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Scene 2

Whit and Gabby's apartment. Night.

GABBY is grading papers while she and WHIT eat dinner. She is appealing, but in a bookish way.

GABBY

Love.

She tosses the paper aside impatiently.

WHIT

What?

GABBY

Love ... is the difference between Don Juan and Casanova.

WHIT

Casanova was real. Don Juan is fiction.

GABBY

But my students have been using them interchangeably. They're forgetting that Don Juan was all about the conquest. Casanova *loved* the women he slept with.

WHIT

(laughs)

He was trying to seduce them. He had to tell them *something*.

He takes a pitcher of water and pours some into his glass, his hands trembling as he does so.

GABBY

How would you feel if your students said “crescendo” when they meant “climax”?

WHIT

I'd have their heads.

GABBY

You would. Don Juan and Casanova are not synonymous.

WHIT

But think how many words there are for “womanizer.” *Libertine, lothario, satyr, sybarite, polygamist, debaucher, voluptuary, sensualist, hedonist* ... Am I missing any?

GABBY

Philanderer.

WHIT

You see? It's a hard thing to pin down.

GABBY

So Don Juan is constantly being redefined. The original was a miscreant and got his comeuppance, but Zorilla's Don Juan was redeemed. Byron portrayed him as a victim of Catholicism, Shaw as a revolutionary ...

WHIT

What about Mozart?

GABBY

*Don Giovanni?*

WHIT

Yes.

GABBY

You know, Casanova supposedly helped him write that opera. And yet, while writer after writer has set out to clear Don Juan's name, "Casanova" has become a dirty word.

WHIT considers this, then gets up to fetch a dictionary. As he pulls it from the bookshelf, it drops to the floor.

GABBY rises to help.

WHIT

I got it, I got it.

He bends down and picks it up, flips through it, and reads:

WHIT (Continued)

"Casanova: lover; especially a man who is a promiscuous and *unscrupulous* lover ..."

GABBY

See? "Unscrupulous."

WHIT turns some pages.

WHIT

"Don Juan: a captivating man known as a great lover or seducer of women." You're right. They're kinder to him.

GABBY

You linguists!

WHIT

Well, Don Juan never claimed his motives were pure. Casanova sleeps with a hundred women —

GABBY

A hundred and fifty.

WHIT

A hundred and fifty, and — Really? A hundred and fifty?

GABBY

Thereabouts.

WHIT

And they all just happen to be the sort — all one hundred and fifty of them — he just happens to find the one hundred and fifty women in Venice or Paris or wherever else he did his dirty work who are just as hedonistic as *he* is? Who don't mind being another notch on his belt?

GABBY

It would seem so.

WHIT laughs.

WHIT

“Sex without complications.” It's the fantasy of every aspiring womanizer. I'll put my money on Don Juan.

He kisses her forehead and gathers their plates.

GABBY

This was excellent, by the way.

WHIT nods and takes the plates into the kitchen.

GABBY gets up and puts on a CD. “Lambada” plays softly.

WHIT returns with a pill bottle and takes a pill with a sip of water.

GABBY (Continued)

How are you feeling?

WHIT

Fine. Good, actually. I had a good day.

GABBY

Yeah?

WHIT

I even had a student come to my office hours. It's not even her major.

GABBY

What's she studying?

WHIT

Dance. And psychology, I think.

GABBY takes his hands and dances slowly with him.

GABBY

Nice legs?

WHIT  
(laughs)  
Probably.

GABBY  
You didn't look?

WHIT  
You know me. Unless she's tattooed with aphorisms, I pay no attention. Present company excluded, of course.

GABBY rolls her eyes.

WHIT (Continued)  
What? Too much?

GABBY  
You get an A for effort, but ... really.

WHIT  
What's the matter? What did I say?

GABBY  
I won't kill you for looking.

WHIT  
Oh, boy ... you and Alex.

GABBY  
What?

WHIT listens to the music.

WHIT  
What *is* this, by the way?

GABBY  
(rocking gently in his arms)  
Dessert.

WHIT  
You know I can't dance ...

GABBY  
Don't think of it as dancing. Think of it as foreplay.

WHIT  
A-ha. The truth comes out.

She starts to kiss his neck.

GABBY  
Was there any wonder?

He laughs.

WHIT

I'm — I'm flattered. I am. But ...

She stops.

GABBY

You're flattered ...? What kind of thing is that to say?

WHIT

Well, I *am*.

GABBY

Okay, well, don't mention it.

She starts to kiss him again.

WHIT

Let's — let's hold on for a second.

GABBY

(keeps going)

What for?

WHIT

Just ...

He lets her continue for a moment. Then he pulls back, kisses her forehead, and moves away.

GABBY

Did I just get shot down?

WHIT

(laughs)

No, no, I just ...

GABBY

What.

WHIT shakes his head.

GABBY (Continued)

Papers to grade? Urgent emails?

WHIT

I'm tired.

GABBY

Okay, so lie down. I'll take care of the rest.

WHIT

I don't think you'll find that very rewarding.