

Chapter 1

Sowing the Seed.

- 13 Years Ago. -

2012 was the year that my mundane life changed forever. It was the year that gave both excitement and sorrow. It was the year that will never be forgotten. It was the year I first met Isabella. It was the year the honeytrap and scam began. It was the year that was to destroy my future.

I had been made redundant in 2011 and was pleased that in early 2012 a new job opportunity had arisen. It was on a lower salary and over 100 miles away from home, but it was a reasonable position although renting a small flat and becoming a bachelor in the week was not as much fun as it sounded.

Within a week of the new commute my mother was diagnosed with dementia and admitted to a local care home and due to my work it was only possible to visit her on a Friday. It was so sad as each week dreaded this as she was rapidly deteriorating. The staff did not seem interested and mum was hardly recognisable slumped in a chair, or sometimes still in bed.

This continued for a few months until one Friday she started saying the name Isabella. I did not think anything of this, however at my next visit she again muttered the name Isabella followed by saying she is so lovely. Thinking this must be a memory and knowing people with dementia often remembered events or friends that happened years ago and this was how my dad had been a few years earlier I continued to ignore it. A week later and the same utterance although she was actually

looking slightly better but repetitively repeating Isabella again and again convinced me to ask the carer who had brought us a cup of tea, as to why was she mentioning Isabella. The carer said Isabella was over there and perhaps I should ask her directly. My eyes crossed the room and settled on what looked like a woman in her mid forties of a mediterranean appearance with her white trainers resting on the arm of the chair. I said to mum that I wanted to talk to Isabella for a second, which was pointless as mum would not understand this, however walked over to her. “Are you Isabella.” “Yes, “ she responded in what I thought was a Spanish accent. “Who are you? “ “I’m Mary’s son she keeps mentioning you.” “Your mother is so nice I just want to help her.” “Well you are doing a good Job.” “You have a lovely mum,” she continued, to which I nodded in agreement and returned to mum. Another Carer arrived and said mum’s dinner was ready so I decided it was the appropriate time to leave. The following Friday Isabella greeted me as I arrived. This seemed odd as usually only received a terse comment from the carers that she is over there or she is in bed as did not want to get up. Was this the first seed being sowed?

The carer who usually served mum tea and biscuits did not come so I went to the kitchen where Isabella was sitting on a stool and as she saw me crossed her legs and ran her hand up the right one which although she was wearing the regulation trousers caught my attention and looking into my eyes ordered me to return saying she would bring it.

Tea and chocolate biscuits, not the normal plain ones were enjoyed and Isabella said why don’t I help give mum dinner. I agreed and enjoyed helping out for the next hour, not thinking anything of it.

The next few weeks followed the same pattern. Mum saying Isabella was so nice, and me helping her and other residents with dinner. I started to look forward to Friday evening and for the next couple of months helped with afternoon tea and dinner. Isabella suggested maybe to come at the weekends and although my partner objected I came that weekend and many others over the next few months and got to know some of the other residents, but also interacted more with the carers especially Isabella who was always cheerful chatty and helpful.

The care home was like a computer game with the residents each having their own characteristics. One lady always carried her handbag thinking she was going to the shops while another one in her eighties was always holding the hand of an even older resident. One man who had been in finance was forever exposing himself and trying to touch the breasts of the carers and was often found undressed in other residents beds. Many characters with so much history now all just existing with their daily achievement being walking down the corridor, sitting in the garden, watching daytime TV, or in the case of the finance man, getting his member out.

I enjoyed helping, although when my partner also came Isabella was nowhere to be seen. At first didn't think anything of this however one Friday when Isabella supplied the biscuits asked why I never saw her when my partner was here. Her answer shocked me saying that she did not like my partner as didn't think she liked her, adding but liked me very much. As someone nearing retirement, balding not over tall, well actually small as you would expect this flattered me. Yes the next seed had been sown.

The following Friday I was surprised when my partner turned up at the care home before me. She said that Isabella was helping with an emergency on another floor so it was Karon who would

be with Mary today. When she noticed my mood change she asked why and before I could think of an excuse said “You fancy her don’t you.” To which my instant respond was “What,” in astonishment. The rest of the evening was difficult and suppose it was good that Isabella did not appear. That whole weekend the atmosphere could be cut with a knife neither of us mentioning her name but both of us thinking about it.

The week was so slow as my mind kept thinking about what my partner had said. Eventually, it was Friday evening and arrived at the care home, Isabella was there. She apologised for last week and said had made an excuse as did not want to see my partner. Isabella said Mary was tired, asleep in bed and as the evening was still light and warm she invited me outside.

We sat next to each other on a wooden bench overlooking the summer flowers. The alluring scent was not from the roses but Isabella’s perfume. It was as if she was Medusa and I was the doomed sailor. Her leg brushed against my leg. Sorry she apologised. No problem I said quite liking it. She started asking me about my family and where I lived. I said not far from here. She said she lived in Aspry Lane Wow I immediately thought as this was one of the most expensive roads in the village, No house below £1.5m and most with swimming pools above £2m. Another seed had been sown.

Her shoe brushed against my leg and again she said sorry but looked into my eyes and her brown eyes penetrated me and I was caught hook line and sinker.

Over the next few weeks we found time to sit together and she mentioned that she had a nice top floor apartment in Colombia that she occasionally returned to. Then one sunny evening on the

bench while chatting our eyes met and our lips touched and she reeled her catch in. Over the next few weeks we became closer and more time was spent with her and regret much less with Mum. One warm moonlit night our kissing became more intimate and my hands more adventurous. This old man was getting seduced by a South American sexy woman and enjoying the attention.

Isabella moved her hand over my chest and down, slowly, slowly, arousing me and although saying no and pushing her away hoped she would not stop.



Chapter 2

Deceit and Death.

This pattern continued over the next month and I was finding myself helping more and more, bringing tea and biscuits to the residents probably thinking it was impressing Isabella. With Christmas approaching I even participated in the care home Christmas Party. Residents singing seasonal songs and of course Vera Lynn war ones and little presents were given out. Not sure how many realised what was happening but the staff and a few family members seemed to enjoy the experience.

It was getting late and most residents had retired including my mother. Luckily in anticipation had walked to the care home as knew Isabella would be generous with the cheap blanc wine and while usually only drink on Christmas Day had readily accepted it, so was becoming light headed and when Isabella suggested we go into an empty room I was very interested. Slightly worse for wear Isabella took my hand and led the way. The bright blue door beckoned and before I realised had opened welcoming us into the room. Isabella turned the light on and drew the poppy pattern curtains.

She pulled me close and we kissed. This was the first time that her lips were bright red, the first time with lipstick. We kissed again. This time she forced her tongue in and it was lovely. She started to run her finger up my shirt undoing the buttons and brushing it to the side. I was amazed that someone wanted my body. and excited about what may happen in my slightly drunk state. Isabella was wearing a very sexy dress with a low cleavage that showed off her, well to me perfectly formed

breasts. She smiled. “You like,” she said. “I know you like,” she continued and just as I thought was about to be seduced she abruptly stopped and said not now, another day soon I promise. As quick as we started it was over, leaving me bemused to walk home.

The following Friday when I arrived there was no sign of Isabella. Mum was not in her usual chair and when I inquired a carer said she was in her bed. Looking in her room was shocked in what I saw. It was horrific and reminded me of a mausoleum and she was the tomb effigy on the coffin. Her mouth was wide open and she was snoring, her breathing intermittent. She had really deteriorated. Was it a coincidence or was it due to no Isabella but she looked so poor. The carer in the lounge just remarked that she had refused breakfast and lunch and did not want to get out of bed and shrugged her shoulders in a very uncaring manner.

On Wednesday after a call from the care home left work and drove straight to the hospital. Two days later as I swabbed her dry cracked lips, her eyes having not opened for 24 hours she coughed lightly and I believe had decided to pass away. Before leaving her bed I wondered if Isabella had stayed would mum have lived longer and not suffered as much. However with dementia who could tell.



Chapter 3

Reunion Call.

- 6 Years Ago. -

Life returned to the usual routine then suddenly seven years after mum's funeral while enjoying a cruise a message popped up on my phone. PLEASE CALL ME IT'S URGENT. Followed by I need help to get out of Bogota, I'm not safe. Some nasty man has threatened to kill me. A third text said I need \$10,000 to get back to England.

Her deceitful plan had resurfaced and again I fell for it and hiding this from my partner was another huge mistake. Knowing had to make the call, told my partner that fancied a coffee adding if she wanted a tea, knowing she would say no.

As there were a few people in the observation room decided to go on deck. The sea was rough and there was a biting wind making it difficult to get a connection. Eventually succeeded and called. The first two attempts failed but on the third I recognised her voice, but it sounded very nervous. She pleaded for help and promised me the earth, well at least profit from the Aspry Lane sale. Pound signs flashed through my mind thinking it's only 10,000 and it will make a fortune In the near future leading to a comfortable retirement.. My thoughts passed from the pound signs on to how she had apparently looked after my mother so promised to help her. Comforting her and saying no problem it will be sorted and the next day made a further excuses so could go to the ship's gym to start the process.

Having no savings just a small private pension called my financial advisor and pleaded with him to release some. To be fair to him he protested and said not to get involved and not for the first or last time I responded by saying that I trusted her. Eventually he agreed to start the process of selling shares and reminded me it will be taxed so required more than the ten.

The cruise finished and we flew back to England. Normal service resumed but I needed to make excuses to go to town to set up a bank account at a new bank that would remain secret so my partner did not realise what was happening as she always checked my current account. The money arrived and after calling Isabella, she said to transfer it to a bank account in the same town as my bank and she would then get a friend to send it via a money transfer shop to Bogota. Not sure why it took so long and why the bank did not ask questions, seeing usually get the third degree for requesting taking out a small cash sum, but after three weeks Isabella called and described what had happened..

Colombia is a dangerous place so the following was entirely feasible.

“I was in my apartment in Northern Bogota {which apparently is safer than the South). Recently I had been threatened and now feared for my life. Thank you for the money it will get me back to the UK..” The call ended abruptly. I tried to call back but no reply so feared the worst.

Several attempts over the next few days but silence.



Chapter 4

Getting Out of Colombia..

Two days later she contacted me “ I’m at El Dorado airport waiting for a flight to Madrid. I left home early in the morning. I had to get a lift from someone I knew I could trust. It cost lots of Pesos I had to go in the night to be as safe as possible. My cousin was robbed last week for her phone by two men and a friend was murdered recently as she was walking home from her cleaning job at a big house in the daytime. I know men were watching me. I left at 3AM with nothing except phone and passport. The friend met me at the back of the apartment. The car dove up with no lights and I got in. The back street was dark but we could only put the car lights on once getting onto the main road. Every car or lorry that drove past was scary and I was sure there was a car following me. My friend seemed unconcerned so much that I was beginning to wonder was he my friend. Eventually I saw the red landing lights at the airport and felt less worried. He parked at the departures and I left him. Still looking at everyone as I walked swiftly to the check-in trying not to look into any eyes and holding the passport in my pocket as no bag. I am waiting for my flight and will call when in Madrid.” Then the phone went dead.



Chapter 5

The Call.

Three days later whilst in a meeting my phone vibrated. It was Isabella. The text read - Call me I'm in England,- so apologised to my colleagues and left. Outside it was raining and miserable. Everyone seemed in a hurry and one gentleman in a blue striped suit just avoided colliding with me. My fault I remarked as sought cover in an empty bus shelter. My mind was in a spin as I texted Isabella saying can I call. Why texting this and not just making the call I do not know. Maybe I was scared or excited or just worried in what to say. Anyway Isabella immediately. called back.

The conversation went like this. "Ola it's. Isabella." "Yes." "Can we talk." "Yes of course." "I'm in England." "Yes." "I'm in a house near you." "What. Oh OK but you know I am working away in the week." "I need money to repair the roof as it's leaking." "No." "Please." "Why. I cannot." "Give me twenty thousand and then we sell the house" "What." "Twenty and you have half the money when we sell."

Isabella had caught me at a vulnerable time as I was expecting bad news at work. Redundancy was looming big on the horizon with little pay off expected and I had not told my partner. Pound signs flashed in front of me thinking of the large house in the Lane (as it was locally known) and this could be my redemption so there would be no need to tell my partner about the redundancy just give her half a million. I readily agreed but fatally said it would have to be our

secret and as to be released from my pension it will take a month to which Isabella tutted but said OK.

Still warning me my financial advisor arranged the sum but convinced myself It was still a good deal and would eventually result in a mega profit I was content.



Chapter 6

Visiting The House in Aspry Lane.

A month later the sum appeared in my bank account and I sent a text to Isabella saying it was ready. She immediately thanked me to which my response was that I needed to see the estimates.

Surprisingly (although in hindsight not so surprising), Isabella said no it was to be cash only which was concerning as there would be no evidence, something that became a regular happening.

To divert my attention Isabella replied that I should come and see the house in the evening but to meet in the Lane. She refused blankly to give the address, the reason was that my partner may see it. Despite my denial she refused saying to be at the end of the road in three days time at 8pm.

Leaving work I drove and despite traffic arrived at the rendezvous around the allotted time. The Lane was empty. I waited in the car in the dark and just as began to feel this was a wasted journey Isabella suddenly appeared. Her coat was buttoned up to the top and she tapped on the window. I opened the door and beckoned her in. She said no and told me to leave the car and we would walk to the house. Feeling this was odd but did as commanded walked along the road until stopped outside an imposing house. Wow I thought is this it remarking it must be worth over two million to which Isabella nodded yes.

The house stood on a large plot with two garages a massive drive sweeping down to the road and a substantial wall. It had an impressive wrought iron gate painted in black and two name plates.

The Nine Oaks was written in gold and I could see at least three massive specimens. Wonder where the other six were I joked. Isabella ignored me. Is that a swimming pool I prattled on. Again no reaction. Let's go inside I said enthusiastically like a child in a sweet shop. This time she retorted with a negative. "We cannot," was her reply. "It is let as I was in Colombia but they will go soon. It will not be a problem in selling.."

Isabella pulled me away and said she rented a house in the next road. Let us go there and talk. I said could not stay long as was nervous my partner or more likely a friend would see the car and wonder why it was there and not at work or home.



Chapter 7

Seduction.

We strolled down the dimly lit lane and turned into a small cul-de-sac, The houses were much smaller than those in The Lane. Isabella ushered me up a path, then some stairs put a key in the door and on opening it entered and slipped off her shoes. I followed her like a lamb to the slaughter into a room that had a good standard of furnishing with a leather sofa. A bed with satin sheets could be seen through another door. Isabella removed her coat revealing a long emerald dress with a slit up one side that exposed some leg and a plunging neckline leaving little to the imagination.

She smiled and pointed to a beautiful spread of canapés that looked very expensive and a selection of red and white wines. Refusing the offer of wine as was expecting to drive back that night but readily accepted s canapé and a glass of fruit juice and watched as Isabella poured a glass of white wine and sipped it. She beckoned me to sit on the sofa and sat down next to me moving closer. She made sure I could see her breasts which looked perfect as she leant over giving me a peck on the cheek and holding my hand in a seductive manner.

Although flattered and excited I said must go. Isabella replied saying no not yet and to stay so we can enjoy the night She remarked that had not had sex for a long time and to drink some more thrusting the juice into my face. Drink she ordered in a stern unfriendly voice. I could not say no and as I swallowed her soft hand caressed my hand and she took the glass from me and pulled me close. Isabella said something that sounded very sexy in Spanish and our lips met. Her tongue opened my lips and forced it inside Discovering feelings that I had not had for many years my

response was to touch her breast. She asked how was that but I did not answer as my hand had moved towards her nipple which was hardly covered and tweaked it. She murmured that was nice and putting her hand round the back of my neck pulled me close. We kissed again but before continuing I suddenly felt very drowsy.

I awoke wondering where was I. What had happened. I was soaking with sweat, I don't sweat was my first thought followed quickly with why am I in the bed under the satin sheets I had noticed earlier and naked apart from pants and socks.. My shirt was on the floor and my trousers nearby. My watch showed 3AM. A beam of light shone from the other room. I stirred but still felt sleepy. The sheet was damp with my sweat and I gingerly moved to the edge of the bed and just about managed to stand up.

I walked or wobbled towards the light and could see Isabella was dressed but gone was the green dress. She said I had fainted so she had put me into the bed. I inquired why was I undressed. She replied that I should know but I could not remember much and said must go to work.

Good old me about to be made redundant and still worried I would be late. I assume I dressed and drove to work but still cannot remember how.



Chapter 8

Unbelievable But I Believed This Fantasy World.

The next day Isabella called seeming concerned and asked was I OK. I said nothing as was trying to process the last 24 hours still feeling groggy and what happened last night. One minute I was drinking a juice, or so I thought and the next I knew it was 3AM and was half naked sweating in bed.

She continued saying still needed £20,000 to renovate the swimming pool as her estate agent said it would be easier to sell. I muttered Ok. No idea why I said OK but I felt well if it will help the sale of the house she had shown me then what is 20k. Of course as before it was my pension and after deinvesting shares and receiving enough to pay for the renovations and the tax I transferred the money, Again asked for contract details but Isabella said not to worry as it will soon be sorted.

Over the next month I received many text updating the progress and that an Australian farmer was interested in the house but only if the flooring had been polished by a craftsman. Another £10,000 net required which I obliged.

After a busy week at work and several unanswered calls and text I finally threatened that would go to check on progress. An hour later Isabella called. and said not to bother as the farmer was coming to the UK to sort matters out. Stupidly not for the first time I felt reassured and thought

nothing more over the Weekend. Monday traffic was good and I arrived at my rented place early so decided to call her before going to the office. Isabella said she had accepted the Australian's offer and sum was more than I had expected, however my enthusiasm was destroyed when she added a but. She continued but it was subject to checking the roof and needed £30,000 for that. I replied that I could not assist anymore and anyway why not just reduce the price. This was the first time that Isabella seemed to react in a hostile manner. She muttered some unknown Spanish words and I could sense that there was someone else in the room.

"Ok you won't help. That is a problem." Silence..... "I will call you later" she said and the phone went dead. I called back but no answer. That evening Isabella called and said as you will not help I will have to get my relative, a lawyer to find the money and therefore he would have a share of the profit. I convinced myself that would be fine as the house must be worth around £2m. She finished by saying would call again soon. Not sure if she understood the dictionary definition of soon. SOON is in or within a short time; before long; quickly: That word crops up so many times going forward.

A week later the text read that The Australian could not sell his farm so had to pull out with what I assume was an emoji sorry. Isabella called a few days later and explained the situation, easily convincing me that as the sale had fallen through she had no money but would go to Bogota to sell the Apartment but surprise surprise needed her relative to pay for the flight. Stupid me said don't worry I will pay. What is another £1,000 so I did. A few days later a What App pinged on my phone. I opened it and then the attachment which read:

We have for you for sale: comfortable 68 Mt duplex apartment on the seventh floor. It has 44 Mt distributed as follows: dining room, open kitchen, a bedroom with closet and social bathroom. The 24 Mt loft has the main room with a private bathroom and a space where you can have an auxiliary room or study for greater comfort.

For sale USD 900,000.

So it was true an expensive apartment just as Isabella had said. My guard dropped as all I could think of was dollar signs. I realised that it could take sometime to sell and waited patiently for any news. Then the inevitable text. It read that an Arab was interested but only if air conditioning was improved and that would require \$6,000. Would ask her relative for it so not to worry. This was followed three days later with a sorry he has not got the money but will pay you back. Need it now. Seeing my pension would take a week Isabella said could I borrow from someone else and she would return it plus another 20%.



Chapter 9

How to Lose a Good Friend

I knew my old friend would help so what could go wrong. A loan for a few weeks and a 20% return. Well everything went wrong as her lawyer relative never paid. I reimbursed my friend who thanks to this is no longer a friend the following month but obviously without the profit. This took a couple of weeks and again taken from my pension which with the tax resulted in It costing more than the original loan. My partner never understood why I am no longer in contact with him.

I do not expect the improvements were ever made or indeed even needed but a week later Isabella's text read, sold subject to the usual caveat. How elation can turn to despair when I received the next lie, sorry text. The Arab wanted to buy but all his money was in New York. I was being scammed and had not recognised it. Isabella had no feelings and only contacted me for cash. The acting continued when she contacted me again.



Chapter 10

Bogota to New York.

I will describe what happened next in her words.

The Arab took a flight to New York to discuss how to transfer the money to Colombia knowing he would have to prove it was not money laundering. He was to meet the bank on the Friday when he called me saying he was feeling unwell and as seventy eight had to be careful, so signed into a private hospital for a check up. The bad news is that he had contracted Covid 19 and the Doctor reported that he was on oxygen in a critical condition.

I asked Olivia, the girl I was lodging with in Bogota to lend me some money which she originally refused. After offering her some money in the future she agreed.

The next issue was that I needed a visa for the US and as I had no time knew needed to find someone to help. Using my contacts, an address was provided and I turned up at a small house on the outskirts of Bogota, I'm not normally scared but all I could see was a lamp emitting a shadowy light from an upstairs window. The blinds twitched. I took courage and trying to show I was calm walked up the path although my heart was beating so fast I thought would have a heart attack. I rang the bell and after what seemed ages heard footsteps coming down the stairs. The door opened slowly and a head appeared. He barked who are you to which I replied Isabella. He beckoned me in. I had seen this in films but this was the first time I had met someone from what I found out later was a drug cartel.

He obviously carried out this service on a regular basis because soon after taking my passport he appeared with the Visa. I offered some pesos to which he grunted and said that's the start you are now in this. Not understanding what he meant I bid farewell and walked quickly but upright so as to show him I'm not frightened of you into the night

On arriving back Olivia said she had booked a flight through a local agent but to be safer I had to fly from Medellín to Miami then take the bus to New York and then find a room.

That evening Olivia drove me to the bus terminal and I purchased my ticket. I was surprised that the bus was very comfortable with a toilet and TV. although it was crowded. The trip was expected to take around 11 hours even though it was less than 300 miles and despite constant laughter from the gentleman sitting next to me, I assume from watching the film i managed to fall asleep.

Thirteen hours later we arrived at Medellín. As the bus drove through the streets I looked out at bustling streets filled with bars often dingy but somewhat welcoming with many people darting around, a man slumped by a doorway a bag by his side and next door a girl sitting on a high stool outside a bar with a flashing neon light, trying to smile.. She waved at the bus or several men that were passing. We then continued along the highway for 30 minutes and arrived at the airport.

There was a rush to get off so I had waited as my flight was not for many hours. As the bus emptied I eventually left and walked quickly to the departures terminal, nervous and each passing glance from a stranger filled me with fear. The only other person apart from Olivia that knew where I was travelling to was the one who had produced the visa. Why would he care I thought as I tried to calm myself.

The flight was the next day so I had found a seat and attempted to rest however as could not manage to sleep so went to a bar and purchased a drink, non alcoholic as I felt I needed to keep vigilant. The departure board was close and however often I looked at it my flight details did not change. I still had hours to wait.

I must have dozed off but at last it was time to take the risk to see if the Visa would get me through. Success I boarded the flight and for the first time since leaving Bogota relaxed. Nearly four hours later we landed in Miami and I disembarked. I approached the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's passport control and after answering several questions and lying about why I was in Miami my passport stamped I looked for signs to the bus station.

The trip to New York would take more than a day so I stocked up on food and drink and sent a text to Olivia just saying I was fine. The ticket was cheap and as soon as I boarded the bus started to understand why. The stench of stale air as body odour hit me as I located my seat. There was a newspaper at the side and a dirty tissue stuffed in it. I sat down hoping no one would sit next to me and even moved the paper onto the adjacent seat to try to dissuade anyone sitting there. All sorts of people, nationalities and ages clambered onboard and eventually a man of South American appearance age about 40 gingerly removed the deterrent sat next to me and said hola. That was the nicety over. The motor shuddered into life and after a quick announcement the bus moved off. I plugged my phone in the socket but it did not charge and put my armrest down as wanted a barrier between me and my fellow traveller.

There was a lot of chatter which as each person tried to outdo the others became steadily louder. I looked around and could see a young couple arguing and an elderly woman snoring. Two

teenagers were playing some computer game and the couple on the left were cuddling. My South American traveller said nothing. I wondered if I should try to start a conversation but then noticed him looking at me in not a very nice manner.

The chatter died down and became more of a hum which combined with the sound of the bus helped me doze. I was awoken when I felt something on my leg which was the man's foot. He appeared or was pretending to be asleep and moved his hand close to my bare arm. Earlier I had removed my coat as the bus was so hot and the advertised air conditioning was not working. As I had not reacted he started rubbing the hairy arm on mine and still pretending to be asleep shuffled closer. I moved nearer to the window and he huffed and retreated. That was that.

The next few hours seemed to be the longest in my life until we eventually pulled into a car park in Orlando. Several of us went outside and I watched as the man started to chat to an attractive young girl and as I could not see any facilities returned to the bus. The washroom was down the stairs and I went inside locking the door. The toilet was as I had dreaded and having been used by so many it stunk even more than the rest of the bus. There was toilet paper and tissues randomly on the floor and remnants in the sink and even a condom wrapping on the floor. I enjoy sex and have had it in several dubious places but how anyone could relish this in this cubicle I do not understand. Anyway after braving the loo rinsing my hands and drying them with the hand dryer which surprisingly worked returned to my seat. This brief stop was followed by one at the Orlando terminal where I managed to have a quick tidy up and use of the facilities and several others including Jacksonville. 28 hours and about 1,400 miles after leaving Miami we arrived at our destination.



Chapter 11

Announce New York.

The first I knew Isabella had arrived safely in New York was on receiving a midnight call. She had booked into a small and cheap motel outside the City and said had asked her relative to help pay for the accommodation however as this would take time could I assist. I transferred a few thousand after the call. She said she was staying in the cheapest place and it was very rundown. I imagined it to be like one you would see in a horror movie. Would she be safe from a mad axeman or a sex starved loner. She said the meeting at the bank was arranged for the following Friday and when asked why not earlier, retorted that was the only time available.

So another week passed and I waited patiently until Saturday night when I texted to be advised that the meeting had been cancelled but with no reason. Then the excuses started.

- Excuse 1. Bank cannot see me as the Manager is away for a fortnight.
- Excuse 2. He is now ill.
- Excuse 3 Seven days later.. Manager better and will meet on Friday.
- Excuse 4. Meeting lasted 5 minutes as need proof of the sale contract to release the money.

Isabella said this would cost USD 25,000 as the lawyer refused to sign the documents for anything less. Well I thought although this is a large unexpected sum it is only 3% of the sale price. So another hit on my quickly diminishing pension and £25,000 plus the extra for tax. Money transferred to her bank and then by the carer sending it via a well known money transfer company

to Colombia. This took another week as the excuse was that only small amounts could be sent each time, maybe to stop her UK bank asking any questions. Eventually it was all done and the lawyer said the documents would be delivered soon, so was disappointed, annoyed but suppose not surprised when the next call from Isabella said she needed USD500 for the lawyer to send it by courier as e~mail or fax was no good to the bank. Was this another excuse or just a different way for me to keep paying out. Excuses continued so I will not carry on numbering them. How it takes 2 weeks to send this from Colombia to New York but it did and as anticipated it was rejected by the bank saying it was a forgery. A call soon after this from Isabella was not about the rejection but that she was not feeling well and was fed up staying in the motel. No money to eat and no money to pay rent. Her relative lawyer who I will call Salah as that is easier than saying relative each time (although I still do not know his name), would pay but of course he did not. I stupidly dripped more of my pension thinking surely we were close to selling the apartment bringing the money home and then putting the UK house up for sale. What could possibly go wrong



Chapter 12

Covid 19 or not.

- 5 Years Ago. -

At home we were experiencing the lockdown and my daily walk in the Common became more hazardous as the Government were telling us told not to touch anything or get close to anyone and to keep washing hands.

What a brilliant excuse as the next telephone call from Isabella explained she had missed the latest meeting as was still ill. I sympathised but was this the start of the next lie to get more from me.

There was no response to the several calls I made over the next few days. Yet another week then I received the latest text saying she had been taken to hospital as was seriously ill. Text said this was sent by the hospital as patient was on oxygen and fighting for her life.

I was concerned, not because she was in this situation but that if she had died all this would end with it and no money for me.

Perhaps if she had actually been in hospital, because with all the other lies I would never know if she was and although would not wish it, if she had died there could not be the later blackmail to keep paying out my pension. Anyway at the end of the month she sent a text saying she was better.

BUT. Of course there was always a BUT. The hospital would not let her home until the \$30,000 bill was paid. As this was increasing daily I agreed but said this would be the final sum.

Knowing to get this would take 3 weeks, the bill was increasing each day and the bank meeting was being delayed, I reviewed the Internet hoping to find a loan that could repay within 14 days however due to my or should I say Isabella's expenditure of my pension no recognised company would accept me. Also looked at payday loans however ridiculous interest rates and virtually none over £5,000 put me off this option. So in desperation decided to approach my eldest son. He was the first person other than my hairdresser that I had confided in. I explained my trust in Isabella after her caring for mum and that it would be paid back soon. He was a special policeman in his spare time and said he felt I was being scammed but after a further discussion he agreed to lend it. The money was gratefully received by Isabella who said Salah would be in contact to pay me back.

A few days later Isabella's text read that she had met the Manager and he now required her signature but (yes another but), but in front of the Colombian Lawyer. This would mean back to Bogota. I said that was not on and must speak directly to the bank manager and may even fly over if that would sort things. She replied no as did not want bank to know someone else was involved. My response of no more money and that Olivia would have to pay her motel costs and flight back was met by some unrecognisable Spanish which due to the tone I think were Spanish swearwords followed by the line going dead.



Chapter 13

Fraud turns to Blackmail.

- 4 Years Ago. -

Time ticked by until one day the police came to my door. Apparently my son who had not received his money back had reported this and that as an old man I maybe involved in a scam. I was surprised but invited the officer in to discuss the matter. My partner asked why were the police here and I said nothing to worry about. After the formalities I explained to the Officer what was happening and that despite the massive sums and lack of proof that I trusted Isabella and there would be gold at the end of the rainbow. This somehow convinced the officer not to worry and that everything was fine.

Yet more advice not taken and it was extremely difficult explaining to my partner that by using my pension in a property deal would produce a dividend to set us up for the rest of our life. She sided with my son and immediately said it was a scam and I was often reminded of that. Not that I needed reminding as use a broken shower and look at the cracked wardrobe glass and no holidays or days out with or without the grandchildren.

I was becoming more frustrated, even more concerned and frankly annoyed at the lack of any progress and was now wondering if some or any of the excuses that kept delaying an outcome were true. Had she gone to New York.? The trip description was certainly well researched if it never

happened. Was there an Arab buyer or any money deposited in a New York Bank? Did she need hospital treatment? The list went on.

Realising action was required, decided to send this text I assume you are back in Colombia. Why is there a further delay?..... I am not paying anything more except your flight back to the UK. Sort it!!! Within ten minutes received a missed call and on returning it her tone was different. Abrupt and menacing she demanded to pay her if want any money back. Immediately after ringing off my phone gave a notification of a message on Viber. We very rarely used Whats App as she had warned me it can easily be tracked so I opened the phone and read the blunt message. You will get the money soon but you have to pay my costs and if you don't. Ping another text with a picture of me naked.

Shocked as could not remember being completely naked let alone allowing a photo however before managing to digest this another message appeared saying this would be sent to my partner if I told anybody, followed by do what I say and you will get the money. Three days later the next excuse or demand arrived by text. Isabella was saying she had asked Salah for money to pay for her food and lodgings in Bogota but he could not pay for the visit to the Lawyer and I must, otherwise she could not get the documents signed. I was being blackmailed but still hopeful there would be some sort of result in due course I agreed. She said would meet lawyer later in the week. A few more days passed and eventually I texted Isabella. Her reply was that she was embarrassed but needed 25,000 to sign. My response of no, that I have had enough and no able to help further and she should return to the UK immediately and sell the UK house then return to Bogota later to sort this out. Isabella swore and again said to send the money or else more photos will appear. Immediately a picture pinged up showing me in pants only with a note saying that if I do not pay