

FEMME NOIR - ANTIGRAVITY - GREEN REVISION - PINK REVISION -
GOLDENROD REVISION

Written by

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1 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

1

The moon is full tonight, in a dense forest is small clearing. Two camping lanterns rest on the ground.

DIANE, mid 30s Chinese woman, wearing black windbreaker digs furiously with a shovel.

ELANOR, late 20s Korean woman, in a cream dress with blood stains on the front skirt, sits on a double bass case. Next to her is a sapling tree about 4 ft high in a pot.

When Diane pounces out of the pit, Elanor with a thermos to Diane, who shakes her head. Diane starts pushing the contrabass case towards the pit. Elanor joins in, but ends up twisting her ankle.

DIANE

Take it easy. Remember, once injured, always a weak spot.

Diane manages to get it into the hole. Elanor wipes the sweat and dirt from Diane's forehead with the frills of her sleeves.

DIANE

Elle, your dress...

ELANOR

It's a goner anyway.

Elanor motions to the blood stains on it. They look at each other for a long moment, then Diane turns to the plant.

DIANE

There's still work to do.

ELANOR

Is the plant like a gravestone only we know about?

DIANE

No. If even the police comes sniffing, they can't raise the soil here, because that's an endangered species.

Elanor limps towards the tree, but trips due to her injured ankle. Diane sprints to help Elanor up and brings her to fallen log.

DIANE

(in soft voice)

Please, just let me do the rest.

ELANOR sighs and looks longingly at the contrabass case.

FADE TO BLACK.

2 INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

2

BLACK SCREEN. The closet light flicks on, revealing ELANOR surrounded by clutter.

She rummages through a box of scrapbooking supplies, pulling out model train parts with a frustrated grunt. Shoving the box back, she scans the disorganized, mislabeled shelves.

From a box labeled HARDWARE, she finally finds what she needs. As she is about to step out of the closet, a contrabass case falls, blocking her exit.

She grunts, shoving it back in place.

Emerging into the bedroom, she notices a pile of clothes on the floor. With a sigh, she picks them up, pausing at an unfamiliar shirt. Sniffing it, her eyes narrow.

KEN, late-twenties, just short of 5'5" tall, wearing worn out t-shirt, enters the room.

KEN

Babe, have you seen my...

ELANOR

What's this?!

KEN

It's not what you think...

ELANOR

Did you just decide to buy a new shirt? You, who's walk around with holes in your socks?

KEN

Look coffee spilled, and someone at my work let me borrow a spare.

ELANOR

You don't drink coffee.

Ken grabs the shirt from her.

KEN

Never said it was my coffee. You're paranoid!

ELANOR
With good reason.

KEN
That was years ago! You'll never
forgive me, will you?

Elanor looks stern standing there. She doesn't say anything putting the rest of the laundry in the hamper.

LATER THAT NIGHT, Ken is in the shower. Elanor walks up to the night stand and picks up his phone. She enters in the passcode, and checks his messages. Nothing out of the ordinary. Photos, just photos of them and their family, and his many hobbies. A Lyft notification said "Thank you for being a regular rider! Here's \$10 off your next ride."

She opens the Lyft app, and looks through the ride history. They all travel to and back from one address. The shower sounds stops. Elanor dashes out the room, down the stairs, and out the house.

3 EXT. OUTSIDE DIANE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

3

Elanor slash her car door shot and strides towards a unit. The neighborhood is composed building two stories high, each apartment unit has their own entrance. It's quiet, except the sound of the street light in a low hum.

Elanor presses the doorbell hard. The ambient sound of the streets fade, replaced by Elanor's heartbeats. She buzzes the bell again.

The sound of footsteps on a flight of stairs alternate with the heartbeats, creating a syncopated rhythm. The door opens revealing Diane in Ken's sweater and long silk lounge pants.

DIANE
Sorry, but I'm Buddhist.

ELANOR
I'm selling you the word of God. At
least not tonight.

DIANE
Oh then... Why are you here?

ELANOR
Why you are wearing my husband's
sweater?

CUT TO: THEM SITTING IN DIANE'S LIVING ROOM

4 INT. DIANE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

4

Eleanor, on a couch, twirls the tea leaves in a mug. Diane in her reading chair, with a glass of wine.

DIANE

Sorry, I never meant to hurt you.

ELANOR

You... you knew he was married?!

DIANE

No, there were signs. Instead of exchanging numbers, he insisted we leave notes for each other. And I thought, how romantic.

ELANOR

And it wasn't suspicious?

DIANE

It's all new to me! I never had a boyfriend. Briefly girlfriend, but our post-doc positions put a whole ocean in between us.

(a beat)

Even if things weren't adding up, I thought this could be "The One".

ELANOR

Hah. You know, you aren't the first to come between our marriage.

DIANE

I'll end it! Okay?

ELANOR

I use to believe if the other woman go away, our problems go away. And yet, here we are again.

DIANE

You guys are on some twisted cycle, I'm just caught in a revolution?

ELANOR

Yea, after you, there'll probably be another. Unless you, you'll help me break the wheel.

5 INT. CO-WORKING SPACE PANTRY - AFTERNOON

5

Diane whisks blue powder into a cup of matcha. She brings the cup to Ken, who's sitting at his desk, and continues to walk to her private office.

When she gets inside, she closes the door, and takes a deep breath. She is shivering, and slides down the floor crying.

DIANE
Helping her will make things even.

6 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

6

Elanor and Ken just finish dinner. It's a rare, they have time to eat together.

ELANOR
Delicious! You've nailed it again!

She raises her wine glass, for Ken to follow suit.

7 INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

7

Elanor picks up Ken's smartwatch, swipes to blood pressure screen, takes a photo and sends it to Diane.

ELANOR (MESSAGE)
Looks like it worked.

She looks towards where their wedding photo hangs, her shadow is stark against the wall.

ELANOR (VO)
I wonder how you are like with her?

8 INT. BEDROOM WALL - DAYDREAM SEQUENCE

8

Diane, Elanor and Ken are silhouettes on bedroom wall. Elanor summons a Ken from the ground, and they dance.

Ken pulls Elanor close, and their shadows combine. When they part it is Diane and Ken that separate, with Elanor in the middle.

Diane and Ken dance encircling Elanor. Ken fades into the background, as Diane spins towards Elanor, and pulls her into an epic tango.

The music is interrupted by Vivaldi. Elanor opens her eyes and shakes her head. Diane as replied to her text.

DIANE (MESSAGE)

Great! This weekend, we'll forage.

9 EXT. WOODS - DUSK

9

Deep in a large city park, DIANE is in gardening gear and a silk headscarf, carefully extracting nectar from a flower in the bushes. Elanor in yoga pants, a cropped sweatshirt and METS cap, hovers over Diane.

ELANOR

My school takes the kids here all the time, who would have this park has poisonous flowers.

DIANE

The lunabusta silvestris isn't poisonous inherently. Its nectar is only potent only with the pollen of solisbusta aureata.

When Diane finishes collecting the nectar, the sun is setting behind the trees. They start walking back.

DIANE

I'm curious, if your marriage is so bad, why not divorce?

ELANOR

A divorce would... My family can't afford another scandal, people at church talk.

DIANE

You mean that other time when Ken...

ELANOR

No. He's smart enough to not dip his toes in that pool. (pause) In middle school, our pastor's daughter and I spent every afternoon together, then talked for hours on the phone. We were a little more than best friends. One day, her mom came up to her room... and saw us.

DIANE

So your family is pretty religious.

ELANOR

Not really. It wasn't *that*. They never asked if I am... if I like... One day, Mom just said "that girl is a bad influence. Next Sunday we're going to St. Robert Bellarmine". We weren't even Catholic!

DIANE

Maybe they weren't ready to admit it to themselves...

ELANOR

More like, church is the only community we had since coming to the US. Our old pastor helped my dad find his first job. I can't let my family to be at the center of gossip again.

Elanor pauses in her step to catch her breathe, tears well up in her eyes. Diane reaches over to touch her shoulder.

DIANE

Parents say that for our futures, they've sacrificed everything. So we've learned that to love is to sacrifice. The endless volley of offerings no one asked for.

Elanor looks up and nods; her eyes shift around.

ELANOR

Umm... I don't recognize this area on the way here.

The sun has complete set. Diane pulls out her phone.

DIANE

Damn! Maps not loading.

ELANOR

Maybe that way should lead us to the pond at the North end of the park, if I'm recall correctly.

DIANE

Local, lead the way.

ELANOR

So my turn? You said you don't have much relationship experience. How old are you?

DIANE

Thirty-four. My parents invested in me like the eldest son—I'm their only child. Took until last year, for me to feel accomplished. Now I'm ready for love, and I thought I'd found it, but...

ELANOR

At least they had faith in you. Mine just wanted me to settle and settle down.

DIANE

What you've wanted for yourself?

ELANOR

I... I never thought about it. At least not realistically. Vienna?

DIANE

Austria or Virginia?

ELANOR

There's a conservatory in Austria, but it wasn't meant to be. Can't make a living with my violin. Funny, though—the money I bring home from private lessons is higher than my teacher's salary.

DIANE

Sounds you do earn a living with your violin.

DIANE pauses and examines the trees.

DIANE

Are you sure we've been going north?

ELANOR

Oh no! Maybe I should call my sister, she'll send a ranger.

DIANE

How long will that take?

ELANOR

Two... to four hours? Depends.

DIANE

While we wait here? I heard, lately there's bear sightings.

ELANOR

Would you rather we continue to
wander in circles, then?

DIANE

We are still in the city. If we
walk in any one direction long
enough, we'll eventually make it
out in less than an hour.

ELANOR

I grew up around here, I feel it's
just best to wait for a ranger.

A growl sounds in the distance. Elanor jumps in fright.

ELANOR

Fine. Let's go, but quietly.

They walk through another part of the woods. Elanor's foot
caught in tree root, just as she's about to trip, Diane
catches her.

They hold their gaze at each other for a moment. First few
notes of the tango song from Elanor's daydream starts, Elanor
quickly breaks away, stopping the music. She motions for them
to continue on. But just as she is about to proceed.

ELANOR

Ow! Twisted my ankle. You know
what, I want to stick with my
original plan. Wait for the
rangers, or maybe at this rate,
sunrise.

Diane pulls the silk scarf from her head, tearing it to
narrow shreds.

ELANOR

That's Bvlgari!

Diane kneels down to to wrap Elanor's ankle.

DIANE

Bears don't care. You are not
staying here for them to come.

ELANOR

Just... go on without me.

DIANE

I won't leave you here. I need you.
(A beat)

To get back at Ken. The plan won't work unless we both play our part.

ELANOR

Oh. Right. Yea, the nectar. You... need me to slip it to him at night.

Dianes nods, drapes Elanor's arm over her shoulders, and pulls her up by the waist. The two crutch walk forward.

FADE TO:

10 EXT. POND AT THE END OF THE PARK - NIGHT 10

They finally arrive at a pond, surrounded by street lamps. A family of swans are grooming each other. Diane eases Elanor onto a bench. They stare at their reflections in the water.

11 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 11

Elanor is mixing a red tincture into curry, when her phone rings. It's a call from Ken.

ELANOR

I'm making your favorite! Katsu!

KEN (O.C.)

Sucks I'll miss out on it. Gotta finish this roadmap tonight.

ELANOR

I can save you some.

KEN

Chad just ordered us delivery.

ELANOR stops stirring the curry.

12 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 12

KEN stumbles in, and tersely announces.

KEN

I'm home!

No reply. He turns on the lights to reveal Elanor on the couch in a cream white dress, her gaze directly onward. She looks like a fancy china doll, down to the glassy reflection in her eyes. Ken jumps.

ELANOR

It's late. It's too late.

Elanor stand up from the coach to reveal, she's been holding a fish knife.

13 EXT. FOREST - NEAR DAWN

13

Diane and Elanor steps back, to admire the sapling in its new home in this forest. Birds start to sing.

DIANE

We might need to go away for
awhile.

ELANOR

Where?

DIANE

Far. Maybe Vienna?

Elanor reach for Diane hand. Diane in return holds it tight.

Elanor leans her head on Diane shoulder. The sky is
lightening up.

FADE TO WHITE