

THE BLACK PEARL

by

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Based on her German short Script

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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY - DAY

A typical American city. Everyone is in a hurry, too busy to pause and take a break in a café or restaurant.

A black limousine drives through a busy main road. we follow her as she stops at a traffic light and people cross the street.

The traffic light changes from red to green, and the car starts moving with other cars, disappearing into a side street.

EXT. PARKING LOT IN FRONT OF JEWELRY STORE - LATER

The limousine stops in front of an expensive-looking jewelry store. The CHAUFFEUR (33) in black livery gets out, goes to the right rear door, and opens it. A well-dressed gentleman with a walking stick with a silver handle gets out. It is GORDON (45), who is nodding to the chauffeur.

GORDON

Wait here, I still need you.

As the chauffeur returns to his driver's seat, Gordon looks at the large brass sign next to the door.

POV GORDON:

MUELLER JEWELRY

PURCHASE AND SALE OF SILVER, GOLD AND JEWELS.

Gordon smiles mysteriously. Then looks through the shop window, where he sees an older man and a young man, and the older man insults the younger man.

Gordon enters the store.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - MOMENTS LATER

A large, expensive-looking room with display cases containing gold and jewelry.

When Gordon enters the room, he sees HANS (50), a fat man in an ill-fitting suit, reprimanding a young man, DAVID (23).

HANS

(angry, very loud)

How long have you been work with me, David?

DAVID
(shy, quiet)
Three months, boss.

HANS
(screams)
Exactly, three months. And you
still haven't understood how the
business works?
(insistent, loud)
Buy cheap and sell high, that's
what my father taught me, and he
knew it from his father. You
have paid too much for the
collar. And I'll deduct that
from your salary.

Hans notices Gordon. His face, just full of anger, changes
to a submissively business-like face.

HANS (CONT'D)
What can I do for you, sir?

GORDON
My wife and I are about to have
our third wedding anniversary,
and I'm looking for a suitable
piece of jewelry for her. Money
doesn't matter!

For a brief moment, you can see greed rising on the
jeweler's face.

HANS
I think I have just the right
thing for you. Just came in
yesterday. A rare black pearl
from the Gulf of Mexico. It
would look great as a necklace
pendant or as part of a
bracelet.

Gordon thinks about it.

GORDON
It's best to come to my hotel
tomorrow around 4 p.m. Room
2012, Hotel Brigadoon. And bring
the pearl with you. My wife will
decide which piece of jewelry
she wants.

He hands the jeweler a business card and leaves the shop.
Through the shop window, he sees Gordon get into the
limousine and the car drives off.

He smiles, looks at David.

HANS

The pearl cost us five thousand dollars. It is worth ten times as much. That's what I mean by buying cheap, and selling high.

INT. LOBBY - AFTERNOON

A large lobby of a posh hotel. People sit in armchairs, read newspapers, or talk.

Hans enters the lobby, a small briefcase in his hand. He walks purposefully towards the PORTER (55).

PORTER

What can I do for you.

HANS

I have an appointment. Room 2012. Would you please inform the hotel guest of my coming?

The porter dials a number on the phone.

PORTER

Your visit is here.

He puts the telephone receiver in the telephone fork.

PORTER (CONT'D)

You are expected. The elevator is to the right of the stairs.

Hans goes off. The porter leaves the area.

INT. BEFORE ROOM 2012 - SHORTLY LATER

A well-kept for an expensive hotel.

Hans stands in front of a door with the number 2012 and knocks. From his jacket pocket he takes out a small red bag, which is closed with a string.

The door is opened. It is Gordon in an elegant suit, just about to tie a bow tie.

GORDON

Come in, we are already eagerly waiting for you.

Gordon makes way, and Hans enters.

INT. ROOM 2012/LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large room with expensive furniture, as well as equally expensive art prints on the walls.

Gordon and HELEN (22), in evening dresses, sit on a leather couch, Hans stands in front of them, opens the bag, and takes out a pea-sized black pearl, which he hands to Gordon.

Gordon gives it to Helen, who looks at this pearl from all sides.

GORDON

What do you think, honey? Would you like to have a piece of jewelry from it? As part of a pendant or a bracelet, perhaps?

HELEN

It is very beautiful and unique.
(thinks)
Earrings! I want a pair of earrings!
(to Hans)
Do you still have another pearl of this quality?

Hans takes the pearl and puts it in the small bag.

HANS

I'm sorry, but this is a one-of-a-kind. Maybe a ring, or a pendant?

GORDON

(determining)
You heard my wife. She wants a pair of earrings. Either that, or the business is dead!

HANS

I can try to find another pearl like this, but I doubt I'll be lucky.

HELEN

(bored)
Then go and look for the pearl. However, we are only here for two more days.

Hans has understood, and leaves. Grinning, Helen and Gordon look at each other.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - THE NEXT DAY

While David cleans the showcases with a cloth and glass cleaner, and the saleswoman ZOË (29) is in the process of redecorating the shop window, Hans walks up and down in his shop, deliberately knocking over a wastepaper basket

HANS

It's unbelievable! I have a customer who is willing to pay a lot of money and I can't fulfill his wish.

(walk to David)

You have contact with the old sea dog who sold us the black pearl. Do you know if he has more?

DAVID

I don't know! It would be possible from the conversations with him. Should I contact him?

HANS

Yes, do that! And, if he has more black pearls of the same or similar quality, make an appointment with him, preferably for today.

David answers the phone, picks up the phone, dials a number.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

A family-style restaurant. Waiters in casual clothing serve the guests, a man is constantly looking at his wristwatch.

It is Hans, who sits in an alcove and constantly looks at the front door, which opens at this moment.

A tall man, GUS (50), with a scar on his face that goes across his left eye, comes in. He wears sailor's clothes with a matching cap. Searching, he looks around, discovers Hans, walks towards him.

The two men shake hands briefly before sitting down.

Gus looks around.

GUS

Nice little restaurant. Is it good to eat here?

HANS

I come here every noon, and I wouldn't do that if they were to serve an inedible meal.

(lurking)

My assistant told me that you still have a black pearl, of the same quality as the one you sold us?

GUS

Yes I have! But I'm hungry, don't we want to eat something first? With a good meal, everything is much easier to discuss.

Hans beckon a WAITER (25) to his table, who gives them both a menu. They look inside.

GUS

I would like to eat a steak, medium fried, served with a baked potato with sour cream, and tiramisu for dessert.

Hans is angry because this is an expensive dish.

HANS

And I would like to have a glass of red wine, with the homemade lasagna and for dessert your homemade ice cream.

The waiter takes the menus and leaves.

GUS

Of course, you invited me. You can then deduct it from your taxes as a business lunch.

HANS

Do you have the pearl here?

GUS

Yes! But the price has increased because I now know how urgently you need this pearl. It costs more than 10,000 dollars.

HANS

(annoyed)

So? And how much more are we talking about here?

GUS
 (thinks)
 I think this pearl should be
 worth at least \$80,000 to you.

He takes the pearl out of his right coat pocket, hands it to Hans, who looks at it greedily.

HANS
 It is even more beautiful than
 the first pearl!
 (thinks)
 But that's too much. I don't
 make a profit there. How about
 doubling the price of the first
 pearl, i.e. 20,000 dollars?

Gus looks at him appraising. He knows that he can get more.

GUS
 Is this supposed to be a joke?
 I'll tell you something. My last
 offer, and only because I like
 you, and I can help you out of
 an embarrassment. 50,000
 dollars, and not a damn dime
 less.

The waiter brings the food to both men.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - LATER

Hans enters the shop, curiously watched by David and Zoé.
 He takes off his coat and throws it over a chair.

DAVID
 And, boss? Did you get the
 pearl?

Hans nods, sits down in another chair

DAVID (CONT'D)
 And? How much did it cost?

HANS
 Too much, but not so much that I
 can't make a profit. I'll drive
 straight to our customer. Lock
 the pearl in the safe with the
 other until then.

He hands Hans the pearl, which is in a small bag.

HANS (CONT'D)

Let's see how much I can get out
of it.

David disappears, and Zoé looks at her boss.

ZOÉ

Then we can go celebrate today,
boss.

(grins)

My bedroom is open today.

INT. BEFORE ROOM 2012 - EVENING

Hans knocks on the door.

In the distance you can see a HOTEL EMPLOYEE (34) of
Hispanic origin pushing a cleaning cart in front of her.

Hans knocks louder, but no one answers.

The hotel employee reaches him.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

You don't need to knock, the
guests have checked out.

HANS

(surprised)

When?

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

Father and daughter left the
room an hour ago. I'm supposed
to clean it up for the next
guests.

HANS

(dismayed)

Father and... Daughter? I thought
it was a married couple.

HOTEL EMPLOYEE

They registered as Mr. Jonas
with daughter Daphne from UK.

The hotel employee opens the room with a check card. When
she enters the room with the car, Hans hesitates. He
considers whether he should enter the room. Slowly it
dawns on him.

HANS

I've been cheated!

INT. JEWELRY STORE - EVENING

Enraged, Hans storms past Zoè into his office.

A short time later, Zoè hears a cry of horror, and Hans comes out of his office.

HANS

Where is David? The pearl is not here.

ZOÈ

Left half an hour ago. He says that he still has something important to do. And he asked me to give you this letter.

She gives Hans an envelope from her handbag, which she has placed on a display case.

Hans opens the envelope and reads the letter. A mixture of fear and anger is visible on his face. He picks up the phone and dials a number.

HANS

(angry)

Is the police there? I would have to report a theft.

EXT. FERRY STOP - LATER

People flock to a ferry. A little to the side, Hans stands next to two plainclothes detectives.

HANS

So they don't intervene until I have the pearl. I will then call you by phone and say that I will be later for dinner.

DETECTIVE 1 (40) nods, while his colleague DETECTIVE 2 (30) looks at Hans questioningly.

DETECTIVE 2

And what if you don't have the pearl, the thief might do something to you?

HANS

What sense would it make if they already had the pearl to kill me?

(thinks)

But in the unlikely event that something does happen, you can do as you please. I'll probably be dead by then.

He grins and goes on the ferry.

EXT. FERRY/UPPER DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Hans looks around on the upper deck. Then he discovers David, Gus, Gordon and Helen sitting peacefully on a bench next to each other.

Hans approaches everyone angrily.

HANS
(screams)
Where is the pearl?

GORDON
(quietly)
Calm down! Otherwise, you will
have a heart attack.

HELEN
And at your age, that can be
deadly!

GUS
We'll show you the pearl, but
first you need to listen to a
story.

DAVID
A true story.

GORDON
In which my family and yours
play a role.

Hans takes his smartphone out of his coat pocket. He is undecided what to do.

GUS
The best thing to do is to sit
down first.

GORDON
I believe you will need it.

Without a word, Hans sits down with them.

EXT. FERRY STOP - AT THE SAME TIME

The two detectives are looking at the ferry. Detective 1 ignites a cigarette, which confirms his colleague with a displeased glance.

DETECTIVE 1
Do you think he'll get the pearl
back?

DETECTIVE 2

I hope so for him. Because that will be the only good news this day for him, I'm afraid.

DETECTIVE 1

Why this?

DETECTIVE 2

Cause I just got a call from the head office. We're supposed to arrest him.

DETECTIVE 1

(surprised)

Why?

DETECTIVE 2

It wasn't told.

EXT. FERRY/UPPER DECK - MOMENTS LATER

GORDON

It all began in 1938, shortly after the Pogrom against Jews in Berlin. My father, a Jewish manufacturer of women's clothing, came into your grandfather's shop to sell jewelry. He wanted to go to London to one of his sons. He wanted to make the jewelry the usual shopping value of a jeweler. But her grandfather, then a member of the Nazi Party, like her father, who was in the SS, did not want to pay the prize. He wanted the jewelry for free.

GUS

So he made a new appointment, and when my grandfather came with the jewelry, her father and his SS men took the jewelry and arrested him.

DAVID

Grandfather was first sent to Theresienstadt, and should then be brought to Auschwitz. When the train had to hold, he and some other men and women could flee. The SS shot at all, and only my great-grandfather considered. He managed to come

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
 to England where he met my
 father. He lived until 1965. On
 his deathbed he took my father's
 promise of revenge on your
 family.

HANS
 But why? This was the situation
 in Germany. Jews were regarded
 as enemies of Germany.

HELEN
 When Hitler came to power in
 1933, he had little followers
 for his Jewish policy. Many
 helped Jews to come out of
 Germany. Gordon, my father came
 to England with the help of
 German friends. Nobody would
 have had to join in later, and
 your father and grandfather
 understood it to benefit from
 the power of the Nazis.

Hans looks at the others. He knows they're right.

EXT. FERRY STOP - MOMENTS LATER

Two police cars and a civilian vehicle stop at the pier. A
 woman, KAREN (45), gets out of the civilian vehicle.

She approaches the two detectives and pulls out an ID.

KAREN
 Agent Fisher from the
 immigration office. Is he on the
 ferry?

DETECTIVE 1
 Yes, on the upper deck.
 (hesitantly, quietly)
 What does your authority want
 from him?

KAREN
 I'll tell you that in a moment.

EXT. FERRY/UPPER DECK - SHORTLY LATER

The ferry's signal sounds. Hans holds his cell phone even
 tighter.

Gordon looks at the wristwatch.

GORDON

Ten minutes to go until the
ferry leaves.

(to the others)

So we don't have much time left.

HANS

Where is the pearl?

GORDON

The black pearl, right! It
belongs to my brother Gus, and
he gave it to us to trick you.

GUS

The pearl, you must know, is not
real. I sprayed them thinly with
paint.

HANS

But I checked it! It's real!

GUS

The first pearl you bought, yes,
it was real. We had to bait you.
But the second pearl that you
sold me for a lot of money was
fake.

HANS

I bought the first pearl, it
belongs to ME!

GORDON

(smiles)

Soon nothing will belong to you
at all. You will go to prison.

HANS

(Confident of victory)

Why?

DAVID

I had worked with you for three
months, time enough to observe
and study you.

(smiles mysteriously)

And so I found out that you are
a fence who sells stolen goods
at a ridiculous price, and sells
them at a high price. True to
your old family motto, buy cheap
and sell high.

GORDON

But that's not all my son David
found out.

HANS

So? What else?

GORDON

That you came to this country illegally, because your grandfather had lain about immigration, concealed the fact that he was a Nazi like your father. And, even if you were born here, you have become a citizen of the USA illegally through your father.

DAVID

By the way, take a look at the pier.

Hans gets up, sees the detectives, the police cars and Karen. He suspects what that means.

GORDON

My son copied your business papers and sent them to the police, as well as proof of your grandfather's and father's activities in Germany to the immigration authorities. They are waiting to arrest you.

HANS

And the real pearl?

GORDON

Remains family-owned.

Everyone gets up and leaves the upper deck. Hans sits down anxiously.

Suddenly he takes a pistol out of his coat pocket and looks at it for a long time. He knows that he has lost.

EXT. FERRY STOP - SHORTLY LATER

Gordon and the others leave the ferry with other passengers and walk towards the officers.

GORDON

You can arrest him now. What had to be clarified, we clarified.

The detectives set off with the officer of the immigration office and some patrol officers.

A SHOT SOUNDS. SCREAMS of FEAR and CRIES of HORROR can be heard.

The detectives look at each other in shock.

Gordon and his family go to the limousine and open the doors.

Gordon and Gus look up at the sky.

GORDON (CONT'D)
(Yiddish)
Satisfied dad? Have you had your
revenge now?

They get into the car and drive off.

FADE OUT:

THE END