

THE DOLL COLLECTORS CLUB

Written by Bill Albert

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EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

There is a car driving through town as if the driver owned the streets. It appears that other cars slow down to let it pass, even the streetlights hold other cars at bay to make sure this car gets through. A slow-moving vehicle in the lane appears to pull over just to let this car pass. Finally, this car pulls onto a side street and pulls up to an odd, mysterious building and comes to a stop. Immediately the door opens up and LISA, a tall, officious and very commanding figure, gets out and marches determinedly to the main door. Just as she gets to the door it opens instantly by INDIA, in her mid-teens, slightly unkempt and looking distant, from inside.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Without slowing down Lisa walks through the door and comes to an immediate stop inside a hallway. She looks down at an eager India.

LISA

You have something new?

INDIA

I came up with some new ideas
for the dolls in school this
week. One of them is really cool.

LISA

That's very good. I'm looking
forward to hearing about them.

Lisa nods down the hall at a door and India snaps to attention and runs down the hallway. Lisa marches on and India opens the door and stands back, almost saluting, as Lisa enters.

INT. SANCTUM - DAY

This room is dark and filled with many exotic symbols and talisman. There are candles and incense burning. In the center is a low table with pillows and cushions, and one chair, around it. CIARA and LARA, both 20, wearing colorful outfits, an opposition to the room, are already seated on pillows. India holds the chair in place and Lisa sits down like a queen on a throne.

LISA

The Kathryn doll is almost
finished. The hair that you
(MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)

got, Ciara, was perfect. I'm going to sew it in tonight and, since it's long enough, I'm thinking of doing it in a ponytail.

All nodded in agreement.

INDIA

Good choice. I love putting the ribbons in their hair.

Ciara and Lara giggle but Lisa puts a hand up to stop them.

LISA

(to INDIA, firmly)

Only a little with this one. If you want to play with them don't forget how valuable they are so you must be careful.

India frowns and Lara pulls a small doll from a pocket and hands it to her. The doll was only four inches tall, much smaller than most, and made from a cheap, flesh colored plastic with a short crop of brown hair glued to its head. A pink handkerchief was wrapped around the doll's body and held together with part of a shoestring to make it look like a robe.

LARA

Here, India, here is something you can play with.

India is and pops it down on the table hard enough that the legs bend oddly backwards. She smiles and dances it around the table.

INDIA

She'll be beautiful.

LISA

(glaring at Lara)

Just what is that supposed to be?

LARA

I was going through the attic and found some of
(MORE)

LARA

Betty's old boxes. The handkerchief was in there and the lock of hair was inside a memory book.

LISA

Are you sure it was hers?

LARA

Everything else was so, yes, I'm sure.

Lisa thinks about it and nods.

INDIA

(to Lara)

Want it back?

LARA

No, you can get rid of it when you are done with it. It's just a small reminder of a bitter old mother-in-law.

India giggles and dances the doll around the table again.

LISA

(firmly)

Just don't do what you did with the Annie doll.

INDIA

It's just so fun to watch them shrink.

CIARA

I heard a siren outside my house this morning. I looked outside and saw an ambulance pull off of Blairsferry road. It came to a stop a few houses down from me.

LISA

Whose house?

CIARA
(enjoying it)
It was Kim.

LISA
How is she?

CIARA
Apparently, she was electrocuted
when she plugged in the new
microwave she won at the church
charity auction.

LISA
(also enjoying it)
Oh, dear. I thought that was
a very nice looking oven. I
bought twelve tickets and
couldn't win it. Too bad it
wasn't very good.

(MORE)

Lisa pats India on the shoulder and winks.

LISA (CONT'D)
That's the second accident
on your street this month. I
t could be dangerous.

CIARA
The other was a common,
ordinary, everyday accident
that happens millions of times.
Christine Jenkins slipped and
fell getting out of the shower
and broke her leg. She's
only sixteen, still young,
so she'll heal fast.

India is still playing with the doll and twisting one of its legs in
a bizarre fashion.

LARA
By the way, how is your
daughter enjoying being
the new Regis High school
cheerleader captain?

CIARA

Very well. First time a
fifteen-year-old ever got
the captain job, even if
it was by default.

(to Lisa)

A happy accident.

LISA

I'm sure, just be careful,
we don't want a flood repeat.

INDIA

(giggles)

I remember that one.

LISA

That was Missy's doing. That's
why I had to replace her.

India is suddenly sad and looks at the crumpled doll in her hand.
There is a moment of silence and they all turn to Lisa.

CIARA

Well, we still need to take
care of the parks director.
The playground hasn't been
touched as much as we've
tried the usual way.

LISA

Doesn't he live near you?

CIARA

Just a block closer to Mercy
hospital. We took my son, Randy,
over to their house for their
son's birthday last week.

LISA

Good to know. If the opportunity
arises...

Ciara nods and gives her the thumbs up.

INDIA

When can we get a Beverly doll?

Ciara and Lara look at Lisa for approval and she nods.

LARA

I have gotten a piece of her clothes. She hemmed her slacks the other day when I was visiting. Sometimes you just have to be in the right place.

India cheers in delight.

CIARA

She just had her hair cut a month ago. She'll probably be back sometime in late November or early December.

LISA

Do you fix her hair?

CIARA

Usually she takes Connie, but once she's done I can get the clippings.

LISA

Good. A few months and we'll take care of her if we have too.

INDIA

There was something I learned about in school this week, though. I wanted to try it. I learned about...

Lisa shushes her and India pouts. Lisa suddenly stands.

LISA

I have to go.

CIARA

(quick glance at Lara)
Nothing wrong, I hope.

LISA

No, but still important.

Lisa turns and marches off. India jumps up and follows her out leaving Ciara and Lara alone. They look at each other, finally nodding an agreement. India returns and picks up the broken doll she played with.

CIARA

India, can you keep a secret?

INDIA

(wide eyed)

Yes, I love secrets.

Ciara takes her hand and India shivers with excitement.

CIARA

We've got a doll just for you. You can play with it anyway you want, but you mustn't tell anyone about it.

LARA

Okay?

INDIA

Okay.

CIARA

Pinky swear?

INDIA

Pinky swear.

India giggles as they cement their pledge with a pinky swear.

Ciara pulls a cloth from under the table and gives it to INDIA, who excitedly opens it. She looks down at the gift in awe.

INDIA

It's almost too pretty to play with.

LARA

No, no, no. This was especially made for you to play with.

CIARA

Yes, you could try something
new. We don't mind.

INDIA

(shivers)
Oh, yeah, wow.

LARA

So, what did you learn about
this week?

INDIA

Well, it was in science class.
It's what happens when heat
builds up inside something
and it bursts into flames.
It's called spontaneous
combustion. I'm sure with
some fresh blood, some beads,
and just the right chants I can
make it work.

As India talks and plans her voodoo, she holds the new doll up into
the candlelight. Lisa and Ciara smile wickedly. India just doesn't
realize that that the doll is a detailed replica of Lisa.

As India chants Lisa's car sits still at an intersection despite the
light being green. There is smoke drifting up from inside the car.