

Choose Heartbreak

written by

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INT. BAR - NIGHT

ANYA hurries into the bar, her stylish coat and purse draped over her arm, catching the eye of a MIDDLE-AGED MAN (M.P)- clearly drunk and definitely not in the same league as her.

She checks her watch as she seats herself and glances across the room at an empty booth. Her ageless beauty gives an air of mystery to her that is hard not to be drawn to.

When she looks back M.P is standing in front of her with his drink.

M.P
What's your poison?

ANYA
I'm actually waiting for someone.

He seats himself.

M.P
I don't mind.

Anya smiles warmly, considering M.P's audacity, and watches him as he polishes off his drink. When he finishes, he wipes his mouth and smiles back at her.

Anya leans across the table and motions for M.P to lean closer, which he excitedly does. She then gently grasps M.P's face, bringing it close to hers.

But instead of kissing him, she looks into his eyes.

Deeper and deeper Anya continues to stare intensely...

Until he's no longer excited or even intrigued but confused and a little uncomfortable...

And then he's not. Like a switch has flipped in his brain he's completely soothed.

Anya grazes his ear with her lips as she whispers something inaudible; glancing towards the door as JAYCE, late 20s, finally enters the bar.

Letting go of M.P's face she sits back and watches as he comes out of whatever spell Anya just put on him.

He's content.

Then confused.

Like abruptly waking from a dream - what's real? What isn't?

Finally, he runs his hand through his hair trying to come up with an excuse to leave, in the end coming up with none.

M.P (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go.

Anya turns her attention to Jayce, young but weathered. Handsome despite his pain.

He sits alone at the booth Anya had been keeping an eye on.

Across the bar, a group of YOUNG WOMEN are having a bachelorette party. SAM, bride-to-be, notices Jayce and nudges her beautiful best friend, ELLIE.

SAM
Check him out.

Ellie glances over and clearly finds him attractive, but hides it as she turns back to Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)
So?

ELLIE
He's not bad.

Sam drags her over despite Ellie's protest.

Anya watches, intrigued by the potential of this interaction. If anyone is going to be able to pull Jayce out of this, it's Ellie.

SAM
I'm Sam and this is my good friend
Ellie.

Jayce continues to nurse his drink, but Sam won't take no for an answer.

She unexpectedly shoves Ellie onto the booth seat next to Jayce -

AWKWARD

- then sits across from them.

Ellie is embarrassed but she takes a chance anyway.

ELLIE
Sorry, she's an idiot.

But Jayce is ignoring her so hard, she could be on fire and he wouldn't notice.

As the silence continues, Ellie- done with this awkward interaction, shoots a look at Sam. But Sam isn't ready to give up just yet.

SAM

So you got a name?

This is too painful for Anya to watch. She approaches them.

ANYA

Ladies, next round's on me.

Ellie takes the hint and practically leaps out of her seat.

Anya slides across from Jayce observing him as they sit in silence.

Finally-

ANYA (CONT'D)

You really blew that one.

JAYCE

Apparently no one in this bar has noticed, that I'd like to be alone.

Anya has no intention of leaving.

ANYA

Tell me if I'm close. Your high school sweetheart cheated on you.

Hearing it out loud brings the pain rushing back. This is why he doesn't talk to anyone anymore.

ANYA (CONT'D)

But it wasn't just once, it was going on for a while?

Jayce tries to ignore her but he's getting more frustrated with each statement. Frustrated with the facts and frustrated with Anya.

ANYA (CONT'D)

And then she dumped you even though you were willing to work it out. That about sum it up?

Annoyed and befuddled Jayce finally responds.

JAYCE

You're friends with Jenny, aren't you?

ANYA

No, I've just seen it play out a million times.

He motions for the bartender to get him another drink.

ANYA (CONT'D)

It doesn't have to be this way.

JAYCE

She made it pretty clear that it does.

ANYA

Maybe it's not entirely up to her.

Now she's caught his attention.

JAYCE

Excuse me?

Anya extends her arm to shake Jayce's hand. Which he refuses.

ANYA

Anya. Nice to finally meet you.

He pulls out his phone and pulls up Jenny's contact ready to check on her.

ANYA (CONT'D)

Jenny's fine. I have no interest in her. Well beyond you, that is.

No drink is worth this, he gets up and starts to leave...

ANYA (CONT'D)

I can help you get her back.

...Except Anya grabs his hand, stopping him. Jayce looks back at her, shooting daggers.

That's all Anya needs though. A single glimpse into his eyes.

She caresses his hand with her thumb, her eyes locked on his, as again, we watch her work.

Jayce's hardened expression fading as he turns back.

Softening as he slowly bends towards her. Her lips in an inaudible whisper as his free hand gently touches her face.

Their lips graze - a kiss is inevitable.

She continues under her breath and just as his lips capture hers -

He snaps out of it. Stunned, he sits back down. Jayce has no idea what to say.

Finally-

ANYA (CONT'D)

I have a talent for making people feel things.

JAYCE

I really wanted to kiss you.

ANYA

I take it you want my help?

JAYCE

I don't know.

And he doesn't.

JAYCE (CONT'D)

How long does it last?

ANYA

Five minutes, five hours, fifty years- depends.

Jayce leans back in his seat and tries to take all of it in.

ANYA (CONT'D)

If we do this, there's one more thing we'll need to discuss.

JAYCE

Payment?

ANYA

In a way.

Well, that's ominous and Jayce takes notice.

ANYA (CONT'D)

Things need balance. I can't give one thing without evening it out with the opposite.

JAYCE

You have to hurt me?

ANYA

You have to hurt someone.

He wasn't expecting that.

JAYCE
I'm not violent.

ANYA
Pain comes in many forms, Jayce.
You off all people know that.

JAYCE
That's not who I am.

ANYA
And that's ok, it doesn't have to
be. I can leave and you can move
on.

Jayce isn't so sure he wants her to leave though.

ANYA (CONT'D)
Or we go through with this and
things are irrevocably different.
The universe will find a way to
balance things out even if you
don't.

Jayce is not pleased with either of these choices.

ANYA (CONT'D)
So, what will it be?

FADE OUT