

CHANCES

A THREE-PART ANTHOLOGY

Written by

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**PART TWO: THE COUPLE**

INT. COCKTAIL CLUB - DAY

A gloomy venue, coloured lights of crimson dance pinkly along mahogany panels. Only one table is occupied. Light piano melodies float through the air.

A couple, man and woman, sit on one side of a table. They converse, flick through numerous papers, use exaggerated body movements.

JIMMY

There is no feasible way for us to buy a boat and-

JAMIE

Why? You can't even maintain a boat now?

JIMMY

Of course I can maintain a fucking boat! But people would notice if we have a boat now.

JAMIE

Maybe so but come to think, you probably couldn't maintain a boat.

JIMMY

Whatever. Whatever.

They continue to converse, scribbling onto the pages, not so kindly sharing a pen.

A young man walks in, WILFRED, wearing a button up shirt. Attempting to dress to impress.

He looks around, finding the couple at their table. They fail to talk at a reasonable volume.

Wilfred looks at them for a moment, weighing things up. He starts haphazardly walking towards them.

JAMIE

Well, now look who's being the idiot. How the fuck is...

She looks up, spotting Wilf. A nudge into her husband, then a harder one. He looks up too. They paint a smile on their faces.

JIMMY

Hi, are you, um...

JAMIE  
Wilfred?

WILFRED  
Hi, yeah. Nice to meet you.

They rigidly shake hands. Wilfred takes one of the seats in front of the couple.

Jimmy's face contorts, slightly.

JIMMY  
Sorry, Wilfred-

WILFRED  
Wilf, if you'd prefer.

JIMMY  
(painting another smile)  
Wilf. Could I be a pain and ask  
that you sit, sort of, central to  
us?

Wilf looks back to him. He also smiles.

WILFRED  
Sure.

Wilfred gets up, pulling one of the chairs away from the table with a screech.

Jimmy and Jamie watch in silence.

Wilfred takes his seat again, now centred from them. Once again, they all smile to one another.

Nobody knows who's to speak first.

JIMMY  
So, Wilfred, thank you for  
responding to our ad so quickly.

WILFRED  
No worries, yeah, you need a plant-  
sitter?

JAMIE  
Exactly. We're going away for... an  
extended period of time.

JIMMY  
Jamie has accumulated a rather  
substantial collection.

JAMIE  
They're plants, Jimmy, not stamps  
or... or...

JIMMY  
Coins?

JAMIE  
That's a little similar to stamp  
collecting, don't you think?

JIMMY  
We're going off track. Wilf, tell  
us a little about yourself.

WILFRED  
Ah. I, um, have quite a good plant  
collection myself.

Normally this sort of hamming up gets a giggle out of these  
30-something-couples but not today.

WILFRED (CONT'D)  
But the main thing I do is acting.  
I study acting.

JAMIE  
Ohhhhh. Acting!

WILFRED  
Yes.

JIMMY  
This would be a bit of a side  
hustle for you, then?

JAMIE  
Side-hustle?

WILFRED  
Yeah, well, the pay is more than  
fair.

JAMIE  
Oh! We're so glad you think so. You  
know, we really believe in fair  
pay.

JIMMY  
Equity!

WILFRED  
Mm.

Wilfred shifts in his seat. The couple are strangely agitated; sparse eye contact, perched to the edge of their seats. Tense.

JAMIE

Jimmy, can we just tell him what's going on? Entirely?

JIMMY

Entirely? How entirely?

JAMIE

Just, you know...

Wilfred stares out blankly. A simple gig, he thought.

JIMMY

Wilfred.

WILFRED

Uh. Jimmy?

Jimmy searches amongst the papers on the table, pulling out a pink lotto stub.

JIMMY

(holding up the stub)  
This here, this is a winning lottery ticket.

WILFRED

(slightly relieved)  
Uh-huh.

JIMMY

We're a little... sceptical about mentioning it. Rented this entire place for the day.

JAMIE

Mhm. Whilst this is a meeting about plant-sitting, we should probably say that we don't know when we're coming back from this trip.

JIMMY

(to Wilfred)  
Y'know, I just realised we didn't even offer to get you a drink.  
(to Jamie)  
What's he gonna think of us?  
Lottery winners who don't offer a drink.

JAMIE  
Oh, Wilf, we're so sorry.

WILFRED  
It's okay.

JAMIE  
No! Come on, what would you like?

WILFRED  
Uh, is there a menu?

JIMMY  
Menu... menu...

Jimmy leaves the table to grab a menu.

Wilf and Jamie sit in silence for a short moment.

WILFRED  
So, what sort of plants do you have?

JAMIE  
I have two really beautiful monstera's, they might actually need trimming in a couple of weeks. Feel free to keep a leaf for yourself.

WILFRED  
Oh, cool. Thanks.

JAMIE  
But there's all sorts around the flat; succulents hanging up and about, various little flowers. I have a chart drawn up at home detailing it all.

Jimmy returns to the table, sliding a menu towards Wilfred.

JIMMY  
I think it's a mostly cocktails on the front, the rest on the back type business.

Wilf turns the menu, begins to glance at it.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Anything else you're wanting to know?

WILFRED  
(glancing from menu to  
couple)  
Can I ask something a bit more  
personal?

JAMIE  
Go ahead.

Wilf slides the menu away from himself.

WILFRED  
What're you planning to do with all  
your winnings?

JIMMY  
(hands floating towards  
the papers)  
Ah, that's what all this is trying  
to figure out.

JAMIE  
We'll start with this impromptu  
trip and go from there.

WILFRED  
As long as you're both happy. Sorry  
if I'm intruding, or anything.

JAMIE  
No, no. Not at all.

Jamie looks to Jimmy. He looks back. Their faces illuminated  
by the artificial lights bouncing around the room.

Wilf slouches into his chair slightly. He notices that the  
couple have eased up a bit, too.

From across the room, the three inaudibly discuss. Nods are  
preceded by handshakes. Wilf leaves.

INT. CAFE - A LITTLE LATER

Jimmy and Jamie sit at the same table, the papers remain  
scattered across the wooden countertop.

Their hands are interlinked. Jamie stares to the side, Jimmy  
stares at Jamie.

His eyes move into the room where he sees a couple entering  
through the door. He squeezes Jamie's hand and she looks  
too.

They're young, probably a similar age to Wilfred.

JIMMY  
 (to Jamie)  
 I suppose adults are too busy for  
 plant-sitting?

She shrugs in response.

The younger couple approach them after looking around the empty room.

The pair, GEMMA and WILL, are dressed up to the point that Wilf's button-up may as well have been underdressed.

JAMIE  
 Hi, are you Gemma?

GEMMA  
 Hey, yes! Sorry, this is Will.

JIMMY  
 WILF?

WILL  
 (uneasily)  
 ...Will

JAMIE  
 That's Jimmy.

GEMMA & WILL  
 Hi.

Gemma takes the lone seat, Will looks around slightly before grabbing the chair previously moved by Wilf. He sits next to Gemma.

JIMMY  
 Can we get the two of you a drink?  
 Grabbed a menu, ready.

He passes the menu over. Gemma takes it before passing it straight to Will.

GEMMA  
 I'll be fine, thanks.

Will looks at the menu, intently.

JAMIE  
 Okay, well, thanks for responding  
 to the ad.

GEMMA  
 Yeah! Plant-sitting, right?



JIMMY  
That'll be the one.

WILL  
(glancing up from menu)  
Oh, this place is Italian-owned?

JAMIE  
I guess?

WILL  
How could we not get a wine.

JIMMY  
Ah, well-

GEMMA  
What's the wine list?

Jamie looks to Jimmy. Her eyes don't know what they're saying to him.

CUT TO:

The papers on the table have made way for a bottle of sparkling white, four glasses dotted across it.

Gemma grabs her glass, taking a fairly hearty sip.

JAMIE  
All this might seem a little formal for some plant-sitting gig but they mean a lot to me, y'know.

WILL  
We dig formal.

He picks up the bottle, going to refill his glass. The pink lottery ticket clings to the bottom.

Will takes the lottery ticket and looks it over, both sides.

WILL (CONT'D)  
(passing it to Jamie)  
Good luck.

She passes the ticket to Jimmy.

JIMMY  
Thanks...

He sticks the ticket into his wallet.

CUT TO:

(MORE)

## JIMMY (CONT'D)

EXT. CITY LANE - NIGHT

A cobbled path vacantly lies beneath an all-encumbering night sky. Star-less, above the polluted city.

Jimmy and Jamie walk along, calmly. Their breath visualises itself, their bodies are layered upon layered.

Jamie looks to Jimmy, past the cloud of vapour spewing from her mouth.

JAMIE

I don't really want a boat.

Jimmy looks to her, slowing down his pace to match her own.

JIMMY

That's good! No way in hell were we gonna get one.

JAMIE

Yeah, yeah.

JIMMY

And you're right, I don't have a clue how a boat operates.

JAMIE

Me neither! I don't even know why I brought boats into the conversation.

Jimmy takes a couple steps in front of her before stopping. She catches up and stops in front, meeting his gaze.

Their lips curl up into smiles below their pink noses.

JIMMY

The kid, the one with the weird name -

JAMIE

Wilfred.

JIMMY

I don't think that's a real name. Anyway, he seems a better fit for the plants.

JAMIE

Yeah, by, like, a landslide.

JIMMY

What're you basing it off of?

Jamie starts to slowly walk again, Jimmy matches her pace, stays by her side.

JAMIE

It helps that he *actually* knows how to take care of a plant.

JIMMY

Sure, sure.

JAMIE

Why? What else is there to base it off of?

JIMMY

I think he just... struck a chord.

JAMIE

Hm?

JIMMY

It's kinda cool that they came in and ordered bubbles, though.

JAMIE

How much wine did you drink?

JIMMY

Oh, I didn't even touch my glass.

JAMIE

What and you left it sitting there?

JIMMY

I guess?

JAMIE

Fuck, man.

They continue walking, towards and into the night. Jamie links her arm through Jimmy's with a shiver. And off they go.

FADE TO BLACK.

