

"LOVE IN MADNESS"

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Frank (40s) is walking the steps that leads to the front door of his house. He holds the phone close to his ear and with the other hand a bouquet of flowers.

FRANK

(to the phone)

I know Jimmy.

(beat)

Of course I have a permission. With all the rides that I did with my cab this week, the boss did not hesitate one sec to give me the night free.

Frank has reached the last step and is now in front of the door. He holds the phone with his shoulder and use his hand to reach for the keys in his pocket.

FRANK (CONT'D)

No, Carmen doesn't suspect a thing.
It's going to be an amazing ni..

A shrill BEEP and Frank take the phone away and look at it. The screen shows in capital letters the sign "NEW MESSAGE". Frank push back the phone close to his ear.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Jimmy. I got to call you later.

(beat)

Of course, I'd say Carmen "Hi" from you. Ok, bye.

Frank turn off the call then dials to the phone and open the recorded message. A male voice comes from it.

VOICE

Mr. Portello, here is Doctor Kenway from the Portland Hospital. I am sorry to inform you that we did not receive the prolifen that you have been waiting for and it will be available only in another couple of weeks. I know this sounds harsh for your situation but I beg you not to give up and to make your wife feel as comfortable as she can.

Frank is freezed and look at the door with his key still in the keyhole and the hand that now is holding the phone is shivvering.

VOICE (CONT'D)

Premature ovarian failure is not so rare as we think but the best thing we can do is to make the patient feel confident that she will overcome it. Don't hesitate to call me. Have a pleasant evening.

BEEP. The recorded voice stops. Frank turn off the phone and put it in his pocket. He wipes a tear that is now on his cheek and takes a huge breath. He combs his hairs and turn the key inside the keyhole, opening the front door.

INT. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - ENTRANCE

Frank enters the house still with his eyes on the ground in order not to show his previous tears.

FRANK

Baby, I'm home. Doctor Portello said that they don't have your medicine this month, but it's totally fine I'll look for it somewhere else. Jimmy says "Hi" by the way. He is dating a new girl, a total skank but guess what? He is in love after two weeks can you believe it?

The house is enlightened but a huge silence comes from inside. Frank realizes that his words did not find response.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Baby, are you there? I came back home early tonight in order to spend some quality time with you. I have the entire night just for us.

Still no response. Frank leaves his coat and turns the corner to the living room.

FRANK (CONT'D)

SURPRIIIIIII-

Frank's "Surprise" scream freezes. His wife CARMEN (39) is in the middle of the living room handing a kitchen knife and at her feet, laying in his own blood, an unknown man.

Carmen stares back at Frank, shocked. Frank looks at the body and at his wife several times before replying.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Carmen, what have you done?!

CLANG. Carmen drops the knife. She puts her hands on her hairs.

CARMEN
(stammering)
He g-got inside the house! He tried
to assault me! I defended myself
and now..

Frank rushes to the breathless body and he checks his pulse. He shakes his head in shock. His eyes wide opened.

FRANK
He's..dead.

Carmen covers her mouth with her hand.

CARMEN
Oh my god..

Frank stands up from the body and hugs his wife. Then he takes a napkin from desk close to them and uses it to pick the knife from the ground.

FRANK
We should call the police.

CARMEN
Wait, please. I am still shocked.

Frank lays the knife, still wrapped in the napkin, on the desk. Then he turns to his wife.

FRANK
Sure honey! Just wait here, I'm
going to bring you a glass of
water.

Carmen nods with her head as Frank goes to the kitchen.

CARMEN
Thank you, baby.

INT. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Frank opens the sideboard and takes out a glass from it. As he closes back the sideboard he sees two half-empty glasses on the kitchen sink's border.

Frank holds on of the glass and smells it. Smell of wine. Then he talks to his wife in the other room.

FRANK

Honey, did someone of your friends
come visit you today?

CARMEN (O.S.)

No sweetheart, why?

Frank doesn't reply. He brings the two glasses in the living room.

INT. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Frank rushes into the living room. Now his tone is quite aggressive.

FRANK

Do you need to tell me something?
Who was this man? Your lover?
That's how you pay me back after
all the sacrifices I made for us?

Carmen is now staring at those glasses, totally speechless by her husband's tone.

CARMEN

Sweetheart, I can explain.

FRANK

Don't you even try to lie to me! I
knew that I should have never taken
those night-shifts. How long did it
last, Carmen? I deserve an answer!

Carmen doesn't know how to react and she takes Frank by his harm.

CARMEN

Ok come with me to the kitchen and
I'll explain you everything.

Frank stares blanked to his wife.

INT. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Frank and Carmen are sit on the opposite sides of the kitchen table. Both are ashamed and at the same time intrigued in looking into each other's eyes.

CARMEN

Ok..I lied to you.

FRANK

I knew it! Since how long, Carmen?
How long were you cheating on me
with that man?

CARMEN

I never cheated on you, Frank! I've
loved you since the first moment
that I've met you.

Frank take a breath of relief.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

But yes, I lied to you: I didn't
kill that man for mistake because I
was defending myself. I invited him
inside and then I killed him.

Frank is shocked. Unbelieving what he has just heard he stares at Carmen hoping that she soon would have said that it was only a majestic joke.

FRANK

What are you saying Carmen? That
you killed that man intentionally?
But what could he have done to you?
Did he hurt you?

CARMEN

Absolutely not! I didn't even know
him! He paid me a few compliments
at Wegmans and he offered himself
to help me bringing my bags at
home. I invited him to thank him
with a glass of wine and after
having put inside a glass a couple
of muscle relaxants, I've waited
for him to fall asleep and then I
stabbed him with the kitchen knife.

Carmen takes a breath like if she just took of a huge elephant out of her shoulders but she notices that Frank is looking straight to her without blinking an eye, the mouth wide open and speechless.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

You were not supposed to see anything of this since I would have cleaned the floor and hidden the body inside a laundry bag before throwing it on the first train from the overpass behind Regent's street.

Frank keeps on rubbing his eyes, not recognizing anymore the woman for which he had bought that wonderful bouquet just a couple of hours before.

FRANK

Carmen, I don't understand..How could you do such a thing, and why?

Carmen reaches for Frank's hand while her husband look at the table, incapable of look at her anymore.

CARMEN

Frank, you are a good man. You've always loved me like no one else has ever done before and from the first moment that you offered me that coffee at the Square Bar I knew for sure that you would have been the man of my life.

Frank smiles as he remember that moment and looks back at Carmen.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

You did many sacrifices for our happiness but with these double shifts I barely see you and one night I found myself so angry that I took a bat and I smashed the toaster.

Frank takes his hand away from Carmen.

FRANK

You told me that it had been an accident. That you broke it and since it didn't work anymore you threw it away.

CARMEN

And you truly believed me? Oh Frank, my dear Frank. Don't you see how this life is ruining us?

(MORE)

CARMEN (CONT'D)

There was a time in which you knew all my thoughts even before that I knew them and it would have been impossible for me to lie to you.

Frank stands up, pushing the chair so far from the table that it almost fell into the ground.

FRANK

So you're saying that there had been more lies, Carmen?

CARMEN

I'm ashamed of it but.. yes.

FRANK

Then which one? Go on, tell me everything!

Frank slams his hand on the table like a detective that is so pushed for exasperation that can't control himself in front of the suspect during the interrogation.

Carmen looks at the table and then with slow voice she replies.

CARMEN

That man..he wasn't my first.

Frank turns himself to the living room where he can still see that dead face staring at him lying in front of his couch. He is terrified more than ever by his wife's revelation.

FRANK

Others? There were others?!?

CARMEN

Yes..

FRANK

And how many Carmen? Since when this all madness started? And why did you never talk me about it, for god's sake? I could have helped you, we could have find a cure together.

CARMEN

I tried to talk you about it Frank!

FRANK

When?!

CARMEN

What about every night when I called you at work and you promised me that we would have discussed about it later that night and then everytime you came back home you..went straight to bed.

FRANK

I was killing myself at work for you! For us! I would have never expected that my wife was going around the town butchering people for fun! When did this all start?

Carmen now in tears and broken-hearted yells to Frank.

CARMEN

When that monster of Francis beat you up in front of me because you owned him money, 5 years ago.

FRANK

Francis? I thought we already talked about this. I haven't seen him since then. I told you I would have dealt with that situation.

CARMEN

I dealt with that situation! He was my first!

FRANK

Oh god honey..what are you saying? That the reason he didn't bother me anymore is because you killed him? You killed Francis?!

CARMEN

I felt so useless! So worthless when he was beating the man that I loved. I had to do something! I invited him over, saying that we had his money, during that period in which you were starting your night-shifts at the airport and then I stabbed him with the knife.

Frank is starting to understand his wife and he calmly goes back to the table and while Carmen starts crying he holds her hand.

FRANK

Darling..but why?

CARMEN

I know what you are thinking. I didn't do it for fun but only for you! Because I loved you! And that brute had dared kicking in the face the most peaceful man that I've ever known.

Frank smiles gently as he caress his wife's face and she moves it in order to feel Frank's touch.

Carmen looks with her blue teared up eyes to Frank. For a first genuine moment that night there is a look of true love shared between each other.

Then Carmen stands up, she turns and frenetically she waves her hands in the air.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

At the beginning I was petrified from what I had done but ..at the same time I had never felt such satisfaction in all my life. And now it become an uncontrollable need.

Carmen sits back in front of Frank that is now once again staring at the table without distinguishing between right and wrong.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

I know that I'm a monster but I beg you to understand, Frank. I need this.

A moment of silence and then Frank finally replies, the eyes still on the table.

FRANK

I understand Carmen.

CARMEN

Really?

Frank rises his face and look at Carmen.

FRANK

Yes. You sacrificed yourself for us as I have done during all these years. You are not a monster, but we are both victims of the life that we had chosen. But you'll see!

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Once we'll have our son, everything will change, we'll have again a purpose bigger than ourselves and it will keep on bringing us joy..

Frank stops. He looks at the glasses once again, that he previously put back in the kitchen's sink.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Just one think I can't understand: which medicine did you put in that man's wine? We can't afford medicines if not the one for your uterus.

Carmen runs in the living room out of despair. Frank follows her.

INT. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Frank grabs Carmen's arm and stops her.

FRANK

Stop running away! Just calm down and answer me.

CARMEN

Oh Frank, my dear and beloved Frank! I had to do it, do you understand? It wouldn't have been possible! You were asking me the impossible!

FRANK

What? Explain yourself, damn woman!

Carmen almost whispering, puts her face close to Frank.

CARMEN

I changed the doctor's prescription for the fertility's medicine with one for some muscle relaxants. In this way, my victims would have never suffered.

Frank now realizes the disaster. He leaves his wife's arm and backoff slowly.

FRANK

But..our son..? We've always wanted a son Carmen!

CARMEN

Many years ago maybe. But now?
Don't you see how many efforts we
do just to keep us alive? Would you
add another mouth to feed? At least
in this way the doctor's
prescription still revealed himself
useful. It helped avoiding the
suffer for those poor victims that
allowed to our marriage to goes on
through their sacrifices.

Frank is freaking out. He rips his hairs off and kicks the
desk in the living room.

FRANK

Carmen, you break my heart! I've
never stopped loving you in 20
years. But this? All these lies
make me question who I've ever
loved for all this time, because I
can not see that person here
anymore. You need help Carmen.

CARMEN

I just need you, don't you
understand?

FRANK

No Carmen. Unluckily I'm not
enough. If you turn yourself in,
I'm sure they will find a way to
cure you.

CARMEN

But..

Carmen stops. She thinks for a moment and then replies.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

Ok Frank. If it's what you believe
then I will turn myself in.

Franks goes back to the kitchen to pick his phone.

INT. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Frank picks up the phone and dials "911".

A terrible noise occurs in that moment and the poor man falls
on the floor consciousness.

When Frank opens his eyes it's morning already. He is surrounded by the pieces of the bottle that Carmen had smashed on his head. Frank stands up and runs into the living room.

CUT TO. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

As Frank arrives in the living room he sees that the body is missing and the blood cleaned up.

CUT TO. FRANK AND CARMEN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Frank finds all his harmchairs opened and Carmen's clothes are missing.

On the pillow on his bed he finds a note. As he starts reading it, Carmen voice echoes in his head.

CARMEN (V.O.)

I'm sorry. I can't do it. I can't stop, now it's part of me. You've been the love of my life. C.

Frank sits on the ground and looking at that note he starts crying.

FADE OUT.