

# THE UNWANTED

by WALTER WYKES

## CHARACTERS

DAN

LIZ

EMMA

## SETTING

An apartment

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# THE UNWANTED

*[DAN, LIZ, and EMMA lounge on a couch. DAN and EMMA kiss. They nurse half-empty glasses of wine.]*

I can't do this.	EMMA
Told you.	LIZ
It doesn't ...	EMMA
What?	DAN
It doesn't feel right.	EMMA
What do you mean?	DAN
She's gonna back out.	LIZ
It's just ...	EMMA
Did I call it or what?	LIZ
There's something ... I don't know ... <i>unnatural</i> about the whole thing.	EMMA
Unnatural?	DAN
Pfff!	LIZ

EMMA  
It just feels weird.

DAN  
I don't understand.

EMMA  
Maybe I should go.

LIZ  
Maybe she should. Fucking tease.

EMMA  
I'm sorry.

DAN  
Wait—

LIZ  
There it goes! Dan's fantasy—up in smoke!

DAN  
Emma—

LIZ  
Poof!

DAN  
I thought we were really clicking.

EMMA  
We were. We are.

LIZ  
Talk about mixed signals.

DAN  
So what's the rush?

EMMA  
I ... I don't know. I just—



DAN  
Yeah.  
*[Pause.]*

LIZ  
Awkward silence.

DAN  
Is there anything I can do to make you feel more comfortable?

EMMA  
I don't know.

DAN  
I don't want to pressure you.

EMMA  
No.

LIZ  
Oh, no—of course not. No pressure.

DAN  
I mean, if you want to go—

EMMA  
It's not that I *want* to—

DAN  
You want more wine?

LIZ  
Yeah. Get her drunk, Dan. That'll help.  
*[DAN fills EMMA'S glass.]*

EMMA  
*[To DAN.]*  
It's not you.

DAN  
I know.

EMMA  
It's her.

LIZ  
Right—the two of you have no chemistry and it's *my* fault! Unfuckingbelievable!

EMMA  
She just sort of hovers over everything.

DAN  
I know.

EMMA  
She's like this unspoken ...

DAN  
Spectre?

EMMA  
There's an 800 pound gorilla in the room, you know?

LIZ  
Did she just call me a gorilla?!

DAN  
You look great, by the way.

LIZ  
She called me a fucking ape!

EMMA  
You're not trying to change the subject—are you?

LIZ  
Are you gonna let her get away with that?!

DAN  
That dress is fantastic.

EMMA  
Thanks.

DAN

Really. Fantastic. It looks great. On you. You look great in the dress.

EMMA

I picked it out just for tonight.

DAN

Did you?

EMMA

Yeah.

DAN

No way.

EMMA

For you.

DAN

Really?

EMMA

Uh-huh.

*[DAN and EMMA kiss.]*

LIZ

Oh, give me a fucking break! He could care less about the dress! It isn't the fucking dress he cares about! What he really wants is to rip it off as soon as possible—isn't that right, Dan? He's trying to figure out the quickest way to strip you down and get his hands on those slutty little tits of yours! That's what he's doing! That's what he's been doing all night—undressing you in his mind ... picturing you in various positions ... various attitudes of distress ... wondering just what you'll let him get away with ... how far you'll let him go ... if you'll have the nerve to tell him no when he starts to get *really* nasty. He's probably got a little stiffy right now just thinking about it. He used to do the same thing with me. Maybe he still does—although he'd never admit it. Maybe he's picturing all three of us right now—right here on this couch—legs and arms and tongues and hair all intertwined like snakes—writhing and twisting and probing. He's trying to work out the geometry of it. The mathematical possibilities. It boggles his mind—the number of ways he could violate that pretty little body of yours. He's trying to pick just the right one—or the right combination. You won't even see it coming. He's smooth, I'll give him that much—it'll sneak up on you. He'll wait until you're comfortable, until you're really feeling safe, and then—BANG!

Suddenly you'll find yourself acting out a scene from some cheap porno you couldn't watch for ten seconds without puking your guts out! You have no fucking clue what's going on here! If you're smart, you'll thank him for a nice evening, turn around, walk out that door, and never look back. If you're smart. But you're not—are you? You're not smart at all. You're a stupid fucking whore. So why don't you just pull that slutty little dress over your head and get it over with!

DAN

It really is a nice dress.

EMMA

You said that.

*[DAN tries to kiss her again—but she stops him.]*

Can I ask you a question?

DAN

Sure.

EMMA

Are you just using me to get over her?

*[Silence. Dan picks up his glass of wine. Smells it. Sits. He doesn't look at EMMA—just stares at the floor.]*

If you are, just tell me. I'd understand. I mean, it's understandable. I mean, I wouldn't judge you or anything. How could I? After what you've been through. How could anybody? I just need to know what to expect here. I need to know what we're doing.

*[Pause.]*

So ... what are we doing?

*[Pause.]*

Dan?

*[Pause. EMMA sits next to him. She touches his hand or his knee. DAN continues to stare at the floor.]*

Talk to me.

*[Pause.]*

Do you want me to go?

DAN

No. No, I don't want you to go. I don't know. I don't know what we're doing.

EMMA

Okay.

I mean, how can I—

DAN

I'm sorry.

EMMA

I can't even—

DAN

I shouldn't have—

EMMA

It's not even real, you know? It's like it didn't even happen. I wake up in the morning—every morning—and I can't remember if it was just a bad dream, a really bad dream, or ... and then I look and she's not there next to me ... the pillow's empty ... maybe she's just in the bathroom ... maybe ...

DAN

I shouldn't have brought it up.

EMMA

No—

DAN

It's none of my business.

EMMA

She left a note. Did you know that?

DAN

No.

EMMA

She left a note that she was doing it for me.

DAN

Oh my god.

EMMA

For me. Because she knew I didn't want her anymore.

DAN

EMMA

That's horrible.

DAN

What's horrible is it was true. I didn't want her. I was ready to walk away and she knew it. I was gonna wash my hands of the whole fucking thing—find some sane girl and start over—someone who didn't play mind games all the fucking time—someone who didn't question my every motive—someone who didn't scare the hell out of me. You know, there were times I was actually afraid she might kill me. My own wife. I was afraid she might poison the milk or stick me with a steak knife in the middle of the night. Honest to god. I was afraid to go to sleep.

*[Pause.]*

Sometimes, I think the only reason she didn't is she knew this would hurt more. This would stay with me.

*[Pause.]*

If you want to go—

EMMA

No—

DAN

I know I'm kind of a head-case right now.

EMMA

Who wouldn't be?

DAN

I just don't want to think about it. I keep seeing her in that pool of blood ... the way I found her ... with her wrists and ... it was all over her nightgown ... the one I'd bought her for Christmas ... her eyes were all glassy ... like you see in the movies ... like a dead fish ... like a dead fucking fish with its wrists slit, but it's my wife, and it's real, and I can't get that picture out of my head. I want it to go away. I want it to go away like a bad dream, but—

EMMA

It will.

DAN

It hasn't yet.

EMMA

Trust me. It will.

*[She kisses him—then takes the wine glass from his hands and places it on the table.]*

You know what you need? A little distraction.

*[EMMA kicks off her shoes.]*

DAN

A distraction?

EMMA

Yeah.

DAN

What kind of distraction?

EMMA

The good kind.

*[EMMA begins to unbutton her dress.]*

DAN

What are you—

*[She puts a finger to her lips seductively—don't argue.]*

I ... I don't know if it's really the right—

EMMA

Shhhh.

DAN

Emma—

EMMA

I got you all worked up asking stupid questions when it wasn't any of my business, and now I'm gonna make up for it.

DAN

You don't have to—

EMMA

I'm a big girl, Dan—I know what I'm doing.

*[She kisses him.]*

Can I borrow your shower?

*[He nods.]*

Give me two minutes.

*[She exits to the bedroom. Silence.]*

LIZ

Looks like you're gonna get some after all.

*[Pause.]*

You know most of that cleavage is fake—right? It's all padding. The fancy silicone ones, but still. I just don't want you to be disappointed.

DAN

I don't suppose I could get you to move towards the light—or in your case the flickering red flames?

LIZ

Not a chance.

DAN

Didn't think so.

LIZ

You should be happy. You always said you wanted a *ménage à trois*.

DAN

This isn't exactly what I had in mind.

LIZ

No?

DAN

Not so much.

LIZ

Be grateful for what you've got, Dan. Be grateful for what you've got.

*[She follows EMMA into the bedroom. DAN glares after her.]*

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