

Slip

written by

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INT. PRIVATE SUITE - NIGHT

Low candlelight sets a romantic mood for the passionate cunnilingus taking place on the hotel's king size bed.

JAMIE

Oh yeah baby right there-AH!

JAMIE (mid-30s) shakes. Hidden by his wife's skirt, OWEN (late-30s) diligently, happily pleasures Jamie, who moans and grips the duvet for dear life.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Mmmm, ah, *fuck Sophie!*

Owen doesn't register the name at first. But he slows down, and Jamie's exclamations and moaning grow quiet as her body slowly stiffens.

OWEN

(muffled)

Nnnn-What?

He emerges from between his wife's legs. Jamie's still in a daze.

JAMIE

(groaning)

Baby, why'd you stop?

OWEN

Why did you say that name?

The loudest silence. Jamie finally meets his wounded gaze, realizing her slip-up.

JAMIE

Oh babe-

Owen stands up, striding to the bathroom. Jamie follows, shaking her panties off her ankles.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Owen, I'm sorry-

The bathroom door slams before she gets there. Jamie stands outside. The water faucet starts running inside.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Come on, Owen. I didn't mean it!

INT. FANCY HOTEL LOBBY - EVENING - EARLIER

A HOTEL GUEST is steps away from the CONCIERGE DESK after being helped to reveal:

Owen, suitcase in one hand and garment bag slung over his shoulder. Rugged, handsome, face covered in a short but well-trimmed beard. From under the cuff of his shirt, we see a SEMICOLON TATTOO on his wrist.

He approaches the counter, greeting the expectant CONCIERGE.

CONCIERGE  
Good evening sir.

OWEN  
I have a reservation. Last name  
West.

They type in the name.

CONCIERGE  
Can I see your ID?

He drops his bag to rest on the counter, retrieving his ID from his wallet and handing it over. The Concierge looks it over for a beat before handing it back.

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)  
Real babyface. Must be an old  
picture.

He takes the ID back.

OWEN  
(chuckling)  
Don't let the beard fool ya. I'm a  
closet softie.

CONCIERGE  
Very good, Mr. West. We have you  
and Jamie- is that your wife?

Owen nods. The assumption is correct.

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)  
-for one night in one of our  
suites.

Owen retrieves a credit card and tries to hand it over.

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)  
The room's already paid for.

That's nice. He puts his card away.

OWEN

Must be the wife's treat.

CONCIERGE

You two celebrating anything special tonight?

Owen hesitates with his answer.

OWEN

Anniversary.

CONCIERGE

Congratulations to you both. How many years?

OWEN

Three.

INT. PRIVATE SUITE - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Owen enters. He inspects the spacious room, wowed by its luxurious trappings.

As he sets his bag down, his phone rings. He checks it: it's the LAWYER. He locks the screen and lets the call go to voicemail, setting his phone on the dresser.

SERIES OF SHOTS - OWEN PREPARES THE HOTEL ROOM

LAWYER (V.O.)

Owen. Jim Meadows, Attorney at Law. Sorry I missed ya earlier. Got your message. First of all, I wanna say congrats. Wonderful that you and the missus are at a better place than when you first contacted me. I understand you'll no longer need my services. Of course, if things change, don't hesitate to call. The divorce papers are good for however long you need to hang onto them. I'd keep 'em handy, if I were you.

- Owen hangs the garment bag in the closet.
- Sitting an incense holder on the table, lighting a stick.
- Setting a bottle of rosé in a bucket of ice.

- Placing tea candles around the room.
- Looking out the window over the city view.
- Owen retrieves the garment bag. He unzips the front, and we see an extravagant suit and tie combo, with a note pinned to the front:

For tonight  
- Jamie <3

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Owen's POV. The suit hangs in the closet, note attached.

Jump forward. Owen tries on the jacket. As he slips it on, we see a LONG SCAR on one of his forearms, accompanying his tattoo. He models the jacket in the mirror. He sports a wide grin.

Jamie, full of sunshine, embraces him from behind. She stands on her toes to gently kiss the back of Owen's neck.

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - NIGHT

Owen is now wearing the suit. A vision of masculinity. He combs his hair in a mirror one last time before entering the restaurant's main room.

Owen finds his wife standing at the bar, nursing a whiskey sour. She's radiant, wearing a satin slip dress.

From behind, Owen caresses Jamie's waist. She turns to greet him.

JAMIE

Buy a girl a drink first?

He chuckles, and they kiss. He takes his place next to her.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

You look incredible in that suit.

Owen beams.

OWEN

You have good taste.

JAMIE

We have the same taste.

The BARTENDER, a butch lesbian type, walks by behind the bar - this is MEL (late 20s).

MEL

I'll be with y'all shortly.

Jamie nods. Her eyes wander, her gaze following Mel a beat too long. Owen turns to look too, smiling as he watches Mel. Her hair is trimmed short, cut clean.

JAMIE

She's cute.

Owen's smile fades at her comment.

OWEN

That she is.

JAMIE

(sighing)

But not as cute as you.

Owen turns back, flashing a smile to hide his discomfort.

OWEN

I'm not so sure about that myself.

Mel circles back with a drink.

MEL

Scotch on the rocks.

Surprised, Owen accepts the drink, taking a sip.

MEL (CONT'D)

You two look dazzling tonight.

OWEN

Thank you. She makes me look good.

MEL

We're just waiting for your table to open up in the dining room. I'm Mel, I'll be takin' care of y'all til then. You two celebrating anything special?

Owen is about to answer, but:

JAMIE

(simultaneously)  
A birthday.

OWEN

(simultaneously)  
Anniversary.

Owen exchanges a glance with Jamie.

OWEN (CONT'D)

Both are true. In a way.

A flash of a knowing smile. Mel looks between them with polite confusion, but admires their mischievous energy.

MEL

Well. Either way. Congratulations.  
We'll have your table ready for you  
shortly.

Mel leaves them to bask in their glow.

JAMIE

(raising her glass)  
Cheers.

Owen raises his to meet hers with a CLINK. They sip.

OWEN

Been a long time since we've had a  
night like this together.

JAMIE

There's time. Plenty more to come.

OWEN

I didn't think we'd make it this  
far together. To tonight.

He looks lovingly at her. She smiles, taking his hand.

JAMIE

Everything up to this moment. It's  
all because of who you are. You're  
my special guy. I don't know what  
I'd do without you.

OWEN

You're just tryin' to get into my  
pants.

JAMIE

Is it working?

They laugh.

OWEN

I don't know. Let me see how the  
bottom of this glass looks first.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

The couple walk side by side down the hallway. They exchange an expectant glance. Jamie lets her hand dangle at her side. Owen wraps it in his own hands.

INT. PRIVATE SUITE - NIGHT

The electronic lock whirs as they enter the suite. Jamie goes first.

JAMIE

(low)

Wow!

She looks around the room, lit by the ambient glow of the tea candles. Owen slips the DO NOT DISTURB sign on the outside knob as the door closes.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

It's even nicer than the pictures...

(beat)

You did all this?

She looks at Owen, who's sheepishness can't hide his beaming smile.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

This was supposed to be your night.

OWEN

I know. But I wanted you to know how much I appreciate you.

Jamie is quietly overwhelmed. She takes Owen's hand, pulling him in for a deep kiss.

JAMIE

I love you.

OWEN

I love you too, Jamie.

Owen nuzzles Jamie's nose. He releases her, walking over to the ice bucket. He pours one glass of rosé, hands it to Jamie. Then another for himself.

JAMIE

You always go for the rosé.

OWEN

(laughing)

Bitch, you like it too! Don't act like you're any better.

JAMIE

Oh I'm a bitch now?



OWEN

Only when you wanna be.

She fake scoffs, laughing it off.

JAMIE

Okay, bitch.

They sip, circling each other before going in close.

Another deep, passionate kiss. And another. And another.

They set their glasses down, freeing their hands and navigating towards the bed. Owen disrobes as he goes, leaving only a tank top undershirt on his torso. They make a soft landing as they fall OUT OF FRAME.

INT. SUITE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Now. Owen lets the faucet run. He sits on the edge of the tub, trying to collect himself. Jamie pleads from outside the bathroom.

JAMIE (O.C.)

Come on, babe, don't be like this.

Beat.

JAMIE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, it just slipped out.

OWEN

A helluva night to let it slip!

He breathes in deep before rinsing his wife's taste from his mouth.

JAMIE (O.C.)

It's not like it's the first time!

OWEN

(indignant)

It's been a year! A whole year tonight, Jamie!

(quietly, to self)

A whole year...

Owen tries to steady himself, eyes closed.

OWEN (CONT'D)

One night, of all nights, you could make sure to get it right.

(MORE)

OWEN (CONT'D)  
(beat)  
I know you miss *her*.

Silence.

JAMIE (O.C.)  
Owen...I didn't mean it like  
that...

Beat. Owen shuts the water off.

JAMIE (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Come out and talk to me. I'm...I'm  
worried.

INT. PRIVATE SUITE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The bathroom door opens, and Jamie backs up as Owen steps  
out.

OWEN  
Alright. I'm out here. Let's talk.

Jamie's searching Owen's face with concern. He sees the phone  
in her hand at her side.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
What're you doing with that?

Silence. Her eyes are locked on his.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
Are you gonna call 911?

JAMIE  
Should I?

He lets the supposition hang a beat before scoffing.

Owen moves past Jamie like a vortex.

OWEN  
Been a long time since you had to.

He sits in a chair across from the bed.

JAMIE  
I don't miss having to.

OWEN  
But you do miss her.

JAMIE

Owen, I said I'm sorry-

OWEN

I know you are. But be real with me. You do.

JAMIE

Let's just forget it. We were having a good night.

OWEN

You wanted me to come out and talk. We're talking.

She looks at him. His look is both challenge and invitation. She sits on the bed.

OWEN (CONT'D)

So. You still miss her.

JAMIE

Most of the time...no. 90% of the time, no.

OWEN

(sighing)

Tonight was part of the 10%? Tonight, of all nights?

JAMIE

I don't know what got into me! The way it made me feel...I guess reminded me of how it used to be.

OWEN

Oh yeah? My face is a lot hairier than it used to be, but it must feel *real* fuckin' similar.

JAMIE

It doesn't work like that.

OWEN

I know. Still.

(beat)

What's it gonna take for you to get to 100?

Jamie's mind races beneath her quiet.

JAMIE

Time? Maybe?

OWEN

I've given you time. I've given you years, Jamie. Hell, I've been "Owen" on paper a year today!

(beat)

How much longer before you let the rest of "Sophie" go?

JAMIE

You think I don't want to? I keep reminding myself what I've seen again and again. I remember the look in your eyes after you cut your hair. When you woke up from surgery. Every step you've taken, more joy. And I'm so happy that I get to share in that joy, but every now and again, something...something brings her back. You disappear, and in your place I see-

(soft cry. beat.)

And I know. I know that the "girl" I married was a shell in comparison to who you are now. But...

She breathes deep, trying to keep her composure.

OWEN

(empathizing)

I told you, at the very start of all this, if shit gets too scary for you, I wouldn't stop you from leaving. You didn't have to stay. I'm so thankful you did, believe me. But...I know how hard it's been for you.

JAMIE

I just never expected to find myself with a man. It's still an adjustment.

OWEN

I can't go back to pretending.

JAMIE

I didn't say I wanted you to!

OWEN

Then what do you want?

JAMIE

I don't want to lose you too.

Owen grimaces, more wounded than before.

OWEN  
"Too."

Jamie understands the implication, regretting her words.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
And that's the problem, isn't it?

JAMIE  
Babe. You didn't cost me anything.

OWEN  
Is that *really* what you feel?  
(Jamie not answering)  
I thought we were doin' better.

He stands, moving toward the door.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
I need some air.

JAMIE  
Owen. I...

He stops, turning back to her slightly.

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry. We were celebrating  
you tonight. And I ruined it.

OWEN  
I was celebrating *us*.

Owen exits.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steadying himself against the wall outside the room, Owen inhales deep breaths.

JAMIE (V.O.)  
Sophie?

The name reverberates, echoes through his head, again and again. Owen closes his eyes.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Owen's POV. Jamie sits across the dining room table from him. She's staring a hole in the floor.

JAMIE

I'm sorry, Sophie. I'm not ready to call you that.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Owen opens his eyes. He starts walking down the hallway, away from the room.

EXT. HOTEL ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The hotel's ROOFTOP LOUNGE is deserted at this hour, save one person having a smoke near the railing. Owen walks over to the railing, looking out over the city. He finds the view calming as he takes deep breaths.

MEL (O.S.)

Date night not goin' well?

Owen looks. She's puffin' on a spliff. The sleeves of her shirt are rolled up, revealing tattoos. Having shed the veneer of customer service, Mel has a sly, playful edge.

Owen nods in greeting.

OWEN

Just needed a minute.

Mel nods.

MEL

I feel that.

She offers the spliff to Owen. He walks over to join her, accepting it.

MEL (CONT'D)

It's a spliff, just so you know.  
Don't inhale too deep.

Owen takes his drag, passes it back. Mel takes another drag. They will continue passing the spliff back and forth throughout the conversation.

OWEN

Thanks for the warning.

Beat.

MEL

So...which was it?

Owen looks with confusion.

MEL (CONT'D)  
 Birthday? Or anniversary? You never  
 said.

OWEN  
 Technically, both.  
 Actually...neither.

MEL  
 (smirking)  
 So elusive.  
 (beat)  
 How'd you fuck it up?

OWEN  
 How do you know I did something?

MEL  
 Conventional wisdom is most of the  
 time it was the guy.

OWEN  
 Maybe I'm not like most guys.

She studies Owen. She notices the LONG SCAR running up Owen's forearm, and the TATTOO. Under his undershirt, she can also make out the ends of TWO SCARS on Owen's chest - top surgery scars.

MEL  
 Ah. I see that now.

Owen looks at her with suspicion. She's clocked him. Mel turns toward him, her attitude softened.

MEL (CONT'D)  
 How long has it been?

She's bold. Owen ponders how to answer. He plays dumb.

OWEN  
 For what?

MEL  
 Your top surgery.

Mel's surprises continue.

OWEN  
 'Round 10 months.

MEL  
 (nodding)  
 How does it feel?

Beat.

OWEN  
 (smiling)  
 I was so happy. After I  
 healed...the first time I put on a  
 t-shirt I cried.

MEL  
 (smiling)  
 And your wife?

Owen thinks.

OWEN  
 She tries.

Mel sighs.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
 She was checking you out earlier.  
 Normally doesn't bother me. But  
 your style...you look a lot like I  
 used to.

MEL  
 She has a type. So do you, for the  
 record.  
 (Owen scoffs)  
 Don't pretend you didn't look too.  
 I saw it.

OWEN  
 (chuckling)  
 I don't know what you're talkin'  
 about.

The pair laugh together, then stand in silence for a moment.

MEL  
 Y'know what else I saw? That spark  
 between y'all. None of my  
 girlfriends have ever looked at me  
 the way she does you. She *delights*  
 in you.

OWEN  
 I hope that means she'll keep  
 trying.



Beat.

MEL

And what if she doesn't?

Owen doesn't know how to answer. Or doesn't want to.

MEL (CONT'D)

It's your journey. You gotta do it your way.

OWEN

I'm not the only one on it.

MEL

But you're the one that stays on the whole way.

She steps away from the wall, straightening her uniform, rolling her sleeves back down.

OWEN

My name's Owen. By the way. I've been Owen for a year. Tonight...that's what we were celebrating.

Mel stops. She thinks before leaning in for a hug. Owen accepts. They linger a few beats before separating.

Mel motions towards the scar on Owen's arm.

MEL

I'm glad you chose to stay.

She starts to walk away. Owen offers the spliff back.

MEL (CONT'D)

All you, man. Happy Tranniversary.

She disappears inside. Owen continues smoking the spliff.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Owen's POV. Jamie stands between Owen and the bathroom mirror. Inspecting his face. She flashes a loving smile as she runs her fingers over his beard.

JAMIE

It's getting so full.

EXT. HOTEL ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Owen remains standing at the railing, smoking the last bit of the spliff. He takes a drag, then sets his hand down on the railing, extended out from him.

Then: Jamie's hand reaches to join it. She takes the spliff from his hand.

JAMIE

I thought you quit.

Owen looks at her.

OWEN

You could cut a guy some slack.  
It's been a rough one.

Jamie flashes a small, pained smile. She raises the spliff to her lips, breathes in its last wisps, then flicks it away. She looks longingly at her husband.

A tear rolls down Owen's face. He wipes it away, sniffing. After a moment, Jamie reaches over to take his hand. He lets her, squeezing it back.

THE END