

Delayed
by
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INT. AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

People rush for flights, search for loved ones, drag their luggage here and there. It's bedlam.

Amidst this manic chaos, a single girl is noticeable for her stillness. This is KATE, 18, attractive, wearing a red-hooded jumper.

She stands statue-like, staring at the flight info boards directly overhead.

MAN (O.S.)

It's not going to work.

Kate is jolted out of her daze. She looks beside her to see ANDREW, 25, geek chic style, flipping a coin in the air.

KATE

Excuse me?

ANDREW

The flight times. You can stare at them as hard as you like but I'm pretty sure you can't change them. Believe me, I've tried.

KATE

I was supposed to board my flight over an hour ago but it's still delayed.

ANDREW

An hour? Amateur... I've been here since this morning. I never knew it was possible but airport food is actually worse than what you get on planes.

Kate nods, turns back to look at the boards. Andrew flips the coin into the air, higher this time.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

So where are you headed?

KATE

To visit my grandmother... it's her birthday.

ANDREW

Well I hope the story works out differently this time.

KATE

Story?

Andrew reaches over and tugs at her red jumper.

ANDREW

The red hoodie... visiting grandma... I hope the wolf doesn't eat you this time.

KATE

(laughing)

I think I'm a little too old to believe in fairytales.

ANDREW

Wow, that is so sad.

KATE

Oh really, so you still believe in 'happily ever after' do you?

ANDREW

Of course, in fact I'm writing my own right now. It's about this charming and suave young prince who meets the beautiful, but cynical, princess in an airport terminal. She plays hard to get at first but she eventually comes around.

KATE

Hmmm, and how's that working out for you?

ANDREW

(a beat)

I'm quietly confident.

Kate now gives him her full attention for the first time.

Andrew flips the coin up into the air again. As it reaches its apex he darts his eyes back to Kate, smiles, catches the coin without looking.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Heads.

He opens his hand to reveal the coin is in fact showing heads.

KATE

Good guess.

ANDREW

Actually I wasn't guessing. The last fourteen times I've tossed this coin it has landed on hands. Do you know what the odds of that are?

Kate shrugs.

Andrew's eyes go up into his head as he mutters some numbers to himself. It's clear he is performing a quick set of calculations.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Exactly 16384 to one.

KATE

Okay.

Kate still looks at him confused, unsure about where he is going with this or if there is a point.

ANDREW

Just because something is unlikely to happen, doesn't mean it can't.

(beat)

What do you think the odds are that you and I would both have booked a flight for the same day, only to have each flight be delayed and then end up meeting here like this?

KATE

(sceptical)

So what are you saying... you think this is like fate?

ANDREW

Well who's to say what in life is fate and what is coincidence. But since you brought up fate, why don't we let fate decide.

KATE

What do you mean?

ANDREW

My flight is still delayed, so I'm going to grab a bite to eat and hope I don't suffer a bout of food poisoning. I'll be at that cafe right around the corner.

He points to a little cafe around the corner.

He takes a few steps backwards from Kate, flips the coin to her. She catches it.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

If it's heads, come and join me. If it's tails... well, I really hope it's not tails.

With that, Andrew turns around and is gone.

Kate stands there, looks at her closed fist with the coin in it. She looks up at the info board which shows her flight is now boarding.

She looks back down at her fist, opens it up and sees--

--TAILS!

A slight look of disappointment spreads across her face.

She picks up her luggage, pulls her boarding pass from her back pocket and starts off for the departure lounge.

Suddenly, she stops. Looks over her shoulder at the cafe. Looks down at the boarding pass, and the coin still in her hand.

INT. AIRPORT CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Andrew is seated at a table by himself. As he pours salt and pepper on his sandwich a coin is placed on the table from over his shoulder.

ANDREW

(still facing forward)

I guess it was heads then.

Kate comes into his view as she takes the seat opposite him. She holds his gaze.

KATE

My flight is about to board, so that gives you about five minutes to wow me.

ANDREW

In five minutes I'm sure I could wow you twice.

KATE

Do you always hit on girls like this at the airport?

ANDREW

No, actually you're my first... so be gentle with me.

KATE
(smiling)
Somehow I find that hard to believe.

ANDREW
Well I would expect no less from my
cynical princess.

KATE
Ah, your fairytale. What happens next?

ANDREW
It continues with the princess catching a
later flight as she couldn't bear to be
torn away from the charming prince just
yet.

Kate smiles and touches her hair, clearly enjoying his
company.

She looks down at her watch.

KATE
Your five minutes is up.

ANDREW
Did I wow you?

KATE
You did okay... but I do have to go.

Kate rises from her seat.

Andrew looks disappointed, hops up also.

ANDREW
Sure, I understand. Well anyway, it was --

KATE
I have to go and see if I can catch the
later flight.
(off his look)
I can't leave now, I want to see how this
story ends.

Andrew looks elated, proffers his elbow for Kate to hold
onto. She takes it, as they stroll away and are lost in
the sea of people in the terminal.

FADE OUT.