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Cross Polly at your peril

POLLY Samson's new short story collection, *Perfect Lives*, has been brilliantly reviewed – but of course it's the tiniest bad one that niggles her. "Have you seen Amazon?" she asked an interviewer. "Ms Felicia Double-Barrelled of Staines has told the world with two stars that I've written a book about being Mrs David Gilmour."

Polly is indeed married to the Pink Floyd guitarist. But Felicia Double-Barrelled couldn't have got it more wrong: Polly is about as much a docile celebrity wife as I am an award-winning weightlifter.

I was a judge in the novel category of the Costa awards with Polly a few years back. She favoured A L Kennedy's *Day* for the prize, and thank goodness I agreed with her. I've seldom seen as shrewd and devastating a verbal demolition of a rival book as she delivered.

She went on to bulldoze Kennedy to her deserved win as overall book of the year, reducing a celebrity fellow judge to shamed silence in the process. "They don't call me Pol Pot for nothing," she beamed afterwards. Three cheers for her.