

LYING IN WAIT

by

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Address
Phone Number

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - ROLAND'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

A barbecue party is in full swing. 1970's rock music plays as party lights, checkered table clothes, and tiki torches decorate the yard.

A large bouncer-of-a-man tends the NY steaks and chicken breasts sizzling on the grill. He motions to the host that they are done.

Holding court with the all men, host LEE ROLAND (55) acknowledges the intel with a nod.

Meanwhile, his son, MAXWELL ROLAND (18), skulks near the ice-filled tub 'o beer on the grass.

STEPHANIE ROLAND (47), Cosmo martini in hand, steps in and out of the house as she and other ladies place food on the long central picnic table.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - GWENEVERE'S HOUSE - CURB SIDE - CAR - NIGHT

JOE FRAGOTTI (35) exits the driver's side of his car and walks around to the passenger side door, smiling and head bobbing to the music from neighbor's party.

GWEN ANDERSON (34) is already opening her door as Joe reaches for the handle, smacking him in the hand. He winces, then shakes it off.

Gwen steps out of the car.

GWEN

I'm so sorry. I'm just not used to someone doing that for me.

JOE

(smiles)

Its all right. No harm, no foul.

Joe closes the car door, flexing his right hand open and closed behind Gwen's back as he escorts her to her front door.

CUT TO:

INT. GWENEVERE'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Gwen unlocks the front door and enters her rented craftsman style home where she quickly slips off her jacket and shoes and heads toward the kitchen.

Joe enters to see Gwen turn the corner into another room. Taking off his jacket, he sees her shoes on the floor and looks down at his own shoes.

He slips off his right shoe only to be confronted by his big toe instead of sock.

Gwen pops her head around the corner, sees his predicament.

GWEN

Oh, you can leave your shoes on.
Its not a "thing." I just like to
go barefoot. Did you want anything?
I'm having tea.

JOE

Sure. That sounds great.

Looking past Joe, Gwen sees the candle on the coffee table in the living room, and crosses to light it.

As she passes close to Joe on her way back to the kitchen, there is a flicker of hesitation as she looks into his eyes.

Admiring the flame, Joe crosses to it, letting his fingers dance in the flame. The music and men's voices from next door draw Joe's attention to the front window to check it out.

Peering through sheer curtains, Joe sees two of Roland's thugs from the festival, hanging out smoking in the neighbor's front yard.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROLAND'S FRONT YARD - JOE'S POV - NIGHT

A woman with Cosmo in hand pokes her head out her front door and motions them inside, and they put out their cigarettes on the sidewalk. She glares at them with hand on her hip. They pick up the butts.

CUT TO:

INT. GWEN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Joe spins from the window as Stephanie enters the room.

GWEN
What are you doing?

JOE
Nothing.

Gwen crosses to the window and looks out only to see the two men entering Roland's house.

GWEN
Anything juicy happening at the neighbor's?

JOE
Why would you ask that?

GWEN
It would make a great conversation starter for you.

JOE
No, I don't think that's a good idea.

GWEN
The Roland's are super nice people, even if Steph apparently doesn't know how to make anything but a Cosmo.

Suddenly, Joe reaches out for Gwen, grabs her by the waist and pulls her close. Their faces inches apart.

JOE
I was just *really* looking forward to that cup of tea. And staying in, with you, to enjoy it.

Gwen chuckles, then squirms out of his embrace.

GWEN
Yeah, that would be great, but I also really wanted them to meet you. (sighs) Stephanie Roland is always trying to set me up with one of her husband's work buddies.

Gwen gestures to the neighbor's front yard.

GWEN (CONT'D)
(duh)
Well, you saw them.

Joe adjusts his posture, as if coming to attention.

JOE

There's another reason I can't go
over and meet them tonight.

Gwen leans against the back of couch, and gestures for Joe to
continue.

JOE (CONT'D)

I have pyrophobia.

GWEN

You're a police officer!

JOE

Yes, but I would have been a
fireman. I can't be around an open
flame.

GWEN

Its a barbecue, not a bonfire.

JOE

Gwen, I thought with you studying
to become a nurse you would have
more sympathy for this very real,
almost debilitating fear.

Gwen studies his face, then rises to her feet and looks him
in the eye.

GWEN

You're right. I'm sorry. We don't
have to go over tonight. But you
are not off the hook completely. I
do want them to meet you.

JOE

I'm sure that will happen sooner
than later.

Gwen pulls Joe in close, their lips almost touching.

GWEN

Its just sad, that's all.

Her lips caress his chin.

JOE

What is?

His head tilts back.

GWEN

That the *one* thing that really gets me in the mood puts you in a tailspin.

JOE

Hmmm?

Gwen pulls back from Joe and blows out the candle. She strides to the entry, grabs Joe's coat, tosses it into his arms and spins him toward the front door.

GWEN

Okay, bye-bye now. Sweet dreams. Sleep tight. Don't let the bed bugs bite your ass.

JOE

What just happened?

Gwen opens the front door and pushes Joe out.

GWEN

Write if you find work!

She slams the door behind him.

A bit bewildered, Joe stands on the porch for a moment.

Hearing Roland's front door open, Joe looks over to see Roland and the same two goons escorting another man, held tightly between them, toward a Prius parked at the curb.

Joe steps into the shadows against Gwen's house.

Joe sees the goons shove the man into the back seat as they attempt to sit on either side of him. One of the goons moves to the front passenger seat. The waiting driver takes off silently as Roland returns inside.

Joe runs to his car to follow. As he starts his engine, Gwen looks out from the front window and sees him speed away.

FADE TO BLACK.