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**TWIN MARRIAGE**

by

Allan Havis

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## CHARACTERS

CALIE ..... late 30s, stage and film actress, lives in Los Angeles  
DANIEL ..... mid 40s, novelist and professor, married to Calie  
VIV ..... Calie's older business sister, NYC accent, lives in London  
MARK ..... Viv's husband, mid 40s, financial analyst, multilingual

## SETTING

The play is set mostly in Alcala de Henares, a university town just 30 miles outside of Madrid. Calie and Daniel occupy academic housing for married families in the newer, sterile campus beyond walking distance to anywhere interesting in the universe. All but the play's first and final scenes occur in their apartment. Mark will take photos of Viv and others at various odd moments throughout the play.

## TIME

Several weeks leading up to Thanksgiving weekend, 2010

**SCENE ONE**

**SETTING:** A London bedroom.  
Viv and Mark sleeping in bed.  
Viv is snoring loudly. Mark tosses left  
and right.

MARK

*Schatzie . . .*

(MORE SNORING)

*Schatzie . darling . . .*

(COUGHS LOUDLY. STRONGER VOICE)

You're snoring like an army barracks, my darling Schatz!

(MORE SNORING. HE SHAKES HER GENTLY)

My darling, it's time to wake up.

VIV

(HALF-ASLEEP)

What?

MARK

I can't sleep.

VIV

Go read.

MARK

You're snoring, my love.

VIV

(SINKING BACK INTO SLEEP)

What?

MARK

You're snoring, darling.

VIV

Oh.

MARK

Why don't you go into the other room?

VIV

Is it that bad?

MARK

Yes and I've an early business meeting.

VIV

You always wake me in the middle of a nice dream.

MARK

All right. I'll go to the other room.

VIV

Thanks, my *scnooky*.

MARK

(AFTER A SILENCE)

You know, the other bed is too small for me.

(VIV RETURNS TO SNORING. MARK STUMBLES  
OUT OF BED)

I was reading in the Herald Tribune that there is so much stolen art being trafficked in Europe that wealthy socialites are showing off their illegal Picassos and Renoirs at private parties and organized crime is decorating their offices. Isn't that amazing? Europe has lost its mooring, darling, and it saddens me so. Even the Catholic Church has been caught in this web of unauthorized possessions. And now with Euro failing, the Greek government about to topple, the radical Islam element everywhere . . . I wonder why are we really here? Can you answer me that?

**END OF SCENE**

**SCENE TWO**

**SETTING:** The apartment in Spain.

Calie enters with light baggage, followed by her husband Daniel.

CALIE

This can't be it, darling.

DANIEL (OFF STAGE)

What?

CALIE

It's the wrong building. We're in student housing.

DANIEL (OFF STAGE)

Not according to the map.

CALIE

Then it's the hospital quarters. Smell the ammonia!

DANIEL

(ENTERS WITH VARIOUS SUITCASES)

Was the door unlocked?

CALIE

Ahuh.

DANIEL

(SETS DOWN BAGS AND TRIES DOOR KEY)

Well it fits. You know there's a large upstairs floor.

CALIE

Daniel!

DANIEL

Oh Christ, Calie . . . take it easy.

CALIE

Five weeks?

DANIEL

It's just a base. We'll be traveling every few days. I promise.

CALIE

(CHECKS DOWNSTAIR'S BATHROOM)

There's no shower or tub!

DANIEL

That must be the second bathroom. The bedrooms are upstairs. It looked just fine on the website. Hey, we'll just take a look and then make love.

(STONE SILENCE FROM HER)

Okay. Why don't we just go out to a restaurant for dinner and then make love?

CALIE

You said it was going to be nice. This is a hell hole. I'm going to cry.

DANIEL

Camille told me it would meet our standards.

CALIE

Who the hell is Camille?

DANIEL

The college liaison. You've talked to her on the phone.

CALIE

Well, she's full of bull. It's not even inside town.

DANIEL

How do you know that?

CALIE

We're in the middle of a frickin' industrial park.

DANIEL

That's the campus, honey - on the high tech side.

CALIE

High Tech? They make truck tires and hub caps here. Smell the rubber.

DANIEL

You wanted to come to Spain.

CALIE

Not as much as you wanted to.

DANIEL

This is our second honeymoon.

CALIE

I know that, Daniel.

(WANDERING)

Do cockroaches fly?

DANIEL

Some do. Most don't.

CALIE

Have a peek. This one looks like the Concorde.

DANIEL

I'll call housekeeping.

CALIE

(FINDS A FEW DISCARDED BOXES AND CLOTHES)

It's a pigsty. No one cleaned up since the Inquisition.

DANIEL

24 hour service.

CALIE

(FINDS A PAIR OF EUROPEAN STYLED CRUTCHES THAT  
WRAP AROUND THE FOREARMS)

Oh my God.

(HE SEES WHAT'S GOTTEN TO HER)

DANIEL

I'm sorry, Calie.

(PICKS UP CRUTCHES AND STOWS THEM OUT  
OF SIGHT)

CALIE

Why can't we move to a hotel?

DANIEL

Because the apartment came with the grant.

CALIE

So?

DANIEL

We're on a fixed income, Calie. Let's give it a trial one week.

CALIE

My sister can't stay here.

DANIEL

Why the hell not?

CALIE

I couldn't stand the ridicule.

DANIEL

Because she's an elitist?

CALIE

Honey! Look at this place!

DANIEL

You're blowing this so out of proportion.

CALIE

Daniel, this is so Dickensian.

DANIEL

Everything's Dickensian with you. When you met me you thought I was Dickensian.

(PAUSE)

Viv's only staying for a few days before Mark arrives. We'll buy some wall hanging tapestries, art posters . . . candles . . .

CALIE

Can't we check into a hotel until she leaves?

DANIEL

No.

CALIE

Daniel, what if I freak out? What if I have a breakdown?

DANIEL

Calie, give yourself more credit. You've worked in horrendous film studios and dumpy little theatres that had no bathrooms.

CALIE

Working in a dungeon is not the same thing as living in one.

DANIEL

Viv will pick up your spirits. She's so funny.

CALIE

And she's totally manic depressive. *I'm* supposed to make *her* laugh. And Mark has made it worse.

DANIEL

Their marriage is that bad?

CALIE

According to published reports.

DANIEL

I'm serious.

CALIE

So am I.

DANIEL

Have they tried counseling?

CALIE

Of course, it was part of their health plan. And counseling never works unless you confess amazing sexual crimes or you agree to do couple's massage for a year at a luxury time share.

DANIEL

Really?

CALIE

All through our childhood, she depended on me. I am Mary Poppins to her Morticia Addams.

DANIEL

Quite a cast. Now I'm worried.

CALIE

I exaggerate.

DANIEL

I don't think you are.

CALIE

You're right. I'm not exaggerating.

DANIEL

You and Viv have a habit of ignoring me.

CALIE

I won't be ignoring you.

DANIEL

That's what you say now. But you two indulge in a private language.

CALIE

Code words are not a private language.

DANIEL

You like to ignore me.

CALIE

With Viv? Or without her? When?

DANIEL

When you're pissed.

CALIE

When else?

DANIEL

When you've a classic Mulligan family crisis.

CALIE

One crisis every seventy five years. Come on, give me a break.

DANIEL

Yeah, right. And when you get dressed to the nines, you can ignore me.

(PAUSE)

Enough?

CALIE

Enough.

DANIEL

Why not take a Spanish class? English isn't spoken outside of Madrid.

CALIE

Who the fuck left crutches?

(APPROACHES HIM SEDUCTIVELY)

DANIEL

The course is free on campus and you know what they say about immersion studies.

CALIE

I can curse in Spanish. *Vaya al infierno, tu pinga!* Isn't that fucking enough?

DANIEL

No, you'll need some pantomime too.

CALIE

I only pantomime in bed, you asshole.

(THEY KISS)

If we end up staying even three days, you'll owe me big time.

DANIEL

Name your price.

(PAUSE)

I'm serious, Calie.

CALIE

A baby in the next twelve months.

Big price.

DANIEL

I think big.

CALIE

Okay.

DANIEL

You mean that?

CALIE

Yeah. It's part of sex.

DANIEL

And you still like sex?

CALIE

Yes.

DANIEL

**SCENE THREE:** Two weeks later.  
In Calie and Daniel's Spanish apartment.  
Another Monday in November.

VIV

Of course my hair looks like shit. Thank you. I heard it from my doorman. The whole day's be a pain in the ass. And I had my hair permed and colored Thursday at Babette's and she charges a fortune. Look! Clumps of hair are falling out like a bitchin' Taiwanese wig.

CALIE

Red or white wine?

VIV

White if it's really chilled. Red if it's expensive.

(PAUSE)

A bird shat on my head just outside the airport. Can you believe it! I stepped out for two minutes for a smoke and bang a surgical strike. I hate bird shit.

CALIE

So do I.

VIV

Felt like a three pound exploding mortar rocket.

CALIE

(CHECKING WITH HER FINGERS)

Looks like you cleaned it thoroughly.

VIV

What's the damn national bird?

CALIE

The stork? The blue heron?

VIV

Storks seem to rule this flipping town. I hope I don't die from fine feathered fecal fever. That's really hard say when you're sober. You say it, Calie.

CALIE

Fine feathered fecal fever.

VIV

Now say it fast five times.

CALIE

(LAUGHING)

The town's known for stork nests atop the roofs and phone poles.

VIV

Guess I'll have to wear a goddamn safari hat for the next five days.

CALIE

You look good in safari hats, Viv. Like Dian Fossey.

VIV

Yeah, just accessorize me with a couple of well hung apes. I'm craving a sweet something awful. You got an éclair or a twinkie?

CALIE

How about cheese and crackers?

VIV

No. Sweet sweet sweet!

CALIE

We've extraordinary soft cheese.

VIV

I need to baseline a fucking frosted donut!

CALIE

There goes your beautiful curvy figure.

VIV

That beautiful curvy figure left me in the dust years ago.

(EXAGGERATING HER HIPS AND WAISTLINE)

The curves are gone. Feel the roll. Feel this blubber. You just don't understand!

CALIE

I do.

VIV

It's either a sugar fix or nicotine.

CALIE

You said you quit smoking.

VIV

I was b.s.ing you.

CALIE

Thanks.

VIV

That was a momentary fantasy at the airport. Thankfully, I think it's gone.

(PAUSE)

I've got two detectable vices. I crave sex in the worst way, and it begins and ends with my salacious mouth - always. You're laughing at me.

CALIE

No, Viv. Yes, Viv.

VIV

Then you should be.

CALIE

I've missed you so much.

VIV

Then pick up the goddamn phone when I call. Is that so hard?

CALIE

We travel a lot.

VIV

Cell phones work everywhere in Spain, Calie.

CALIE

I know.

VIV

A good conversation is like holding hands in the rain, dear sister.

CALIE

Very poetic. But I hate the phone.

VIV

In all our conscious years, this you deny me?

CALIE

Take it to a higher court.

VIV

I want to be a vivacious post-modern mother and I want you to root for me!

CALIE

I'll get a bull horn and pom poms.

VIV

Oh, I've got Mark trained to participate. Business travel is now a second priority.

CALIE

He gets it?

VIV

It's either the carrot or the stick. And he knows where I'll shove that stick.

CALIE

I thought he had you trained?

VIV

That was just until we got past the wedding.

(PAUSE)

So why did you chose a suburb of Madrid?

CALIE

Instead of Paris' fifth arrondissement?

VIV

Spain's a beastly country compared to France.

CALIE

This country has beauty.

VIV

Yes, yes, in a primitive, raw, and brutal manner. I can see why *España* lost her former glory. Forget Cervantes and *Man of La Mancha*, lollipop. Spain's so backward it makes Poland look hot. Even well dressed Spaniards seem shocked about the new century. The country which invented the *siesta* is not out to break speeding records. At least the Brits in defeat of their lost empire celebrate their denial in a some style.

(PAUSE)

Actually, I love Spain and I love bull fights, but I don't know exactly why. Maybe I just love Hemmingway? Maybe I just love Gertrude Stein. Am I making any sense to you?

(PAUSE)

I have to buy four pairs of high-knee, "whore on the street" leather boots, Calie. And I know what I'm allowed to spend. This is Mission Impossible Week. Everything's unbelievably expensive in London. And I'm craving to buy a pair of profession castanets with an instruction booklet. I need an avocation or else I will die by the end of the year.

(PAUSE)

Do you remember Charo and Xavier Cugat? Boy, am I dating myself? I am Charo to Michael's Cugat – not in age but in mentality. I am the underage sexpot and he is the debonair fart in the tuxedo. Did you know that Buddy Hackett taught Charo English? I read that in a fan mag.

(PAUSE)

Mark's driving me crazy. These days without him will be a piece of heaven. He's obsessing day and night about paralyzing injustices at the office. My Jewish J. Alfred Prufrock. His secretary humiliates him the moment Mark enters. He makes him feel lower than dirt. I never knew there could be this much S and M at Citicorp. I never knew Mark could be this masochistic.

CALIE

Mark doesn't strike me as the office whipping boy.

VIV

Well, he certainly isn't General MacArthur. It's Mark's hidden side. He salivates as soon as he approaches the building. From the first day onward, he signaled his boss to show no mercy. It's as though he has a sign taped to his back which says, "I'm a low status asshole. Kick me." I guess it's the glorious carryover from his family. But he's so much smarter than these supervising pricks from Harvard and Wharton. At least we're out of the country. He loves having a London address.