

# LURES

by JEANETTE D. FARR

## CHARACTERS

BOB

MAUREEN

## SETTING

Wilderness

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# LURES

*[Wilderness. A man 30—40 stands in the cold near a lake. He has a tackle box next to him, hands in his pockets. He seems either cold or nervous, we really can't tell. After a moment, a woman approaches. She is dressed like a mom – in a warm-up suit and tennis shoes. Her hair is in a ponytail – not a neat one by any means. She catches his eye. He starts to leave.]*

MAUREEN

Don't leave. On my account, I mean. I am supposed to meet someone here.

BOB

I haven't seen anyone.

MAUREEN

You waiting for someone?

BOB

Yeah... My son. He's fishing. We're fishing.

MAUREEN

Oh. A good spot, huh? To fish I mean.

BOB

That's what they say.

MAUREEN

Catch anything?

BOB

Nah. Too cold, probably.

MAUREEN

Your first time?

BOB

Fishing?

MAUREEN

Here. Fishing here.

BOB

Sure is pretty. You zone out after a while looking at it all. Not much to see anymore, it's getting dark. Nice chatting, though. So long.

MAUREEN

What about your son?

BOB

What? Oh. I'm sure he went back to the car already.

MAUREEN

The burgundy van, right?

BOB

Do I know you?

MAUREEN

I would think you would've gone with him. Your son.

BOB

Do you need some help finding the road?

MAUREEN

I would go places with my son. You just can't be too careful these days. The people out there.

BOB

I could go back, call someone for you.

MAUREEN

You just don't strike me as a parent.

BOB

I told you, I'm here with— Fuck it. I'm outta here.

MAUREEN

I used to think we could help you sick fuckers, that somehow pedophilia was curable.

BOB

Look, lady, I don't know you – can you let me by?

MAUREEN

Cut the shit!

*[She threatens him with a baseball bat.]*

Give me your shoes.

BOB

I told you, my son...

MAUREEN

You do know me. Lilpete4673. Teenspace, right? Well guess what—you thought it was him, this is what you get.

BOB

I'm here fishing—

MAUREEN

Give me your goddamned shoes!

BOB

My son went to pee, he'll be back, you'll see.

MAUREEN

What's his name? Call him.

BOB

I'm sure as hell not going to tell you anything about my son.

MAUREEN

What? You think I'm going to do something? That's a laugh. Sit down! Admit why you are here. Tell me what you were going to do.

BOB

Why are you doing this?

MAUREEN

I'm trying to get in your sick head. You're gonna tell me he is your first? Why any human being on the planet would lure innocent children to—

BOB

I was fishing!

*[She hits him in the back with the baseball bat.]*

MAUREEN

You don't even have a fishing pole.

BOB

You have a bat, but we're not exactly playing baseball, are we?

*[She whacks him again. Lower. His knees buckle. He's down on the ground.]*

He took it back with him. We had some things to load. He was cold.

MAUREEN

Give me your jacket. *(yelling)* NOW!

BOB

It's freez—

*[HE complies, not sure if he's going to get whacked again. MAUREEN looks in all pockets.]*

MAUREEN

Where is it?

BOB

Where is what?

MAUREEN

What you promised me. Him. What you promised him. A baseball card. Where is it?

BOB

I don't—

MAUREEN

*(reciting)*

I like to fish, maybe we could meet sometime. I told – He told you he likes baseball.

BOB

Who!?

MAUREEN

My son. Look. You thought you were talking to an eight year old, right? But it was me, instead. Your worst nightmare. A parent. You're lucky it's me and not the cops. You know what they do to you in prison. Huh? I'm not that cruel.

BOB

Please, lady. I think you broke a rib. Calm down, would ya?

MAUREEN

You told him you would bring him a vintage Babe Ruth when you met. Where the fuck is it?

BOB

You got the wrong guy, lady. I'm sorry if your son has been downloading porn or something while you're at PTA or getting your nails done. Feel guilty – fine by me – but don't you pull a Babe Ruth just because you're a bad parent and you think something's going on with me and your son –

*[She raises the bat and gets ready to swing. He catches it and pulls her down. He puts the large end of the bat to her throat. He has the upper hand now.]*

What do you think now, huh? How do you like it, huh you crazy bitch?!

MAUREEN

My son was raped with his own baseball bat.

*[BOB backs off, still holding on to the bat.]*

*(breaking down)* You don't talk about my son. You don't have any right to even think about my son.

BOB

*(Looking at the bat, horrified.)*

Lady – I'm sorry. You got the wrong guy.

MAUREEN

Pete was only 78 pounds. A grown man versus 78 pounds. He fought like hell to get that monster offa him.

BOB

There was a person here earlier. Shady looking guy. He saw me and my son and left. Probably got spooked. Can't imagine those types would do anything with people around.

*[Pause.]*

You okay?

MAUREEN

*(stunned)*

Oh, god. I'm sorry. Are you okay?

*[SHE approaches him, reaching out. He's spooked and pulls away quickly.]*

MAUREEN

I'm not. I'm not myself.

BOB

I'd hate to meet the real you then.

*[MAUREEN and BOB share a nervous laugh.]*

MAUREEN

Humor. My therapist says that laughing is good. A release of chemicals.

BOB

Funny—great. Can you get me a stretcher please?

MAUREEN

Oh, god. Are you really hurt?

BOB

I'm fine. At least I think I am. Just, I don't think I'm ready to give this back yet. You know my boy has to be about the same age. In the Boy Scouts. That's why I wasn't so worried about him, you know? He's pretty good at finding his way. Likes to be independent. How old is your boy?

MAUREEN

He was eleven when he... It first happened when he was only eight years old. After that was when the real torture began. Once was enough... enough for anyone.

BOB

You should tell someone. I could talk to him, if you want.

MAUREEN

It doesn't matter anymore.

BOB

Of course it matters. You have to.

MAUREEN

They knew. We did. Still too much for an eleven year old, thinking about girls, and dating. I couldn't even count the nightmares he had about it. Or the ones he didn't tell me about. He loved baseball. So he – *(can't bring herself to say it)* Most Moms would be pissed at their kid for ending it. I don't blame him, you know. Figured the best thing for him was to leave this world.

BOB

I'm sorry for your loss.

MAUREEN

Thank you.

BOB

You and your husband must've been mad as hell.

MAUREEN

He was overseas serving at the time. Left the anger and me in charge of dealing with it all. Paul became obsessed with e-mails, then websites, then chatrooms. Seems so impersonal to me. But he said it was the best way to make friends.

BOB

I served in the Gulf.

MAUREEN

Oh god. If I knew then...

BOB

Cut yourself some slack. I don't judge. Can't compare to what you went through.

MAUREEN

How long did you serve?

BOB

Eight months in the Marine Corps. Kids don't think of you as much of a hero these days. Not like they used to.

MAUREEN

Pete always thought his father was a hero. We just... we just couldn't get past it his father and I. Or I couldn't get past it. We just sort of grew apart after Pete... after he...

BOB

I get it. There are places, you know. To get help.

MAUREEN

Oh, shit. You think I'm going to off myself now, is that it?

BOB

It helps to talk about it, right? I'm just saying that maybe you should think about getting help.

MAUREEN

They already got me on plenty.

BOB

What's their cocktail for ya? Zoloff?

MAUREEN

Atavan. Sometimes Xanax. Helps me sleep. That's when it's the worst.

BOB

Yep. I remember. I'm off it all now. But I don't know how I would've done without it after I came back. Some guys aren't so lucky. Do worse. Stuff without a prescription.

MAUREEN

My husband wouldn't talk about what happened there or here. Let it go, he said. Forget it. He didn't think that back home things were big enough fish to fry.

BOB

Fish. Geez. My son must really be freaked by now. Can I?

*[BOB points to the shoes.]*

MAUREEN

Oh, god. Sure. God. I'm sorry.

BOB

I told him I would watch the sunset and then we'd go. *(Putting on shoes)* You going to be okay out here?

MAUREEN

You know my Petie, he always hated when I called him Petie, but I told him it didn't matter 'cause he was my Petie—he used to like coming here. It's why I suggested it to the creep in the first place. Figured if I caught him, it might be some sort of tribute.

BOB

I'm sure he's long gone by now.

MAUREEN

Whether I catch him – or someone like him. I don't care. I think I'd feel better. Hell, I don't know. It was my therapist who suggested visiting some of the places he liked to help with the grieving process.

BOB

I hope you find the bastard that e-mailed him...you. Be careful. You could get hurt.

MAUREEN

They're cowards. Why else would they pick on children? Besides, I think I can defend myself.

BOB

I have no doubt about that. You're batting a hundred.

MAUREEN

Still sore? What am I thinking? Of course you are.

BOB

I don't judge. Besides nothing some Aspirin won't help. From Ativan to Aspirin. Hey, there's something to look forward to.

MAUREEN

You are kind, you know that? Nobody's been this kind, really.

BOB

We're human beings after all. All put here for the same thing, right?

MAUREEN

To fight like hell.

BOB

Hoo-Rah! You do have quite a swing there. You should have your own baseball card...

*[An awkward laugh. Glad it's over.]*

MAUREEN

Maureen.

BOB

Take care of yourself, Maureen.

## MAUREEN

Do the same.

*[Bob finds the quickest way out of the forest he can. A little smile back on the way out. MAUREEN notices the tacklebox. Thinks for a moment, then...]*

Hey – Wait a minute – you-

*[MAUREEN is curious. She contemplates the quiet moment. She opens the tacklebox. There are fishing lures. She breathes a sigh of relief. Fingering the lures, she pulls out a magazine. This one she is not so thrilled about. She pulls out a baseball, and finally a baseball card. She takes her bat and clutches it tightly as lights fade.]*

END OF PLAY