

CHILD'S PLAY

### A toy story with a twist as interactive dolls plot attacks against each other

Everyone knows kids love toys. Now a New York design collective suggests what would happen if children's toys loved them back. Needies are a trio of interactive plush dolls inspired by co-dependent, high-maintenance relationships. Like their human counterparts, they will not only trade shameless flattery for love but also compete with each other for attention — sometimes going so far as to plot physical attacks against fellow Needies — in a bid to be their owner's favourite companion. The dolls boast electronic "nervous systems" that allow them to talk, sing, feel hugs and conspire against each other when necessary. They complain when left alone and coo when cuddled. *Misty Harris, CanWest News Service*



# DAY OF LOVE, ROSES AND A DREAMY BENZ



SHINAN GOVANI

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It was interesting, too, that she'd chosen to wear nothing around her neck — no neck furniture at all — and the simplest of teardrop earrings, thus avoiding the bride-as-Christmas-tree look.

Just hours before, I'd inspected Sophie walking up the steps of the Ste. Madeleine d'Outremont church — an abbey so residential that I even noticed a row of modest townhouses across the street, where a lucky few sat on their balconies, watching the spectacle like they were season-ticket holders at La Scala.

There, her fluttering head-dress gave her a look that was very Princess Bride. And with that caramelized smile, that doll nose and that off-the-shoulder, backward look she shot several times to the throngs of photogs behind her, she even seemed to be successfully pulling off a sort of French Reese Witherspoon. Legally Brown. With highlights.

But a Hollywood wedding this was not. These nuptials were notable for their non-over-the-topness, and a guest list not made up overwhelmingly of back-scratching political hacks or two-bit celebrities spread out like cream cheese on the couple's big day cracker.

These were, more or less, the couple's close friends and family.

If anything, however, the wedding was a bit like the recent picking of the Catholic pontiff — so shrouded in secrecy was the lead-up and the arrangements!

Indeed, when I initially made some inquiries about coming to perhaps cover the wedding, a one-sentence e-mail was sent to me from Camp Trudeau. "Plan to be in Montreal at the end of May," came the byzantine message. No date. No time. No place. Later, I joked to friends: "I guess if I see white smoke in the sky in Montreal, it's the wedding!"

Inside the actual ceremony — and out — much has been said about the little nods to Papa Pierre that were built into the day. The dreamy 1960s Mercedes-Benz 3000SL, so loved by the former PM. The single red rose in the bride's bouquet. The haunts-us-still rendition of *Amazing Grace* sung in the church to commemorate not only Michel, the brother who died in 1998, but, of course, the father who followed two years later. Even the



Justin Trudeau kisses his bride, Sophie Grégoire, as his mother, Margaret Kemper, and brother Sacha look on. Below, the couple drive away in his father's 1959 Mercedes 300SL.

thoroughly bilingual ceremony and vows-swapping were sort of like riding Air Canada — in a church! — and an unconscious reminder of that Trudeau-era Official Bilingualism Act.

There are obvious parallels to another dynasty, and for some time now, the question has been: Is JT our JFK Jr.?

Like the late Kennedy, Justin has the looks, the social ease, and that it thing that fits many people's definition of charisma. But is Sophie, the Holt Renfrew personal shopper and daughter of a stockbroker, his Caroline Bessette?

There is one amusing link: shortly after Kennedy met Bessette he went to Calvin Klein — where it was her job to help celebrities shop! Legend has it she helped him pick out three suits. (Tip to ladies looking to marry well: take up personal shopping!)

At the reception, the room swooned to the newlyweds. At one point, Justin, in an unorthodox beige tuxedo designed by Dubuc, walked over to his friend, *Canada AM* host Seamus O'Regan, about whom there was also the scene of political aspiration. (A preview of a Cabinet meeting

from 2015?)  
Sasha, the other Trudeau son and also the best man, was telling everyone who'd listen: "I'm just so happy he found love."

Another friend revealed to me that he was present when Justin met Sophie at a Grand Prix event in 2003, and that he knew immediately that he'd fallen hard for her. This is how he sees it: "She changed him. Justin was such a guy before, you know? But it was different with her." Similarly, a friend of the new Mrs. Trudeau told me that Sophie is very strong, and possibly more politically savvy than her husband.

And then there was Justin's mother, the former hippie bride herself, Margaret, who looks now like what you might think Sue Ellen from *Dallas* might look if she did a guest spot on *Desperate Housewives*.

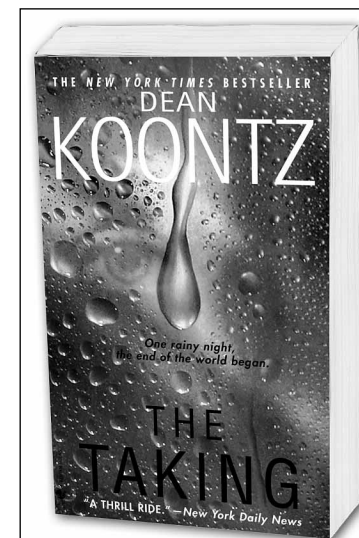
"I packed some hankies in my purse," I heard her say, just before guests began heading down to the dinner in the hotel salon styled in the opulent, old-world way of Gosford Park. (At this first-class hotel, as its directeur-général Gui Luzu once sniffed to a magazine, "Our guests don't ask the price, they ask for the square footage.") The revelry there dragged on.

Dinner, music, more drinks, the love that fills a room when a life match is taking place.

National Post



Ben Mulroney, son of former prime minister Brian Mulroney, arrives with his date for the wedding.



# DEAN KOONTZ

# THE TAKING

One rainy night, the end of the world began.

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