

OAKES It was only five years ago that Nelson Mandela's name was removed from America's terrorist watch list **[P66]**

YOUR SAY If only there were more men like Nelson Mandela, what a wonderful world it would be **[P64]**

SATURDAY

AFTER A HIGH-FLYING CAREER, IT TOOK A SPLIT SECOND FOR CHARLES SAATCHI TO BE LABELLED A ...

BRUTE

CHARLES Saatchi went from extravagant art dealer to artful dodger in as little time as it took one eager photographer to fire off a few shots.

The pictures captured through a long-lens outside a ritzy London cafe in June would show the 70-year-old as he clenched his hands around the throat of his TV-chef wife, Nigella Lawson.

For the man who built an advertising empire on image — throttling everybody's favourite

AARON LANGMAID



domestic goddess was not a good look.

Like the gaudy pieces hung for view inside his famous gallery, Saatchi's private dealings were suddenly very public.

Reaction to the tabloid picture scoop of the year was instant.

Saatchi's name was angrily spat across dinner tables the world over.

Domestic violence campaigners reached for their megaphones.

But just like Dickens' Dodger, it became clear that Saatchi considered himself the victim.

Caught in a raging torrent of tabloid news he waited for Lawson, his third wife, to throw him a buoy and tell the world it wasn't what it looked like.

She didn't.

So the man who married one of the most sought-after television personalities suddenly found himself in just as much demand.

Outside Britain, few would have recognised him otherwise.

That was just how Charles Saatchi liked it.

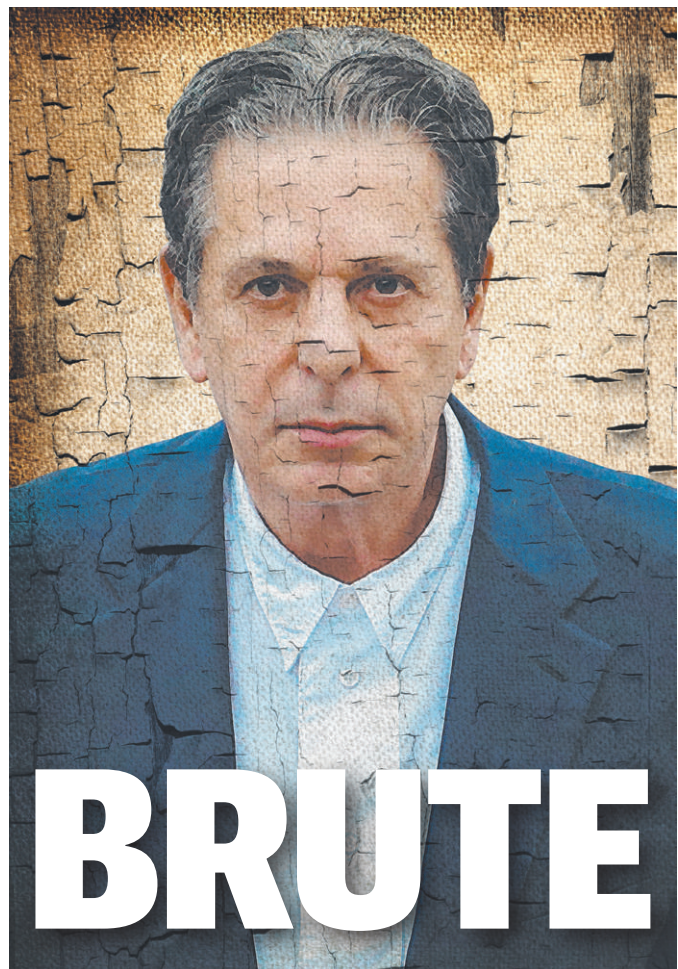
A Baghdad-born Jew, he fled with his family to London and with his brother, went on to establish the most successful advertising agency on the planet.

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SATURDAY

"MANKIND HAS CLEARLY FAILED TO EVOLVE MUCH IN ALL THESE YEARS. WE'RE STILL AS CRETI



FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

• Saatchi and Saatchi was synonymous for sharp, polished campaigns that helped boost everything from cigarette sales to political polls. Even former British PM Margaret Thatcher was on his books.

"What I adored most about my advertising agency was the fanatical devotion to keeping our clients happy," Saatchi once said. "We were maniacally driven to impress our clientele."

"If all other businesses cared as much about providing satisfaction as ad agencies we would have no need for automated customer service helplines."

But for all the streamlined campaigns and stunning business strategies, Saatchi never pulled off the same kind of success in his private life.

He avoided the spotlight and on the rare occasion that he was spotted publicly, could have been just another glib-suited man with a sad face trudging through Chelsea.

By 2000, with two failed marriages under his broadening belt, he had plenty to lament.

His weight had become such an issue, he reportedly used talcum powder to stop his testicles from chaffing.

Bizarrely, it led to at least one awkward chat with airport staff after customs officers spotted a trail of white dust emanating from his trousers.

Some might say it was only on meeting Lawson that he trimmed down and marginally embraced a social existence, albeit a curious one.

Dinner parties at the couples' house were said to have been hosted in rooms resplendent in contemporary artwork.

On at least one occasion guests walked in to find model male appendages displayed on chairs.

As his reputation for art dealing began to tower over his advertising credentials, lonely contemporary artists became household names.

Three years ago he even took

the extraordinary step of donating his beloved Saatchi Gallery to the public. It included more than 200 pieces worth more than \$50 million.

His appetite for the canvas was only ever sullied by the social extravagance that went with it.

Attending one cocktail party after another was, in his words, the exact idea of hell.

"I'm not interested in the art world," Saatchi said. "I'm interested in art. I know some people enjoy this lifestyle, but I can't pull it off..."

I abhor violence of any kind against women.'

CHARLES SAATCHI

His disdain for it all even extended to his own exhibitions.

"I don't go to other people's openings," he said. "So I extend the same courtesy to my own."

SAATCHI might have hoped his union with Lawson was a refreshing turning point and for a moment it was.

Often the pair could be seen together, smiling and seemingly content. But friends say Lawson's level of fame never sat well with her husband. As her international profile soared, Saatchi's shifted.

In a few short years he went from advertising and art king pin to Mr Nigella.

Tension between the pair was said to be at a tipping point at the very moment the shutters of a paparazzo's camera flicked in succession outside Scott's Restaurant in Mayfair.

As the images flashed up onto the camera's small screen, the snapper would have been the first person to comprehend the media circus that was to come.

CHARLES SAATCHI 1996



ELISABETTA AND FRANCESCA GRILLO

THE Saatchi brothers may have earned a reputation for salesmanship. But Charles found himself given an almighty salvaging job.

When his wife failed to jump to his defence, he launched a poisoned retort penned for the public before he'd even told his previously beloved life partner.

"I am sorry to announce that Nigella Lawson and I are getting divorced," he wrote.

"This is heartbreaking for

both of us as our love was very deep, but in the last year we have become estranged and drifted apart.

"I am disappointed that she was advised to make no public comment to explain that I abhor violence of any kind against women, and I never abused her physically in any way."

Just this week, during the court proceedings to recover more than \$1.3 million allegedly stolen by two of the couple's

personal assistants, Saatchi fired what could be the most dangerous arrow of all.

His wife, he said — the woman who peered from our televisions holding freshly-baked biscuits and tea — had a raging cocaine habit.

In an email to his wife read to the court, Saatchi wrote: "Nigella ... I can only laugh at your sorry depravity. Of course now the (two accused women) will get off on the basis that you

... were so off your head on drugs that you allowed the sisters to spend whatever they liked.

"But I'm sure it was all great fun and now everything is perfect — bravo, you have become a celebrity hostess on a global TV game show. And you got the pass you desired, free to heartily enjoy all the drugs you want, forever. Classy."

Lawson went on to admit her drug use but said it was far from



CRUEL AND BARBARIC AS WE WERE MANY CENTURIES AGO" CHARLES SAATCHI



NIGELLA LAWSON AND CHARLES SAATCHI



habitual. How the saga will impact her career remains to be seen.

What is clear is the damage done to the reputation of the man who wrapped his fingers around her neck.

"Mankind has clearly failed to evolve much in all these years," Saatchi spruiked in a book of quotations. "We're still as cretinous and barbaric as we were many centuries ago and poor God must spend all day

shaking his head at our vilence and general ineptitude.

"Or perhaps, we might just give him a good laugh. But of course, I hope God likes our art enough to forgive us our sins, particularly mine."

A WORLD away from London, in the quiet boutique book shops in Australia, Saatchi's novels, including collections of his best quotations always sold well. At

least they used to. His local distributor has, well, stopped distributing.

"Charles Saatchi has become retail poison," said one store owner in South Melbourne. "Most of our customers are women over the age of 35. They've seen the photos. They're not buying his books."

God may forgive Charles Saatchi, but the public sure won't.



NIGELLA LAWSON

Miranda Kerr stumbles and keeps going

ELISSA DOHERTY

A YEAR ago, Miranda Kerr's life appeared as flawless as her peaches and cream complexion.

Hollywood heart-throb husband? Tick. International modelling career? Tick. An organic skincare range, a self-help book, designer wardrobe, adorable toddler ... tick, tick, tick, tick.

Everywhere you looked, her dimpled smile flashed at us: from the Victoria's Secret catwalk, to David Jones catalogues, Spanish label Mango and as a Qantas ambassador.

But fast forward twelve months and it appears on the surface the 30-year-old's wings have been clipped.

She's lost her gig with Victoria's Secret, the US lingerie brand, plus her multi-million dollar deal with DJs and has been replaced by Mango.

Then, in October, came the confirmation of her split with English actor Orlando Bloom, two years after the birth of their son, Flynn.

Now the healthy living model appears set to spread her wings again.

Her career is undergoing a transition, including deals with popular British clothing brand H&M, major Japanese handbag label Samantha Thavasa, a "Miranda Kerr for Royal Albert" line to be released in 2014 and her second book hitting the shelves last week.

Now, there is news of a budding romance with billionaire businessman and family friend James Packer.

Has Kerr-Bloom been replaced by Pac-Kerr? If so, what is behind this unlikely courtship?

There

has been nothing but silence on the rumours from the Packer and Kerr camps, despite "sources" confirming the hook-up in the media.

The casino mogul in September split from second wife and mother of their three children, model Erica Packer, who grew up in the same town as Kerr.

Kerr was spotted dining with Leonardo DiCaprio in Las Vegas recently.

There's also talk of a new career as a recording artist, and she has become the face of crystal house Swarovski's fall 2013 campaign.

Fashion commentator Melissa Hoyer said she did not believe the Miranda Kerr "brand" had been damaged by parting with multiple big brands. "She will come back. She might reinvent herself. She's playing it quite well for now."

The girl from Gunnedah has never lost her sunny smile — publicly at least — during the trying year.

Beneath her wholesome, sweet nature and rural roots lurk traces of prima donna. Insiders have described an at times difficult model who instructs photographers on lighting, and demands special treatment.

But she denied she was dumped by Victoria's secret over "diva antics".

Her Twitter feed would suggest she's sticking to the positive mantras espoused in her book *Treasure Yourself*, like: "We all have bad days, but one thing is true; no cloud is so dark that the sun can't shine through."

Could that be in the shape of an Australian media heir with his own private jet, helicopter, casino empire and luxury yachts?

