

Sweet Sweet Revenge

By Daniel Cappello

The clock strikes midnight as the dark sky illuminates of fluorescent colors. Explosions surrounded the perimeter as if a war had just begun. Loud cheers blurted out in excitement in the celebration of the New Year. Casey runs over to a good buddy of his to make a toast, clinks his glass with a few other bystanders, making his way over to him.

“All right boys! I’d like to offer up this moment of celebration in hope to bring all of my favorite people a joyous and prosperous new year,” Casey says.

“How about a stable girlfriend Casey?” Kenny says.

Everyone laughs at the insult since Casey has trouble in the past holding down a girlfriend. It isn’t his charming looks or personality that pushes them away but his inability to commit. Casey grins at Kenny, slams his hands down on the counter. He walks over to Kenny lifting up the bottle of scotch, refills both of their glasses.

“Hey man, I was only joking around,” Kenny says.

“It’s all good, I didn’t take anything from it. We’re all drunk and trying to have a good time,” Casey says.

In a booth seated diagonally across from them, sits a young woman wearing a blue sundress. A mysterious ambience surrounded her persona. Casey gazes at the young woman breathless. His heartbeat drops as he stares contently. He clears his throat to avoid the scratchiness from the cigar he had just smoked. Casey adjusts the tie around his neck, takes a few steps towards her.

“Don’t say anything stupid. Just be yourself,” Casey says, as he walks over to her.

“A pretty girl hanging out by herself for New Years. Can I buy you a drink?” Casey asks.

She smirks at him, rolling her eyes. She giggles at the offer.

“Do you use that cheesy pick up line for all the girls you hit on?” she asks.

“Not exactly. Only the pretty ones,” Casey says.

“Nice one,” she says.

Casey glances over at Kenny and gives him a subtle wave of acknowledgment as they air five each other. During the conversation, Casey admires her left hand to ensure that he wasn’t making a previous mistake. The most previous encounter, Casey had met someone that was married, out looking for a one-night stand. Not aware of the consequence, he made the mistake of getting involved, resulted in a devastating encounter. As Casey continued to stare, he notices a tan line from where there once was a ring. He stares, stuck frozen as a flashback overwhelms him.

“Would you like to get out of here?” She asks.

Casey snaps back to reality and stares at her with a confused expression on his face not knowing what she had just said.

“I asked if you would like to get out of here,” she says.

“I don’t see why not, it’s kind of noisy in here anyway,” Casey says.

He slides out of the booth and puts out his hand, reaches for her. They walk towards the exit grabbing their coats from the rack near the door. Out front of the bar waited a taxi. They stumble towards the car, fall in the back seat from being intoxicated.

The following morning Casey wakes up with an aching headache to notice a sticky note placed on the end table near his bed. He reads:

I had a great time last night. Meet me for lunch at the Ritz around 12. Hope to see you there.

Love, Jen

“What exactly happened last night?” Casey says.

Even though the friendly encounter wasn’t coming into Casey’s mind he had this feeling as though it was something special. The sensation of butterflies flapped around in his stomach. He rushes to his phone on the end table to see that it was almost time. Casey slides on his jeans and hoodie that he had grabbed from his closet while pacing through the front door.

The Ritz was located only a few blocks from his apartment building. He turns the corner of the tall building, slightly out of breath. The same young woman he had grown to remember, stood outside by the double doors.

“Jen?” Casey asks.

“Were you really that drunk last night? Come on let’s head in and get a seat you goof,” Jen says.

“My apologies. Let’s head in,” Casey says.

They both walk in where there resided two tables by a window that overlooked a landscape. Down in the distance a beautiful waterfall brushed behind a flock of trees. They both sat down to order lunch as Casey stares into Jen’s eyes. Her green pearls reflected from the crashing blue water. Within that moment he felt a surrounding energy of love that he had never felt before. She wasn’t like any other person that Casey had known. Unlike his previous attempts

at a relationship, one thing still bothered him. As Jen was about to say something, Casey interrupts.

“Are you married? Listen I feel a connection between us, but I don’t want to.”

Jen laughs, knowing what he was about to say. She reaches out for his hand.

“Let me stop you there. I was married a few months ago. Unfortunately, I lost my husband,” Jen says.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to pry. That was not my intention,” Casey says.

Jen reaches for her glass wine, takes a sip.

“Cheers,” Jen says, raising her glass towards him.

Time flew by before they knew it. Behind the raging waterfall the sun gleamed incandescent. Casey and Jen walk along the waterfront as they hold hands. As they sit down at a nearby park bench, Casey’s phone vibrates. He pulls it from his pocket to see it was his friend Kenny.

“Do you need to take that?” Jen asks.

“It’s ok. I’ll call him back tomorrow. It’s not important,” Casey says.

Casey lifts his leg to rest on his lap. He reaches over to Jen, putting his arm around her. The moon crept from behind the clouds, filling the night sky over the two lovebirds.

Some-time had passed. The aroma of flowers filtered the air as birds blew high, chirping loud gawks. Outside of Casey’s apartment complex parked a moving truck. A bang strikes at the front door. Large stacks of boxes rested there next to a man. Casey opens the door to see a gentleman at his step, holding a clipboard.

“Is this the Clifton residence?” The mover asks.

“You got the right place. Please bring all the stuff and set in over in that corner,” Casey says.

Steps creak from around the corner coming from the hallway. Jen runs over to Casey, pressing her lips against his. Grabs his body and pulls him close to her as she dips down swinging her arms around his neck.

“I hope this is okay. I’m not trying to force you into anything,” Jen says.

“Not at all babe. I fell in love with you the first time we met. You can say love at first sight,” Casey says.

They unpack boxes fooling around. It was as if they were a teenage couple unable to resist one another. A vibrate is heard from the kitchen, growing louder. Casey struts over to his phone to notice that his friend Kenny has been calling, leaving fifteen missed calls. The phone rings again. Casey slides his finger onto his phone to answer.

“Where the hell have you been? I’ve been trying to reach,” Kenny says.

“My bad, it has been pretty hectic as of lately,” Casey says.

“I understand that, but it only takes five minutes out of the day to make a phone call, even less,” Kenny says.

“Calm down now. I don’t know what else to tell you. I have finally met the one and I’m happy,” Casey says.

“Are you talking about the same girl from the bar?” Kenny asks.

Jen snatches the phone from Casey and hangs up. They both wrestle on the couch falling to the floor in laughter. The day shifts to an evening of joy and happiness to confusion in the matter of minutes. Casey grabs a bag of laundry from the pantry in the hallway closet. In the corner of the basket remained a bloodstained t-shirt. Casey’s eyes widen as he stares at the shirt

in his hands. Footsteps crept from behind him, his heart starts to race. He throws the stained shirt back in the basket of dirty clothes and turns around.

“Sweetie, is something the matter? You’re all flustered,” Jen says.

“It’s nothing. I thought my authentic jersey got ruined in the wash,” Casey says.

“I’ll be right back. I need to run out to my car really quick,” Casey says.

Casey scoops up his keys from the end table by the front door and dashes out. He sits in his car contemplating as he tries to be rational with his next move. Casey is the type of person to overthink something so simple. He gets up out of his car to head back into the apartment. Jen sits there on the couch with the stained shirt in hand.

“Listen. We need to talk about something,” Jen says.

“Sure. What is it?” Casey asks.

“The other day I got held up at gunpoint,” Jen says.

“Oh my god, are you ok?” Casey asks.

Jen places her hand on his cheek, slowly strokes her fingers through his hair. Casey grasped her hand, pulled it to his mouth and kissed her sensually. He leans in pressing his chest close to hers.

“Yes honey, I’m fine,” Jen says.

“Did they ever catch the guy?” Casey asks.

The ten o’clock news appears on the television. The news anchor explains on the details of the robbery. Both Casey and Jen watch in awe. Next a report, premier in detail of local citizen that disappeared a few days ago. Jen reaches for the remote to flip the channel.

“I’m heading to the kitchen, you need anything?” Casey asks.

“A tall glass of beer would hit the spot about now,” Jen said.

“Anything for my lady,” Casey said.

As Casey heads into the kitchen, two cabinet doors were open with a foul odor producing from them. He walks over as his eyes widen covering his mouth with his shirt. Underneath the sink rested a head with missing eyes as rats nibble at the remains. He jumps up out of disbelief to find the chopped off head was indeed his friend Kenny. Casey turns to find Jen standing behind him with a large pipe wrench grasped in her hand. She swings at him and the heavy tool smashes right across the temple of his forehead, knocking him unconscious. Jen grabs his body and drags him placing him in a dimmed room, tied up against a steel barricade with his mouth gagged. He wakes to find Jen standing there in front of him seated.

“You may want to know why I have killed your friend, and have you tied up in this mysterious room,” Jen says.

Casey struggles as he sways his body to try and release himself from a chain. His attempt is unsuccessful. Jen grabs a chair placing it in front of him as she pulls out a picture from her back pocket. The picture shown was a little girl and two parents.

“Do you happen to remember who these people are in the picture I am showing you?” Jen asked.

“This is my father and mother. You sent them to die, stranded with nothing, leaving a helpless girl to grow up with no parents,” Jen says.

Casey continues to struggle, mutters words as nothing is coming out. He stares into the eyes of Jen as she displays a sense of terror. She removes the gag from his mouth as she bends down.

“Any last words?” Jen asked

“But why? I don’t understand, I really thought we had something special,” Casey says.

“Are you really that gullible? My parents worked for your company for many years. You worked them to death and sent them off when they had information against you,” Jen says.

“I had no choice in the matter. It was either your parents or my company and I can’t allow that. Your parents were only pawns in this so-called conspiracy,” Casey says.

Jen heads behind a white curtain, rummaging through a crate. She pulls out a clear container with a hazardous symbol with crossbones on the side of it. The label on the front of the bottle displayed *Muriatic Acid*. She pops the cap of the bottle and begins to pour the liquid into Casey’s eyes as he screams. She then runs the bottle down into his throat causing Casey’s skin to burn as it rots through his skin. His body swings from the chains, hanging limp. Jen turns around walking out the room and grabs a pack of smokes out of her top pocket, ignites it. She grabs a red container that has been sitting outside of the room of where Casey’s body remained. Pours the substance throughout the hallway leading to the entrance. Lights herself a cigarette taking one pull and flicks it.

“Now that is what I call Sweet Sweet Revenge,” Jen says.