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“WHEN ROMCOMS GO BAD”

A One-Act Romantic Comedy

By Ken Levine

Putting a modern spin on those screwball romantic comedies (romcoms) of the '30s and '40s, the classic trope is set up (beautiful heroine leaves conservative fiancée for former lover who is a charming cad while her best friend offers comic relief) then turned on its ear. It's the romcom ending you've never seen.

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# WHEN ROMCOMS GO BAD

A One Act Comedy by  
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SYNOPSIS: Putting a modern spin on those screwball romantic comedies (romcoms) of the '30s and '40s, the classic trope is set up (beautiful heroine leaves conservative fiancée for former lover who is a charming cad while her best friend offers comic relief) then turned on its ear. It's the romcom ending you've never seen.

## CHARACTERS:

ROZ – 20's/30's, beautiful, not sure what she wants  
RALPH -- 20's/30's, conservative, always dumped  
CARY -- 20's/30's, charming, handsome, a player  
MOLLY -- 20's/30's, quick wit, always the bridesmaid.

## SETTING:

An apartment in Manhattan

WHEN ROMCOMS GO BAD

INT. ROZ'S APARTMENT (MANHATTAN) - DAY

Even though it's present day, the goal is to make this look like a black & white screwball romantic comedy (Romcom) of the '30s and '40s so everything should be in shades of black, white, and gray. And the pace should be brisk.

Tiny apartment. ROZ (late 20's/early 30's, beautiful) is stuffing things into a suitcase. Helping her is her best friend MOLLY (late 20's/early 30's, cute in that "best friend" way).

ROZ

There. I think that's everything.

MOLLY

Where's the bouquet?

ROZ

I'm not having a bouquet. We're eloping.

MOLLY

I can see not packing a chopped liver swan. But you've gotta have a bouquet.

ROZ

Why?

MOLLY

So I can catch it.

ROZ

Oh, Molly. You'll get married someday.

MOLLY

Yeah, right. During the next solar eclipse.

ROZ

Why do you say that?

MOLLY

Because I'll need a guy who looks directly into the sun.

ROZ

Come on. You're a total prize. I wish I was as smart and as funny as you.

MOLLY

Uh huh. You'd trade your looks for my 165 IQ?

ROZ

Well... no.

MOLLY

Your tits for my 165 IQ?

ROZ

Why are we even talking about this?

MOLLY

You're right. Sorry. And I'm really happy for you. I am.

Roz hugs her.

ROZ

Oh thanks. It means everything to me that you like Ralph.

MOLLY

I do.

ROZ

Over Cary.

MOLLY

Seriously? You're still hung up on Cary?

ROZ

No. Gawwwwd.

MOLLY

Wake up, girl. Cary's not into you. Cary's into Cary. Who takes dick-pics and sends them to himself?

ROZ

Okay, that was one time only and it was an accident. He also sent them to his folks.

MOLLY

Just because he's gorgeous, doesn't mean he can get away with everything.

ROZ

He is gorgeous, isn't he?

MOLLY

No. I don't know. Maybe. Let me see the dick-pics again.

ROZ

Well, I want (beat) Ralph. I am done with craziness in my life. Who needs that drama? Ugh!

(MORE)

ROZ (cont'd)

Ralph is solid, he's trustworthy, he's such a good accountant that did you know -- next year Price-Waterhouse is going to let him seal the Oscar envelopes?

MOLLY

That's an incredible responsibility. P.S. he loves you.

ROZ

He does love me.

MOLLY

And he'll never be unfaithful.

ROZ

Right. Which will be a refreshing change.

MOLLY

He's sweet and kind and will treat you like the princess... that it was your birthright to be treated like. You're making the right choice.

ROZ

Oh, God, I hope so. This isn't like voting. I can't blame Pennsylvania if it doesn't work out.

There's a KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

ROZ

Oh, that must be Ralph.

MOLLY

I'll get it. (re luggage) Throw in a bottle of Wessen Oil. It's your honeymoon.

Roz ponders what that means. Molly opens the door to find CARY. He's in his late 20's/early 30's, handsome, charming, with a certain swagger.

MOLLY

Cary!

CARY

Sup, Molly. You like "Avenged Sevenfold," right?

MOLLY

Who doesn't?

CARY

They're playing next month on the 14th. Your birthday. I made a call. You're in.

MOLLY

Thank you. That is so awesome. You remember my birthdate?

CARY

You mentioned it once at dinner.

MOLLY

Wow. My own sister can't remember. And we're twins.

ROZ

(frosty) What are you doing here, Cary?

CARY

I haven't seen you in four months. It's time to change your water filter. So I heard you're getting married.

ROZ

You weren't supposed to know.

MOLLY

That's why she's eloping.

ROZ

How'd you find out?

CARY

I work at CNN -- "the most trusted name in news." We had his phone tapped. (opens the suitcase) So where you kids going on your honeymoon? I bought you this thong, didn't I?

ROZ

(closing it) Stay out of my stuff.

CARY

So where? Paris? Tahiti? Udaipur?

ROZ

We're taking a river cruise up the Mississippi.

CARY

Huh? What was that? I fell asleep.

ROZ

It's a history-rich experience. We visit Mark Twain's boyhood home... and many great Civil War battlefields.

CARY

(wistful) You'll always have Vicksburg.

ROZ

They also offer on-board entertainment, asshole.

CARY

Let me guess -- Ralphie's idea?