

BEYOND THE SEA

Written by

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INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Valentines day. The place is packed with couples. Paper red hearts and cupids cascade from the ceiling. Every table has roses as a centerpiece.

MELISSA (30) navigates around the crowded room with her tray laden with food. She's been on her feet for hours and has hours yet to go.

She sets the plates on the table before an elderly couple.

The lady notices her ring and reaches out to her wrist.

OLD LADY

What kind of a man lets you work on Valentines day? My Henry always takes me out.

She makes doe eyes at her husband. He preens.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

Fifty years and he's never once missed an occasion.

Melissa tries to brush it off.

MELISSA

Oh, I've got to earn a living.

OLD LADY

Even on the most romantic night of the year?

MELISSA

It's only one night in a whole year.

OLD MAN

You should have a talk with him, some things are more important than working another shift.

MELISSA

I know... There's always next year.

She smiles, too brightly, to hide her pain.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It's late, the streets are deserted. A few waitresses and Melissa walk out as the lights inside are switched off.

A man on the street calls to the group of tired employees.

DUDLEY

Honey!

He has a huge bouquet of roses. Another waitress squeals, runs to him and jumps into his arms. They kiss.

Melissa looks around the dark streets, hopeful. No one waits for her. Not really surprised, she walks home alone.

INT. MELISSA'S FLAT - NIGHT

She stands in front of the fridge covered with postcards from foreign, dangerous places. Falklands. Iraq. Afghanistan.

Melissa takes one off and flips it over to read again.

POSTCARD: My leave for Christmas was denied. I'm so sorry. They say maybe in the spring. I love you.

She reaches out and caresses the writing, tears in her eyes.

A light under the bedroom door catches her attention.

She puts the postcard back and pushes the door open.

HEATHER (32) still in her uniform, freezes in the act of hanging up a dress uniform. A military rucksack is half unpacked on the bed.

Melissa stares at her in shock.

MELISSA

How... When...

Heather crosses the room to hold her lover.

HEATHER

Does it matter? I'm here. I wanted to surprise you.

She cradles Melissa's head in her hands.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Baby, I'm home.

Melissa throws herself into Heather's arms, tears up.

They kiss passionately and tumble onto the bed, knocking the rucksack onto the floor as they cling to each other.

THE END