

A HAPPY LIFE

by

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INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

DEEP JOHAR, 20s, stocky and half-asleep, awakens to the sound of his neighbor's voices.

STEVE (O.S.)

Natasha! Natasha! Oh no, she hurt herself.

Deep grunts. Gently slips his arm from under his husband, KIRAN JOHAR, 20s, soft and slender, who is snoring quietly.

He goes to the window. Cracks the blinds. Stares out onto the sidewalk, where STEVE and JOSEPH, 40s, a flamboyant gay couple, are holding their Pomeranian dog, Natasha.

JOSEPH

She's fine. You fuss too much.

The couple rub noses. Deep lets the blinds go. Looks back at a still sleeping, Kiran.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Deep eats scrambled egg yolks out of a pan. Slow music comes on. Kiran comes up behind him.

KIRAN

They're playing our song.
(slow dances for a moment)
All the worlds and heavens could
come down right now...

KIRAN (CONT'D)

And it would still be just
us.

DEEP

And it would still be just
us.

KIRAN (CONT'D)

Why are you up so early?

DEEP

(breaks away)
Going to see my parents before
work.

KIRAN

Oh?

DEEP

She thought it was time.

INT. PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

MOTHER, 50s, hopeful, opens the door to Deep. Embraces him.

FATHER (O.S.)
Who's there?

MOTHER
Our son. He came all the way out to
see you, isn't that nice?

DEEP
Hello, Dad.

FATHER, 50s, face furrowed, sits, his eyes glued to the TV.

FATHER
I don't have a son. Tell him go
back to where he came from.

MOTHER
He came from us.

FATHER
He's a disgrace.

DEEP
It's no use, he's impossible.

FATHER
And who are you? A creep? A
pervert?

MOTHER
Paven!

FATHER
No! We do not support this
lifestyle. You've brought nothing
to the family but humiliation.
You'll have no children. No place
in society. You're not a man.
You're disgusting! I am ashamed.
How can you not be?

DEEP
Dad.

Father stands. Walks away. Deep's shoulders sag.

MOTHER
Oh, Deep, I--

EXT. OFFICE - DAY

Distracted, Deep sits with JOHN LEMMER, 30's, on a bench, eating his lunch. John picks apart his sandwich.

JOHN
Bologna again.

Deep's phone rings. He does not seem to notice.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You going to get that?

He glances over at his phone that is lit up with Kiran and him cuddled up on it.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Nice wallpaper.

FATHER (V.O.)
I am ashamed. How can you not be?

DEEP
(grabs phone)
It's not what you think.

JOHN
Okay--

DEEP
That's not me.

JOHN
(eats sandwich)
Sure looks like you.

DEEP
Who are you to tell me who I am?

JOHN
What?

DEEP
(stands)
Put them up.

JOHN
Put--

DEEP
(puts hands up)
Come on.

JOHN
I'm not going to fight you.

DEEP
What are you, a sissy?

Deep swings. Misses.

EXT. HOUSE

Deep riddled with self-disgust, his nose bloody, quickly gets out of the car.

JOSEPH (O.S.)
Hi, neighbor?

Deep turns to see Joseph and Steve, dressed alike, their faces in a panic as they block him from his front door.

STEVE
We're looking for our baby. I think she got out of the house through the back door... she's able to fit through there since the hairstylist Joseph picked butchered her cut--

JOSEPH
It was supposed to be a pixie.

STEVE
It was a crew cut.

DEEP
I don't--

They tango as they continue to block him. The tension builds.

STEVE
We're just so completely devastated. Natasha is like a daughter to us--

JOSEPH
Almost like we gave birth to her ourselves--

STEVE
Let me send you a picture of her. It's my favorite one, she's got this little pink tu-tu and crown. She's--

DEEP
 (explodes)
 I'm not gay!

STEVE
 What did he say?

JOSEPH
 He said he's not--

DEEP
 Gay. I'm not, okay? You got that,
 perverts?

JOSEPH
 (steps back)
 Dear mother of Heaven.

STEVE
 No problem, hon.

He slams the door in their faces.

JOSEPH
 Was that real blood?

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Deep swings open the refrigerator. Chugs a beer. Opens another one. Downs it.

DEEP
 I am a man.

KIRAN (O.S.)
 Hey, baby, what are you... Are you
 pounding beers? You don't even
 drink beer.

DEEP
 Well, maybe that's who I am now.

KIRAN
 Oh my god, you're bleeding. What
 happened?

Kiran tries to blot his nose with a rag. He pushes him away.

DEEP
 Enough. Stop treating me like we're
 a regular couple. You're not my
 wife.

KIRAN

How many of those have you had?

DEEP

I can drink a whole twelve pack if I want.

KIRAN

Is this about your father? What did he say to you? God, he's such a hateful man--

DEEP

Don't you say another word about him, you... you fruitcake!

Deep chugs another beer.

KIRAN

"Fruitcake"? Oh god, he's really gotten to you this time, hasn't he? I knew you shouldn't have gone over there. He doesn't show up to the wedding, sends that long, nasty note, doesn't even answer the phone when you call. Now this.

DEEP

What do you know?

KIRAN

Come here, let me hold you.

DEEP

No.

(pushes him off)

I'm not gay!

KIRAN

Then how do I know your favorite color is blue, huh? Or that you have a scar across your stomach from when you were ten and you jumped the fence to get away from the bullies? Stop letting him get into your head.

DEEP

I need to be alone.

Deep opens the garage door. Rushes inside.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Deep closes the door behind him. Dials.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

NEENA, 20s, speaks into the phone.

NEENA

Deep?

INTERCUT: Deep/Neena

DEEP

Who am I?

NEENA

Not this again.

DEEP

We were married, right?

NEENA

And divorced.

DEEP

But we were happy--

NEENA

Hardly. What's this about?

DEEP

Maybe *that's* who I am. What I was with you. Maybe I thought that was a phase, but maybe this is.

NEENA

Are you kidding me? You were supposed to have worked through all this before you married him. You used *our* counseling sessions to work through it--

DEEP

But, we were married. Me and you, we were in a straight marriage--

NEENA

You're self-sabotaging.

DEEP

I'm disgusting.

NEENA

Stop! You're just--

DEEP

Don't say it--

NEENA

Fine, I'll spell it out. Who picked out all the furniture when we were together? Who decorated the whole house?

DEEP

You're color blind.

NEENA

Who cried at the end of "Bridget Jones' Diary", the third one, all the way through the credits?

DEEP

I had just had eye surgery!

NEENA

Okay. Who left me for a man who he called the "love of his life"?

He quickly hangs up. Kiran knocks on the door.

KIRAN

Deep, are you alright in there?

Deep hits the garage opener.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Deep awakens on the couch a mess. John pops his head in.

JOHN

Hey, couch surfer, problems at home?

DEEP

I don't want to talk about it.

JOHN

Sorry about the nose. We cool?

DEEP

(spots Kiran out window)
Oh no, it's him.

JOHN

Who?
 (sees Kiran)
 Ohhhh!

DEEP

It's not what you think.

Deep runs past him. Goes into the men's room.

INT. OFFICE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Deep sits on top of a toilet in a stall.

JOHN (O.S.)

I don't think we've met--

KIRAN (O.S.)

Kiran.

DEEP

Please. Please. Please. Please.

JOHN (O.S.)

Interesting.

KIRAN (O.S.)

Excuse me.

CO-WORKER (O.S.)

What's going on?

JOHN (O.S.)

Some kind of lovers spat or something.

Deep cringes. Hears the door open.

KIRAN

Deep? I know you're in here.
 (looks under stall)
 I can see you. You're wearing the
 socks I bought you last year for
 Christmas.

Deep pulls up his feet.

KIRAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I don't know what's going on with
 you. Do you want me to leave? Is
 this you, pushing me away?

(MORE)

KIRAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I stayed up all night, wondering
what I did wrong, and now here I am
talking to a stall after finding
out that nobody from your work even
knows who I am. I think maybe I
should leave. I should leave,
right?

Deep hangs his head but stays silent.

KIRAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I guess there's my answer. Got it.
Enjoy your stall, Deep.

Kiran walks out.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Deep watches Kiran lugging a suitcase out of the house before
pulling away.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Deep eyes their wedding album open on the counter. It has a
note on it. It says, "Us".

He opens the album. Stares at the pictures of them together
in their tuxedos. Turns the page of them in the pool. Having
dinner. Kissing. A whole wonderful life.

Deep's lip trembles as he collapses into a chair.

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE - PATIO - NIGHT

Deep stares down at the photos in the photo album with his
mother by his side on the porch. He stares at them dancing.

DEEP
What's wrong with me?

MOTHER
Oh, Deep, relationships are
complicated. People are
complicated.

FATHER (O.S.)
(from inside)
People are simple--

MOTHER

Your father is simple. That's his biggest problem. He still doesn't understand that people are different and that's what makes the world beautiful. You're beautiful, Deep. And Kiran--

FATHER

(comes out onto porch)
I say good riddance.

MOTHER

Perhaps I should've listened to my father and said "good riddance" to you as well?

(to Deep)

They said he was too old and that his family was "undesirable"--

DEEP

I never knew that.

FATHER

Thought they were better than me.

MOTHER

And how did that make you feel?

FATHER

At least we were normal people, not parasites of the community.

MOTHER

Actually, that is the exact word my father used to describe you.

FATHER

We did not raise him this way.

DEEP

(stands)

But, yet here I am, your son, in love with a man--

FATHER

Shame!

DEEP

You keep your shame! Why must you always try so hard to make me hate myself? Make me question who I am? Who I'm *with*! You make me a liar in my own life. I love him--

FATHER

Queer relations isn't love! Two
gays slapping themselves together,
isn't love--

DEEP

Why does it always have to be about
sex with you? We laugh together. He
understands my sense of humor, even
though I barely have one. We dance.
We comfort each other, he's stayed
up hours listening to me go on
about the silliest things.

His mother smiles at him, encouraging.

DEEP (CONT'D)

For breakfast, he always cuts
around the yoke because he knows I
hate the white part of the eggs. He
never burns my toast because it
scrapes the roof of my mouth. And
he loves to surprise me, but always
gives it away with this little
crooked, side smile he does. He's
everything to me.

KIRAN (O.S.)

And you're everything to me.

Deep turns to see Kiran coming up the walkway.

MOTHER

I called him.

DEEP

Kiran.

FATHER

Great.

MOTHER

Paven!

KIRAN

Deep.

Father goes inside. Mother follows, shutting the door.

KIRAN (CONT'D)

Did you mean all that, what you
said?

DEEP
 You don't joke with a man like my
 father. I'm sorry--

KIRAN
 Nice to meet you, I'm Kiran. What
 do you say we spend the rest of our
 lives together?

DEEP
 I say, "I do".

KIRAN
 I can't hear you. Say it loud, say
 it proud.

DEEP
 (yells)
 I do! A million times, I do!

FATHER (O.S.)
 The neighbors!

MOTHER (O.S.)
 Not another word!

DEEP
 I love you. All the worlds and
 heavens could come down right now
 and it would still be just us.

KIRAN
 No more shame, okay?

DEEP
 I'm working on it.

KIRAN
 And in the meantime?

Slow music comes on from inside. Mother smiles from inside
 the window. Puts a "thumbs up".

DEEP
 I guess we dance.

They fall into each others arms and begin to dance slowly to
 the music in plain view for everyone to see.

THE END