

THE INTERPRETER

By Cerise de Gelder

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CHARACTERS:

Constance

Dr Fergus Crane

Rose, the interpreter

SETTING: *The office of Dr Fergus Crane.*

(Fergus sits at his desk writing. There is a knock on the door.)

FERGUS: Come in!

(Constance enters and stands rather awkwardly. He stands.)

CONSTANCE: Fergus.

FERGUS: Constance.

(They stand looking at each other for a moment. He tentatively approaches to peck her on the cheek, but she ducks away to avoid it.)

CONSTANCE: You said you wanted to see me.

FERGUS: Yes, thank you for coming.

CONSTANCE: I don't know what else needs to be said, Fergus...

FERGUS: Constance...I hope you don't mind...I asked someone else to be here/...

CONSTANCE: Someone else? Who/...?

(There is another knock on the door.)

FERGUS: Enter!

(Rose enters.)

Ah...you must be...

ROSE: I'm Rose, Dr Crane...I'll be your interpreter for today...

(She shakes hands with Fergus and puts her hand out to Constance.)

CONSTANCE: Interpreter? I don't understand...

ROSE: Well, I think that's why I'm here.

FERGUS: I thought it was a good idea, Constance. We just weren't communicating...

CONSTANCE: So you've employed an interpreter? Am I that hard to comprehend?

FERGUS: Just give it a chance, Constance, I think it could work. Please everyone...take a seat.

(They are all seated, Constance still looking bewildered.)

I wanted to explain what happened that day...at Noosa...

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I've had time to think of a good excuse for whatever I did and I'm hoping you'll buy it...

(Fergus looks a little surprised but continues.)

FERGUS: That day on the beach...I was having such a wonderful time with you. And then that woman came and sat near us...

CONSTANCE: You don't have to tell me what happened, Fergus. I was there.

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* I'm not an idiot and I'm not buying any of your excuses.

FERGUS: I didn't ask her to sit so close to us...

ROSE: *(To Constance)* It wasn't my fault I got lucky...

CONSTANCE: But you weren't complaining at the time, were you.

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* You were so busy perving you apparently lost the power of speech.

FERGUS: What was I supposed to do? Sit by and watch her struggle with that umbrella? It could have blown away and killed someone!

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I'm a man, that's my job...to save helpless women and look good doing it.

CONSTANCE: Didn't you get a little suspicious when it blew away the second time?

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* She was reeling you in, you pathetic fool.

FERGUS: I just don't know what I was supposed to do? Tell me what I should have done?

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I'm playing the dumb, socially inept male card now in the hope that you'll take pity on me.

CONSTANCE: We could have moved away from the floozy!

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* My breasts looked so much smaller than hers...I needed to distance myself to avoid comparison.

CONSTANCE: It was so obvious that she was trying to flirt with you, waving her ridiculous bosoms in your face...

ROSE: What kind of whore comes on to a man lying with a woman on the beach? And if those breasts were real I'll eat my sun hat.

FERGUS: Okay, she came on a little strong...I agree.

ROSE: *(To Constance)* She was so hot and soooo asking for it...

FERGUS: But all I did was fix her umbrella.

ROSE: You're making mountains out of molehills...again.

CONSTANCE: You spent half an hour fixing her flat tyre while I waited in the car!

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* You found another excuse to spend time with the balloon-breasted bimbo while I sat in forty degree heat!

FERGUS: She was in trouble!

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I felt so superior. It was magnificent!

CONSTANCE: And then you disappeared...

ROSE: I don't trust you, you sneaky bastard, where were you?

FERGUS: She wanted to buy me a drink at the kiosk...to thank me.

ROSE: *(To Constance)* We had a quickie in the sand dunes while you roasted in the car...

FERGUS: *(To Rose)* Excuse me...I didn't say that!

ROSE: Oh...sorry. Did I get it wrong?

FERGUS: I said she bought me a drink...

ROSE: Sorry...in malespeak that usually means 'we had fast and meaningless sex'.

FERGUS: It was only a soft drink...

ROSE: Ah...my mistake. Sorry.

CONSTANCE: You had sex with her?

FERGUS: No! She misinterpreted!

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I'm going to blame the female interpreter now because I've painted myself into a corner.

FERGUS: Will you shut up!

CONSTANCE: I knew it! I knew you and that...that...tart were up to something. The way she grinned at me when you came back to the car.

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* You must think I'm an imbecile...I know adulterous post-coital smirking when I see it.

FERGUS: We had a can of Fanta together!

ROSE: *(To Constance)* She was the best I've ever had. I got her phone number and I'm going to ring her next weekend.

FERGUS: *(To Rose)* Okay, that's it...get out!

ROSE: Are you unsatisfied with my services, Dr Crane?

FERGUS: Yes, I'm unsatisfied with your services! You're causing more problems than you're solving! Are you actually qualified to do this job?

ROSE: I assure you I'm fluent in both manspeak and womanspeak, Dr Crane. I've had over ten years experience in all kinds of situations...proposals, weddings, divorces, business, politics...

FERGUS: Politics?

ROSE: Kevin and Julia are two of my best customers.

CONSTANCE: I think she's very good.

FERGUS: You would.

CONSTANCE: What's that supposed to mean?

ROSE: He thinks you're a domineering man-hater with latent lesbian tendencies.

CONSTANCE: Just because I've never had a real orgasm with you doesn't mean I prefer women!

ROSE: (To Fergus) You're a lousy lover and your penis is too small.

FERGUS: You lying bitch! How can you say you've never had an orgasm with me? Just last week you were screaming so loud the neighbours banged on the wall.

ROSE: (To Constance) How dare you criticise the size of my penis. My penis is so big I can make women scream. Isn't it? Don't I?

CONSTANCE: Haven't you ever heard of faking an orgasm, Fergus?

ROSE: (To Fergus) I should win an academy award, I'm so convincing.

FERGUS: Don't you dare tell me you were faking. I don't believe you!

ROSE: (To Constance) I'm a great lover. My penis is huge. I'm the best lover you've ever had. You're a big fat liar, liar, liar!

CONSTANCE: And *she* probably was too, Fergus. Your siren of the silicon supplements probably pretended she was having the time of her life in the sand dunes because that's what women do. Because women don't want to make men feel small and unimportant. Because they're compassionate and caring and giving...

ROSE: (To Fergus) All men are bastards!

FERGUS: Oh well, I guess that's why you left your husband to be with me, is it? Your poor suffering husband, waiting at home, wondering what he did to deserve being left by his wonderful Constance. Did you leave him because you're so compassionate and caring and giving?

ROSE: (To Constance) Why in God's name would you leave such a wonderful man to be with a bastard like me?

CONSTANCE: You're right, Fergus. I made a mistake.

ROSE: (To Fergus) I'm finally seeing the light.

CONSTANCE: I should be at home with my Oscar. He would never ogle another woman at the beach while I was there. He would never be seduced by some tart with a beach umbrella and leave me in the hot car to have sex with her...

ROSE: (To Fergus) Old Oscar is looking pretty damn good right now.

FERGUS: Do you really think you could be happy with that nutcase, Constance?

ROSE: (To Constance) Is his penis really bigger than mine?

CONSTANCE: You're his psychiatrist, Dr Crane. Do you consider 'nutcase' a suitable term to apply to one of your patients?

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* I'm not even going to use your first name anymore, you quack.

FERGUS: I'm sorry. I'm just upset.

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I've been exposed for the dickhead I am and I can't handle it.

FERGUS: *(To Rose)* Could you please leave?

ROSE: Is the session over?

FERGUS: It's not a 'session'...it's a conversation. And it appears to be drawing to a close.

ROSE: *(To Constance)* I'm all out of excuses...time to withdraw.

CONSTANCE: Sounds like an excellent idea.

ROSE: *(To Fergus)* I am *so* over you.

FERGUS: *(To Rose)* Enough! Thank you for your time...my secretary will fix up your fee.

CONSTANCE: Thank you, Rose.

ROSE: Lovely to meet you both.

CONSTANCE: Do you have a card? I might require your services again.

ROSE: *(Handing her a card)* Call me anytime. I'm very reasonable.

CONSTANCE: I'm sure you are.

FERGUS: *(Under his breath)* Lesbian.

CONSTANCE: Goodbye, Fergus. See you in hell.

FERGUS: Wait...Constance...don't do this.

CONSTANCE: Oh and Oscar won't be seeing you anymore either...we'll find a more reputable doctor. Someone who doesn't seduce his patient's wives.

ROSE: Thank you, Dr Crane. *(Handing him a card)* My card in case you need me again.

(Rose and Constance start to leave together.)

CONSTANCE: Rose...I'm planning a reconciliation with my husband sometime soon...perhaps you're available?

ROSE: I think I can slot you in, Constance.

(They exit. Fergus tears up the card and throws it in the air.)

END