



Futile Hours

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CHARACTERS

LOUIS: a man in his early 40s, a meek man who enjoys his job at an office.

CAMILLE: a woman in her late 40s, is a very passionate and creative woman.

SCENE 1

CAMILLE and LOUIS' house. LOUIS has had a drink or two, and CAMILLE is noticeably the drunker of the two, slurring her words slightly. They have been arguing on the way home from a party.

CAMILLE: He was flirting with you, Louis.

LOUIS: (*sighing*) Not tonight. Please Cami, we've had a good night, haven't we?

LOUIS turns the lamp on, and on stage, a spotlight shines on the pair. CAMILLE storms slightly past LOUIS and grabs a wine glass, pouring another drink.

CAMILLE: I am not a liar.

LOUIS: I have not claimed that you are. I told you; he is just a friend. I am not interested in him anyway, I love you.

CAMILLE: (*Laughing*) He was flirting with you.

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Pause.

He knew what he was doing.

LOUIS hangs CAMILLE'S coat on a rack and puts the shoes she has kicked off neatly.

LOUIS: What exactly was he doing, Camille? Saying hello? Telling me it was nice to see m-

CAMILLE: He was ignoring me.

LOUIS: He was ignoring you?

CAMILLE: Yes.

LOUIS: You are drunk. He was not-

CAMILLE: He *was*, Louis. Each time he spoke to you he ignored me. *(She takes a sip of wine)*. As soon as you stepped in the door, he was hugging you, completely disregarding me. When you went out for a cigarette, he spoke to you and ignored each word I said. The whole night he sat and ignored my existence. Not too long ago when I was in the pub, I said hello to him, and he turned his back to me.

LOUIS walks to stand close to CAMILLE.

LOUIS: I'm sure he means no harm. He doesn't know you that well. Let's go to bed.

CAMILLE: *(Insisting)* We have met before. We've been to parties and events together.

LOUIS: Only a handful of times.

CAMILLE: He likes you, Louis. You have allowed him to flirt with you the whole night!

LOUIS: I love you. I love my wife. Let's go to bed, you will see that it is nothing in the morning.

CAMILLE: No-

Louis gently grabs her by the hips to guide her to bed. Camille pushes him off.

LOUIS: *(Gently)* Come on, you're just drunk.

CAMILLE: Fuck you.

LOUIS: Camille, stop.

CAMILLE: You *know* he was ignorin-

LOUIS: No, I do not *know* he was ignoring you. I hadn't thought about how he was interacting with you as I was busy enjoying all my friend's company.

LOUIS walks to the other end of the stage and begins folding laundry that had been left in a basket.

CAMILLE waits, gulps more wine, and follows him.

CAMILLE: Why are you mad at *me*?

LOUIS: I'm not mad at you.

CAMILLE: You are.

LOUIS: I am frustrated that I am not allowed to be around my friends without you accusing me of flirting. I would not have brought you if I had intentions to pursue another man. (*Sarcastically*) That typically happens when your partner is not around.

CAMILLE: I didn't say *you* were flirting.

LOUIS: (*Impatiently*) Then what is it? Why are you trying to start an argument?

CAMILLE: *He* was flirting with you, and you made no attempts to stop it. It is embarrassing.

LOUIS: I made no attempts to stop it as I had no idea it was happening, in fact, I am almost certain it was not. I wish you would not punish me.

CAMILLE: I'm not punishing you. He was-

LOUIS: You are punishing me, and it is not fair.

CAMILLE: (*Angry*) Do not dare. Why are you angry with me? I haven't done anything.

LOUIS: I am angry because I have chosen you. I have chosen you again and again. For twenty years I have chosen you Camilla, and you punish me for it.

CAMILLE: Loui-

LOUIS: You punish me for your mistakes. You punish me for loving you. It was *you* who was unfaithful. It was you who made your mistake, and you punish me as if I am going to do the same. Each time we go out you start an argument. Each time someone so much as looks at me it is a problem. We are not the same, Camille. I would not treat somebody I loved like that. I am in love with you. I sit at your feet like a puppy, keep a roof over your head and work hard so that you get to go on artistic endeavours that bring home no money, but I don't mind because I want to see you happy. I have woken you up with a kiss and a coffee every morning over the years. I show you off to my friends, I talk nonstop about you when we are out. I wake each day and focus on trying to make you smile. I do the laundry, I cook, I clean. I do everything to ensure your life is easy. I have not once asked you to repent for what you did. I have not once argued about it. I, for six years, have not mentioned what you did with that woman. I have kept it to myself. I have held you, forgave you, and loved you. I have moved on from it, and I wish you would too.

CAMILLE lets a few stray tears escape her eyes, her hand loosening on the glass of wine. LOUIS puts a folded towel down and stares at her.

LOUIS: *(Almost whispering)* You are waiting for me to take revenge, but I am not interested.

There is a silence between them for a minute, CAMILLE fidgets and avoids LOUIS' gaze.

CAMILLA: I am tired.

Louis stands quietly watching her.

CAMILLA: *(Looking at LOUIS)* I love you, Louis.

The lights turn off, the pair are standing in the dark.

LOUIS: *(Defeated)* Come on, let's go to bed.

BLACKOUT.

END.