

Back On The Map

by

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Cast of Characters

CHIARA:

49

GUIELLRMO:

29

Place

New York City Gallery

Time

9:00 PM

Setting: A large penthouse sized room, featuring large framed painting on the walls as exhibition.

At Rise: Chiara smokes a cigarette on a bench and drinks wine from a glass. Guiellrmo also drinks wine from a glass and looks on at Chiara defeated.

GUILLERMO: Are you okay?

CHIARA: I'm okay.

GUILLERMO: Chiara, your work looks exquisite at this gallery.

CHIARA: You've said.

GUILLERMO: I didn't...uh...

CHIARA: What is it you wish to tell me?

GUIELLERMO: The place is empty.

CHIARA: I see that.

GUILLERMO: It's my fault.

CHIARA: Why do you say such a thing?

GUIELLERMO: I didn't do my job.

CHIARA: And what job is that?

GUIELLERMO: Promotion.

CHIARA: Oh...*that*. Yes. Promotion makes it seem so, I don't know, so clumsy in a way, don't you think? Promotion. Hmm. I liked it better when you told me you were producing. That's right. You said, "Chiara, I am going to produce the greatest exhibition this side of the Atlantic. It will be memorable, exciting, fresh, fun and profitable." Remember those words?

You sold me on your scheme. Look now...look around you...what do we have? Huh? Where is this fun, exciting, memorable exhibition you claimed? Huh?! I admit, this is memorable. That I cannot say, isn't true. This is a *memorable* evening.

One filled with lies, deceit, tricks and broken promises! Just you and me in this large empty warehouse!

Tell me, why has no one showed up here? It has been two hours and I want to know what your excuse will be? Tell me! I am dying to know.

(beat)

How can you stand there? How can you have the gaul to show up here yourself? If I were you, I would have fled as far as I could go. This embarrassment is a disgrace. I have never been so humiliated in my life.

I put so much in you. I believed everything you told me, despite my intuition screaming at me, “No, no, no!” I didn't want to listen because I want what you promised so badly. I was foolish. I was blind. And now I am ashamed.

GUIELLERMO: I didn't know it would hurt me this much.

Chiara throws her wine glass at Guillermo narrowly missing him.

CHIARA: You?! Hurt you?!

GUIELLERMO: I didn't know hurting you, would hurt me so much.

CHIARA: You are a waste!

GUIELLERMO: Chiara, I fucked up. I know that I promised you the world and I have given you nothing. It isn't because I don't want you to have the world, it is because I came up short. I was only capable of affording this location for tonight. Everything else died with my dream of helping you because my divorce and my business have destroyed me financially...I am not the man I was yesterday.

CHIARA: Disgrace!

GUIELLERMO: I am a disgrace. You were the last person I know who had trust in me and I wished to hold it for as long as I could, and now I've lost that, too.

CHIARA: I don't ever wish to see your face. Please, leave!

GUIELLERMO: All of my contacts turned their backs on me because the media has painted this picture of me as a fraud. I am no fraud.

CHIARA: The media is correct.

GUIELLERMO: All lies by men richer than me who hold the media in their pockets and twist stories around to suit their own interests. I have been disgraced and I don't even have the money to defend myself in the court of law. My lawyers will not extend any courtesy to me if I am broke. So, there you have it...I have nothing now.

(beat)

Don't act like you didn't know. We have talked about this, haven't we? You know all about my scandals in the press.

CHIARA: You told me it would not affect my showing. You told me that my gallery presentation would finally make me and put you back on the map.

GUIELLERMO: I was wrong.

CHIARA: You dishonored me.

GUILLERMO: Please, don't say that.

CHIARA: What do you expect me to say? It's okay? That everything will turn out to be fine? Nothing is fine. You tarnished my reputation. I have less than I even had before.

GUILLERMO: You are an artist. You are young. You have time. Just because no one came doesn't mean you have failed.

CHIARA: You have failed! I do not fail. This is because of you! Don't even think about putting this on me. If you weren't such a con, perhaps tonight would have been a hit and all would have fallen into place.

GUILLERMO: If I can get myself out from this rubble, I might be able to start again...it will take time, lots of time and we can try again.

CHIARA: Never! I will never trust you again. Our relationship is over.

GUIELLERMO: Please, Chiara, everything being said about me is not the truth. Please, believe me, you know me long enough to---

CHIARA: Do I know you? They say you used to beat your wife? Is that true? That even your children acted as witnesses. They say you sold paintings that were not painted by the artists you claimed them to be painted by. And now tonight, my event, this was the final telling. I do know who you are.

GUIELLERMO: I love you.

CHIARA: You are insane!

GUIELLERMO: I am in love with you...I would never do anything to hurt you, Chiara. I am not that man. My ex-wife, we fell out of love a very long time ago and it got to a very ugly place because we simply did not wish to be together anymore but we stayed for the kids...all we did was go for one another's throats, but I swear, I never put one finger on her, not one...I don't know how she did it but my children were brainwashed into imagining I hurt their mother...that kills me more than anything. How do I fix that? I fell in love with you because you believed in me, gave me hope again and I didn't want to let that go...

CHIARA: How long did you string me along?

GUIELLERMO: What do you mean?

CHIARA: At what point in time did you realize my exhibition would flatline?

GUIELLERMO: I knew for months...I've been lying to you for months. That I am guilty of...

CHIARA: What about all the introductions, all the people you had me meet?

GUIELLERMO: Favors I was owed, money that was paid behind the scenes to help make such meetings happen, but everyone stabbed me in the back. No one has remained loyal to me. It will be until this blows over, if I can ever regain some of my respect in the industry, if I can ever obtain---

CHIARA: Why would you?

GUIELLERMO: Because I am innocent and I worked too hard all my life to have competition destroy me!.

CHIARA: I will never get a showing now. Do you realize that? Because my name is mixed up with yours, I am finished before I've even begun.

GUIELLERMO: I don't believe so.

CHIARA: All of the key contacts I met see my art work as an extension of you. They will never touch me.

GUIELLERMO: This is a big industry and you will have to dissociate yourself from me. I will get you into events that you can attend without me, on your own and you will have to show that you have no more ties to me. There is always a way. I will do whatever it takes to help you.

CHIARA: I wish to go home.

GUIELLERMO: I will get a car for you.

CHIARA: I don't love you.

GUIELLERMO: I understand.

CHIARA: I want you to know that.

GUEILLERMO: I know.

CHIARA: I want all my work returned to me by tomorrow or you will be sued.

GUIELLERMO: You don't have to threaten me.

CHIARA: Oh no, I do.

GUIELLERMO: Chiara, I promise you, whatever I do in my life, I will get back on the map and prove my innocence. I don't know how, but I will stop at nothing to vindicate my honor. This you will come to see. And I will pay you back what you believe I have cost you. I swear it.

END OF PLAY