

POETIC JUSTICE: PART TWO

by

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1 INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM

LUKE HOT I know it's only been a few days, but... I really just... Honestly, I don't know how to process this. I've tried to write poetry, but... well, obviously that didn't help. Hard to distract yourself with something so tied with what you're trying to forget. It's like an ex, you know? Everything you shared is tainted. Only I can't quite put my finger on why.

MELISSA I know *exactly* what you mean.

LUKE HOT You do?

MELISSA Go on. Tell me, what do you remember from that night?

LUKE HOT Must we do this?

MELISSA Of course. For the sake of your health, and your poetry.

LUKE HOT You must have other clients. I wouldn't want to delay their appointments...

MELISSA It's still early. As of right now, we have plenty of time.

LUKE HOT Very well.

MELISSA Whenever you're ready.

PAUSE. FX: LUKE FIDGETS.

MELISSA You're fidgeting. You're nervous. Why do you think that is?

LUKE HOT That's just the thing. I don't know. I can't remember. Why can't I remember?

MELISSA Let's take it slow. Let's start from the beginning. Focus on that night: who else was there?

FX: IN THE BACKGROUND, SCENE 2 FROM PART 1.

LUKE HOT Angie, of course. The life and soul of all our events. And... I recall another Luke.

MELISSA Tell me more about him.

LUKE HOT I'm not sure I can. I never spoke to him much, and when I did... Well, I can only assume I paid very little attention.

MELISSA Why do you say that?

LUKE HOT I... can't remember his face.

2 INT. LUKE WARM'S HOUSE - MORNING

FX: LUKE WARM SNORES.

FX: A COCKEREL CROWS.

LUKE WARM

(jumps)

Uh, it's fine! I'm doing it. I'm awake. I'm... it's 5am! Why am I... and why did the cockerel sound louder than...

FX: THERE ARE A LOT OF CHICKENS IN HIS ROOM.

LUKE WARM ...usual? Ah. Oh... This isn't... How did you get in here?

FX: THE CHICKENS MAKE CHICKEN NOISES.

LUKE WARM I remember locking the back door... or maybe not? I guess not.

FX: HE YAWNS. GETS UP. WALKS FORWARD...

FX: A CREAK.

FX: HE STOPS.

LUKE WARM What was that?

FX: THE CREAK OF A DOOR SLOWLY SWINGING SHUT.

LUKE WARM Hello? Who's there?

(pause)

I don't suppose you happen to be a chicken? Or are you an intruder? Or both?

(pause)

Probably both.

FX: HE STARTS WALKING AGAIN, THROUGH INTO THE CORRIDOR.

LUKE WARM Get it together, Luke. It's 5am, you live practically in the middle of nowhere, it's obviously just a chicken --

FX: HE STOPS.

LUKE WARM A chicken which can open doors. Of course, that's completely reasonable. And I'm talking to myself! Excellent. Let's just open the DSM and tick, tick, tick!

FX: THE DOORBELL.

LUKE WARM FUCK! Oh, God. Now there's somebody at the door. At 5am? No. That's ridiculous.

FX: THREE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.

LUKE WARM Oh, God. Maybe it's the postman? No, why would it be the post?
(pause)
I'm just going to ignore them.

FX: HE STEPS THROUGH INTO THE KITCHEN.

LUKE WARM I'll just ignore them and then they'll go away.

MELISSA Sounds like a plan.

LUKE WARM FUCK! Uh, I mean, *hello*... You aren't a chicken.

FX: MELISSA SIPS COFFEE.

MELISSA Well observed. Coffee?

3 INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM

FX: MELISSA POURS COFFEE AND HANDS IT TO LUKE HOT.

LUKE HOT Thank you.

MELISSA Caffeine might help you out.

LUKE HOT Here's hoping. Though I haven't been clear-headed since... well, you know.

MELISSA Hmm.

LUKE HOT Or not, it turns out. Where was I?

MELISSA Luke... Warm.

LUKE HOT "Luke Warm"?

MELISSA You mentioned once... it was James' nickname for the other Luke. Do you remember him?

LUKE HOT Oh, yes. Yes, I do. He was spectacularly failing to score - twice. He'd started the party a few hours early, I think. But he was kind enough to buy us all drinks. Did he really call him "Luke Warm"?

MELISSA That's what you told me.

LUKE HOT Ugh, my memory... But you must be right, of course. What a nickname. No doubt he called me something equally offensive.

MELISSA What do you mean?

LUKE HOT Well, it's just not funny. What next, Claire Voyant? Jack O'Lantern? Jay Walker? Mal Practice --

MELISSA -- Not a fan of puns, then?

LUKE HOT You could say that. If I never heard another pun in my life, it'd be too soon.

MELISSA Would you say James annoyed you?

LUKE HOT Not as I recall. Not myself. He was always very kind to me. But yeah, he seemed a good guy, though I think he always tried too hard to impress.

MELISSA Who do you think he was trying to impress?

LUKE HOT Who am I to say? If it was those two women, then I'd say he was a better matchmaker than he was a date.

MELISSA I notice you're using the past tense there.

LUKE HOT Well, uh... These events did take place in the past, no matter how fresh they seem.

MELISSA Is that the only reason?

LUKE HOT Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes, of course it is. I'm sure, I'm sure of it... what are you implying?

MELISSA I'm not implying anything. Just trying to dig through your thoughts, that's all. And it seems there's a lot to get through.

LUKE HOT Is there still plenty of time?

MELISSA There's nowhere I'd rather be.

LUKE HOT Very well. Can we move on from James?

MELISSA We can. Why?

LUKE HOT I just... I'd rather talk about something else, if that's okay.

MELISSA No, that's perfectly fine. You are, of course, the master of your own fate.

LUKE HOT As you, uh, as you say.

MELISSA Okay. Let's move on. What else do you remember, hmm? Who else was there?

4 INT. LUKE WARM'S HOUSE - MORNING

FX: MELISSA SIPS COFFEE.

LUKE WARM *Coffee?*

MELISSA Yes. Dried seeds mixed with boiling water. Necessary to some for basic functionality. Would you like a sip?

LUKE WARM You're offering me coffee?

MELISSA That about sums it up, yeah.

LUKE WARM You broke into my house, presumably let the chickens out, and then made yourself a drink?

MELISSA Yes, about that. You didn't have any tea bags. Bitterly disappointed.

LUKE WARM Well, this isn't your kitchen. Maybe that's why it isn't entirely to your taste.

MELISSA Oh, no. I like it. And the chickens really add to the, uh, ambience.

FX: THE CHICKENS WALK AROUND THE KITCHEN.

LUKE WARM Hey, don't dis the chickens. I like having them around -- FUCK OFF, STUPID BIRD!

FX: HE BATS OFF A CHICKEN.

LUKE WARM When *someone* hasn't let them loose around my house, that is.

MELISSA Sorry.
(pause)
I'm impressed though. You've amassed quite the collection.

LUKE WARM Well, uh, yes. I am quite fond of them. When they don't escape, that is.

MELISSA Sounds like you live a funny life.

LUKE WARM I suppose I do.

MELISSA Why chickens, though?

LUKE WARM What's this got to do with you?

MELISSA Maybe I want to get to know you. Don't you want to introduce yourself?

LUKE WARM Surely you should be the one doing that. You're the intruder.

MELISSA The indecision, I love it! Do you run, or you fight? You seem pretty strong, if you know how to use it... but then again, you've never seen me run. I could outpace you easily.

LUKE WARM Why are you doing this?

MELISSA Hmm, a good point. Why do any of us do anything?
(pause)
Because it makes us happy. So, go on, make your decision.
(pause)
Or, maybe... maybe. Maybe there's a third option.

LUKE WARM ...What's the third option?

MELISSA Maybe I could pour you a drink.

LUKE WARM A drink...?

MELISSA Yes, I think so. I'll pour you a drink, and then we'll play a little game.

7 INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM

FX: MELISSA SITS DOWN.

LUKE HOT You know, maybe I should go. Come back another time.

MELISSA No, no. It's fine. Stay.

LUKE HOT Are you sure? I think I maybe need to process some of this --

MELISSA -- *I insist.* Stay.

LUKE HOT Very well. Can't say I'm getting anywhere though.

MELISSA On that, we can agree.

LUKE HOT What's that supposed to mean?

MELISSA Never you mind. Let's move on. What else do you remember? What do you remember of the poetry?

LUKE HOT Not much, unfortunately. I remember I was enjoying myself, before...

MELISSA Before...?

LUKE HOT Before. Yeah...

MELISSA Let's talk about Angie. You didn't mention much about her. What was she like?

LUKE HOT Everyone loved Angie. She was like if joy had a body. Not your usual poet.

MELISSA Your usual poet being?

LUKE HOT Depressed.

MELISSA Oh, I see.

LUKE HOT I guess she just hid it well.

MELISSA You never know what somebody is hiding.

LUKE HOT Exactly.

MELISSA Sometimes even they don't realise they're lying to themselves. They think themselves better, or worse than their actual self.

LUKE HOT True. But Angie was always just honest. You knew exactly where you were with her.

MELISSA And where were you with her?

LUKE HOT -- Forgiven.

MELISSA -- For what?

LUKE HOT I'd rather not say. I've tried to forget. I don't know how I got onto this --

MELISSA I put a little something in your drink. Should help you remember things.

LUKE HOT Oh, I see. That makes sense. Wait, does it?

MELISSA Probably not. But we're wasting time now.

LUKE HOT Oh, we're on the clock now, are we?

MELISSA Exactly.

LUKE HOT Why, what's so urgent?

MELISSA That's up to you. Tell me, what else do you remember? Do you remember how your evening ended?

FX: RELEVANT SCENES FROM PART 1

LUKE HOT Let me think... Yes. Yes, I think I can see it now. James and I had been joking a bit. Getting on well. He went to get drinks, and came back, but he started to feel unwell. He left. Then... oh, God. Then...

8 INT. LUKE WARM'S HOUSE - MORNING

FX: BOTH SAT AT A TABLE. LUKE SIPS COFFEE.

MELISSA And here we are, finally. It's been too long.

LUKE WARM What do you mean?

MELISSA Time for our little game. I slipped a little something into your drink - truth serum, mental stimulant. Just to help us along. So far, so normal.

LUKE WARM For you, maybe.

MELISSA Exactly. Similar to the poison I put in your drinks at the pub. And then injected into James, and gave to Luke... But for this, for the finale, I thought I'd spice things up. And I'm being honest here - because I'm compelled to. I drank the poison too.

FX: SHE UNZIPS A BAG. TAKES A BOTTLE AND PUTS THEM ON THE TABLE.

MELISSA And the antidote is here.

FX: LUKE GRABS THE BOTTLE. MELISSA GRABS IT BACK.

MELISSA But! Only one of us gets to drink it.

LUKE WARM You want me to choose, don't you?

MELISSA Exactly. Tell me, Luke, have you ever wished anyone dead?

LUKE WARM I... I don't think so. No, I wouldn't do that.

MELISSA Really? You've never wished someone ill, at least? Smiled when someone had a bad day?

LUKE WARM Maybe once.

MELISSA Go on.

LUKE WARM When I was younger, people would always call me names. I'd always freeze up, and shy away from decisions. So they'd call me chicken.

MELISSA Hence the chickens?

LUKE WARM Hence the chickens. Honestly, I wanted to scream at them. I wanted them to stop. But my dad told me to own it. That they can't hurt you with something if you accept it and move on with your life. Yeah, sure, chicken. I like chickens, they're cool. So you call me a chicken? If that means something bad to you, then good for you. If being mean satisfies you, then we all win. I'll be "chicken boy" if that makes you happy.

MELISSA And you could just forgive them?

LUKE WARM Forgive them? I don't know. But I could learn to live with it.

MELISSA You learned to accept it. To live with it.

LUKE WARM Exactly.

MELISSA Maybe that's the same thing.

LUKE WARM Maybe it is.

FX: SHE TAKES ANOTHER SIP OF COFFEE.

MELISSA Nearly empty. How about you?

LUKE WARM Still some left.

MELISSA Okay, good.

LUKE WARM Why?

MELISSA I'm not sure I'm ready.

LUKE WARM For what?

MELISSA For you to choose.

LUKE WARM Why are you doing this?

MELISSA ... It's complicated.

LUKE WARM We have plenty of time.

FX: SHE LAUGHS.

LUKE WARM What?

MELISSA That's what I say.

LUKE WARM Oh, I see.

MELISSA You know, I wasn't always like this. Just like you weren't always you. And the other Luke... something made all of us the way we are. And all we can do is choose how we react. Whether we try to deny who we are, or stay true to ourselves.

LUKE WARM And who exactly are you?

MELISSA That's just the thing. What would you do? What would you do in my shoes? Would anyone do anything different? If so, how could I be judged?

LUKE WARM You've killed people.

MELISSA Yes! Yes, I'm a murderer. Because that's the only way. What else could I do? What else could I do?

LUKE WARM What do you mean?

MELISSA I saw my girlfriend die, Luke. I looked right into her eyes as it faded away. And it was the best I had ever felt. It was primal. It was... wonderful. I... loved it. There: I admit it. I love watching people die. So I tried to find ways to do that. Hidden sites - the darkweb. But there's nothing like seeing it in person. Seeing the life in someone be snatched away toward heaven or hell. So I tried to find humane ways to do it.

LUKE WARM "Humane"?

MELISSA Poison. Nothing... painful. I hate to see people suffer. They could just drift off. I'd choose troubled, flawed souls. People with regrets. People who'd hurt others, mostly. But sometimes, I couldn't control myself. I'd find an Angie. And I'd feel this darkness, this urge to snuff out all that light. What else could I do but accept that? And then... I find I enjoy toying with people. I enjoy it when they realise they're about to die, and I love it even more when they panic.

LUKE WARM You want me to choose you, don't you?

MELISSA What?

LUKE WARM You're asking me to choose you to die.

MELISSA I know. Is that something you can... accept?

LUKE WARM I'm not sure I can. Hasn't there been enough death? Can't we just... share the antidote?

MELISSA No. You must drink the entire bottle.
 (pause)
 The decision is yours. You are the master of
 your own fate, and mine.

LUKE WARM Is that what you think? Is that what you'd
 have me believe, that the decision is mine?

MELISSA It is.

LUKE WARM Is it?
 (pauses, gathers strength)
 No. No, it's not. Not how you've framed it.
 Not how you've described it to me.

MELISSA The decision is entirely up to you.

LUKE WARM Maybe it is. But both choices are on your
 terms.

MELISSA Well, of course.

LUKE WARM So it's hardly fair, is it? Once option, I
 suffer committing murder, the other I die. And
 you - well, you either suffer your own
 personal justice, or you watch me die. Maybe
 you'll feel guilty afterwards.

MELISSA I'm sure I would.

LUKE WARM But that isn't justice.

MELISSA It's poetic.

LUKE WARM You know nothing about justice, or poetry. And
 you were counting on me being too *chicken* to
 sacrifice myself, to take that risk. But you
 know what? Chickens are vicious. And, if they
 have to, they will put up a fight.

FX: HE GRABS THE BOTTLE AND SMASHES IT.

MELISSA NO!

LUKE WARM To hell with your game, and to hell with you.

MELISSA What have you done...?

LUKE WARM You don't get to make a murderer of me today.
 You did this to yourself.

MELISSA If that's what you want to tell yourself.

FX: LUKE GETS OUT HIS PHONE.

LUKE WARM I'm going to ring the police. And for an
 ambulance. With any luck they'll arrive in
 time.

MELISSA

(weaker)

What, to save me? To arrest me?

LUKE WARM

No. To save *me*. You drank your coffee first, so I assume you'll be the first to go. But believe me, I won't be watching.

FX: LUKE GETS UP AND LEAVES THE ROOM. SHUTS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

MELISSA

If anyone's there, I just want to say... it was an accident. I never meant to kill her. I loved her. And, you know the last thing she ever said to me? After all I'd done, she said, "See you in hell." I guess I treated it like an invitation. So, I want you to know... I know where I'm going. I'm content, I accept it. And I deserve to face her for what I've done. Who knows, maybe she'll forgive me. And if not, I completely understand. I'm not sure I would in her shoes. Perhaps one day, I can climb back up to where I once stood - in her eyes and mine. God only knows how far I've fallen.

FX: A POLICE CAR AND AMBULANCE ARRIVES OUTSIDE. LUKE OPENS THE DOOR.

MELISSA

And then, there's the curious case of Luke. What have I made of him, I wonder? And how far will he find he's fallen? I can't wait to find out. 'Cause there's one thing I can say for certain...

(pause)

We will meet again.

END.