

Stuck

By Michael Zielinski

Registered with the Writers  
Guild of America, East

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## Cast of Characters

LOLA:

COLE:

ACT IScene 1

*LOLA and COLE, both in their early 40's, are riding in an elevator. She is blonde, busty and fit. She is wearing a tank top, gym shorts and sneakers. He is tall, a few pounds overweight, and has a buzzcut. He is wearing slacks and a polo shirt. They exchange glances in silence.*

*Suddenly the elevator screeches and jolts to a jarring stop.*

COLE  
Uh-oh.

LOLA  
That was more than an uh-oh. Hit the emergency button.

*He does so. Nothing happens. He frowns.*

LOLA  
I'll call nine-one-one.

*She punches in the three numbers on her phone.*

LOLA  
Damn, no service.

COLE  
This elevator picked the wrong damn day to die.

LOLA  
Please don't mention the word die.

COLE  
Relax. The elevator's dead. Not us.

*He smiles devilishly.*

COLE  
Yet.

LOLA  
Please. No gallows humor.

*They stand in silence for a couple moments.*

COLE  
I wish we could somehow pry open the doors.

LOLA  
Even if we're stuck between floors, we could grab one of the cable wires and climb up to the next floor.

COLE  
Maybe you could. Since I haven't worked out in years, I'd have a better chance of getting a conservative Republican to date an environmentalist.

LOLA  
So we stand here growing old?

COLE  
Beats plunging to our deaths down an elevator shaft.

LOLA  
Your beer gut would cushion your fall. Man up and grow a pair.

COLE  
Speaking of a pair, you certainly have a set. But not so sure they're homegrown.

LOLA  
You're sure as hell aren't coping a feel to find out.

COLE  
Just saying that those boobs would cushion your fall down the shaft.

*The elevator shakes and drops down a foot or so. They both widen their stances to maintain their balance.*

LOLA  
We're fucked.

COLE  
Your voice sounds vaguely familiar.

LOLA  
I doubt we ever met. If you were the least bit memorable, I would remember you.

COLE  
You look really fit. Did you play sports in school?

LOLA

Nah. I was too skinny in college. And I wasted my time dating a guy who turned out to be a real jerk.

COLE

I bet he wouldn't be such a jerk if he saw you now.

LOLA

CrossFit transformed my body.

COLE

Isn't CrossFit a modern version of a torture chamber with a variety of high-intensity exercises?

LOLA

CrossFit develops your strength and cardio.

COLE

CrossFit obviously works. I'm as hard as a rock...I mean you're hard as a rock.

LOLA

CrossFit also is a great stress reliever. I'm even relaxed when I'm under the gun at work.

COLE

What do you do?

LOLA

I'm a CPA.

COLE

You don't look like a bean counter.

LOLA

I hate that phrase. What do you do?

COLE

I'm a dentist.

LOLA

I hate dentists. Three of them butchered my teeth. I've had more grill work done than a restored Camaro. I eventually had an oral surgeon put in implants.

COLE

So you have dental and breast implants?

LOLA

Keep it up and you'll need a penile implant.

COLE

I don't know how you can stand being an accountant. My college girlfriend was an accounting major. She was always talking about entity, accrual, periodicity, money management, realization, whatever.

LOLA

Not nearly as exciting as studying tooth decay. Why did you stick around if you found her boring?

COLE

Because she was as pretty and sweet as a peach. I loved her looks. Skinny as 6 o'clock and a brunette. She stood out among all the buxom blondes at UCLA.

LOLA

Not a breast guy?

COLE

I fall for a woman's eyes, the windows to her soul. She had gorgeous eyes. By the way, so do you. They sort of remind me of hers.

*The elevator bounces and the lights go out.*

COLE

Strangers in the dark.

LOLA

I'm afraid of the dark.

*She uses the flashlight on her phone. He does the same.*

COLE

My college girlfriend also was afraid of the dark. We used to make love with all the lights on.

LOLA

What did you look like in college?

COLE

A lot different. *(He laughs)* I had long blond hair and, if I must say so myself, a bronze Thor of a body. I was a pole vaulter so I lifted a lot of weights and did a lot of sprinting.

LOLA

My boyfriend in college also was a pole vaulter with flowing blond locks.

COLE  
A lot of pole vaulters fit that description. Just like surfers.

LOLA  
So what the hell happened to you?

COLE  
Life. Busy with my dental practice. No time to work out. Started eating all the wrong things after my divorce five years ago. Too much S and C.

LOLA  
S and C?

COLE  
Scotch and cigarettes. Finally quit the lung busters because they were fucking with my throat. Wound up having surgery on my vocal cords. Changed the sound of my voice. Made it sexier.

LOLA  
You really must have sounded like a dweeb before the surgery.

*The elevator lights come back on.*

LOLA  
That's encouraging.

COLE  
So what did you look like in college?

LOLA  
I was skinny with no boobs. Pissed me off. Every coed was sporting a pair of melons on campus and I was stuck with a couple of plums.

*The elevator shakes violently.*

COLE  
If this keeps up much longer, my claustrophobia is gonna kick in.

*Suddenly the elevator is as still as a cathedral.*

LOLA  
My college boyfriend had claustrophobia and whenever he felt a panic attack coming on, we had sex to calm him down.

COLE

Really?

LOLA

You have as much chance of having sex with me in this elevator as Ted Cruz has of mating with AOC.

COLE

My girlfriend used to swallow the claustrophobia bit. Unfortunately, that was the only thing she swallowed when it came to me.

LOLA

How tragic for you.

COLE

To spare you the brunt of the crash if this elevator plummets, suppose I lie down on the floor and you lie on top of me.

LOLA

Nice try, Sir Chivalrous.

COLE

Suit yourself. Your body, your choice.

LOLA

So your girlfriend looked like me in college and my boyfriend looked like you in college.

*Her eyes suddenly are as big as silver dollars as she gulps. A look of grave concern trespasses across her face.*

*The elevator suddenly shakes so violently it knocks them both off their feet and she topples on top of him lying on the floor. The elevator continues to shake.*

LOLA

(Trembling)

We're going to die, aren't we?

COLE

I'd say the odds are pretty good.

LOLA

Before we move on to the hereafter, where the hell did you go to college?



COLE

UCLA.

LOLA

Shit. Me too.

COLE

What year did you graduate?

LOLA

2003. You?

COLE

Same year. I don't remember seeing you on campus but I swear your voice and eyes are familiar.

LOLA

UCLA is a big school. There were plenty of blond guys with muscles and a few flat-chested brunettes who were skinny as rake handles.

*The elevator stops shaking. She climbs off of him and they both stand up.*

COLE

So what's your name?

LOLA

Lola.

*Suddenly his eyes and mouth pop wide open.*

COLE

I'll be damned! It's Cole.

*Stunned, she sits on the floor. He joins her.*

LOLA

Now I know why you were giving me bad vibes from the moment we got stuck together in this damn elevator. I've wanted to kill you for two decades.

COLE

A lot of college romances break up. You could get a hernia carrying around a grudge that big for twenty years.

LOLA

Women usually don't get hernias. Instead they fuck up their pelvic floor and their bladder starts dragging on the ground like a fallen tailpipe scraping

(MORE)

LOLA (CONT'D)  
asphalt.

COLE  
Spare me the graphic details.

LOLA  
(Shouting)  
You think that imagery was ugly? What you fucking did to me was ugly. You not only broke my heart, you destroyed my self-esteem. But I knitted myself back together with a stronger thread.

COLE  
I had no idea.

LOLA  
Why do you think I dyed my hair blonde, got breast implants and started doing squats and power cleans with heavy barbells? Shielding myself from my former self.

*She begins crying.*

COLE  
When I ended it, I thought you weren't that into me.

LOLA  
(Angry)  
I was busy hitting the books. Your douchebag roommate said you were busy hitting on all sorts of pussy and calling it biology lab work.

COLE  
You believed a guy who was so damn depressed he spent a summer studying the harmonica at Juilliard so he could play the blues?

LOLA  
So why the fuck did you break it off with me?

COLE  
I got sick of your anxiety over your studies. You were about as much fun as a root canal. It was bad enough that you talked about income statements during our foreplay but you even babbled on about cash flow statements while you were climaxing.

LOLA  
I cared about my grades. Besides, you were about as much fun as my comparative lit class on Russian  
(MORE)

LOLA (CONT'D)  
literature. You were always obsessing about getting a good plant in the box.

COLE  
The pole vaulting box, not your box.

LOLA  
Thanks for clarifying that.

COLE  
Did you ever marry?

LOLA  
Never found the right guy. Even though you're a total jerkoff, you evidently were the right guy. How sad is that? But I haven't been alone. I'm real close to my son, who's a senior at UCLA.

COLE  
A son, huh? Good for you. There's nothing like sharing a bond with your child. Of course I wouldn't know, not being a father myself. Is he athletic?

LOLA  
Very. And the spitting image of his father.

COLE  
Who's the father?

*She stands up and towers over him.*

LOLA  
Here's a clue. My son has flowing blond hair.

*He springs to his feet.*

COLE  
(Loudly)  
Oh my God! How could you keep that from me?

LOLA  
Because I didn't want you coming back to me just because I was having your kid.

COLE  
So if we didn't get trapped in this elevator, I never would have found out that I have a son. Sounds like the hand of God in this.

LOLA

You think there was divine intervention in throwing us together again?

COLE

What the hell are the odds that of all the elevators in Los Angeles you and I would be the only ones stuck in this one?

LOLA

I'm sure all the people who drowned in Noah's Great Flood would be flabbergasted to find out God is a romantic at heart.

COLE

Walking out on you was the stupidest thing I've ever done. I understand why you will never forgive me. But can I at least meet my son?

LOLA

Why should I be nice to you? You changed me for the worse. The truth is I hate being a blonde. I hate my fake big knockers. I hate busting my ass with CrossFit.

COLE

Let me see my son and I'll give both of you free dental cleanings.

LOLA

He thinks his father is dead, died before he was born. Which is true. You're dead to me. And dead to him.

COLE

God is big on resurrections.

LOLA

I will bow to the will of God. You can meet Kevin. But don't forget we're still stuck in this elevator.

COLE

Stuck together.

LOLA

Yeah, like dogshit on a shoe.

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF PLAY)

