

Hotel Lobby

by

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Cast of Characters

CARLOTTA:

50's

DAVIDE:

30's

Place

Hotel lobby

Time

Evening

Setting: The play takes place inside a large yet intimate hotel lobby in New York City. The place is dimly lit. There's a bar dominating one wall, table and chairs in the center of the establishment and booths running alongside the opposite wall from the bar.

At Rise: The play opens up with Carlotta sitting on a stool sipping a drink. Davide, her hired escort who is also a charming and handsome young man, enters and approaches her.

DAVIDE: Are you Carlotta?

CARLOTTA: Yes. Davide?

DAVIDE: Yes. Well, you're more beautiful than I imagined.

DAVIDE kisses CARLOTTA on the cheek.

Would you like to sit in a booth?

CARLOTTA: Sure.

DAVIDE extends his hand to CARLOTTA and they sit in a nearby booth.

DAVIDE: What are you drinking?

CARLOTTA: Rum and diet coke.

DAVIDE: Diet?

CARLOTTA: Well, less sugar, yes...it keeps the curves intact.

DAVIDE: A woman like you shouldn't think about the word diet.

CARLOTTA: Thank you.

DAVIDE: I'm the one who needs to thank you.

CARLOTTA: (smiles) (uncomfortable)

DAVIDE: (smiling) You don't like compliments?

CARLOTTA: No, I, I'm not used to compliments.

DAVIDE: I find that hard to believe.

CARLOTTA: Yes, perhaps I should have gotten used to them by now. I've never really, well I've never heard my husband call me beautiful.

DAVIDE: ...Husband?

CARLOTTA: Yes, I'm married.

DAVIDE: I thought...

CARLOTTA: No, I've been married for eight years.

DAVIDE: Why are you meeting with me then?

CARLOTTA: To see if I could, I guess...

DAVIDE: Why?

CARLOTTA: Well, my husband and I, we, we've never been fully committed to each other in that way and I think we're kind of going in separate directions now...we've reached the inevitable it seems.

DAVIDE: Oh. I'm sorry.

CARLOTTA: You shouldn't be the one apologizing.

DAVIDE: But, still---

CARLOTTA: It was bound to happen, Davide. Perhaps more my fault than his. (beat) You aren't so bad looking yourself.

DAVIDE: That's nice of you to say.

CARLOTTA: Better in person. The photos online were something, but seeing you in person is quite the sight.

DAVIDE: I'm glad you think so.

CARLOTTA: I'm sure many do. Do you enjoy your job?

DAVIDE: I do, especially when I'm with a woman like yourself, I knew I liked you from the moment we spoke on the phone. You know, you have a very unique voice, another thing that mystifies me about you, I've never heard such strength in a voice from such a soft spoken woman. I've spoken to many women but none that had the qualities of your voice. Am I allowed to compliment you?

CARLOTTA: You may. You can also kiss me.

DAVIDE: Right now?

CARLOTTA: On the neck.

DAVIDE slowly kisses CARLOTTA on the neck.

Okay, that's enough. (sighs) (recovering)

DAVIDE: You smell amazing.

CARLOTTA: I thought you might like it. (beat) What are you drinking?

DAVIDE: Oh, I...waiter? (to CARLOTTA) Would you like a refill?

CARLOTTA: I'm already on my third one.

DAVIDE: Really?

WAITER: May I help you?

DAVIDE: I'd like an amaretto on the rocks, please.

WAITER: And for the lady?

CARLOTTA: I'm fine for now, thanks.

WAITER leaves.

DAVIDE: You must have gotten here early.

CARLOTTA: I did. I just felt like I needed a drink, to wind down. I'm sorry I cancelled on you before.

DAVIDE: Oh no, I understand.

CARLOTTA: I just find it so strange, the whole thing. You know, I need to understand it better, it's the first time I've ever hired a man in this way.

DAVIDE: Of course. I know, it's strange. I mean, I've gotten used to it, I don't take all offers.

CARLOTTA: Oh, I'm aware of that. That's what made me feel special. Tell me, what makes you decide?

DAVIDE: Decide?

CARLOTTA: On whose offer you wish to accept.

DAVIDE: It has to happen naturally for me. Nothing forced. If I see that there is an awkwardness of some sort, it usually doesn't pan out.

CARLOTTA: Define awkwardness.

DAVIDE: Awkwardness in the sense that we don't gel. If I feel I have to work hard, it isn't worth my time.

CARLOTTA: So, you are saying you don't like to work for it?

DAVIDE: I don't mind a healthy challenge, but if my subject is too resistant, where I feel as though I have to do some convincing, then that's a sign that she isn't ready.

CARLOTTA: Have you been in situations where you had to be more convincing?

DAVIDE: In France, there was this woman who turned out to be extremely difficult. It was though the harder I worked to gain her trust and affection, the further she pulled away from me and made things uncomfortable.

CARLOTTA: Maybe she needed your helping hand.

DAVIDE: I would say things were much more complicated than that.

CARLOTTA: How so?

DAVIDE: Perhaps that's for another time Carlotta. Another one of my rules is to avoid talking about my previous experiences.

CARLOTTA: I've noticed you have many rules.

DAVIDE: Rules keep things orderly. Without them, we leave ourselves open for trouble.

CARLOTTA: I like you Davide.

DAVIDE: I should hope that you do.

CARLOTTA: You have a warm smile, but I get the feeling there's something else underneath it all. You cover it up quite well.

DAVIDE: Perhaps, perhaps you're right.

CARLOTTA: I've always been good at reading people...

DAVIDE: And what do you see in me?

CARLOTTA: We aren't going to sleep together.

DAVIDE: Why not?

CARLOTTA: It's not needed.

DAVIDE: I was looking forward to being with you, but having met you, I am confused.

CARLOTTA: Yes, that's my point.

DAVIDE: What is?

CARLOTTA: The fantasy has already been broken, for both of us.

DAVIDE: It has.

CARLOTTA: A little bit of truth tends to shatter the glass wall we place between ourselves and the rest of the world.

DAVIDE: I wasn't trying to—I was only wishing to give you what you hired me to do.

CARLOTTA: I'm not asking you for a refund. Knowing I can take you out of this hotel lobby, into an upstairs room and have my way with you, is all I need.

DAVIDE: It is my policy, to only meet clients once. We won't have another chance.

CARLOTTA: When I first arrived here I told myself that what I was doing was the right thing, that what I wanted was relief from all the years of pain that has built up, that I was entitled, allowed to be intimate with someone else because of it all...it's not that the thought hasn't crossed my mind, but I had always kept my marriage first, I always lived by my own deep set of values...but, a few drinks in, and after much justification, I was ready to relinquish my ideals. However, becoming acquainted with you Davide has made me feel that I don't need to sacrifice my own moral ground...sure, it would be something to have you in that way, something that perhaps we would both never forget, but I know that over time my actions will eat at me and who will I hire next to solve that problem? I won't bring myself down and make myself feel like less of a woman...I've given myself the permission to go this far with you and that is enough, that's as far as it will go.

CARLOTTA stands up.

DAVIDE: Carlotta...

CARLOTTA kisses DAVIDE long and passionately.
She smiles at him endearingly.

CARLOTTA exits.

WAITER arrives with DAVIDE'S drink. He leaves
it on the table and leaves.

LIGHTS FADE OUT.

END OF PLAY