

Somebody Watching While I Am Waiting

I fidget where I am. Finger over thumb, thumb over finger. “What are you doing here?” A man in blue breaks my trance, looking at me quizzically almost as if he caught me committing a crime. My mouth hesitates on opening, my tongue is in a knot, my teeth are chattering but I am not cold. This happens a lot.

“Waiting.” I manage to say which isn’t an exact lie but it isn’t the exact truth either. The man in blue furrows his thick, dark eyebrows in disbelief. He ponders for a second thinking whether he should continue or let me be. He shifts from foot to foot, keeping his stare locked.

He finally lets out a strong, “For what?” Followed by an awkward silence. See there is only one problem with that. I don’t know why I am here and I definitely don’t know what to expect. I feel as though the man in blue is becoming impatient with me. He rolls his eyes, crosses his arms and moves his lips to speak when I cut him off.

“Someone, something,” I answer, which is a bad answer, a very bad answer. You see, I gave the man in blue two possible answers so I look even more skeptical now. If you took away my long trench coat, my hat and the fact that I’m talking to myself secluded from all people, I wouldn’t seem so suspicious. He lets out a sigh and meets my eyes. I stare at him right back, his large nose scrunches as he scratches his mustache.

“Who?” He finally lets out, followed by a cough. I look through my coat pocket for a throat lozenge and he steps back as if I was pulling out a weapon. I smirk and let out a small laugh when he raises hands to defend himself. “Listen, man, I’m just doing my job here.” I dig around my coat pocket and find a throat lozenge. He steps back further as I pull the lozenge out.

He looks around at the people enjoying their night on the street. With his hands still raised I move closer to him, pull out the lozenge and dangle it in front of his face.

He puts his hands down and takes it, slowly unwraps it like there is a bomb inside and inspects it. He glances up at me and mumbles a hesitant, "Thank you." He looks around him again staring at the people who are looking at us. He obviously looks like a complete fool and some girls smoking by the lamppost giggle. His face goes red like a beet and he adjusts his hat, lets out a sigh and turns to me.

"I'm doing the same thing as you then," I say with a smirk. He looks back at the girls who are still giggling and then turns to me. His eyebrows flinch as if he didn't hear me right. He purses his lips and looks at the girls again with his arms crossed, they see him stare and stop laughing. He moves towards me not taking his eyes off them, with each step his face grows angrier.

He leans in with his arms crossed and says, "Are you mocking me?" I give him a grin but he is as solid as a stone. The man in blue is waiting for me to answer but my tongue is in a trap I try to make out words but there are only sounds coming out of my mouth.

"I'm here the same reason you are." I blurted abruptly.

"And that would be?" He spat. His face was getting angrier as the girls by the pole started laughing again as if they thought this was a comedy act.

"I'm doing my job," I answered sternly as he rolled his eyes. He licked his lips, scratched his mustache then leaned in again as he reached into his pocket looking for something I knew wasn't good. I took my hands out of my pockets and raised them and pleaded, "I'm here for the play! I wrote the play! I just want to ask someone how the play was and I'll be on my way."

“The play, huh?” He asked almost immediately. I nodded with my hands still raised, he took his hand out of his pocket and grinned while saying, “You can put your hands down now.” I nodded and smiled at him almost giving him a telepathic thank you.

“I took my lady to see the play last week.” I looked at the ground expecting him to say something cruel like his lady hated it so much she left him. “She said she really enjoyed it.” I looked up at him giving him a smirk as he stammered, “Of course I liked it too, it was very good. I-I just didn’t think a man like you would write such a thing.”

What did he think I would look like? A tall, young, beautiful, woman who writes plays while she takes care of her 5 children when her husband is at work? Is my short physique catching him off guard? Maybe my clothes, or the fact I am a man.

“Sir, would you like a cigarette?” He asked breaking me from my thoughts. I realized I was staring at him for quite awhile now.

“Yes, sure.” I respond as he gives me a fresh one from a new pack, “Do you have a light?” He nods and gives me one and I ask him, “What did you mean by ‘A man like me wouldn’t write such a thing.’”

He lights his cig and takes a puff then answers, “No offense but I thought you would be a woman.” I watch him as he takes another drag and lets the smoke exit his mouth,

“None was taken,” I respond and we both take a drag at the same time. “I’ll be on my way now. It was nice meeting you.” I start walking away and as I turn back he leans into the spot I was standing in. I flick the butt of the cigarette on the ground as I promise myself this is the last time I come here because nobody pays attention to the writer anyway.