

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

by
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PAC2 - Romance & Seduction
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THIRD DRAFT

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A married couple, MICHAEL and ANNE, enter. They are formally dressed. Anne holds an opera programme (*Porgy and Bess*).

ANNE

Thank you dear, I've had a wonderful time. The show was divine.

MICHAEL

The evening's not over yet.

Michael crosses to the dining room table where he lights two candles. The best crystal glasses and fine china await them as does an empty ice bucket. Michael disappears into the kitchen.

Anne absently strokes one of the glasses lost in thought.

Michael reappears, holds up a chilled bottle of champagne.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Your favourite.

Anne barely acknowledges him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What is it?

ANNE

You've done too much already ... dinner, the opera, now all this.

MICHAEL

You forgot breakfast in bed.

She smirks at the memory despite herself.

ANNE

They were eggs, right?

MICHAEL

Before I got hold of them.

ANNE

And that burnt looking strip of, I'm guessing meat of some sort?

MICHAEL

I believe they call it bacon. You like it extra crispy, no?

They both smile.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You think maybe in another ten years I'll have mastered the art of cooking?

ANNE

What are the chances?

He playfully digs her in the ribs.

MICHAEL

Hey, you.

Anne looks at him more with fondness than anything else. Michael busies himself with the champagne.

He pops the cork with a flourish, pours the champagne into the flutes. Glasses clink in celebration.

ANNE & MICHAEL

Happy anniversary.

Michael leans in closer.

MICHAEL

I have strawberries, I have cream
... I have chocolate sauce.

ANNE

After that dinner? I don't think
I could squeeze in another
morsel.

MICHAEL

(cozies up further)
Who said anything about eating?

Anne's reaction is muted as she pulls away ever so slightly ... more than enough for Michael to be devastated, annoyed, angry.

A beat.

Anne picks up the opera programme, pretends to read it.

ANNE

So, what did you think of the
opera?

MICHAEL

Yeah, it was okay.

ANNE

Didn't you think the story line
was a little impractical?

MICHAEL

Why do you always do this Anne?

ANNE

I mean, who could ever fall in love with a cripple?

MICHAEL

You're not a cripple.

ANNE

The doctors said it would take time Michael, why can't you accept that?

MICHAEL

That was months ago! How much longer do we have to wait?

Anne is hurt by the accusation and both know it.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I promise I won't hurt you.

Michael kisses her tenderly, places his hands gently on his wife's hips. She flinches. It's like electricity to Michael who pulls his hands away.

ANNE

It's too early Michael. That's all. Please understand.

Michael nods in curt acceptance. She embraces him tightly.

Michael closes his eyes and hold his wife close as if a hug could heal her.

He never sees SOPHIE appear in the hallway behind him.

Anne, wrapped in his arms looks at the woman. They hold each other's gaze before the wounded wife nods ever so slightly.

Sophie slips into the bedroom.

Anne unravels herself from her husband, takes his hand, and leads him towards the bedroom.

MICHAEL

Anne, it's okay, you don't have to do this. I do understand ... and I'm sorry for rushing you.

ANNE

Do you trust me?

He considers this and nods slowly.

Anne opens the door, guides Michael inside.

BEDROOM

The room is lit with candles. Sophie sits on the bed wearing only a long t-shirt.

Michael is gobsmacked. Anne kisses him tenderly on the cheek, leaves the room and gently closes the door behind her.

Michael stands there, confused, surprised, shocked. Who is this stranger in his bedroom?

MICHAEL
What's your name?

SOPHIE
Sophie.

MICHAEL
How do you know my wife?

Sophie hesitates, stands.

SOPHIE
Does it matter?

She takes a few tentative steps forward.

MICHAEL
How much did she pay you?

Sophie stops dead, hurt at the accusation.

SOPHIE
Your wife loves you very much.

Michael turns to leave.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Please, don't go.

She touches him lightly on the elbow.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Do you not think I am attractive?

MICHAEL
I can't do this.

SOPHIE
You have your wife's blessing,
no?

Michael is attracted to her ... but this is too weird.
Sophie caresses his cheek.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
I can give you something she
cannot, no?

MICHAEL
Out of pity.

SOPHIE
No, out of love.

She kisses him, takes his hand and leads him towards the
bed.

DINING ROOM

Anne sits at the table, chomps on a strawberry, takes a sip
of champagne, tries to hold back the tears.

ANNE
(makes a mock toast)
Happy anniversary.

FADE TO BLACK.