



A CHANCE  
BY  
MAX PORTER

A SMITH SCRIPT

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Shit. Shit. Shit.

***She turns and sees she is not alone.***

Sorry.

CAROLINE Pardon?

LINDA My outburst.

CAROLINE Oh, it doesn't matter.

LINDA Bad news.

CAROLINE Sorry to hear that.

LINDA That was my doctor.

CAROLINE Ah.

LINDA They just confirmed something.

CAROLINE Nothing serious I hope.

LINDA Well, serious to me, but not life and death.

CAROLINE That's something.

LINDA I might have to have a procedure.

CAROLINE Sorry.

LINDA Well, it will get it sorted out, at least.

CAROLINE Yes. Good.

LINDA I have an inverted uterus.

***LINDA sits beside CAROLINE***

CAROLINE Sounds painful.

LINDA Uncomfortable certainly.

CAROLINE I'm sure.

LINDA                      Hopefully they can ease the discomfort.

CAROLINE                I am sure they will.

LINDA                      I blame it on having a child late. That's the penalty.

CAROLINE                Recent birth?

LINDA                      Six months. I am just having a couple of hours to myself. First time for months really.

CAROLINE                And a lovely day for it.

LINDA                      But I was meant to be meeting someone and they've let me down.

CAROLINE                Oh dear.

LINDA                      Still....I get so tired.

CAROLINE                It's not unusual. I have been tired most of my life since my children were born. You get used to it.

LINDA                      Do you? I'm not sure I will. He still wants sex all the time. It's so painful with this useless uterus of mine. I hope it can be sorted out. But he won't let up. I can't do it at the moment without wanting to cry out in pain.

                                  Sorry, you don't want to hear all this. I just needed to get it off my chest.

CAROLINE                This is such a calm and out of the way spot, it's quite a good place to let off steam.

LINDA                      Yes. Maybe it will help. I used to come here when I was a teenager. It's hardly changed. It was where I used to bring boys. **(She laughs)**

CAROLINE                Many a couple I have seen here over the years. Either on this bench or hiding away in the bushes thinking they couldn't be seen. I love secret places.

LINDA                      I have had to find quite a few of them recently. Been spending a lot of time looking over my shoulder. Pretty sick of it now.

CAROLINE                Oh dear.

LINDA                      I sound awful don't I? Sorry. I'm not really. Just going through a few problems at the moment.

CAROLINE With the baby?

LINDA No, no. Well, not really. It's not his fault. He's lovely. Love him to bits. But, well....nothing is easy these days is it?

CAROLINE No, I don't believe it is.

LINDA How many kids have you got?

CAROLINE We had three. Two girls and a boy. We lost the little boy.

LINDA He died?

CAROLINE When he was six. The apple of my husband's eye. He never got over it. Well, me neither. You don't.

LINDA Oh God I am so sorry.

CAROLINE We had two girls though. Lovely girls. But not another son. It would have been his birthday this week. 40 years old. Road accident. Chased the dog into the street. But you move on. Don't you? You move on. But he always wanted a son.

LINDA It must have been so awful for you.

CAROLINE Yes, it was. Yes. Terrible. Awful.

***There is a silence***

LINDA This weather!

CAROLINE Spring in the warmth. Always my favourite time of the year.

LINDA Do you see your daughters much?

CAROLINE Not as much as I would like. They both live abroad. But we talk on the phone and on Skype occasionally.

LINDA Skype's great isn't it? I use it on my phone all the time. Not sure what I would do without it. I wouldn't have met my man.

CAROLINE How did you meet?

LINDA Tinder.

CAROLINE Tinder?

LINDA                    It's a dating app on the phone.

CAROLINE                Ah.

LINDA                    How long have you been married?

CAROLINE                Nearly 50 years.

LINDA                    Wow. You must really love each other.

CAROLINE                Well, we have our ups and downs. Like most people. Tolerance gets you through I think. I think. Eventually you get so used to things that you accept the bad and keep going. Oblivious really. But they do hurt. The bad things. They *really* hurt. The older you get the less strength you have for the fight.

LINDA                    You make it sound like a battle.

CAROLINE                Marriage is only part of life and life itself is a battle. Sadly mine is one which I am finally losing.

LINDA                    Your life?

CAROLINE                Partly. But that's because I am getting on. But it's ok. I am fine.

LINDA                    Your marriage?

CAROLINE                Hanging on by a thread.

LINDA                    I'm sorry.

CAROLINE                I'm sorry. But it's ok. I'm fine.

LINDA                    I'm not married.

CAROLINE                Your son's Father?

LINDA                    I won't marry him. He wants me to, but I won't. Tommy will be ok with me.

CAROLINE                That's good to hear.

LINDA                    Been coming here quite a lot recently. It's always quiet. I don't live far away. You?

CAROLINE A short bus ride. Just the other side of town. Near the recycling centre. Just along from where the mobile library stops.

LINDA Not sure where that is. Never used the library. Wasn't there one in town once.

CAROLINE Yes. It went two years ago. It's where Starbucks is now.

LINDA Oh, yes.

CAROLINE It's not the area it was. But we've been here since we got married. It's what you get used to isn't it? I don't like the house any more. Haven't done for years. My husband hates it too. He isn't there much. He goes out. I try and get out too when I can. I go to pilates on a Thursday and am taking classes in stained glass work. It's lovely. I make gifts for my friends.

LINDA I don't have time for anything like that anymore.

CAROLINE So, where's Tommy today?

LINDA With my sister. She's got two of her own, so she can only look after him every so often. But I needed to get away.

CAROLINE His Father help out?

LINDA Not often, always busy.

CAROLINE Men eh?

***They laugh***

LINDA Yes. You're right there. Not sure Tommy is going to see much of his Dad in his life. But you never know.

CAROLINE No, you never do.

LINDA Still he might surprise me.

CAROLINE Maybe. Give him a chance eh? Maybe he will give Tommy a chance.

LINDA Fat chance.

CAROLINE Well, we all need a chance in life and if it presents itself, then we need to take it. I have taken a chance. Let's see what the result is.

LINDA What chance did you take.

CAROLINE I came here today.

LINDA Oh. Sorry. Not sure I understand.

CAROLINE Maybe you will.

***A silence***

Ok. Well, I suppose I should be getting on my way. I have so many things I ought to be doing. It's been nice chatting to you.

LINDA And to you. Sorry to seem so miserable.

CAROLINE Don't be silly Linda. It is Linda isn't it?

LINDA Err.... Yes. How did you know?

CAROLINE It's ok. I think I stood behind you in the bank the other day. I thought I recognised you.

LINDA Oh, right. Yes. Lloyds. I am afraid they weren't very helpful. Money is so tight and I'm struggling a bit. So much for customer service. They couldn't care less.

CAROLINE I think they are all a bit fed up in that branch. It's closing down you know.

LINDA Really? Well, sod 'em.

CAROLINE You did seem a bit upset. Probably why I remembered you.

LINDA That was a few weeks ago though. You have a good memory.

CAROLINE One of the few parts of me that's working ok. I hope you get your uterus sorted out. Not nice.

LINDA Thanks.

CAROLINE And take care of young Tommy. I don't think he will see a great deal of his Father in his life, because I think the Father is quite a bit older than you isn't he?

LINDA Errrr. What makes you think that?

CAROLINE Oh Linda. Linda Planter. I know a lot about you and about the man who is the Father of Tommy. Whose birth resulted in your uteral

issues. Because Tommy's Father is my husband of nearly 50 years and he is 74 years old. You and he have been having an affair for the last two years and you were here today to meet him so he could give you some money. But he is at home, throwing up. Food poisoning. My food. My poison.

So, I wish you luck with your child. Your life. Your uterus.

Good bye.

***CAROLINE gathers herself, gets up and walks off. LINDA sits still, staring ahead.***

***FADE TO BLACK***

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