

Pillow Talk

By

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A baby's crib, a colored mobile glides effortlessly above, playing a sweet nursery rhyme. In the corner, a lone teddy bear sits, eyes bright, patient, waiting expectantly.

Across the room MELANIE REYNOLDS, 30's, velour tracksuit, raven hair scraped back, tight, harsh, hums along tunelessly while rummaging around in a closet.

She turns, revealing a prematurely aging face and makes her way across the room to an armchair, inviting, also aging, cracked leather.

In one hand a bottle of Belvedere vodka and a glass. In the other an ashtray containing a pack of Marlboro and a Zippo lighter carefully balanced. Stability in motion.

Her distended belly and stretched attire proudly announce imminent Motherhood. She eases herself into the chair.

MELANIE

Aahhh! Nice.

She places the ashtray on the chair arm, the glass and bottle between her legs as she massages her bump.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I love these moments. Just the two of us. Our secret time.

She pours herself a large vodka and gently places the bottle on the other arm, the glass back between her legs. Skilful, practised.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Like I've told you before, if Daddy knew I did this, he'd get real mad.

Deftly removing a cigarette, she zippo's it and inhales deeply.

Before exhaling she takes a huge slug of vodka, swallows, closes her eyes, savors the moment.

Twists of gray-blue smoke snake their way from Melanie's nostrils

MELANIE (CONT'D)

But Daddies don't understand. They just don't know what Mommies go through.

Another slug followed by the preordained nicotine hit.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

The sickness, the back ache, blood pressure, raging hormones, God! ...And worse of all the rejection. Too fat and ugly I guess. Not like before. Not hot!

One more huge hit of alcoholic nectar and a draw, so severe it propels sparks into the air. A veritable Vesuvius.

She examines her glass and then her smoke.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

No. I need this! In fact I deserve it!

The nursery rhyme stops. Melanie's head snaps up toward the mobile.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

You know we started decorating your room but had to stop...Didn't know which color to use. Pink, blue, some said yellow! Ughh!

Slug, draw followed by a top up.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Y'see, Daddies always want to know. Mommies don't. Just want a surprise. Boy, girl, no matter. A surprise is all...Healthy.

Melanie leaves the sanctuary of her chair and walks across to the crib, drink in one hand, Marlboro in the other. She rubs her belly.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Maybe a girl?...I'd dress you up every day. You'd be so cute! We'd go to pageants and then you'd be a model or a movie star. A real beauty. Men'd go crazy.

She reaches out and touches the crib.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

A boy? Oh, then Daddy'd be so happy. He'd teach you to fight, to drive, to date girls, drink, fish....My God what fun you'd both have.

She laughs as she spins away, slightly high and shuffles back to the chair. Reaching her resting place she bends down to stub out the dying remains of her smoke.

Suddenly, a light knock on the door. Melanie tuns quickly spilling the ashtray and it's contents onto the floor.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Shit!

She places her glass on the vacant arm and stoops to clear up the ash-spill.

A man speaks.

MAN (O.S.)

Mel?...Mel, you O.K?

Melanie panics, retrieves the ashtray and cigarette butt and blows away the remaining incriminating evidence, silently, guiltily looking over her shoulder at the door.

MELANIE

Yeah. Yeah, I'm fine. Just in here, thinking, praying a little. You know, usual stuff.

She nimbly rises, grabs the glass and bottle and heads to the closet on a mission of self-protection.

The door swings wide open. Melanie freezes. BRAD REYNOLDS, 30's, muscular, tee shrt, jeans, sneakers, stands framed in the doorway.

BRAD

What the hell are you doing?

Melanie desperately tries to hide the drink and cigarettes.

Brad makes his way across the room, stands behind his wife.

Melanie hangs her head.

MELANIE

Nothing...

Brad angrily swings her around.

BRAD

Nothing? You call this nothing?

He smashes the ashtray from her grasp, grabs the bottle and glass and throws them across the room.

BRAD (CONT'D)

You bitch!...You promised me...you  
promised me never again...God!  
Forget me...you promised our baby!

He roughly grabs her and throws her to the ground.

BRAD (CONT'D)

You are pathetic! A disgrace!

Brad stands over her, threatening. He prods her with his finger as she cowers and attempts to crawl into the corner.

BRAD (CONT'D)

You're sick you know that?

Brad drags her back into the center of the room by her hair.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Oh no. Not this time honey. You  
ain't gonna hide this time.

Melanie screams.

MELANIE

Stop! Please stop! I promise...

Brad shouts in her face, spit spraying from his mouth.

BRAD

You want to be a mother?...I pity  
any kid you bring into this  
world...you selfish...

Brad straightens up, regains some of his composure.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Now it's my turn to make you a  
promise...I promise you that I'm  
gonna walk outta that door and  
that's the last you'll ever see of  
me!

Melanie howls and throws herself at Brad clutching his leg.

MELANIE

Don't leave...you can't, not  
now...I need you...

Brad reaches down and prises her hands from his shin. He glances at the broken ashtray, bottle and glass.

BRAD

Looks like you got all you need.

With one more disdainful look he leaves.

Melanie lies on the floor sobbing. The front door slams.

Now beside herself, she crawls to the crib, reaches up, grabs the guard rail and pulls herself onto her knees.

Rivers of tears course down her distressed countenance. She peers through the bars at the empty mattress, caresses it.

Slowly she pulls two pillows from under her tracksuit top.

Overcome with emotion she throws herself onto the down-filled surrogates, buries her head and wails.

MELANIE

Forgive me! Please forgive me  
little one...It was all my fault!  
...I still can't stop!

FADE OUT:

THE END