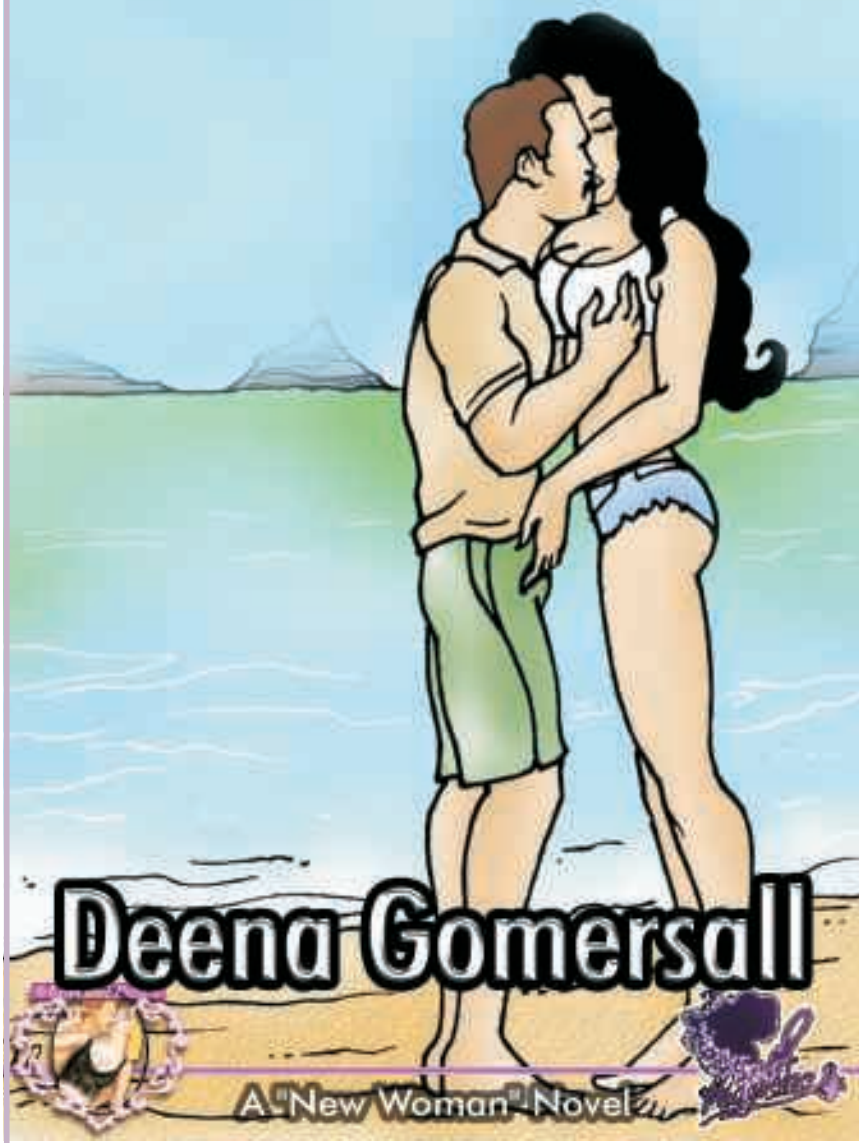


Reprogrammed



Deena Gomersall

A "New Woman" Novel

Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers

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Part One

by Deena Gomersall

Chapter One: Just an Ordinary Housewife

Chloe walked into her spacious lounge, her cell phone pressed against the side of her head. “Yes, of course, Marge. Ha Ha. I think I’ll reserve judgement on that and anyway I doubt Rick would be too impressed. Oh, you and me both. Anyway, talking about Rick, he will be home in an hour so I guess I’d better get on with prepping the evening meal. It’s like they say Marge, a woman’s work is never done. Look, I’ll see you down at the clubhouse on Saturday. Bye bye.”

Chloe then looked around at the mess in her lounge.

“Children, come on now; your father will be home soon. Get your toys cleaned up and put away. First one to do so will get a cookie,” she told her children in her upper Midwestern American accent.

Chloe’s two children, eight year old Todd and his younger sister Donna, both shrieked excitedly as they suddenly began scooping up handfuls of toy cars and dolls which had been undressed and their clothes scattered on the floor.

Chloe herself, as her children worked, pressed the button on the electric kettle in view of making herself a cup of coffee. She was wearing a simple white, short-sleeved top and powder blue slacks which she covered over with her kitchen apron to start peeling and slicing a variety of vegetables.

Chloe was a tall woman, six foot one in her bare feet with quite well-developed shoulders but she had a nice figure, long willowy arms, long shapely legs, round hips and bottom and well-developed, firm DD cup breasts. Her long curly dark hair fell framing her attractive face; she had a strong, square chin and a broad nose but those features did little to deflect from her having a very pretty face. Her hair spilled over her shoulders; she wasn’t bad at all for a thirty-four year-old mother of two.

She was careful that the long, sharp kitchen knife she used didn’t catch her long, elegantly tapered finger nails that were painted in lilac enamel as she quickly cut and sliced each piece of vegetable.

Over all, Chloe was satisfied with her life. She lived in a small suburban town near Minneapolis, she had a group of regular friends who would meet to have lunch or a drink together or browse the shops. Her home was a modern detached three-bedroom on a leafy street that was quiet and everyone knew one another. Keeping her home clean, doing the laundry

and preparing the meals was no great hardship... yes, she was content.

It was six-thirty when Rick got home, parking his car in the double garage next to Chloe's, then walking in through the front door. "Hi honey, I'm back," he called.

Chloe hurried to pull off her apron, comb her fingers through her hair and go to greet him with a big smile. The children had beaten her and Rick had a kid hugging each leg. Walking up to him, Chloe closed her eyes, put her arms around his shoulders and gave him a loving kiss.

"How was your day, darling?" she asked. She knew Rick worked in some secret government office but never asked much detail about his job, and he never gave any.

At 5'11", Rick was shorter than his wife but he had a nice solid, muscular build and kept himself fit. He had short dark hair and wore a neatly-kept Van Dyke beard. "Oh, just the usual, honey; mostly bureaucratic crap. How has your day been?" he replied and asked.

"Same old, same old. Marge is back off vacation and I met Cynthia this morning for a jog around the park. I'm doing a steak pie for our meal with lemon cheesecake for desert. How does that suit you?"

"Sounds wonderful. And then, darling, you need to get yourself fresh and find a nice dress, I got us some tickets for that show that's in town tonight."

"Oh Rick! I mean, wow! But what about the kids?" Chloe asked.

“It’s all sorted; Maisy from up the street is coming round at eight to babysit for us,” Rick told his wife with a satisfied smile.

Twenty minutes after his arrival back home, the family sat down at the dining room table to enjoy the meal that Chloe had prepared.

“Todd, sweetheart, stop playing with your food and eat it properly.” Chloe lightly chastised her son.

“I eat mine properly, don’t I, Mommy?” Donna followed up.

“Yes, you do, darling.” Chloe replied, missing Todd putting his tongue out at his sister. The rude gesture wasn’t missed by his father but Rick just smiled.

After everyone had finished, Chloe was up on her feet and collecting the dirty plates and utensils, taking them all into the kitchen and loading them into the dishwasher. She then hurried upstairs to start getting herself ready for her unexpected night out.

She sat at her vanity mirror to do her evening makeup, applying cosmetics to her eyes with a practised ease: eyeshadow, liner, and mascara. She ran hair curling tongs over her long locks and sprayed to give more bounce before tracing a light red lipstick over her full lips.

“Rick... should I wear my purple sheath dress with the draped neckline or the red wrap dress?” she called to her husband, who was getting a shave in the bathroom as she pulled a pair of beige-coloured pantyhose up her legs.

“Go with the red wrap, darling, I like that one, it really suits you.”

Just then there was a knock on the front door followed by the sound of the door being opened. As Donna's voice could be heard talking excitedly and an older girl's voice replying, Todd clambered his way upstairs. "Mom, Dad...Maisy is here," he announced before rushing back down again, excitedly, to see the babysitter.

Rick had wasted no time at all in getting ready. Having put on her red dress, Chloe walked to her wardrobe and selected a pair of red pumps that would go with her dress; the shoes had a three-inch stiletto heel. She was almost ready.

Putting on a necklace, a couple of rings and a bangle for her left arm, she threaded a pair of drop earrings into her pierced ears, gave herself some perfume that she sprayed into the air and walked into, then descended the stairs.

"Will I do?" she asked Rick with a smile.

"Darling, you look as glamorous as ever." Rick assured her, meaning it.

"Hello Mrs. Williams," Maisy greeted with a big smile that revealed the braces on her teeth.

"Hello, Maisy. Thank you so much for coming to look after the two terrors for us," Chloe responded.

"It's okay, Mrs. Williams; they are no trouble at all," Maisy reassured.

With greetings made, Rick was keen to usher his wife out to the car so that they had plenty of time to settle in at the theatre.

Much later that evening, after the show, the couple walked back from the theatre to the parking lot, Chloe's arm linked in Rick's.

"That was a lovely surprise, darling, and a really enjoyable evening, thank you." Chloe looked up at her husband, smiling and he leaned down towards her for a brief but loving kiss.

Rick lifted his head back up but then his smile died on his face. Chloe sensed it.

"Honey? What's wrong?"

"Oh nothing, darling," he replied but his face said differently. Chloe looked across the road where she saw a man standing. He was wearing a long grey-coloured coat and a hat that was pulled low over one side of his brow. He was looking across at them and seemed shifty.

"Do you know that man?" she asked.

Rick made to look across. "Who? Him? No! Why, should I?"

"No... I just wondered," Chloe responded, looking a bit mystified.

They continued on to the car, then Rick drove them home. Nothing further was said and Rick seemed to be back to his normal self. At home, the children were settled down and fast asleep. Chloe went into her purse and gave Maisy some money for her troubles and then bid her goodnight.

Walking back inside, taking off her heels, then wiggling her toes, she heard Rick's voice in the lounge talking on the phone; the door was shut behind him. After a few minutes Rick came out, slackening his tie.

“Who were you talking to just now?” she asked.

“Oh, just the office.”

“What? At this time?” she pursued.

“Yeah, you know my office works around the clock. Baby, I wanted them to get some files out ready for my arrival tomorrow. Got a busy day.”

Chloe walked up to Rick and slid her arms around his waist. “Rick, you work too hard and never really switch off,” she chastised, “I’ll pour us each a night-cap and then I suggest bed. I want to thank you for my surprise tonight.” She smiled.

It wasn’t much later that Chloe and Rick were in bed and engaged in foreplay. Chloe moaned softly and bit her lip as Rick sucked upon the right nipple of her large, full breast.

Chloe stroked her hand over her husband’s well-toned body and let it drift down towards his crotch before wrapping her fingers deftly around his growing erection and working it to full size, then shifting herself to a comfortable position and widening her legs ready to accommodate him.

The following day Chloe had dropped her two children off at school which was close to Gleason Lake. She was driving into town to pick up some groceries and putting some clothes into the dry cleaning shop. She had arranged to meet a friend, Veronica, to do some shop browsing and have lunch. It was another typical day for her.

After lunch she drove up to her Yoga class. Chloe liked to do Yoga three times a week. It was while she was driving that Veronica phoned her on her cell phone; Chloe did the wise thing and pulled into the side of the road to take the call.

“Hi Vee, what have you forgotten to tell me?”

“Well, it’s not something I have forgotten, but just something strange that I thought I ought to let you know about,” Veronica informed her, sounding slightly concerned.

“Strange? Sounds interesting. Do tell,” Chloe laughed.

“Well, it’s just that, after you left me I was approached by these two men. They spoke in a foreign accent, sounded Eastern European or something. They asked me your name, how well I knew you, how long I have known you, things like that... I told them that you and I have been friends for over six years, ever since you first moved into Plymouth with Rick. Do you know anyone like that?”

Chloe’s smile had faded, she now felt slightly worried. “No. It’s stranger still because Rick spotted some guy looking at us after we were returning from the theatre last night. I challenged him about it but he became elusive.

“And then, when we got back home, he was talking to someone on the phone. He said it was to his office and just said some silly thing about files he needed for today. You know that Rick works for the government... I’m just wondering if he is tangled up in something international and they are trying to get information on him through me.”

“Oh dear, I guess that could be a possibility, Chloe. You need to be very careful and observant in whatever you are doing and tell Rick what I have told you. He may shed some light on it. I wish you both well. Do take care, dear.”

Resting her phone on the passenger seat, Chloe continued to her Yoga class but she was now con-

cerned... not so much for herself but for Rick and even her kids. What if someone approached them?

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“I don’t know honey; maybe, maybe not. My office deals with international matters all the time; the Russians and other Eastern Europeans are always spying on us, looking for what we know, what we know of them. You know how it works. I’ll inform my office tomorrow,” Rick tried explaining that evening after he had come back from work.

“Is there a link between these guys today and that guy you noticed last night? You were a bit aloof last night and then you were making that call the moment we came in. Could there be anything for us to worry about? ”

“No honey, don’t worry yourself needlessly. If there was, then my department would have a bunch of guys around here to protect us. Like I said, these foreign guys are always looking to find something. It is likely they have identified me as working for the government. They may try talking to you to glean information or even tapping our phone lines... but that’s a long shot,” Rick tried to reassure.

“Promise me. I don’t want any danger coming to you sweetheart, nor my children. If there is anything to worry about, I would rather know.”

“I promise you,” Rick told her.

That night Chloe didn’t sleep very well. She had dreams throughout the night, some faded in her mind, others were quite rememberable at times when she stirred. Like most dreams, the ones she could remember made hardly any sense. She saw herself carrying a large gun and shooting at bad guys, but she

wasn't herself; it was hard for her to picture what she looked like.

She had a vivid dream about some large room full of electric equipment and some large computer that had coded files on it. Someone was coming and she had to get out. The dream woke her up and her body had a coating of sweat. The strange thing was that now she was sure she'd had that same dream several times before... or had she just dreamed that she had?

Nothing further happened for the rest of that week so by the weekend, the family had gotten themselves back into a normal routine and Chloe was forgetting all about the two incidents.

Rick drove them out to Weaver Lake Park for a picnic on the Sunday. It was a nice day and Chloe just wore a loose-fitting, sleeveless pink dress over her bra and panties and a pair of comfortable low heel shoes. Rick wore a white T-shirt and a pair of khaki shorts that showed off his muscular, tanned hairy legs.

Chloe sat on a bench and watched Rick and the kids play ball after they had eaten, her right leg crossed deftly over the left knee. Then, as Donna and her brother played hide and seek, Rick and Chloe lay on a blanket together and lightly made out with each other. They still loved each other as much now as they had the day they had married, ten years ago.

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The following day Chloe drove her two children down to school after they'd had breakfast. She stood at the school gates to wave them in, idly standing and talking to other parents she knew.

The day in late June promised to be a hot one. Chloe was just wearing a white short-sleeved blouse

left unbuttoned over a white singlet, black boot-cut trousers and a pair of moccasins on her feet. She was laughing with her friends and didn't see the two men walking down the sidewalk alongside the school until they were close.

"Chloe Williams? You come with us now please," one spoke in a heavy accent.

"What? Who are you?"

"NOW, please," he repeated as each man took an arm and began to forcibly move her away.

Chloe felt a sense of panic and then everything became a blur. She looked around, responding to all the shrieks and loud voices from the women around her. She was no longer being held. When she began taking everything in, the two men were both laid out on the floor. She looked in shocked horror at the other parents to try and get a clue as to what had just happened.

"Did you see that?"

"I can't believe what I just witnessed."

"She threw that man with the moustache straight over her shoulder and then kicked him hard in the face."

"That was so fast."

"Was that some kind of karate chop she did on that tall man?"

The voices were all mingled and coming at once. Her head was spinning. She found it hard to take things in. She was vaguely aware of some of the other women escorting her into the school.

She was being sat down. She was being handed a glass of water. The head teacher, Mrs. Murgatroyd, was looking down at her with a pressed smile. "There is nothing to worry about now, Mrs. Williams. Apparently your two assailants got up and made for their car, rather battered and bruised. Can you remember what happened?"

Chloe tried to think. "These two men just came from nowhere, grabbed me and said I was going with them. I'm not sure what happened next, they were suddenly both on the floor."

Mrs. Murgatroyd was now beaming. "Well, from eyewitness sources, you quickly laid them both out. One woman described it as watching a scene from Wonder Woman."

"Really? Me? I... I can't remember; my mind just went blank."

"We've phoned your husband. He's travelling here straight from work. My secretary has tried explaining, as much as we know, about the incident to him."

Chloe was still shocked and stunned by it all. She put the glass tumbler to her lips and took a drink of water.

"Chloe... honey, are you alright? Rick's voice asked with a sense of concern when he arrived an hour and ten minutes later. He was eager to know all that had gone on and seemed both surprised and concerned when he heard the account from Mrs. Murgatroyd of how his wife had fought her attackers off.

There were a number of newspapermen assembling outside the school gates as word filtered to them about the incident. Rick went outside to remonstrate with them; Chloe watched the proceedings through the window. She saw him holding up his

identity badge and saying something to them all and then, surprisingly, they all started walking away back to their cars.

For all that she had tried to learn more concerning his type of work, it was a closed book. Now she assumed he must have much more clout in his job than he ever let on. Getting rid of paparazzi when they sniffed a good story was almost an impossible task, yet Rick had just despatched them with a few words and a flash of his I.D.

Before coming back inside, Rick was back on his cell phone, pacing up and down and making an animated call that lasted over fifteen minutes. By that time Chloe had fully settled down, all remaining nosey parents and passers-by had moved on. She and Rick hugged each other in the school playground before he returned to work and she returned home. Rick promised to talk to his wife that evening.

She was shook in mid-afternoon by a loud knocking on her door. She had taken off her shoes and was trying to relax in an easy chair. She could see the shape of two men through the frosted glass paneling.

They knocked again as Chloe padded nervously in her bare feet over to a high cupboard and took one of Rick's handguns from its safe keeping place. She hoped she didn't need to use it, even unsure if she could.

"Hello? Who is it?" she called, lifting the gun with trembling arms and pointing it at the door.

"Agents Malloy and Tanner, ma'am. We are responding to the incident earlier this morning," a deep American voice replied. She saw badges being pressed up against the window.

“You don’t have to open the door for us; we are just letting you know that we are stationed in our car just outside your premises, in case you noticed us and became nervous.”

Chloe sighed with relief and slowly lowered the gun. Taking a deep breath, she went to the door and unlocked and unlatched it, pulling the door open enough to peer through to the outside world.

Standing outside were two American-looking men, one of whom was a little on the chubby side and Chloe would guess to be in his mid-forties, the other one being about ten to fifteen years younger, both wore long light-coloured coats and hats. The older one smiled at her.

“Mornin’, ma’am. Like I say, we are here to keep a watch on your premises in case there is any further incident, at least until your husband gets home. Dan is going to put up some temporary cameras at the back and far sides of your home that are blocked from our view but which we can see from our car.”

“Oh, thank you. Would either of you like coffee? ice tea? I can make you something to eat if you like. A sandwich?” Chloe asked, gratefully.

“No, thank you anyway, ma’am but we have both had coffee before coming out,” Malloy told her. “If I may just say, ma’am, we heard how you despatched those two bad boys at the school this morning. There could be a job for you in the department,” he added with a smile, only half joking.

Chloe blushed. “I’m afraid I don’t really know just what happened, it all seems too hazy.”

When it was time to pick her children up from school, Dan Tanner tailed her in his car whilst Phil

Malloy remained on the street. They returned without further incident.

As Rick arrived home, Chloe ran into his arms and gave him a long hug before wanting answers from him.

“Who were those men, Rick? Were they after you through me? They sounded foreign.”

“It’s possible, sweetheart. Unless we can find them, we can’t be sure. But my department is taking it very seriously. We have their car registration plate caught from the school’s CCTV camera.”

“But what else can it be? Why would they have any reason to come after me?”

Rick could see that Chloe had been pretty shaken up by the incident. “Well, there is one good thing that has come out of all this; the department has given me the rest of the week off. We’ve notified the school and we’re all going to the lakeside for the week, see if we can’t put all of this behind us. How does that sound?”

Chloe finally smiled. “It sounds wonderful, darling,” she told her husband, putting her arms around the back of his neck and drawing herself in for a loving kiss, then resting the side of her face against his chest. “Hey, children, we are going up to Lake Superior tomorrow,” she then shouted to Todd and Donna. The children both cheered gleefully.