

1ST FLOOR, 2ND FLOOR

By Olivia Arieti

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SYNOPSIS: A couple of newlyweds decide the best way to survive married life, without killing each other, is to live separately. With scheduled visits and strict rules, they hope it will be more like dating and keep their love alive. A funny play with a surprise twist at the end.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 MAN, 1 WOMAN)

JAY (m)In his thirties.

SHEILA (f)In her mid-twenties.

SETTING

Present day; a well furnished living room. Evening.

AT RISE: JAY and SHEILA are just back from their wedding ceremony. SHEILA is still wearing her bridal dress. Wedding presents, suitcases around, tickets. Everything is ready for their honeymoon trip.

JAY: *(Throws himself on the sofa, exhausted.)* At last it's over, Sheila! I didn't know I had to go through all this fuss! Last time it was different. Her mother made things easier. She did practically everything except saying, "I do," of course!

SHEILA: It was the first time for me, but it sure has been a big stress! Hope it will be the last!

JAY: Sure it will be, honey. I promise you won't have to go through all this ever again!

SHEILA: I'm awfully tired, Jay. I really don't know how we'll manage with the honeymoon trip.

JAY: Don't worry, dear, I've made all the arrangements. Things will turn out marvellously!

SHEILA: Hope so.

JAY: Why won't you come and sit down here so we can start the first part of our honeymoon?!

SHEILA: First I have to get out of this dress, darling... Never thought how uncomfortable a bridal dress could be! Not to mention the shoes! *(Starts taking off her shoes.)*

JAY: Wait! One more snapshot! *(Jumps up and gets his camera.)*

SHEILA: Oh, no! Can't go through anymore of this!

JAY: Just a last one ... for your darling husband. *(Snaps a photo.)*

SHEILA: Can I go now and get out of this stuff?!

JAY: Sure, honey, but be quick... You know how much I miss you when we're not together! *(SHEILA exits. JAY goes back to the sofa and starts looking at some vacation brochures. Sound of SHEILA taking a shower.)* Shall I join you, dear?!

SHEILA: *(Loud.)* We've got plenty of time, honey!

JAY: All right, I'll be patient. *(Looks around.)* It's quite a lovely apartment, Sheila. It must have taken you a while to decorate it. By the way, honey, you've done a wonderful job with mine too. You've given it that special touch so it doesn't look like a bachelore pad any longer. You should have been a home decorator!

SHEILA: *(Loud.)* Thank you, darling.

JAY: You know what, sweetheart?! We forgot to decide where we're going to have our dinners?!

SHEILA: (*Shower stops.*) One evening down here, the other up at yours. It seems fair enough.

JAY: Well, I have that little problem about the cleaning...

SHEILA: (*Comes back in her bathrobe.*) Don't worry, Jay, I've talked to Betsy. She'll do the cleaning for you too.

JAY: Did you tell her that I leave all my butts around and that I sleep naked?!

SHEILA: I'm sure she'll manage. She's very accurate. Extra pay, of course!

JAY: Luckily that's not a problem... at least up to now. And what about our lunch?

SHEILA: That's not a problem either. You know we never have lunch at home, at least I don't. I have to be out at 7:30 and it's difficult for me to be back before 6:00 in the evening.

JAY: Well, I do some of my writing at home, but I'll keep the fridge well supplied. What about *our* nights?!

SHEILA: We have the weekends, dear! One weekend I'll sleep upstairs, the next you'll come downstairs!

JAY: Do you think it will work?

SHEILA: Definitely! Imagine how nice it will be after a week of lonely nights to find ourselves in bed together, warm and cozy...

JAY: Yea, it's almost like being engaged!

SHEILA: That's what keeps a couple young and love always fresh! There must be a reason why so many marriages break up.

JAY: (*Prepares SHEILA and himself a drink.*) Are you sure you won't feel lonely? (*Hands her the drink.*)

SHEILA: And you?

JAY: Anyway don't worry, honey, if you feel lonely or want me you'll only have to take the elevator and—

SHEILA: I won't do it.

JAY: Neither will I.

SHEILA: We talked it over.

JAY: We did.

SHEILA: We made a decision and we must follow the rules.

JAY: We will.

SHEILA: I'm so happy, dear!

JAY: Things will turn out great! We didn't leave anything out, did we?!

SHEILA: Don't think so.

JAY: We might have friends over on the weekends.

SHEILA: No problem. We'll leave them one of the apartments. Stop worrying, dear. We went through all this before, didn't we?

JAY: Sure honey. One last thing, what about holidays?!

SHEILA: Christmas on the first floor, Thanksgiving on the second! Or it could be the other way round if you prefer.

JAY: Sounds perfect! You know, I just wanted to be sure about the final arrangements. We want to make the best of it, don't we, sweetheart?!

SHEILA: Sure, darling.

JAY: Let's start immediately! *(Pulls SHEILA down on the sofa and they start kissing.)* You're the most beautiful doll I've ever seen, baby. I've known it since the first time I saw you!

SHEILA: Stop talking, dear, kiss me! *(They kiss. JAY tries to go further. SHEILA stops him.)* We didn't consider one thing!

JAY: What is it?!

SHEILA: If we had a baby.

JAY: Sheila, not now!

SHEILA: We should know what to do! Our choice might not be appropriate for a child.

JAY: Certainly not. Listen, honey, we may decide not to have a child and if we decide the contrary it won't be for a long, long time. Let's leave this kind of decision to nature. Take it easy, love, we'll see later on.

SHEILA: *(Relaxed.)* I guess you're right, Jay. *(JAY starts kissing her again. SHEILA stops him.)*

JAY: What is it now?!

SHEILA: We can't go on.

JAY: Why not?! It's so exciting!

SHEILA: I have to change.

JAY: Again?!

SHEILA: I have to get dressed. Can't leave for our honeymoon in my bathrobe! Didn't forget our trip, did you?!

JAY: Nope. Absolutely not!

SHEILA: I'll take just a few minutes. (*Kisses him; exits.*)

JAY: (*Gets another drink.*) Don't bring along too much stuff. You women always bring a lot of clothes and end up wearing the same things!

SHEILA: (*Loud.*) Don't start being fussy, too husband like!

JAY: I am a husband now, am I not?!

SHEILA: Sure darling, a dear, loving husband! By the way, you mustn't forget your sleeping pills, pajamas and slippers... And of course your bathing suit! And don't leave all your butts around!

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