SECRETS AND DIRTY LITTLE LIES

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The room is dark except for the light from the refrigerator.

CLARENCE (40s) attempts to put something into the refrigerator, but it drops to the floor with a THUD.

He bends over and picks up a large and bulging food storage bag that's filled with something dark. He tosses it into the fridge and closes the door.

Clarence smoothes down his hair with both hands, straightens his suit jacket.

He takes a step and his foot slides on the floor.

Clarence regains his balance. He grabs a towel from the counter and sops up the spill with one swipe. He tosses the towel into a corner.

INT. TALK SHOW SET - DAY

A lively audience chants "TERRI" over and over again.

TERRI (30s) a shapely blonde with a cheshire cat grin, stands in front of two empty chairs on the stage. She lifts a mic.

TERRI Thank you. Thank you.

She faces the camera.

TERRI Hello. I'm Terri Spaniel. Welcome to my show.

The audience APPLAUDES.

TERRI

Today tales of betrayal could very well crush the relationships they're attempting to mend with our topic -- Before we go any further I have a confession to make that could change everything.

OOHS and AAHS come from the audience.

TERRI

Did you know that one in five relationships begin online? It's true. That's how our first guest found a woman named Madeline.

AWS come from the audience.

TERRI The two haven't met. They've only talked. But Madeline hasn't been truthful. Madeline has a secret.

Terri revels in the AHHS from the audience, she leans in as if trying to hear them better.

TERRI What is it, you ask? Do you really want to know?

A man in the audience shouts.

MAN She's a dude, man!

Terri makes a face.

TERRI

No, she's not a dude man. And just for that, I'm not tellin' you.

A woman sits next to the man. She punches him in the arm.

Terri wipes a smile from her face, regroups.

TERRI

Madeline was afraid of what could happen when Clarence finds out her secret so she wanted to meet him in public. On our show. In front of the whole world. Imagine that!

Terri turns to look for her guest.

TERRI

Clarence has been backstage in our soundproof booth. Let's bring him out now. -- Clarence.

Clarence, a geeky looking bundle of nerves, shuffles across the stage through the sea of WHISPERS and LAUGHTER coming from the audience.

He sits down in a chair.

TERRI Hello, Clarence. Welcome.

Clarence gives her a pleasant nod.

TERRI So, what made you look online for romance?

CLARENCE I don't go out much.

TERRI Have you done this before?

CLARENCE

A couple times.

TERRI Any success?

He nods.

TERRI

Clarence, you knew that Madeline wanted to meet you here, but what you didn't know is that she has been keeping a secret from you.

He looks surprised.

CLARENCE She has? What is it?

TERRI Why don't we bring her out and she can tell you.

MADELINE (30s) steps out from back stage. She's attractive in a tragic sort of way. She's thin, dark haired, with pale skin and ruby red lips.

Clarence stands. He beams as he watches her walk toward him.

Madeline reaches him and gives him a hug.

TERRI Have a seat.

They sit.

TERRI Madeline, it's on you.

Madeline avoids eye contact with Clarence.

He nods, hangs on her every word.

MADELINE I guess there's no easy way to do this so I'll just come right out with it. -- I'm married.

Madeline peeks at Clarence. He's eerily calm.

The audience is quiet.

TERRI Clarence, are you surprised?

CLARENCE I already knew.

TERRI

You did?

CLARENCE I met her husband in a bar. He was pretty lit up and he gave me her web page address.

TERRI

What?

CLARENCE He thought it could be a good thing for everyone involved if we got together.

Madeline smiles.

Terri looks confused.

TERRI

I don't get it.

MADELINE

We have an open marriage. Sometimes my husband will set me up with someone that he thinks I will like.

TERRI

(interrupting) Now, I've heard everything. MADELINE My husband's good at keeping secrets when he wants to be.

Terri LAUGHS.

TERRI

And what about you? You thought you were deceiving Clarence. And Clarence, too. All three of you were hiding something from another.

CLARENCE

Terri, everyone has a secret of some kind. Maybe even a few. I have to admit that I have a few skeletons in my refrigerator.

Terri looks confused.

TERRI

You mean closet.

Clarence CHUCKLES.

CLARENCE Ah, yes. In there, too.

Madeline gives Clarence a kiss on his cheek.

Terri slumps, looks let down.

TERRI Only on my show.

THOMAS (O.S.) (interrupting) -- Terry.

She looks, then turns back to the camera.

TERRI -- They're telling me we have to take a commercial break, but stay tuned. Our next loser, I mean guest, is going to tell his wife of seven years about his sick love for trees. -- What a perv.

The audience chants, "TERRI" over and over again.

THOMAS (O.S.)

And cut!

Terri addresses the audience.

TERRI Gawd! I'd hate to see what some of these people are like at home.

Clarence and Madeline are in their own little world, talking, oblivious to what Terri just said.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The drapes are pulled, but open only enough to shed a little light into the dark, messy room.

Clarence and Madeline stand in the middle of the room. Madeline sets her purse down on a chair.

> MADELINE Do you have anything to drink? I'm thirsty.

He motions toward a room.

CLARENCE The kitchen's in there. I'll be right back.

Clarence heads down a hallway. Madeline goes into the kitchen.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Madeline opens the refrigerator door and has a look inside.

INSIDE THE REFRIGERATOR

A food storage bag sits on the top shelf. Black strands of hair stick out from the seal.

BACK TO SCENE

Curiosity forces her to reach for the bag. She lifts it up to get a better look at what's inside.

A severed head inside the plastic bag. It's lifeless eyes stare blankly at her.

Startled, Madeline drops the bag and stumbles backward.

CLARENCE So now you know another one of my secrets.

Madeline turns to find Clarence standing right behind her, weilding an ax.

MADELINE

CLARENCE I've developed certain tastes. Eclectic tastes. In food.

Madeline shifts. Clarence blocks her way.

Wha --

CLARENCE Did you know that brains are considered to be a delicacy in some parts?

He LAUGHS.

CLARENCE The look on your face says no. --But actually I'm more of a leg man.

Clarence smacks his hungry lips together.

Madeline SCREAMS.

Clarence takes a wild swing. She lifts her arm as a shield.

BLACK

WHUMP!

FADE OUT.

THE END