

**GARTH** (adult – any age)

I was about to go back to Norway. But I fell in love with a Latvian. Inga. She had beautiful feet, it's what attracted me, like a rat to cheese.

She was a foot model and I a cook. She moved in and we were happy. Until her brother Ivar's wrote from Latvia.

He needed to get out because of the Russians. She urged him to come to the USA and move in with us.

He told me he couldn't work because he was missing three fingers although he always wore a mitten.

I would cook fourteen hours a day at The House of Borscht and come home cook for Inga and Ivar's. One day I found them in bed together.

I was puzzled but Inga explained that Ivar's had been tortured by the Russians. I said, okay, good, but why the naked?

She said, you have never been to Latvia. You know nothing of totalitarianism. You only know exciting recipes.

One night when I brought Ivar's his strudel, I told him he must at last get a job. He got angry and we ended up wrestling on the floor.

I sat on him and pulled off his mitten and I saw he had all his fingers. Ah-ha! So I beat his face until he told me his dream to be a circus performer.

I bought him a new suit and juggling balls and sent him off to Clown College in Florida. He graduated in the top three-quarters of his class and Inga flew down for the ceremony.

But he found that the circus world too political so he worked as a freelance clown, children's birthday parties,

but he hated children and they hated him and it ended badly.

He would lie on my sofa in my fluffy robe watching pornography and talking about how much he loved the USA and I would cook for the two of them.

Inga had let her feet go so the model work dried up and I had to pay for everything: the food, the rent, Inga's vodka

and Ivars' gym membership which he never once used. They went on a holiday but I couldn't go because of my work.

When they arrived home, they told me they had married. I said, holy cow, what kind of country is this where a sister can go to Calabasas and marry her own brother?

Inga took my hand and said very gently, Garth my love, this is difficult to tell you, but Ivar's is not my brother.