

Simpatico
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. HOTEL - BEER GARDEN - NIGHT

An upmarket establishment with a predominantly singles crowd.

Bench-seats, flowered trellises and fancy industrial lighting. Christmas decorations and mistletoe hang from wooden rafters.

Two women in their mid 30s sit opposite each other drinking wine - MELISSA, a buxom brunette - spilling out of her top, her skirt hiked up to reveal long tanned legs.

And ANN, a curly blonde - shorter, rounder and more modestly dressed, with a cheery smile.

Melissa pinches a passing WAITER'S bottom. She smiles broadly.

The waiter, almost half her age, winks and smiles back.

She turns her attention back to Ann.

MELISSA

... Anyway, I felt something really real between us, you know?

ANN

(giggling)
What, his penis?

MELISSA

(checking her cell-phone)
Yeah. You're a real riot, Ann.

Across the beer garden, at a separate bench, sit:

CHAD and BOB, both late 30s.

Chad is conventionally handsome in a ken-doll way, least he was ten years ago. Now the slick-backed hair and trendy clothes look a little try-hard and overdone.

Bob is sandy-haired and freckled with a receding hairline, a jelly belly and a jovial face.

Both drink beer while checking out the female contingent.

BOB

So, when's the wedding, mate?

Chad shrugs his shoulders.

CHAD

Yeah, you know...

BOB

Well actually no, I don't, which is why I asked.

CHAD

If you'd asked me at the start of the night I'd have said dust off that penguin suit, fella'. But by the end of it...

BOB

Sorry to hear that, mate. She sure looked the part.

CHAD

Yeah. Nah. She was a bit too full-on, you know. Gave off this vibe...

BOB

The 'you're my last hope' kinda vibe?

CHAD

Yeah, oozing from every pore.

INTERCUT MELISSA AND ANN & CHAD AND BOB.

ANN

Well no offence but I think you've played this tune before.

MELISSA

This is different. I really think this guy might be the one.

Ann squeezes Melissa's hand.

ANN

In that case I'm really happy for you.

Chad takes a long swig of beer, belches loudly.

CHAD

Shame. Great pair of tits on her.

MELISSA

He's got the most beautiful lips,
full, sensual, - infinitely
kissable.

Ann has a glazed faraway look in her eyes.

ANN

Ah, remember when you used to go on
a date and all you did was snog -
for hours. I want that again.

MELISSA

Yeah, me too.

CHAD

And a majestic arse.

He burps again.

BOB

Call me old fashioned but it's the
face for me. Every single time.

CHAD

Tell me something Bobby, based on
your abundant experience - would
you say women are still into
romance?

BOB

I think so. Yeah.

CHAD

So what's up with this then? Last
night I was my usual sensitive
self, didn't deviate from the tried
and tested, you know? Everything's
going great guns...

INT. CHAD'S APARTMENT - FLASHBACK

Music pumping.

Lights low.

Clothes coming off fast.

Chad kisses Melissa's bare shoulders, then her neck.

Moves around to her mouth - about to kiss her when:

Sudden discomfort on Melissa's face.

Abruptly, she turns her face away.

Grabs for his belt-buckle.

BACK TO INTERCUT:

CHAD

What's with that? Have I got bad
breath or something?

MELISSA

He was a little shy at first -

Chad leans forward huffs his breath on Bob.

Bob retracts his head.

ANN

Really? Shy? That's so adorable.

MELISSA

Yeah, so I took matters into my own
hands, if you know what I mean...

BOB

Bit beery, maybe. But fuck that,
man. Nah, you're cool.

Ann still in her own reverie.

ANN

Everything was so much simpler
before, don't you think? No Tinder,
no Grindr, No RSVP, just...

Ann sighs.

ANN

So, was he a good kisser?

Melissa scrunches her face up.

ANN

What? Too much tongue?

Ann grimaces.

ANN

Ooh, I hate it when they do that.
You gotta work up to it - nice and
slow, you know.

MELISSA

I just got the feeling he wanted to
get down to business.

ANN

So, what? No kissing?

MELISSA

Well, he leaned in for one, but I
wasn't falling for that trick.

ANN

What trick?

MELISSA

You know. The perfunctory snog, the
pretend seduction. I figure the
kissing can come later. When we're
a couple, you know.

ANN

Isn't that a bit back to front?

MELISSA

Jeez, Ann.

ANN

What?

Ann appears genuinely perplexed.

MELISSA

Rule number one: Never appear too
needy.

ANN

So, what? Kissing's needy?

MELISSA

Kissing's intimate.

ANN

But sex is not?

Melissa throws her hands up as though Ann knows nothing.

CHAD

Kinda ruined it for me. In the end
I just wanted it done and her gone.
Know what I mean?

MELISSA

I stayed the night

ANN

Ooh, that's a good sign.

BOB

(nodding)
Know it well, mate.

CHAD

She wouldn't take a hint about
leaving once we were done either.
Sex is one thing, you know, but now
I've got to navigate the whole
sharing a bed thing.

MELISSA

Okay, confession. And, before you
say anything -

ANN

Oh-oh, really? That's not good -

CHAD

She was drunk as a skunk, mate.
Passed out on me. Like a dead
weight all night. Be alright 'cept
she was lying diagonal, you know?

BOB

You're a funny guy, man.

CHAD

You gotta earn overnight
privileges. I mean I don't know
this woman...

BOB

Real funny.

MELISSA

I was out of there before he woke
up, so it's cool.

CHAD

There was drool coming out of her
mouth, mate... And another thing...
(MORE)

CHAD (CONT'D)

When we were doing it she refused to get on top. Just flat out refused. Now, what the hell's that about? I thought women were into equality and shit.

BOB

She might have been shy. I went out with a girl once who -

CHAD

What? I've got to do all the work now? Fuck that. Not to mention...

ANN

So has he texted?

Melissa checks her phone again.

MELISSA

Not yet, no. But it's all part of the game.

ANN

I wish there was no game...

MELISSA

We can wish all we want but when it comes down to it men are really not that bright. They're ruled by their baser instincts.

ANN

What, you mean like their -

MELISSA

Exactly. Beer, shag, kebab, and not necessarily in that order.

ANN

I don't know...

MELISSA

Tell me this, why does every guy these days want you on top? It's not a good look for a girl, you know. You're trying to suck the belly in, and at the same time the girls are flapping around...

Melissa grabs her own breasts as if trying to corral them.

CHAD

... No better sight than her on top
and a nice pair of jubbies
bouncing away -

ANN

Everybody looks much better lying
down. Not to mention...

MELISSA

Ugly sex-face!

ANN

Ugly sex-face!

Both girls roll about laughing.

INT. CHAD'S APARTMENT - FLASHBACK

Chad on top of Melissa, going at it at the speed of a bullet
train - headboard rattling, sweat beads on his forehead.

Melissa's face looks serene, as -

Chad pounds away like a mad man. One almighty thrust then -
his face contorts, red, angry looking, a little unhinged.

His mouth gapes wide open in the final throes of orgasm.

BACK TO INTERCUT:

Melissa throws back some more wine.

MELISSA

Speaking of, whatever happened with
you and that Leonard guy?

Ann looks momentarily affronted at the mention of ugly sex-
face and Leonard in the same sentence, but recovers
perfectly. She takes a sip of her drink.

ANN

Didn't work out.

MELISSA

Aww, shame. You two looked so good
together.

ANN

What does that even mean? We looked
good together?

Melissa's too busy ogling more of the passing talent to even hear the resentment in Ann's voice.

MELISSA

You're too picky, that's your problem.

ANN

Guy chewed with his mouth open -

MELISSA

Ewww -

ANN

Yeah, we'd go out to dinner I couldn't look at him.

MELISSA

Still, you need to be way more open and proactive.

ANN

I'd rather it just be, if it's meant to be. Like... destiny.

Melissa snorts into her drink.

MELISSA

Destiny? Please. That's a pre-feminist myth perpetuated by our grandmothers to stop us tarting around. Gotta put yourself out there kiddo.

ANN

I think guys can smell fear and desperation. Remember Scary Helen?

MELISSA

Oh shit, Scary Helen. Yeah. That was not good. But she's a special case. Trick is to look but to not look like you're looking. There's an art to it.

ANN

I'm not sure I can be bothered anymore. I'm not even convinced there is someone for everyone.

MELISSA

That's the whole point. The market is saturated - four women to three men. It's called supply and demand. You could do with loosening up a bit too if you don't mind my saying.

Ann looks down at her modest attire.

MELISSA

Guys are visual creatures.

Melissa leans forward, undoes the top two buttons on Ann's blouse.

MELISSA

They're your best assets.

ANN

Um, thanks. I think.

MELISSA

You're really quite pretty in a Mumsy kind of way. You just need to play to your strengths.

ANN

I'm not you, Mel. I certainly don't consider myself a commodity to be -

Ann buttons her top again.

MELISSA

That's exactly what you are. That's what all of us are. You've got something to sell. If you don't put it out there someone else'll snap him up. Look around you.

ANN

I don't know, sometimes I think we're just going about it all wrong you know. If it's meant to be -

BOB

Seeing her again, then?

CHAD

Not likely.

BOB

Oh well. You did her, right? So not a complete loss.

CHAD

You saw the tits on her. Not gonna not, am I?

BOB

S'pose not.

CHAD

Besides she was gagging for it. I'm curious about her turning down the romance though.

BOB

I think some people are just not into the kissing.

CHAD

Mate, the kissing is the litmus test of love. You can stick your dick into anything, right? But at the end of the day if you haven't got the kissing going on, it's just not going to work. It's um... what's it called...?

He clicks his fingers a couple of times.

BOB

Simpatico?

CHAD

Yeah, that's the word. Simpatico.

BOB

The alternative is that she was just using you for sex.

CHAD

True.

Chad lets out a long drawn out belch.

CHAD

Sometimes I think I was born in the wrong era, you know?

BOB

Yeah, I can see that.

CHAD

I just don't understand women like that, you know?

BOB

Ask me she sounds a lot like you, minus the dick of course.

CHAD

Fuck off.

BOB

Well it's not like you were so offended you refused to give her some, is it?

CHAD

You're missing the point.

BOB

What point?

CHAD

The 'I sure as hell ain't taking that home to Mum,' point.

A look at one another cues an insider joke between them.

BOB

Hell no!

CHAD

Hell no!

They slam their beers down on the table. They laugh.

CHAD

But seriously, she wants more of the Chadmeister, too.

BOB

(indulging him)

How do you figure that?

CHAD

I figure cause of this.

Chad pulls a lacy g-string from his pocket.

BOB

What's that?

CHAD

Fuck man, what's it look like?

He twirls it around his finger.

CHAD

What does she think, I'm a beginner?

Bob shrugs.

CHAD

This, Bobby-boy, is one of the oldest tricks in the book. If you leave something you gotta come back for it. Gettit?

He tucks the g-string back into his pocket.

CHAD

What? No girl never left any souvenirs at yours?

BOB

Oh yeah, course. Lots.

CHAD

I s'pose I could do her once more.

BOB

Very magnanimous of you.

CHAD

What's with the attitude? All of a sudden you're the moral compass? We're the guys, Bobby. We're supposed to do this shit. Spreading our seed is what God intended.

BOB

Yeah, maybe...

CHAD

No maybe about it. A few more years I'll be hitting the big four-o. I want what everyone wants, the wife, the kid, the whole shebang.

A nubile young WAITRESS in a short skirt and low cut top leans over the table. She picks up some empty glasses, then walks away wiggling her slim hips as she goes.

CHAD

Jesus titty-fucking Christmas, look at the arse on that.

- loud enough that the waitress can't help but hear.

She turns, smiles.

BOB

Ever think maybe you're going about
all this the wrong way?

The waitress winks at Chad. He laughs.

CHAD

That right there, tells me no mate,
I don't. They eat this shit up.

BOB

That's about her, mate. Not you.
You just finished saying you want
the real thing, right? The one?

CHAD

Eventually, yeah.

They sit in silence for a moment.

CHAD

Hey, whatever happened to that
redhead you were seeing.
Whatsername? Tip o' my tongue?

Chad clicks his fingers again.

BOB

Simmonne.

CHAD

Christ, that's right. The one with
the la-de-da accent. Hello, my name
is Simmonne. Not Simone. Spoke like
she had a bug up her arse.

Bob's stung by the comment, but hides it.

BOB

She was alright. Anyway, it didn't
work out -

CHAD

- See, fucking bitch -

BOB

Her visa ran out.

CHAD

Right. Oh shit. That's a bummer.
Sorry, mate.

(MORE)

CHAD (CONT'D)

(pause)

Did you cry?

BOB

Um, a bit, yeah.

CHAD

Fuck, sorry. I really am an insensitive prick aren't I?

BOB

Yeah.

CHAD

Dodged a bullet though, I reckon.

Bob pinches the area between his brows, closes his eyes briefly.

BOB

Still with the insensitive prick, then?

CHAD

Shit. Sorry. Did I do it again?

They both go quiet, watch as a few more women pass. Bob takes a deep breath, sighs.

BOB

I don't know, maybe that was my chance. Maybe that was it for me.

CHAD

Fuck off. There isn't just one. There's lots of the 'one'. The 'one' is the biggest manufactured construct ever. Brought to you by Hollywood and sponsored by Hallmark. Imagine if you were born in England -

BOB

If I was born in England I would've met Simmonne and married her, and we'd have two kids and a dog and -

CHAD

Okay, bad example. Suppose you were born in Switzerland...or Gibraltar -

BOB

Gibraltar's not a country. It's a British territory.

CHAD

Or India... Whatever, man. It's not likely you'd grow up in any one of those countries and never meet the 'one', is it?

BOB

I don't know, maybe.

CHAD

Hypothetically you could meet 'the one' in every single country on this earth and given there's around - what, one-hundred -

BOB

Double that.

CHAD

- countries on this earth, well, you do the maths.

BOB

So how do you account for the fact some people never find their 'one'.

CHAD

I dunno. They're lazy. Or, quite possibly, very fucking ugly.

Chad suddenly slinks low into his chair.

CHAD

Oh, fuck me.

Melissa sits up straighter in hers.

MELISSA

Shit, he's here.

Melissa flicks her hair back, thrusts her breasts out.

BOB

What?

ANN

Who?

CHAD

Fuck, fuck, fuck. Do not look around. She's here.

BOB

Where?

Bob whips his head around just as Chad gives him a swift clip around the head.

MELISSA

He. Him. Last night. He's here.

BOB

Ow!

ANN

Where?

Ann swivels in her seat. Melissa yanks her back around.

CHAD

Do you suppose she followed me here?

MELISSA

Do you suppose he's stalking me?

CHAD

I said don't look. Bloody hell.

Ann retrieves her compact, tries to use it to see behind her.

MELISSA

Jesus Ann, could you be more obvious. Put that away.

ANN

Sorry. I was just trying to...

MELISSA

How the fuck did he know I was here?

Melissa squeals with delight, squeezes Ann's hand.

MELISSA

I knew it. I just knew he liked me.

Melissa grabs her bag, stands, adjusts her cleavage.

CHAD

(head in his hands)
Brilliant. Fucking brilliant.

MELISSA

Is he checking me out?

CHAD
Has she spotted me?

ANN
I don't know. Which one is he?

MELISSA
The dirty blonde, six o'clock.

BOB
Don't think so. She just stood up.

CHAD
Oh shit, is she headed this way?
I'm off for a leak.

Chad stands.

MELISSA
Okay, watch and learn, Ann. This is
where I play it super cool and slip
off to the lady's room. Is he
watching?

Nope.

ANN

Nup.

BOB

ANN
(to Melissa, walking away)
I'll get us some more drinks then,
shall I?

BOB
(to Chad, walking away)
Same again then...?

Ann turns in her seat to look in Chad's direction as Bob
turns in his to espy Melissa, but both of them are gone.

Instead, across the crowded beer garden, Bob and Ann meet
each other's gaze.

A lingering look between both of them...

Ann blushes, turns away, gathers up her handbag.

Bob grabs the empties from the table, his eyes tracking Ann,
then losing her in the crowd - as they both head for:

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Saloon-style with rich wood panelling. Suspended from the ceiling a trailing canopy of fairy lights and mistletoe.

A handful of people mill around as Bob and Ann make their way to the front from different directions.

A few patrons move away from the bar with their drinks.

And then a few more...

Leaving both Bob and Ann standing next to each other.

Bob looks at Ann. Ann looks at Bob.

Both unable to take their eyes off one another.

All around them the sound ceases.

As if nobody else exists in the world.

BOB

Hi.

ANN

Hi.

Bob takes in the vision that is Ann standing before him, her face bathed in the glow of hundreds of twinkling lights.

BOB

(breathy whisper)

Wow.

Bob leans in close, and then closer still.

Ann tilts her face to meet his.

Their faces almost touching, then:

They kiss.

They break apart for a moment -

A quick glance at the mistletoe hanging above them.

Both of them smile.

They gaze once again into each other's eyes.

They kiss again, deeper -

Not coming up for air this time.

Oblivious to all those around them...

FADE OUT.

ROLL CREDITS:

FADE IN:

EXT. MEN'S AND WOMEN'S REST-ROOMS

The exterior of both closed doors side by side.

INT. MEN'S REST-ROOM

Chad shakes his wet hands, wipes them on his jeans. He moves to the vanity mirror.

INT. WOMEN'S REST-ROOM

Melissa dries her hands under the blower. She ducks her head under it to fluff up her hair, moves to the vanity mirror.

INTERCUT BETWEEN CHAD AND MELISSA:

Chad pulls out a comb - Melissa's g-string with it - it falls to the bathroom floor. Hair's perfect, Chad pockets the comb. Smooths a stray eyebrow hair instead.

Melissa applies lip-gloss, smacks her lips together, pouts. Sprays perfume.

Chad smiles at his own reflection revealing gleaming white teeth.

Melissa pushes her breasts up for maximum cleavage.

Chad and Melissa move to exit their respective rest-rooms.

Their hands reach for the door handles.

The doors swing open at the same time...

FADE TO BLACK.