

Parts & Pieces

By Reaper & Fearless

The sun was just starting to rise above the treeline, but Greg and his wife Emily had already been up for hours. Emily was packing to go on a trip to see her family. Greg and Emily both lived in and worked in the greater Washington DC area. Greg's family lived relatively close by over in Maryland, but Emily had moved to DC from Oregon and hadn't seen her family in over two years. Emily had been saving vacation time for over a year and had been looking forward to introducing Greg to her family.

Unfortunately, Greg had recently started a new job and didn't have much vacation time to commit to a large trip. He and Emily talked about it and decided that she should go home to see her family and he'd be able to meet them another time. Emily had been disappointed by the decision but could see the practicality. The only alternative would be to wait for another year until Greg had enough vacation time as well, an alternative that didn't suit her or her family.

Greg had to be at work early to attend a meeting so Emily would be taking her car separately to the airport. When they were done loading Emily's suitcases into the car, Emily came back inside to give him a hug and kiss goodbye.

"I love you. See you in two weeks," Emily said.

"I love you too. Tell your folks that I'm sorry that I couldn't come but I'll try to come next time," Greg said giving Emily a kiss goodbye.

Emily then left while Greg went about making a cup of coffee from their Keurig coffee machine when he thought he heard Emily say something from the driveway.

"What's that?" he called.

There was no answer. He waited a moment but didn't hear Emily's voice again. He guessed he just imagined it. Still he listened in case she had said something, only giving up when he heard her car start and pull out of their driveway on her way to the airport.

Greg left for work a few minutes later, grabbing his coffee and a bagel so he could eat breakfast on his way to work. His work day dragged by probably because he knew that he'd be going home not to the love of his life, but to a dark and empty home.

Not that Greg was entirely upset to have the house to himself for the next two weeks. The life of a bachelor could be a lot of fun after all, as long as you know it's only a temporary situation. Greg was looking forward to playing video games all evening, going out fishing, maybe inviting his buddies over for a poker night without having to worry about Emily's approval.

Still, when he got home that night he couldn't help but notice how empty the house felt. Nobody to share a meal with, or talk about his day to, or cuddle up next to in bed at night. Greg imagined he'd have a certain amount of fun for the first few days that Emily was gone, but knew he would spend most of those two weeks desperately missing her and looking forward to her coming back home.

Later that evening his phone chimed indicating that he'd gotten a text message. He'd been expecting one from Emily a few hours before letting her know that she'd arrived safely. When he hadn't received one he'd tried calling her phone but it had gone straight to voice mail. Her phone was either turned off or dead. Greg was annoyed. Emily was known for being forgetful about things like that but he sometimes felt that she didn't take his feelings and worries about her safety all that seriously.

When he checked his phone however, the number that had texted him was not Emily's. It was a number he'd hoped never to have to see again. The number belonged to Rachel, Greg's psycho ex girlfriend who had stalked him for months after he'd broken things off with her. Rachel's pattern of strange behavior had dwindled over the past year and he'd hoped that after marrying Emily that Rachel would have finally moved on.

"Hey, would you like to meet me sometime this week?" Rachel's text had said.

Greg looked incredulously at the text. He considered just ignoring it, but knew that Rachel

would keep persisting until he gave her an answer.

“What do you want?” he texted back at her.

“I just want us to be together again.” was her reply.

“I told you I'm not interested in seeing you again. You know I'm married now don't you?”

“I know.”

“Then why don't you move on and find someone else?”

“I want to be with you.”

Greg was frustrated and unnerved. He thought he had put this relationship and all the baggage that went with it behind him. But here she was, starting up the same shit all over again. Instinctively, Greg glanced out the window to see if he could see Rachel's car outside. He looked up and down the street but didn't see her vehicle anywhere. At least she wasn't watching him right now.

“Listen to me. I never NEVER want to see you again. Is that CRYSTAL CLEAR to you?” Greg texted to Rachel again.

“Don't do this to me. I love you and I need you. I can't live without you in my life.”

“Just stop. Go away and stop trying to contact me.”

“You're mine. I will have you with me again.”

“I'm not yours. I haven't been yours for three years now. You need to stop this.”

“If you won't be with me I'm going to do something drastic.”

This last message caused a quiet unease for Greg. Rachel had always been strange and obsessive. She'd never tried to do anything to hurt him before, but this last message seemed to be a thinly veiled threat. Perhaps an escalation in her behavior.

“What is that supposed to mean,” Greg asked.

“If you don't agree to be with me, I'm going to cut off a body part and mail it to you every day until you do.”

Greg couldn't believe his eyes. He reread the message twice to make sure he wasn't just imaging this strange scenario. What the absolute fuck? She was going to mutilate herself and mail pieces of herself to him unless he agreed to go out with her again?

“She's fucking lost it,” Greg muttered to himself.

Greg naturally also considered the possibility that she was just bluffing. How many times had she threatened to kill herself if he hadn't come back to her before? A dozen times at least. But she was still alive and well from the looks of it. Using the term 'well' liberally of course. He decided not to play this particular game with her again. He texted her one last time.

“You're fucking nuts! I'm not doing this with you. I'm turning off my phone and going to bed. Get the fuck out of my life you psycho bitch.”

Greg didn't wait for a response, he simply turned off his phone and tossed it onto the counter beside the dishwasher. No doubt she would continue to text him but he was done listening to anything that Rachel had to say. Greg turned his phone on again later that night and listened to it buzz as a slew of texts came into the phone. Greg let them come but refused to check any of his text messages.

Sleep didn't come easily to Greg that night. He'd tried taking his mind off of Rachel's threat by watching movies and playing video games, but she was still there in the back of his mind. By the next day though, Greg had largely forgotten his strange conversation with Rachel. He had a busy day at work and was commended by his boss on giving a very successful presentation of their latest product to their clients. Considering the good work he'd been doing so far, Greg thought he would be a shoe-in for his companies yearly bonus and perhaps even an early promotion.

His good feelings were dashed though when he checked the mail that night and discovered an unmarked, unaddressed envelope. There was no stamp, only writing on the front that said “For Greg.” Curious, he opened up the envelop and let the small item contained inside fall into his hand. Instantly he screamed and dropped the object onto the ground.

“Holy fucking christ!” Greg exclaimed, feeling nauseous.

The envelope had contained a bloody human ear. It looked like it had been sawed off the side of someone's head while they were still alive. The envelope was slick with blood as was his hand where the ear had touched him. Greg rushed to the side of his house, collapsed against the front stoop and vomited into the grass.

Rachel had made good on her threat. She'd hacked off her own ear and sent it to him in the mail. Although no, she hadn't sent it. There was no address or return address, and no stamp. She had to have delivered the letter in person to his mailbox.

Greg got shakily to his feet, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. He breathed heavily, leaning against the side of his house. Once he decided he wasn't in any danger of passing out, he considered what his next move should be. Obviously contact the police and tell them what's happening. The ear was still laying in the grass next to the mailbox, so he would have that as evidence. Probably calling nine-one-one was a bit of a stretch. He nor anyone else was really in imminent danger, mostly he was just freaking out. He decided calling the non-emergency police number would be the practical approach.

Greg went inside and immediately dialed the local PD and explained to the receptionist what had happened. She took down his address and advised him that she would dispatch an officer to the scene. He asked what he should do with the ear and was advised to leave it where it was until officers arrived on the scene. Greg thanked the receptionist and after pouring himself a whiskey on the rocks, he went out onto his stoop and sipped it where he could keep a watch on the mailbox and wait for officers to arrive.

Later that evening, a little over an hour after he'd called the police station, a marked cruiser pulled up in front of his home and two police officers got out. Greg stood and thanked them for coming and proceeded to tell them everything he knew about Rachel, the text message conversation the previous evening, and the severed ear by the mailbox. Both officers listened and took down the information he gave them. One of them inspected his phone, going over the text messages that were sent back and fourth.

One of the officers, Williams according to his badge name, advised Greg that he could keep his phone in his possession if he wanted to but advised Greg not to delete the text message exchange between Rachel and himself in case they needed to use it for evidence later on. The other officer, Greg didn't get his name, produced a pair of what looked like long tweezers and an evidence bag. He then placed the ear into the evidence bag and marked the bag with a bio-hazard sticker.

"We'll take this into evidence and put it on ice to preserve it. You did a good job responding to this person. Once we have Rachel in custody we'll have all the evidence we need to charge her with stalking and make sure she doesn't bother you again. In the meantime, if you don't have a court order of restraint, I'd strongly advise you to seek one out."

"Thank you, I'll definitely look into that," Greg said.

Officer Williams gave a card to Greg containing his direct number.

"Give me a call if anything else funny happens or if you get any more body parts from Rachel. We'll step up patrols in your area as well."

"Thank you," Greg said again.

After the officers had left, Greg found that he could focus on little else beyond the latest and greatest sick game that Rachel was playing. Putting her hacked off ear in his mailbox? That was quite literally Vincent van Gogh level crazy. Who knew what she might do next. One thing for sure was that he had no intention of checking his messages or talking to her again tonight. His only comforting thought was that at the very least, Emily was far away visiting her parents in Oregon. Probably the safest place she could be given the circumstances.

Rachel was true to her word. Over the next few days every day she would mail a new body part to him. The next day had been brought the other ear. The day after that had been a finger. The day after that a thumb. The police had kept their word as far as Greg was concerned. Each time a new body part

turned up in his mailbox, they came and collected it. Rachel had stopped using envelopes after the second day and was just sticking body parts in his mailbox where anyone could see them.

The police had gone to Rachel's address, or at least the last address Greg remembered her living in. But when the police had checked they'd discovered that Rachel had moved out a year earlier and left no forwarding address. The police then checked government records and discovered her current address, however they found it abandoned when they went to investigate. An APB was put out for her registered vehicle which had also turned up nothing.

Greg couldn't help but feel frustrated by the situation. The police were all looking for Rachel, but despite all efforts they couldn't find what would now be an extremely disfigured woman who somehow found a way to keep visiting his mailbox each day while he was at work. Greg had kept refusing to view his text messages the whole time to avoid getting anymore messages from Rachel.

Probably Emily would be worried sick about him by now as well. She'd undoubtedly been trying to text him at some point over the past several days but if she had, he hadn't responded to her. Even if she had contacted him and knew of the situation he was going through, she'd probably be even more worried about him.

Finally the day came when Greg, feeling a great deal of trepidation, checked his mailbox and found an eyeball staring at him from inside the mailbox. It had been crudely cut out and the optic nerve was still attached like a limp bloody noodle. Greg felt the urge to vomit again and forced it back down. He just stared at the eye. Something wasn't right. He looked closer at the eyeball. The iris he noticed was brown, but that didn't make any sense because Rachel had blue eyes.

Greg went inside to get his phone and for the first time in days, checked his messages. Unsurprising to him he'd gotten dozens from Rachel all demanding that he talk to her and meet her or risk getting more body parts. He didn't bother reading most of them. He finally texted her back.

"You are fucking crazy, you know that?" he asked.

"OOH! You've been getting my gifts I see!" was her response.

"I've been getting the body parts you've been sending me. But something doesn't make sense. You sent me an eye today, but the iris of the eye is brown. Your eyes are blue."

Greg waited a few seconds to see Rachel's response to his observation.

"OMG, No wonder you haven't been responding to me! You thought I was cutting body parts off myself and sending them to you."

Greg stared at the phone completely nonplussed.

"What, you haven't been," he asked?

"No! Those body parts I've been sending you weren't my body parts. Those body parts came from your wife!"

Greg felt an icy chill go down the entire length of his body.

"My wife? My wife is in Oregon you stupid bitch. What are you talking about?" Greg texted.

"No, she isn't. I have your wife here. I was waiting outside your home and I heard everything you both said to each other. I overpowered her by her car while you were still inside and I took both her and her car to my special place. I sent a text to her family telling them something had come up and she wouldn't be coming to Oregon after all this week."

Greg dropped the phone onto the floor and ran back out to his mailbox where the eye was. Now that he looked at the eye more carefully he realized that what Rachel had said was true. He recognized the eye as belonging to his wife. Greg collapsed to his knees and began to scream over and over again while neighbors came out to see what was going on. He was still screaming insanely as the police arrived.