

HAPPILY EVER AFTER
Written By Carrie Lynn Certa

**First Performed in January of 2002 at The Complex in Hollywood, CA.
Creative Juices theatre company provided the space and advertising.**

CAST

CATHERINE.....Fanshen Cox

AMY.....Marissa

JOSEPH.....Chad

New York Premiere: October 6, 2004

Directed by Eric Jones

Further developed at The Theatre-Studio Inc., New York

CAST

CATHERINE.....Lauren Kruse

AMY.....Stacie Leigh Scaduto

JOSEPH.....Micheal Giese

CATHERINE, preoccupied, sits sipping her cosmopolitan at an outdoor restaurant. AMY (both late 20's), excited and self-absorbed, rushes towards Catherine with drink in hand and sits down.

AMY

(apologetic)

I know that we've planned this time just for the girls but I have to apologize. I can only stay for one quick drink.

Amy stares at Catherine with an ear-to-ear grin.

AMY

Donald is going to propose!

CATHERINE

What makes you think that? You've only been dating six months.

AMY

It's love, Cathy. He's the one, I know it. I'm 28 and...
Didn't you know Tom was the one before he asked you?

CATHERINE

I thought so.

AMY

Come on and still do.

CATHERINE

(smiles)

Of course.

AMY

Last week he took ALL my rings in to be "cleaned".

Catherine stares blankly at
Amy.

AMY (CONT'D)

Ring size?

CATHERINE

OH! Well, it doesn't mean engagement ring necessarily.

AMY

Cathy! Please, I'm the last among us to get married and
here I am on the verge.

CATHERINE

Of course. I'm happy for you.

(pause - not convinced)

I really hope it works out for you. But you know what
they say about sex after marriage...

AMY

Maybe your marriage! Donald and I are like rabbits well,
he's better than The Rabbit actually!

Amy laughs at her own joke.

CATHERINE

I can see it happening to you too. Amy, to be honest, I
mean I...

AMY

See it happening? This isn't the sixteenth century,
Catherine. With chastity belts and such.

CATHERINE

Chastity belts were made to prevent wives from taking on
lovers when the husbands were off at war. My mother
always said, "If they're not getting it from you,
they're getting it somewhere else." My Mom should know.
Dad cheated on her for five years.

Amy looks at her friend
quizzically.

AMY

What? Are you saying that Tom's...

Catherine looks her friend
straight in the eye and says
nothing.

Amy shakes her head in
frustration.

AMY

What's with all the relationship negatives? I give
potentially fantastic news and you talk about
infidelity.

(frustrated and half to herself)

As MY mother would say, Tom is straight as an arrow.
He'd never do that!

CATHERINE

I'm sorry. Look, I have to confess...

Catherine looks to her friends
sad/angry face. She takes a deep
breath. Smiles and slumps into her
chair.

CATHERINE

I guess I just miss Tom. He's always out with the boys,
Bobby, and it gets lonely in the house. I don't mean to
take it out on you. I'm sorry.

AMY

An adult relationship consists of sex. We've talked
about this before. It's time to become little "wifey"
and insist he stays home and take care of your needs.

CATHERINE

I'll just get more batteries on the way home.

CATHERINE & AMY

The Rabbit!

The girls laugh together and
toast to the Rabbit.

CATHERINE

(uncomfortable)

So when do you think he'll propose?

AMY

He's taking me out tonight to Spago. I just hope he
doesn't put the ring in a dessert or food type thing. I
don't want to choke on the ring before I have the chance

to say yes.

CATHERINE

He can always Heimlich the word out of you. Just before you die, of course.

AMY

Lovely. Shit. I'm going to be late! I have to do my hair yet.

(throws money down)

That should take care of it.

(Cathy shoos her money away)

Will you be my maid of honor?

CATHERINE

Can you get engaged first?

AMY

That's fair. Bye.

The two hug and Catherine is left staring at her own wedding band. She slips it off.

CATHERINE

It was a beautiful wedding.

She puts the ring down on the table and finishes her drink. She is near tears as she stares at her ring laying at the table.

JOSEPH (early 20's), quite handsome, walks up to the table with drink in hand.

JOSEPH

Excuse me.

CATHERINE

(composes herself)

Yes?

JOSEPH

It's a bit crowded in here. Would you mind if I joined you?

CATHERINE

That's okay, I'm leaving.

Catherine begins gathering her things but forgets the ring in the process.

JOSEPH

Please, don't. I'd hate to have you leave on account of me. Plus, you look like you could use an ear.

CATHERINE

Excuse me?

JOSEPH

I noticed you across the room...

CATHERINE

(laughs)

Look. I'm married.

JOSEPH

I know and unhappy.

CATHERINE

(perturbed)

That's a little presumptuous.

JOSEPH

You're sitting alone...

CATHERINE

My friend...

JOSEPH

Wait. You're sitting alone, just downed a cosmopolitan, and have your wedding ring haphazardly laying on the table.

CATHERINE

My fingers are... swollen.

Joseph smiles while Catherine snatches up her ring.

JOSEPH

You're too beautiful to be unhappy.

CATHERINE

(under her breath)

Oh Jesus.

JOSEPH

What?

CATHERINE

Nothing. Look, I'm really flattered by this but...

JOSEPH

Okay, no lines. Hi. My name is Joseph.

Joseph sticks out his hand.

Beat.

Catherine takes his hand.

CATHERINE

I'm Catherine and I'm leaving.

Catherine tries to get up and leave but Joseph still hold her hand firm.

JOSEPH

One drink.

Catherine tries to shake him off.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

He's not waiting for you at home.

Catherine, terribly hurt by this, sits down and Joseph releases her hand.

CATHERINE

(to herself)

No, he's not.

Joseph passes her his drink and she takes a long swig.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

So, what do you want?

JOSEPH

Just to lend an ear.

CATHERINE

And what do you expect out of this?

JOSEPH

Just tell me what's on your mind.

CATHERINE

Are you a shrink?

JOSEPH

Not exactly.

CATHERINE

(getting annoyed)

This is a great little game you've got going here.

JOSEPH

It's not a game Catherine. I'm here for you.

CATHERINE

Am I on Candid Camera or something?

Joseph stares and cracks a bit of a smile.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Are you still in college and I'm part of some psych evaluation on unhappy wives?

Joseph is now amused by her guessing game as the two stare at one another.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Hot or cold?

JOSEPH

What are you thinking?

CATHERINE

I'm thinking you're a freak and I should leave.

JOSEPH

Then leave.

Catherine ponders this but the mystery of Joseph makes her stay.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

What's on your mind?

CATHERINE

(smug)

Do you really want to know?

JOSEPH

Yes.

CATHERINE

Fine. My husband's gay and that what's been on my mind for two years! Game over. You win.

JOSEPH

(shocked)

How do you know?

CATHERINE

He doesn't know it but I caught him with his "best friend", Bobby, in our bed one afternoon. I should have known my husband would be a bottom.

(beat)

That was a joke.

JOSEPH

It's just sad.

CATHERINE

Look, I've just told a complete stranger something

I've known for two years but never verbalized. Plus, I haven't had sex in the same amount of time. Can you please humor me?

JOSEPH

Do you want to have sex? With me?

CATHERINE

Now, that's funny.

JOSEPH

I'm serious.

CATHERINE

Tempting offer but I'm married.

JOSEPH

So is he.

CATHERINE

Noted.

Joseph sighs. He stares at her with sadness and then touches her softly.

JOSEPH

The truth is, I was hired to help you.

CATHERINE

Hired?

JOSEPH

I'm uh... a professional.

CATHERINE

(soft-angry-nervous)

A hooker?

JOSEPH

An escort.

Catherine stands up and knocks her purse and it's belongings to the floor.

CATHERINE

You can escort yourself out of here. I've never been so insulted.

JOSEPH

Don't be so dramatic, Scarlet.

CATHERINE

What?!

JOSEPH

Your husband hired me.

Catherine stops and stares
at Joseph.

CATHERINE

He...?

JOSEPH

He honestly didn't know you had a clue.

Catherine continues to stare.

JOSEPH

I'm sorry. I wasn't supposed to tell you. I was just
supposed to hit on you and do anything you asked.

Catherine still soaking it in.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Look, can you not tell him I told you. I could really
use the money and...

CATHERINE

How much did he pay you?

JOSEPH

(professional)

I can't disclose that information.

Beat. Catherine is near tears.

CATHERINE

He wants a divorce, doesn't he?

JOSEPH

So I gathered from our brief discussion.

CATHERINE

I'm catholic. I can't get divorced.

JOSEPH

Lets not think of that right now. I'm here for
Whatever purpose you need a man for. An ear, a lay, a
massage even, if you still want it.

CATHERINE

This is one hell of a way to notify your wife of a
divorce. Why would he think I'd... with you...

JOSEPH

He didn't say that exactly, I don't know... but he did
say that he loves you and never wanted to hurt you.

CATHERINE

Yeah.

JOSEPH

He's terribly sorry he hurt you.

CATHERINE

(angry)

Are you his messenger now?

JOSEPH

(to comfort)

No, but he did say he can no longer deny who he is and ...you need to move on. He loves you as much as he could love any... life partner... He cried. I'm his gift, one night of whatever you want.

CATHERINE

A genie? Snap my fingers and have three wishes come true? Have my husband want me.

JOSEPH

I can't do that but I can give you what he can't.

CATHERINE

And what would that be?

JOSEPH

Holding you through the night between the times we make love. Slow like you like it.

CATHERINE

Did he tell you that?

Joseph takes her hand gently and kisses it.

CATHERINE

Please don't.

Joseph stops and Catherine is hurt by his action then embarrassed.

CATHERINE

Now what?

JOSEPH

Drink?

CATHERINE

I think I've had enough.

Joseph moves his chair closer to her and nuzzles her neck. Catherine moans then pulls away.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

It's been a long time... I...

JOSEPH

(smooth)

Then that's how long we'll take until you're comfortable with being touched and made love to again.

CATHERINE

(turned on - to herself)

Damn.

(to Joseph)

I don't know. This is a lot to digest in one night.

JOSEPH

Let me please you.

Catherine pulls away. The pair stare at one another thinking of the next move. Joseph makes no move towards her but lets her admire him.

CATHERINE

Are you gay?

JOSEPH

No.

Catherine breathes.

CATHERINE

Let's start over.

Catherine wipes away the tears, straightens herself and thrusts out her hand.

CATHERINE

I'm Catherine.

Joseph takes her hand and smiles.