

LOVE NEVER DIES

By

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A mans unwavering vow to love his childhood sweetheart.

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REASONS

FADES IN

(INT. CAFETERIA)

Luca 23, attractive exotic-looking woman and Cassius 24, Semi-muscular dark-handsome guy sit at a booth in the Hospital cafeteria.

LUCA

Why do you think I made it?

CASSIUS

I don't know, maybe God has a extra plan for you and it isn't your time yet. You know?

LUCA

I kinda wanted it to be over this time. I just don't know what I'm supposed to be doing, like what's my purpose?

CASSIUS

Don't say that! I think...

Luca interrupts with her hands in the air as if she's making a public speech among hundreds.

LUCA

Everyone is here for a reason, everyone is doing stuff, some good some bad. But there doing stuff. I'm just here waiting.

CASSIUS

Luca, you're beautiful and you can do what your heart desires, just don't give up on yourself. Life is hard, and it is for a reason.

LUCA

What reason, you telling me life is hard on purpose? That's bullshit.

Luca frowns, looks at Cassius and proceeds to put jelly on her bagel.

CASSIUS

Luca, sometimes life is as hard as you make it. Besides, a lot of the hardships people go threw are self-

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CASSIUS (cont'd)
inflicted, you know? You need to
come back to church and pray more
often and ask for strength, Luca.
He'll help you.

Luca abruptly gets up to fill her coffee mug and almost falls from the sudden movement. She grabs her hair and puts it in a ponytail. Looks at Cassius without words for a second, but seems to be a minute. Takes another bite of her bagel. And with a mouthful of food tells Cassius.

LUCA
You think that's my problem? I pray
a little and then "poof" all my
problems are gone? No more shooting
up, no more fucking no more
nothing? No more being me, I change
all the sudden? You believe that
Cass? You believe people change who
they are overnight?

Cassius breathes in and looks to the ceiling. He arches his arms back, fists balled to pop his back. He closes his eyes tight and exhales. Then with his palm to his chin pops his neck from side to side.

CASSIUS
Luca, It doesn't happen...

Luca interrupts with frustration oozing from her tongue. Her body language is one of a boxer sizing up her competition. Her eyes pierce his face and if looks could kill. He'd be dead.

LUCA
Cass, why are you here, why do you
even care? I am what I am. I'm a
whore. I'm a junkie; I deserve
nothing good to come my way. I
don't deserve a happy ending. I
fuck for money so I can get high.
Cass, that's what I do.

Cassius grabs Luca's left hand with both of his and leans over staring directly in her eyes without blinking.

CASSIUS
Luca, you can stop whenever your
ready. You can re-write the story.
You have the pen. But I'm telling
you. Let the Lord help you. He
understands you more than you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CASSIUS (cont'd)
understand yourself. He'll answer
if your sincere and truthful in
your efforts. Give him a chance.

Luca stares out the window. A tear rolls down her face along with the mascara from last night's events.

Luca looks at Cassius and shakes her head. Wipes the tear and mascara with her right hand. Then takes a sip from her coffee. Cassius continues to hold her left hand, brings it close to his face then kisses it. She smiles, then glances out the window again.

CASSIUS
What time did they say they were
gonna discharge you? Can you go
now?

LUCA
No, she said my blood pressure was
kinda low and I needed two more
tests done before I can go.

CASSIUS
Oh. Is it cool if I stay or what?

LUCA
You don't have to, you have your
sister's thing tonight and they're
expecting you.

CASSIUS
Well it's early, maybe if you get
out soon, later today you can come
with me, you know?

Luca in a sarcastic tone laughs as if Cassius told a Martin Lawrence joke from the Def Comedy days.

LUCA
Cass, I fucking overdosed last
night. And everybody knows.

CASSIUS
Nobody knows, besides what are you
gonna do hide out now? Naw, Luca if
your able I want you there.

Luca puts her head down towards the table, a strand of her hair falls into her coffee. She begins to cry silently. Cassius looks on, at a loss for words.

CASSIUS

Luca...

Cassius grabs a napkin and gently grabs the hair in the coffee and dabs it with a napkin. Luca lifts her head, snuffles and wipes her nose. And takes a bite of her bagel. Cassius stares into her eyes, but Luca won't make eye contact.

LUCA

Cass, I have to go back. Thank you for everything. Comforting my mother on the phone, I really appreciate it.

Cassius smiles.

CASSIUS

It's cool, I mean you would've looked out for me so, you know. It's cool. Hey, you get some rest. OK. You can stay at my house if you want.

LUCA

Thanks Cass, But my Ma is flipping out and already said I should come back home. I don't know yet. I'll give everything some thought and see then.

CASSIUS

I'll come back in a couple of hours. If they let you out before then, you'll call me right? Right?

Luca starts to scoot out of the booth.

LUCA

Cass, I'll call. Shit. I gotta go.

CASSIUS

OK, Luca get some rest.

LUCA

Bye Cass.

Cassius would stay in that same spot for four hours drinking coffee and watching the CNN highlights of current news reports. He lied to his sister, and said he had to work late. He made a promise to see them later. But his sister heard about the latest with Luca and figured that's where he was.

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

It was an ongoing pattern. When Luca fell Cass was there to pick her up. He knew and she did as well. You see, Cass has been in love with Luca since the 2nd grade. From the day he met her outside playing after his first day of school. She was the first friend he made after moving from Washington. She stayed across the street. He always fantasized of being her everything. But in return, he got friendship alone.

He's lost teeth fighting boys that did her wrong, dumped girlfriends due to her disapproval. He kept himself available for that day she wanted to take his offer up. Things got sketchy when she moved away for school four states away. But Cassius didn't mind. She suggested he do the same and he did. There through the pain and agony of watching her date other guys and scrapping her off the floor as she partied like 1999 everyday.

Soon to drop out and wait tables, to becoming a roadie and doing drugs on the regular. Cassius didn't budge. His phone would rang at the ass crack of morning some nights as he'd have to go rescue Luca from different places. He didn't care, It was Luca and He stuck to the promise he made when they were thirteen. He said, he'd never leave her and one day she would be his wife. She laughed then, he didn't. He meant everything he said that evening and can recite that very conversation verbatim. He loved her. She loved how she could always depend on him, no matter what.

FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY

FADES IN.

(INT. CAFETERIA)

Cassius lies head down on the table in the cafeteria four hours later. Same CNN news reports on television. He's awoken by a young kid staring him in the face eating a hot dog.

(the mother of the child calls him and he walks away quickly)

He checks the time on his phone. Turns towards the window and witnesses the weather. The rain is coming down pretty hard.

He proceeds to head upstairs to check on Luca.

Cassius heads to the room where Luca was, only to see another resident in the room. Cassius looks confused, and makes his way to the nurses desk.

CASSIUS

Hello, I'm Cassius. Luca's friend.

VERONICA(NURSE)

Oh, yeah I saw you earlier. How can I help you?

CASSIUS

Was Luca discharged?

VERONICA(NURSE)

Yes sir, she was discharged twenty minutes after she returned from her lunch.

CASSIUS

Really!?

VERONICA(NURSE)

Yes sir, she's been gone for a while now.

CASSIUS

Did she say anything about me or leave a message, anything?

VERONICA(NURSE)

I don't think so... I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

Confused, worried and anxious Cassius turns around and heads to the elevator. Makes a call to her cell, only to receive voice mail.

Cassius heads to the parking lot, pays the meter and leaves the hospital. Driving seven miles under the speed limit, thinking of where Luca could be. He heads home. As the rain pours and the thunderstorms continue, He speeds up. Then he turns around and heads to her friend Ally's house.

At a red light Cassius looks through his phone to find Ally's number. He finds it.

He makes the call. The phone rang three times.

ALLY

Hello.

CASSIUS

Ally.. Ally, I can barely hear you.
Ally.

ALLY

Hello, Cass is this you? Hey,
what's going on?

CASSIUS

Hey Ally, hey have you heard from
Luca? Have you heard from her
today?

Cassius goes through the red light, then hangs a left on a back street.

ALLY

Yeah, she called me around 2:10 or
so, yeah. She asked could I pick
her up and I did.

CASSIUS

Was she OK when you got her, I mean
she wasn't... you know!?

ALLY

She seemed cool.

Cassius' tone changes as he's losing patience with Ally.

CASSIUS

Ally, shit... Was she high Ally?
I'm worried about her. Was she
high?

(CONTINUED)

ALLY

She seemed a little spacey, yeah.

Cassius hangs up the phone, as he sits in his car in park.

CASSIUS

Fuck!

Cassius enters the highway and heads back home. Hoping to hear from Luca.

IT'S JUST A JOB!

(2 1/2 weeks later.)

Still no sign of Luca. Cassius would call Ally and try to get updates on how Luca was, but didn't get any answers.

NARRATOR

Cassius hoped for the best, but braced for the worst. Also, swore to himself, if he had the chance he'd throw it on the line and do what he needed to do to protect Luca. If she'd consed.

Meanwhile, since day one of Luca's discharge things remained the same. The drugging and doing whatever it took to get high continued. Sleeping with different men everyday, sometimes numerous times a day. Depending on the location.

2 1/2 weeks of the same pattern. She runs into Ally, because they'd score from the same guy sometimes. Ally, gives her the run down on how Cassius has been worried. Luca swears to make a call to Cassius.

And does so that evening.

(EXT. HIGHWAY)

Cassius heading home from work on the highway. Has his music up pretty loud. And doesn't hear his phone ring.

Luca leaves a voice mail.

(CONTINUED)

LUCA

*Cass! Cass! Pick up, this is Luca.
I talked to Ally and she told me
you've been calling her everyday
asking about me and I call you and
you don't pick up, punk! Anyway,
I'll be at Ally's tonight. You
should stop by. Answer your phone!*

Click!!

Luca hangs up the phone. She's extremely high, dirty and needing a shower. Ally is having another one of her 1st of the month parties. Where there's a lot of drugs and more drugs. And Luca is all in.

Cassius makes it to his house and hears a beep signal, indicating a voice mail. He grabs his coat from the back of his car and unlocks the door. And walks in. Sets his coat on the couch and presses the button to check the voice mail.

(INT. CASSIUS' HOUSE)

Cassius instantly calls the number back.

Only to get Ally's voice mail. He'd call back, two more times before his call was answered.

ALLY

Hello. Cass is this you again?

CASSIUS

Yeah, this is me. Is...

He's interrupted by a familiar voice.

Luca would grab the phone handed to her by Ally. Her voice was slurred due to the intoxicating effects of shooting up all day.

LUCA

Cass!

CASSIUS

Luca! Luca are you OK? Are you OK?
I'm coming to get you, don't you
move. Please don't move from
there. Luca!!!

Cassius screamed over the phone, due to the excess noise in the background.

Luca would sound like she was half dead. And to Cassius, he felt as if he didn't take action soon. She might be.

(CONTINUED)

LUCA

Cass! Cass! I'm fine. I'm
just....I'm just tired.OK

CASSIUS

I'm on the way Luca. Please don't
leave.

The phone would drop and make a big thud sound as it hit the ground. The background was so loud. Cassius would yell for Luca, to no avail.

Cassius was nervous.He quickly put his shoes on and grabbed his keys. Make his way to the car to head over to Ally's.

Knowing it was across town to Ally's, he figured he'd call again. To be on the safe side. No answer.

(EXT.HIGHWAY)

On the highway now, he'd call again. The same result ensued.

BOWS & ARROWS

(EXT.ALLY'S HOUSE)

Cassius would make it to the house, To be approached by Ally. Fully intoxicated and looking like death herself.

Cassius would move forward towards the house, bobbing and wiving through the crowd.No Luca.

(EXT.ALLY'S FRONT YARD)

On his way out of the house, he'd see Ally again.

CASSIUS

Shit Ally where the fuck is Luca?

ALLY

She left with some guys, I'm not
her keeper.

CASSIUS

Your fucked up, you really
are.Which way,did they walk or take
a car?

ALLY

They just left on foot, towards
Liberty St, I think.

(CONTINUED)

Cassius would look for Luca on foot. Towards Liberty St. Cassius is in full rage at this point. Fully concerned, maybe figuring she's passed out somewhere. He shouts out for her.

CASSIUS

Luca... Luca...

He'd pause for a minute look from left to right every other few steps and repeat.

CASSIUS

Luca... Luca...

Until he heard moans from the alley on the left. Cassius starts to jog. To see with his own eyes where Luca was.

NARRATOR

Now, Cassius had a idea what Luca did for money and some of the stories that would run through his head time after time. But what he saw in that alley aggravated him very much. There it was, the reason why she told him she was no good, the reason why she wasn't worthy of second chances. The reason for not being worthy of white picket fences and 2 plus children. He'd never seen it with his own eyes. The hurt, the pain. Every emotion that every ran through his body for Luca was multiplied ten fold at this very moment.

Cassius stood at the entrance of the alley for seconds, but felt like hours in slow motion. To witness Luca, having sex with two guys at the same time. In a alley, on top of trash bags next to a dumpster.

Cassius grabbed the first thing he saw on the ground, which being a bottle. Possibly dropped by one of the men from the party. He ran over, and hits the one behind Luca in the doggy style position.

The other receiving oral sex would back up towards the wall.

Luca screamed from the top of her lungs in defense of the guy that had been hit by Cassius.

Luca still heavily under the influence, speech still slurred.

(CONTINUED)

LUCA
Casssss! What the fuck are you
doing?

Luca would roll over and grab her shirt and cover herself.

While Cassius was still hitting the first guy. The second guy
seemed shaky, and reaching for something in his back pocket.

Luca would scream again.

LUCA
Casss! Why are you doing this Cass?
Stoppsss Cass! Please, your gonna
kill him.

The second guy would finally get a hold of what he was
gripping from his backside.

2ND GUY
Awww, naw. He ain't gone kill
nobody.

The 2nd guy arches a gun into Cassius rib cage and let two
rounds go.

Luca jumps up with only her shirt on and moves over towards
Cassius, as she screamed.

The shooter was nervous and told the first guy to get up and
they needed to get outta there,

LUCA
*WHAT THE FUCK MAN!!! YOU SHOT HIM!!
YOU SHOT HIM, HE'S GONNA DIE. HE'S
GONNA DIE. CALL THE AMBULANCE.*

Cassius, bleeding from his torso would try and gather his
footing. Only to stumble and fall repeatedly.

Luca was crying uncontrollably. Screaming and sobbing.

LUCA
*CASS, I'M SO SORRY. CASS, PLEASE,
PLEASE. I'M SO SORRY. I'M GONNA GET
YOU TO A HOSPITAL.*

The two guys would flee as Luca held Cassius in her arms
with only a shirt on, her hair covering her whole face
screaming for help.

At that moment Cassius would drift in and out consciousness.
Cassius is losing blood at a alarming rate.

Luca still screaming, feels a tap on her leg by Cassius. He whispers to Luca.

In a very low tone, Cassius grips her leg very tight with his left hand. While his other hand, filled with blood covered the wound.

CASSIUS

*Why didn't you love me?
I've...Loved you from the first day
I met you. I'd do anything for you.
Even die on this pavement right now
for you.*

Luca, sobbing nonstop and shaking Cassius as she responds.

LUCA

*Cass, it's not that I didn't. I
don't deserved you. I'm nothing.
I'm nothing Cass! I'm nothing. This
is all my fault. Please, Please
Cass, don't go. Cass!! Cass!!Hold
on...*

Luca screams for help repeatedly. The first screams fell on deaf ears, but finally a passer by with a cell phone happens to stop and call a ambulance.

By the time the ambulance would make it. Cassius would pass from his severe wounds and massive blood lost.

Luca would go into shock, numb from the feeling of being without the one true friend she's had the majority of her life. She would also bear the brunt of being the reason for Cassius's death. Feeling ashamed and full of guilt she wouldn't make it longer than a month later.

She would OD the way she intended to. She was found at Cass's burial site.

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