

THE PROPOSAL

(For 50 Kisses competition)

Written by

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EXT. RESTAURANT, STREET - NIGHT

AN ATTRACTIVE 30-SOMETHING COUPLE emerge from a bistrot, happy and carefree. Hearts and roses adorn the restaurant window, suggesting Valentine's Day.

LAURA
Want to head back to mine?

BEN
Yeah, just a minute.

Ben crouches down to tie a shoe lace, takes his time.

Laura pulls her jacket around her for extra warmth.

LAURA
Come on, it's freezing.

He fumbles with something, trying to be discreet.

LAURA (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

He suddenly whips out a little box and flips the lid, revealing a sparkly diamond ring.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Oh my God!

Ben stands up holding the ring between his thumb and fore finger.

BEN
Will you marry me?

Laura gasps, then laughs, then - BAM! Out of nowhere a MASKED MAN grabs the ring and SMASH! Elbows Ben in the eye. Ben crumples to the ground. The masked man flees.

Laura stands frozen to the spot, staring numbly after the absconding thief, then at Ben, in a heap on the floor. Suddenly decisive, she legs it after the mugger.

The masked guy sprints off into the distance.

Laura pursues him speedily.

The thief rounds the corner and disappears.

Laura's legs pump faster.

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

She races into the side street and pauses to scan the area, super focused.

She clocks the masked guy, ducking behind parked cars, then disappearing into an alley. She charges off again.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Laura dashes into the alley, approaches a row of wheelie bins, slows, looks down, spies a discarded lump of wood and picks it up.

She nears the end of the bins, raises her weapon -

LAURA
Hi-Ya!

- and slices the air, about to chop the guy, but he jumps out of the way, pulling off his mask in a panic.

MASKED GUY
Wait! It's me!

He reveals himself, flashing a goofy smile. It takes Laura a moment to register.

LAURA
George! What the hell are you doing?

GEORGE
You can't marry that guy -- marry me!

LAURA
What?!

GEORGE
You said I wasn't dynamic enough, well, I'm trying to prove myself.

Laura sighs, momentarily conflicted.

LAURA
When I said dynamic, I meant get out of bed in the morning and find a job!

She holds out her palm.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Hand it over.

He reluctantly places the ring in her hand. She closes her fingers round his and tugs him towards her -- then kisses him softly on the lips, she smiles slightly, then steps away.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Goodbye George -- and next time you propose to a girl, buy your own ring.

Laura jogs off. George watches her go, smiling wistfully.

MASKED GUY
Sorry!
(as an after thought)
I hope your boyfriend's OK!

LAURA
You mean fiancé.