

NO GOOD DEED

by

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FADE IN:

A STILL, ETHEREAL IMAGE

JAMES (30) and MELISSA (25), lie on their sides and stare in each other's eyes over a featureless, black background.

Melissa wears a long red negligee that's slit up the side to the top of her thigh. She has one leg draped over his and a hand on his hip.

James, in a white dress shirt and khakis, has an arm around her waist and a palm to her cheek.

Very sweet and tender.

JAMES (V.O.)
(heavy Brooklyn accent)
It ain't how it looks. Let me
explain...

CUT TO:

EXT. FIFTH FLOOR WINDOW, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Curtains billow out from an open window of a brick apartment building. City noise of car horns, sirens, and whistles.

JAMES (V.O.)
...you see, it was late. I just
hailed my sorry ass up five flights
to my floor and, man-oh-man, this
couple down the hall was going at
it. A real doozy, from the sound of
it.

James appears in the open window. He wears a 1940's sport coat and fedora.

JAMES (V.O.)
And then nothin'. Silence. No
argument just stops like that
without someone gettin' popped. The
door was cracked, so I had a
look-see.

Seconds later, he leans out and vomits. His fedora tumbles into the night air without a care.

JAMES (V.O.)
What a mess. I mean, this guy...I
dunno. I swear he had more blood
than anyone had rights.

James spits and clears his nostrils of any remaining bile. He turns his head to his right and stares.

JAMES (V.O.)
And there she was. Oh...my...God.

JAMES POV

Melissa stands barefoot on a ledge beyond James' reach. Her head tilted back, eyes closed, and biting her lower lip.

The breeze causes the negligee to cling to her body and breasts. A wavy blonde wisp of hair blows across her delicate face.

JAMES (V.O.)

She looked just like a pin-up I had
in my old G.I. footlocker...

(beat)

.45 caliber nipples and all.

EXT. FIFTH FLOOR WINDOW, NEW YORK CITY - CONTINUOUS

James leans out farther with his hands on the ledge.

JAMES

Ma'am? Don't move, alright?

Melissa nods her head, ever so slightly.

JAMES

My name's Jimmy. You okay?

MELISSA

He had it coming, you know.

JAMES

I don't care about that, right now.
I just don't want you to get hurt.
Can you tell me your name?

MELISSA

Missy.

JAMES

Missy? Is that short for somethin'?

MELISSA

Melissa.

JAMES

Melissa. That's a beautiful name.

The comment brings a barely perceptible smile to her face.

MELISSA

Thank you.

JAMES

Now, Missy-

MELISSA

Call me Melissa?

JAMES

Uh, sure. Now, Melissa, can I get you to come back inside so we can talk?

MELISSA

He called me that.

JAMES

What's that?

MELISSA

Missy. Never really liked that.

JAMES

I prefer Melissa too. It fits you.

MELISSA

You said it was beautiful.

JAMES

It is. Can you-

MELISSA

Can I call you James?

James looks curious but doesn't miss a beat.

JAMES

Yeah, sure. Course you can.

Melissa smiles, opens her eyes and looks at James. Her eyes are brilliant blue.

JAMES (V.O.)

I'd swear it was Lauren Becall looking at me. You know, them eyes? But there was something else...

MELISSA

That bastard was cheating on me. Me! I mean, look at me!

She moves her left hand up and down the curves of her red silk covered torso.

James' eyebrows rise and he swallows hard.

JAMES

I, uh, I find that hard to believe.

JAMES (V.O.)

But what I was really thinking was that this guy must've been out of his freakin' mind to cheat on a dame like this.

She blushes.

MELISSA
Do think I'm pretty?

JAMES
You oughta be in pictures.

MELISSA
Would you cheat on me?

JAMES
Not in a million years.

She smiles and lets out the cutest little chuckle.

MELISSA
We'd be good together.

It's James' turn to blush.

JAMES
Melissa, I really wanna get you in
here for your safety. Can you
scooch yourself a little closer?
Here, take my hand.

He extends his right hand out to her but she pays no
attention. She has faraway stare.

MELISSA
It was going to be a special night.
I was making him veal parmesan.

She snaps back to present and looks to James.

MELISSA
James? Do you like veal parmesan?

JAMES
It's one of my all-time faves.

MELISSA
I'll make it for you sometime.

JAMES
That'd be swell. Now...come to me.

He opens and closes his extended right hand to beckon her.
She reaches over but she's still a good foot away.

MELISSA
I...I can't, James.

JAMES
Can you side-step over?

She shuffles to her left but starts to swoon. She puts the
back of her left hand to her forehead like a movie starlet.

MELISSA

I'm dizzy.

JAMES

That's okay. Hold on.

James takes off his jacket and climbs out to sit on the window sill with his legs still inside. He holds onto the window frame with his right hand and extends his left.

JAMES

Okay, how about now? Can you reach?

Melissa reaches over with her left. When their fingers touch, she GASPS, as if she had a static shock.

MELISSA

Oh, James.

She leans over just a bit more and he's just able to grab her wrist.

JAMES

Gotcha!

JAMES (V.O.)

And that's when it all went south.

Melissa looks to his hand to see the glint of a gold wedding band on his finger. Her face goes blank.

MELISSA

You're married?

James is really stretched out the window now, trying to maintain his grasp.

JAMES

Melissa, please. Come to me.

A sneer ripples across her face and her eyes blaze in anger.

MELISSA

You're all the same!

Unseen until now, she raises a bloodied meat-cleaver high over her head with an equally blood-covered right hand.

James, in an attempt to ward off the blow, releases his grip of the window-frame and instinctively raises his right hand.

The momentum of her swing causes Melissa to lose her balance and fall off the ledge.

James doesn't let go of her wrist. He falls backwards and hangs upside down from his legs.

JAMES

I won't let you go!

A broad smile spreads across her face.

MELISSA

Oh, James. I love you too.

JAMES

Wha-?

A STILL, ETHEREAL IMAGE (BACK TO SCENE)

The featureless, black, background slowly changes to on a dirty, cracked sidewalk.

As before, Melissa has one leg draped over his. James has an arm around her waist and a palm to her cheek.

All sweet and tender as blood pools around their heads.

FADE TO BLACK