

Love Her Madly

by

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Synopsis: A woman relies on her roommate for support for a first date, met on an odd on-line site. His unusual quirks lead to surprising reactions from both of them.

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Love Her Madly

Cast:

MICHELLE – Female, 38, shy around men

SUSAN – Female, 40, supportive, friendly

GREG – Male, 28, charming

Setting:

Present day. Action takes place in a living room, two entrances at opposite ends, one leading to a bedroom, and the other to the kitchen. The entrance to the apartment is through the kitchen. On stage there are three chairs and a coffee table, and a large plant near the back wall.

Only props needed are two water glasses and a cell phone.

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Scene opens with Michelle on stage. She is dressed to go on a date, except that she is barefoot.

MICHELLE

What time is it?

SUSAN

(From offstage, kitchen)

6:57.

MICHELLE

Oh my god, how do I look? Is my hair O.K.?

SUSAN

(Enters from the kitchen holding a glass of water. She is wearing a casual top and jeans, and is barefoot.)

You look perfect. Would you relax?

MICHELLE

First dates seldom go well for me. What time is it?

SUSAN

(Sits, puts water glass on the table)

6:58. Just chill. Besides, if he's like most men, he'll be 20 minutes late.

MICHELLE

Not Greg. He's very prompt.

SUSAN

How do you know? It's your first date.

MICHELLE

Yeah – but we've spent hours texting each other. I feel I know so much about him. I thought if I took my time, I'd be calmer when we met in person. What time is it?

SUSAN

10:24. (beat) You met him on a dating site, right?

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MICHELLE

Yeah. Episcopalian mingle dot com.

SUSAN

But you're not Episco –

MICHELLE

I know. But I have this thing for Episcopalian men. Always have.

SUSAN

O...K.... (beat) Dating sites never work for me. Tell me more about Greg – the punctual Episcopalian.

MICHELLE

He's the front desk manager at a hotel, and volunteers as a high school swimming coach. He's 28. Moved here from –

SUSAN

Wait a minute. 28? Does he know your –

MICHELLE

Yeah, he knows I'm ten years older. He said he's always preferred older women.

SUSAN

Hmmmmm.

MICHELLE

What?

SUSAN

Sounds like the last guy I met on line. About the same age as Greg. Said the same thing. Then when we met in person, turned out HE was the one who was 10 years older. I should have been suspicious when his profile pic was standing in front of his Ford Pinto. That's when I swore off dating sites.

MICHELLE

Oh my – maybe I should have checked –

(Knock at the front door)

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SUSAN

Wow. 7:00. Right on time.

(Michelle freezes, unable to move)

SUSAN (cont.)

Michelle!

(Michelle shakes her head no. Another knock at the door)

SUSAN (cont.)

He's waiting.

MICHELLE

Could you please get the door?

SUSAN

O.K. dear.

(Rises and crosses towards kitchen)

MICHELLE

(Leaps up, crosses quickly to Susan, wraps her arms around Susan's thighs while falling to her knees, nearly tripping Susan)

Don't leave me!

(Another knock)

SUSAN

Let me get him, and then I'll be back.

MICHELLE

And then you'll stay with me?

SUSAN

Throughout all eternity if you wish.

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(Susan breaks hold of Michelle, exits through kitchen. Michelle looks for a place to hide, and settles for a spot next to the plant.

SUSAN

(voice from off stage)

You must be Greg. I'm Michelle's roommate, Susan. We just got new carpet, so I have to ask you to take off your shoes and socks.

(Susan and Greg enter. Greg is wearing a sports coat, nice slacks, and is barefoot.)

SUSAN (cont.)

And this, of course, is Mich – where is she?

(Susan looks around the room for Michelle, spots her, grabs the water glass, crosses to the plant, and pours the water into the plant.

SUSAN (cont.)

You were right, it definitely needed some water. But your date is here.

(Susan grabs Michelle's hand and pulls her out from behind the plant. Once Michelle sees Greg, they stare at each other, lovingly, speechless, for a few moments)

SUSAN (cont.)

Greg, can I get you something to drink? ... Water? ... Coke? ... Greg??? GREG???

GREG

Oh! No. Nothing for me.

SUSAN

Michelle, how about for you?

MICHELLE

Yes ... ice ... please ... no water. But hurry back.

(Susan exits. Greg and Michelle continue to stare)

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MICHELLE

Thank you for being on time. I appreciate that.

GREG

You're welcome. *(Long pause as they continue to stare. Then with increasing volume)* You look even more beautiful than your piiiiiiiiiiiiiiics.

SUSAN

(Enters, running with a glass of water)

What's wrong? I thought I heard yelling.

GREG

Sorry. My ears get plugged up from swimming. I can't always hear how loud I'm speaking.

(Pause, as Greg and Michelle continue to stare)

SUSAN

Let's all have a seat. *(Susan hands the water to Michelle, who sits farthest from the Kitchen. Greg sits in the seat farther away from Michelle, and Susan sits in the middle)* So, Greg, were you raised Episcopalian?

GREG

I should have told you, Michelle. I'm not Episcopalian.

MICHELLE

That's a relief, neither am I.

SUSAN

Do you have an attraction for Episcopalian women?

GREG

No, but I have an attraction for women who like Episcopalian men.

SUSAN

(Looks at her phone)

A text from my sister. She needs to book her flight to come out here. I have to call her.

(Begins to exit)

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MICHELLE

Please don't –

SUSAN

(To Michelle, softly)

You're doing great. I promise, I won't be long.

(Exits to bedroom)

MICHELLE

Thank you for the compliment before. You're very sweet.

GREG

(Increasing loudness, with a hint of anger)

I wasn't being sweet. I was just speaking the truth. You're the most gorgeous woman I've ever seeeeeeeen.

MICHELLE

I didn't mean to imply you weren't sincere.

GREG

I'm sorry. That came out wrong. Maybe I should get something to drink.

MICHELLE

(Starts to rise)

What would you like?

GREG

Just a coke. I'll get it.

(Exits to the kitchen)

SUSAN

(Enters from bedroom)

She just needed to confirm the dates – (beat) Hey, where's Greg?

MICHELLE

He's getting a drink. Please don't leave me again.

SUSAN

Oh no! You shouldn't have let him –

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GREG

(from off stage)

What's the heck is this?

MICHELLE

You didn't! Not with a date!

SUSAN

I'm sorry. I tried to stop. But I couldn't help myself.

GREG

(Enters)

Are those my socks in your fridge?

SUSAN

Yes. I have this condition. It's called polar fasciitis.

GREG

Is that the thing when the bottom of your foot gets inflamed?

SUSAN

You're thinking of plantar fasciitis. Polar fasciitis is a psychological disorder. It's an obsession with having chilled footwear. Please don't blame Michelle. She's been very patient with me.

MICHELLE

She's had to reimburse me \$100 so far for panty hose.

GREG

I guess we all have some oddities.

MICHELLE

Wait until you hear about my deviant sexual fetishes.

(All three laugh)

GREG

(Loudly with more anger)

You're so damn funny. For a while I was wondering where that sense of humor went. But now it's coming oooooooooooooooooooooo.

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MICHELLE

(Rises)

What the hell? Why are you yelling at me?

GREG

I'm sorry. When I really like a woman, that's how I display affection. I don't mean to sound hostile. It's just the way I was raised.

MICHELLE

What caused you to be this way?

GREG

My parents emigrated from Azerbaijan. They were both soccer announcers. They were always loud when they were passionate. Every time me or one of my brothers did something good, they would both yell goooooooooooooooooo!!!!!!!

SUSAN

But why the angry tone?

GREG

The soccer teams in Azerbaijan suck. We always lost. My parents were bitter. I don't talk that way most of the time. It's only when I feel deep affection.

MICHELLE

I understand. But you have to stop it. Your yelling is very upsetting.

GREG

Give me one more chance. I'll try my hardest.

SUSAN

Let's press the reset button, and pretend the last few minutes never happened.

(Susan sits in the chair that Greg was previously sitting in.
Michelle sits in her chair, and Greg sits between them)

MICHELLE

I feel very comfortable around you. I'm usually very nervous, but tonight I'm pretty relaxed.

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GREG

Me too. I've really enjoyed our texting.

MICHELLE

The texting's been nice, but it's kind of one dimensional. Hard to feel a connection. Really need to hear the voice, see -

GREG

See the reaction of the eyes. (*Starts to get louder, fighting, keeping under control*). You have soulful eyes. All of the senses are important. For me – smell is significant.

MICHELLE

Really?

GREG

I couldn't tell before. But I (*again, fighting to maintain control*) adore the perfume you're wearing.

MICHELLE

You noticed? I usually don't fuss about scents, but I confess, this afternoon I spent the most I ever have on perfume. Come closer.

GREG

(Leans over. Smells. Then fights hard, but loses the battle for control, and eventually starts to yell in full rage)

Oh my god. That is heavenly. It is worth every god damned penny you spent. Congress should make that friggin' scent illegal. You should be deported for wearing iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiit!

MICHELLE

That's it. You're a great guy, but I can't handle these eruptions.
(Exits through kitchen)

GREG

Oh god. I really like her. I've been putting off seeing her for weeks, and doubled my therapy sessions. I thought I might be able to control it.

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SUSAN

(Rises, loud, and in full rage)

Stop apologizing for who you are. Anyone who really cares for you will understand. You're an amazing man.

GREG

(Rises)

What the ...? You too?

SUSAN

My parents were New York City cab drivers. They met when my mom purposely rear-ended my dad 'cause he was driving too slow. They got out of their cabs, each brandishing a tire iron, and ... it was love at first sight.

GREG

So my outbursts don't bother you?

SUSAN

(Loud again)

Hell no. And, you're so friggin' handsome. I didn't want to get in Michelle's way, but as soon as I saw you, I felt something.

GREG

(Crosses to Susan and embraces her, loud and angry)

Me too. I love your passion. Tell me again how you feel.

SUSAN

(They start to roll on the floor, loud and angry)

I love you, Greg. So much so that ... I put your shoes in the freezer.

GREG

That is such a turn oooooooooooooooooooooooooooooon.

END OF PLAY