

HAPPY WIFE

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HAPPY WIFE

SCENE I : HONEYMOON SUITE, PUERTO RICO

Your typical honeymoon suite: the heart-shaped bed, center stage, is decorated with a basket of chocolates, rose petals, and towels and wash clothes shaped into romantic, white swans. The plump pillows are embroidered with "Mr" and "Mrs."

The tropical sun brightens the room. If possible, a sliding glass door, STAGE LEFT, should lead to a balcony that overlooks the beach.

The door to the suite is STAGE RIGHT.

OFF STAGE we hear giggling and fumbling and banging into the door. The door swings open. RASHAD, early 40s, fit, handsome and radiant carries his beautiful bride, NADINE, also early 40s, fit, bubbly, into the bridal suite.

RASHAD

Whoa, whoah, whoah!!

NADINE

Watch it now, 'til death do us part
better not come right now. I ain't
ready!

RASHAD

I got you baby, I got you!

Rashad stumbles with Nadine, they fall onto the bed lovingly. Kissing ensues.

RASHAD

(kissing her)

You. have. got to. be the sweetest
thing in. here!

NADINE

I better be!

RASHAD

You are, Mrs. Rashad Williams.

NADINE

Mrs. Nadine Adamson-Williams.

RASHAD

Can I have one day to say it?

NADINE

Just one day?

RASHAD

One day. Maybe two. Give a brother
a brief shining moment.

NADINE

(playful)

I plan to give you lots of shining
moments. (aside) Not just the
permission to erase my full name.

Rashad kisses her again. He stares into her eyes.

RASHAD

Mrs. Rashad Patterson, what did I
do to deserve you?

NADINE

You showed up.

RASHAD

(laughs)

You're right. I did.

NADINE

Imagine if some other dude had
showed up at the financial seminar instead
of you.

RASHAD

You'd be Mrs. Somebody else.

NADINE

Yep. Mrs. Somebody Else.

RASHAD

So. What do you want to do today?

NADINE

I was thinking of...nothing.

RASHAD

Nothing? We're in Puerto Rico. The
sun is shining. Better than any
day, ever, in Chicago.

NADINE

Yeah. It's a little hot, though.

RASHAD

That's why we came here. To be hot.

NADINE

I didn't think it was gon' be this hot!

RASHAD

I told you to read the travel links I emailed you.

NADINE

Well.

RASHAD

C'mon, I want to see you in that new bikini I got you.

NADINE

Mmmmm-

RASHAD

Nadine.

NADINE

What...?

RASHAD

Really? We didn't spend all this money to sit in the room.

NADINE

Maybe I did.

This hurts him.

RASHAD

Maybe you did. Ok.

NADINE

You can go.

RASHAD

There's something about a honeymoon that indicates two people are supposed to be together on said honey moon.

NADINE

We don't have to be tied at the

hip, Rashad.

RASHAD

Nadine.

NADINE

Go, go. If you want.

Nadine begins to unpack. She is methodical about folding and unfolding her things and putting them away in the drawers.

Rashad glances between her doing this and the beach that awaits.

NADINE

Aren't you going to unpack?

RASHAD

A hotel is not home.

NADINE

They provide you with these nifty dressers and closets for a reason.

RASHAD

A reason to help you forget something in a dresser or closet.

NADINE

Are you 12?

RASHAD

Twelve?

NADINE

You can't unpack something, put it away and then pack it again in your suitcase?

RASHAD

I don't like to.

NADINE

Something your mother must have helped you with.

Rashad opens the mini bar. Much to Nadine's annoyance. He makes himself a nice cocktail, without ice.

RASHAD

That's your mother, babe. My mother was too busy working to pack my

clothes for me.

NADINE

She should have paid more attention to you, then maybe you wouldn't feel like you have to be the center of attention.

RASHAD

Cheers to that!

He swallows down the drink. He looks serenely out at the water.

RASHAD

Why did you marry me?

NADINE

Why did you marry me?

RASHAD

Seemed like a good idea, at that time.

NADINE

Seemed?

RASHAD

The wedding was yesterday. That is past tense. I'm allowed to use the past tense. Seemed. Seemed like a good idea at the time.

NADINE

And now? Present tense.

RASHAD

This is why I ask.

NADINE

In some ways, I think we're perfect for each other.

RASHAD

You see yourself as being a happy wife?

NADINE

I see myself as being a happy person, a happy woman and hope to be a happy wife.

RASHAD

It is choice, you know.

NADINE

I suppose. Making choices comes with repercussions. And some choices, well most choices are not made in a vacuum.

RASHAD

So, you'll be happy if I make you happy.

NADINE

More or less.

RASHAD

You know that's impossible.

NADINE

Probably.

Rashad opens another bottle of alcohol from the mini fridge.

RASHAD

My parents have been married for thirty-five years. My pops told me that five of them were great and the other thirty were a work in progress.

NADINE

Your father told me this at the wedding.

RASHAD

He did? (beat) Hmm.

Rashad thinks about this. After a while,

RASHAD

Interesting.

NADINE

And your mother? What does she think about your father.

RASHAD

Did she talk about marriage to you?

NADINE

Nope.

RASHAD

And your own mother? What does she say?

NADINE

Eight years was too long.

RASHAD

Why'd you marry me?

NADINE

Rashad, I don't need an answer for everything, like you do. I married you because I love you.

RASHAD

Do you?

NADINE

Where are we right now?

RASHAD

In a hotel room.

Nadine is on the bed now, scrolling through photos on her cell-phone.

NADINE

On our honeymoon. Do you think I would have spent most of my savings on a wedding if I didn't want to be with you?

RASHAD

You like weddings. You've been wanting one for a long time.

NADINE

You were there, too.

RASHAD

I was. I wore what you told me. Stood where you told me. Smiled when you told me.

NADINE

Look at this picture.

She shows him a photo.

He attempts to lay on the bed with her. This physically takes him away from the window, which is sad. He tries to be close with her; she is not fully accommodating.

NADINE

The light hit us perfectly. I'm so glad we chose the bow tie for you.

RASHAD

You have good taste, babe.

NADINE

Are you going to drink all night?

RASHAD

Probably. It is my honeymoon.

NADINE

There should be some champagne somewhere.

RASHAD

Where?

NADINE

Look in my bag. I think my Aunt Ronetta gave us some Moet.

RASHAD

Ah, that's right.

Rashad finds her carry-on bag. He pulls a letter out of the bag also. Nadine is too busy in her phone to notice him reading it.

Rashad is upset.

RASHAD

What made you think of the champagne.

NADINE

Your breath.

RASHAD

My breath?

NADINE

Tequila reeks. You said you were going to drink all night. Champagne smells better.

RASHAD
(reads)
"A little bit of bubbly for those
times when being married isn't."

NADINE
Oh. (laughs) My Aunt Ro. We should
definitely open that right now.

RASHAD
I'm going to the beach.

Nadine is still quite casually looking through her phone.
Seemingly.

NADINE
No.

RASHAD
What?

NADINE
No. I want you to stay with me.

RASHAD
Why?

NADINE
Because I said so...?

RASHAD
Because you said so?

NADINE
Yep.

RASHAD
I'm going to the beach.

NADINE
No, you're not.

Rashad is confused, for a moment. He goes for his beach
towel and swim trunks from his suitcase. He starts to get
flustered. They aren't there.

RASHAD
Where are my trunks?

NADINE
At home.

RASHAD

'Da fuck?

NADINE

They're probably in the bathroom
hamper where I hid them.

RASHAD

Why?

NADINE

I don't like to swim. I told you
that.

RASHAD

I like to swim.

NADINE

Good for you.

RASHAD

Where are my damn trucks?

NADINE

I told you. At home.

RASHAD

You--

NADINE

Yes?

RASHAD

I'mma need--

NADINE

You'ma need what? I told you when
we planned this shit of a honey
moon that I wanted to go to Corsica
and sit in cafes and eat fantastic
food and maybe take a cooking
class. YOU said you wouldn't go to
Italy. YOU said you wanted to go to
(uses a voice like a Wisconsin
homemaker) 'Oh my gawd Amber, we
are going to Puerto Rico for our
honey moon, I cannot wait to speak
Mexican with all the locals' Puerto
Rico. Nobody who's anybody goes to
fucking Puerto Rico for their honey
moon!!

Rashad can't believe what he is hearing. He's looking through his bag again.

RASHAD

Where are my running shoes?

NADINE

At home. In the pantry.

RASHAD

This is some bullshit!

NADINE

You should keep it down. I phoned ahead and told the concierge that I was concerned about you and to watch our door really closely.

There is a knock at the door.

NADINE

Who might that be?

Nadine opens the door. A concierge stands there with two hotel workers.

CONCIERGE

Everything ok, Miss?

NADINE

Si, Senior, mi esposa...muy loco.
Gracias, gracias.

She tips him and closes the door.

NADINE

I am giving these fuckers five stars on Trip Advisor.

RASHAD

Who are you right now?

NADINE

Mrs. Rashad Williams. Remember?

RASHAD

This isn't funny.

NADINE

I ain't laughin'.

RASHAD

