

A LOST LOVE

Written by

Vicky L. Neal

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - UNDISCLOSED HOUSE - NIGHT

The darkness masks a couple having hot and heavy sex on the bed. Moans, along with breaths of pleasure pierce the silence.

Scattered clothing around the bed is barely visible within a small stream of moonlight that beams through a part in the curtains.

BILL GERSHING (40s), a stern, unfeeling man who sees the whole world as his enemy, climaxes and rolls off of his companion.

He lies back, grabs a pack of cigarettes from the nightstand, and lights one. He puffs deeply.

His partner remains hidden by darkness as she rolls over and strokes Bill's chest.

FEMININE VOICE

Want to go again, Tiger?

Uninterested, Bill tosses the covers off, finds his underwear in the mess of clothing and slides them on.

BILL

I have to go.

Bill retrieves the rest of his clothing (shirt, pants, tie, and jacket) and puts them on.

The feminine silhouette sits up in bed, clutches the covers to her.

FEMININE VOICE

Can't you stay? He's hardly ever out of town this long.

BILL

Jess will have a fit. I'm already late for dinner.

FEMININE VOICE

Since when do you care what SHE thinks?

BILL

I don't. I'd just like to avoid a fight when I get home.

Bill sits on the edge of the bed to put his socks and shoes on.

The unseen woman slides over, massages Bill's arms in a seductive manner.

FEMININE VOICE

Forget her, Bill. I have so much more to offer.

BILL

Then maybe you should offer it to your husband.

Bill finishes, a sloppy job with his tie. He grabs his cigarettes and lighter as he stands, then leaves the room like a fireman rushing to a fire.

O.S. A door opens and closes.

Greatly disappointed, the woman lies back on the bed and sighs.

INT. GERSHING HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

JESSICA GERSHING (40s) is a sweet, innocent-looking wife and mom. She's more like a walking doormat as her demure manner allows others to take advantage. She tends to a couple of pots simmering on the range and peeks at a roast inside.

KATIE GERSHING (16), a solemn girl who is dying on the inside, enters from the hall.

KATIE

Is Dad home yet?

Jessica barely looks at Katie as she stirs a pot. Something troubles Jessica greatly.

JESSICA

No.

KATIE

He's been late every night this week.

JESSICA

I know.

KATIE

Mom...

Jessica slams down her hands to the stove, grips the edge for support.

JESSICA

I don't want to talk about it.

Katie saddens.

O.S. A door opens and closes.

The women watch the doorway, where footsteps come near.

It's Bill. He removes his jacket and lays it over the back of a chair. He unties the messy knot in his tie, leaves it dangling around his neck.

KATIE

Hi, Dad.

Bill grabs a beer from the fridge and drinks, uninterested in his daughter.

BILL

Shouldn't you be doing homework?

The small amount of joy Katie has over seeing her dad drains from her face.

KATIE

(hesitating)

I... I took a break to eat.

Bill scans the food still cooking.

BILL

You'll eat when the homework's done.

Katie, head hung low, trudges into the hall. She stops at the entrance to take a look back at her dad, then continues on to the steps.

Jessica takes a quick look back. She needs to say something but it afraid.

JESSICA

You're a little hard on her sometimes.

BILL

Kids need discipline. God knows you never give her any.

JESSICA

Please don't bring God into this.

BILL

Oh, that's right. He might strike me down because I refuse to believe in things I can't see.

Jessica sighs. She's heard this before.

JESSICA

You could try church once in a while. Katie would love it if you'd come with us.

BILL

And you can try not telling me what to do.

Bill finishes off his beer and tosses the can into the trash.

BILL

When's dinner gonna be ready?

JESSICA

A few minutes.

BILL

It was supposed to be done two hours ago. What if I had been on time?

JESSICA

I work too, you know. And I was actually at work tonight.

Bill's glare is terrifying. He looks like he could explode any moment.

As a distraction, Jessica removes the roast from the stove.

BILL

What are you saying? That I wasn't at work?

JESSICA

I called. You left before six.

Bill roughly grabs Jessica by the shoulders and turns her to face him. There's fear in her eyes but she refuses to give into it.

BILL

You don't check up on me. I'm a grown man.

JESSICA

You were with that slut, weren't
you?

Whack! Bill slaps Jessica across the face, so hard that she stumbles back against a counter. She holds a hand to her burning cheek as tears start to flow. Blood trickles from her nose.

BILL

How dare you!

Bill charges forward.

JESSICA

(pleading)

Bill...

Bill throws Jessica against another counter. She hits stomach first, the wind knocked out of her.

BILL

I've told you a thousand times
there isn't another woman!

Katie races in from the hall, just in time to see Bill shove Jessica to the floor. Still unable to breathe from the previous blow, she withers in pain.

KATIE

Mom!

Katie rushes to Jessica's side.

Bill looks like he's ready to attack again but he holds back now that his daughter is here.

KATIE

You bastard!

Bill's rage turns to Katie. He yanks her up by the arm, his face consumed with fury.

BILL

You ungrateful little shit.

Bill raises his hand to strike Katie. Her eyes widen in fear.

Jessica scrambles to her feet just in time to intercept. She yanks Katie out of Bill's grasp and holds her close.

JESSICA

Don't you touch her!