

UNREQUITED

Written by

Ara Shahinian

Shahinian@sbcglobal.net

OVER BLACK:

SUPER - Paris, France - 1956

FADE IN:

EXT. GARE DE L'EST - PARIS, FRANCE 1956 - TERMINUS - DAY

IN BLACK AND WHITE:

Swarms of PASSENGERS, most of whom stand in wait. Sounds of chatter and speaker announcements echo in this grand station.

Fashion at the forefront, the energy electric.

We move through the crowd following a playful YOUNG BOY as he weaves through legs. He takes cover behind a pair of slacks, but we pass him too and through more crowds.

We reach the end of the platform where we focus on a MAN and WOMAN standing, backs to us. The WOMAN has her arm wrapped tightly around his. Their leather luggage next to his feet.

CLAUDE BACOT (40s), mediocre in looks but makes up for it dressed in a well-pressed suite, overcoat and trilby hat. He stands confidently next to his woman.

LISETTE BACOT (30s), a Grace Kelly clone, impeccably dressed wearing a thick coat, high-heels, head scarf, and gloves.

Train arrives. Claude reaches for both luggage.

INT. TRAIN - FIRST CLASS - DAY (MOVING)

Wearing a provocative dress, Lisette is seated across from Claude, sipping on a glass of wine and watching the meadows WHIZ across her window.

Claude quaffs his last bit of Scotch. He's definitely tipsy. He grabs a MALE ATTENDEE'S attention, tapping his empty glass of Scotch for another.

Claude stares at the love of his life, Lisette.

She notices him back. She smiles. She turns back to look through her window.

The attendee places a glass of Scotch in front of Claude. He grins ear to ear.

All language is in French.

CLAUDE
Aaaahhh. Brilliant.

He kicks back the entire drink.

INT. TRAIN - FIRST CLASS - DAY (MOVING)

Claude knocked out, snoring with a napkin bib.

Lisette reading a book.

Their table being replaced with new linen and silverware by an attendee. The attendee puts the finishing touches.

LISETTE
Thank you darlin'.

ATTENDEE
(respectfully nods)
Madam

She sinks her head back down into her book.

In through the gangway a tall MAN (40's) with jet-black hair saunters in with just the clothes on his back. He's rough around the corners, but looks to have aged like fine wine. His eyes fixed on Lisette.

His UNKEPT WORK COVERALLS immediately catches an attendee's attention. The attendee approaches him.

ATTENDEE (CONT'D)
(Quietly and rudely)
Monsieur, your ticket?

The Man snatches his ticket from his inside pocket and presents it to the attendee.

MAN
Amazing, isn't it?

The attendee reads it in disappointment. The man grins but no sooner his sight snaps to Lisette. The attendee catches the object of the Man's affection, unsettled.

ATTENDEE
This way Monsieur...

He extends his arm towards the back. The man, instead, slumps in the booth beside him; a perfect angle on Lisette.

MAN
I think I like this better.

ATTENDEE

But monsieur, I think it--

MAN

*The view here is so much nicer. I
guess you get what you pay for.
Good day sir.*

The attendee grudgingly nods and walks away.

INT. TRAIN - FIRST CLASS - NIGHT (MOVING)

The overhead lights dimmed throughout the cabin, except for Lisette's who's still reading her book,

and the Man who's now slouched in his seat, obsessively watching her. He picks at a bowl of grapes in front of him and a beer in hand. He takes a swag in frustration.

Lisette closes her book and sets it down. She stares out the window.

The Man perks up. He looks at his bowl of grapes. He plucks one and playfully takes aim at her. He chucks it, and misses. He grabs a second and takes aim.

This time a direct hit to her face. Startled, Lisette looks in the direction it came and spots the Man.

The Man breaks in an inaudible laugh as he exchanges looks with her for the first time. He tries his best to keep his composure.

Lisette on the other hand mortified by his presence.

Claude wakes from his comatose state forcing the Man to temporarily stop his shenanigans.

Claude sees Lisette and looks around, still half asleep. It's nothing, so he slips back into his comatose state and no sooner starts to snore.

Lisette and the Man exchange looks again. He sends her a silent kiss and airs the words, 'I love you.'

She shakes her head in sadness, as-if not able to bear his presence. A tear falls down her face. She drops her head to hide it.

The Man throws another grape that bounces off her head.

She disregards it completely.

He throws another,

but this time she looks up and airs the words, 'STOP!' She turns to look outside her window.

He throws another, hitting her.

She doesn't budge.

Another, and another.

Finally, she's had enough. She grabs one of the grapes and tosses it back, but instead of hitting the Man, an attendee catches crossfire.

The attendee deadpans both and ambles along.

The Man silently laughs uncontrollably,

and Lisette can't help but chuckle, but no sooner she's back to sadness.

The Man feels her pain. He flicks his head in the direction of the cabin behind him.

She shakes her head.

He persists by pointing his finger at her and himself to meet in the back.

She nervously shakes her head again.

The Man childishly pouts.

Lisette gets up and instead walks in the OPPOSITE direction.

Confused, the Man watches her move through the gangway.

INT. LAVATORY - TRAIN - NIGHT (MOVING)

Lisette washes her face. She looks in the mirror, her face pale, her eyes swollen from tears. She exits.

Standing, waiting, is the Man.

LISETTE

What are you doing here?

He has between his fingers a single grape. He moves it in close to her lips, seductively.

DEMETRE
*Can't a man travel to Vienna to
visit his lonely grandmother?*

She flicks the grape out from between his fingers with her middle finger.

LISETTE
Except she lives in Luxembourg.

DEMETRE
(playful)
Oops.

He moves in for a kiss. She pulls back.

LISETTE
Stop Demetre.

DEMETRE
*What, your knight not deserving of
your kisses anymore?*

LISETTE
No. No More.

His playing stops.

DEMETRE
Well, isn't that a shame.

LISETTE
*Yes, it is. What are you doing
here?*

DEMETRE
*I love you. I couldn't bear to be
without you Listette.*

He moves in for another kiss, but she pulls back more adamant.

DEMETRE (CONT'D)
Please don't do--

LISETTE
*You shouldn't have spent all this
money. You know you can't afford
it.*

DEMETRE
*I'll spend the rest of it if I
must. I'll travel the ends of this
world for you.*

LISETTE

*How dare you, putting my marriage
on the line like this. Who the hell
do you think you are?*

DEMETRE

*I was afraid I would never see you
again, okay.*

LISETTE

That was the plan.

(beat)

*Look, it's over - we're over. In
time you'll accept it and get over
me. It's only natural. But we must
honor our commitment.*

DEMETRE

Ya, well, I changed my mind--

LISETTE

Change it back--

DEMETRE

*Just like that? You nuts? You don't
understand. I tried, boy did I try.
But I couldn't stop thinking about
you. Day in and day out. It's like
you're part of me. You're my
everything. I'm in love with you
and I know deep down you still love
me. We can't just let that go.*

LISETTE

*Demetre, it's not a choice no more.
We're both married. Don't make this
any harder. What we had once was
beautiful, but it's the past. It's
over. Go back to Adeline. Give her
all your love--*

DEMETRE

*NO! I don't love her. I love you. I
love you so much that I want to
marry you.*

LISETTE

*Oh sweet Demetre...Claude is my
love now.*

(holds his hands)

Please understand...Go home.

The finality of those words hit Demetre hard. A FEMALE ATTENDEE walks up, concerned.

ATTENDEE
Monsieur, Madam, everything okay?

Lisette nods. Attendeo walks away, unconvinced.

DEMETRE
*Without you I'll end my life.
Tonight.*

LISETTE
*If you love me you take back what
you just said.*

DEMETRE
No.

LISETTE
*If you truly love me you go home,
back to Adeline, start your new
life. Just know you'll forever live
in my heart.*

She kisses his forehead.

LISETTE (CONT'D)
*Please sit in another cabin. I beg
you, let me be. I'll send you the
cost of this trip...goodbye.*

DEMETRE
...So just like that?

She nods.

DEMETRE (CONT'D)
I would've given you the world.

LISETTE
Claude already has.

We hold on Demetre as he stares deep into her eyes. His eyes flooding with tears. But just as he's about to erupt, he storms off into the other cabin.

INT. TRAIN - FIRST CLASS - NIGHT (MOVING)

Lisette curled up under a blanket. She looks to the vacant seat where Demetre once was. She starts to SOB.

INT. TRAIN - FIRST CLASS - NIGHT (MOVING)

Lisette knocked out, along with everybody else in the cabin. All is quiet, except for the rhythmic sound of iron wheels over track.

A FAINT SCREAM of a WOMAN in b.g..

Lisette jolts from her sleep. She's frozen in eerie silence. Another scream, followed by sobbing.

TRAIN WHEELS GRINDING against the track, slowing. Panicked, Lisette opens her window drapes and pans outside; nothing but meadow and darkness as far as the eye can see.

She shuts her eyes in disbelief.

FADE TO BLACK.