. Often, he imagined him

to be in relentless pain knowing that her wife was wilfully yielding to another man's wishes.

As his first semester approached, his frenzied watch on Mrs Ravina intensified. From the earnings of a few home tuitions he had taken up, he rented a miniscule flat close to her apartment. Later, he got himself a pair of binoculars. When just watching her from a distance wasn't enough for him to gratify himself, he started recording her and watching the tapes over and over again. He used to cut and edit those pieces of videos to make it look like she was entering his apartment, and not hers. For some reason unknown to him, he started to stock things you would find in a serial killer's hideout. Knives. Chains. Ropes. Between all these contraptions, sometimes he scared even himself.

Slowly, his attendance started to dip. The professors got concerned about the classes he missed and the frequent fights he got into. His aggression often started people. It was like the onset of a second puberty. The only time he was calm was when he watched her. The people in his building loved him. He taught their kids and was well mannered. Though they had no idea of what went on his perverse head.

He wasn't allowed to give the second semester exams. On being caught with notes stashed up his underwear, he had lashed out at the invigilator and broke his nose. He was lucky not to be suspended. That day he went back to his dingy apartment, feeling lost and angry. Rage dominated psychological profile. *Something needs to be done*, he said. *I need to get over her*, he reprimanded himself. *Or find a way out . . .*

Kunal Roy was smiling the widest at the Annual Excellence Awards at his company. For the third year in a row, he was adjudged as one of the star employees of the South Asia wing of the company. He spearheaded most of the innovative projects of the R&D department in India of the Norwegian cell phone company. Not only was he respected for his ideas, but revered for his ideals. He had completed all his education from Delhi rejecting generous offers from universities across the better parts of the

world. If anything, he was the glowing example of how your college doesn't play a part in your success, a case in point against brain drain.

By the time the evening came to an end, he was exhausted. The smiles, the thank-yous, the handshakes, and the small talk took a toll on him. He had hardly got any time to eat. The raging hunger didn't allow him to wait any longer. Just as he turned to walk towards the buffet, he spotted someone who made his heart wobble. A girl — newly married— was sitting at a distance, her long legs crossed, and her eyes roving restlessly around the banquet hall. She was waiting for somebody. Her face looked strangely familiar, like a face from the past. In that second, he felt transported back to his school days when he used to obsess over a woman who looked exactly like the girl across the hall. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn't look away. The woman's long hair flirted with her eyes and she kept swatting it away. She kept nibbling at her food and it seemed like she did so more out of boredom than anything else. Kunal Roy's eyes didn't blink. He was staring at his past, once again. His heart, his mind started chugging like an old coal locomotive fired after decades of neglect. The images were rusty at first, then they became clearer, and he could finally see clearly. The girl was as close as he would ever get to Mrs Ravina. The face of the young woman in front of her seared itself on his temporal lobe, almost obliterating the previous face.

Moments later, the husband appeared and the girl broke into an enrapturing smile. They hugged. The rage came back. Suddenly, he was furious. He closed his eyes and took a few long breaths. He didn't want to think about the woman anymore. And he definitely didn't want to follow that woman into her car. Or take a picture from his cell phone.

He couldn't eat. But the sandwiches begged to be tasted. Hurriedly, he wrapped a few in a tissue paper. He left the building and headed home. Despite numerous requests, he had not shifted out from the apartment he had rented in his college days. *Ten years . . .* He argued that he was emotionally attached to it. Moreover, he wasn't married, so there was no need for him to shift to a bigger apartment. On his way to his apartment a few neighbours smiled at him and he smiled back. They knew him as a gentle, nice boy.

He unlocked the door. Almost immediately, his lips curved into a smile. He switched on the light. The place was just like it was ten years ago. Not a thing had changed. At the corner, there were the chains he had bought when he was in college. Shackled in those chains was a woman who had been missing for ten years now.

‘ Ravina ma’am? Are you hungry? I got you some food,’ Kunal smiled. The naked woman cowered. In the next apartment building, a middle aged man went to sleep, still waiting for his missing wife.

The End

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