

THE CUT - a short film

By

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Paul Laight/Mountfiew Films
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INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

LUCY SANDERS (29) hands a glass of red wine to young, fresh-faced HENRY MARCONI (22). He smiles at her warmly.

Lucy smiles back. Runs her fingers over Henry's cheek. His EYES gaze into hers with passion and adoration. She cuddles up to him on the large sofa.

HENRY

I wrote a song for you.

LUCY

(pleased)

Another? What's it called?

HENRY

'Ghosts of Love' - 'Ghost Lover', maybe. I don't have the words yet.

Lucy stands and moves to the mantelpiece. Places the wine glass down on it. Reflects on Henry's words for a beat.

LUCY

Is that how you feel--like a ghost?

HENRY

Not when I'm with you. Just. . .

Henry stands and moves to Lucy.

HENRY (CONT.)

When I'm not--I feel like I don't exist.

(beat)

This thing. It's tough. As much as I love you. . . He's--

LUCY

--in Paris. Forget about Carl.

HENRY

I want to, Lucy. I want to.

Lucy kisses Henry. They embrace.

SUDDENLY: the LIGHT flickers and CUTS. Room is DARK.

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy lights a scented candle. PULL BACK and reveal the room lit with candles creating an ambient glow.

Henry's at the window. Moonlight illuminates his soft face.

HENRY

The whole street's cut.

Lucy's arms reach around Henry, who enjoys her touch. A car is heard OFF-SCREEN. Lucy looks. SEES the car. Lucy pulls the curtain shut. Peaks again. Then shuts them again!

HENRY

What is it?

LUCY

(a whisper)

Carl.

HENRY

He's not due back until--

LUCY

--I know. You'll have to hide.

HENRY

What? No! WE need to tell him.

CUTAWAY: Car door SLAMMING.

LUCY

Please?! I'll distract him while you escape.

HENRY

ESCAPE!? I'm not a prisoner of war?

(sighs)

I'm tired of being a secret, Lucy. Not being able to see or call you--to have to fit around HIS business schedule. Love isn't a business--it's spontaneous and shouldn't be bound to a timetable.

CUTAWAY: SMART SHOES stride along the pavement.

LUCY

Carl works hard. He provides. He's a good man, Henry.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

If he's so good--why do you need me?

LUCY

Love. I love you.

HENRY

But you love him more?

LUCY

Don't confuse matters. I'm confused enough. Trust me--I will tell Carl. But he cannot find us like this. He deserves better.

HENRY

Our love deserves better too.

CUTAWAY: KEYS rattle in the front door.

BACK TO: Lucy, LOOKS toward the door; her hands shake. She looks at Henry; EYES pleading. He sees her vulnerability. He doesn't like it but nods, 'okay'. She's kisses him out of relief.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

LUCY sits reading a magazine. It's UPSIDE DOWN! She realises and turns it the right way up.

From LUCY'S POV: the door opens; suited, professional CARL SANDERS (32) enters. He's tired and huffy. He tests the light switch. No power. Lucy stands up abruptly. Attempting to ACT natural.

LUCY

Carl. What a er. . . Pleasant surprise. I thought--?

CARL

--Don't ask! I've had a nightmare! Flight delayed. Lost baggage. Deal's on hold too. What's with the power?

LUCY

Not sure. It's been down for a while. What happened with the deal?

Carl grabs the wine from the mantelpiece. Drains it.

(CONTINUED)

Lucy SEES 'Henry's glass' on the coffee table and inches in front of it.

CARL
French MD! Had a heart attack. In critical condition. Whole thing's on ice. Of all the luck.

Lucy bends her knees. Picks the glass up blind - hands behind her back.

LUCY
Sit down. I'll pour you another drink.

CARL
I've got some work to finish up.

LUCY
Chill for a moment.

CARL
Too tense.

Lucy leaves the room.

ANGLE ON: Carl sitting on the sofa WHILE behind it is Henry--stone-faced!

Lucy re-enters. Hands Carl a glass of Red (Henry's drink!) She sits next to Carl. Rubs his back and shoulders.

LUCY
I missed you so much.

CARL
(begins to relax)
If I'd done the deal I'd have got the Paris job. Living in France, Lucy. You and I--together.

LUCY
It's what we always dreamed of.

CUTAWAY: Henry. Angers wells in his face as he HEARS this 'revelation'. Power surge: LIGHT flickers on/off.

CUTBACK: Lucy strokes Carl's hair behind his ears.

CARL
I know I work long hours and you must get lonely. But, I'm doing this for--

LUCY

--Us. I know, darling. I know.

ANGLE ON LUCY: She pushes Carl back. Lies astride him. Undoes the buttons on his shirt; he enjoys her touch.

Lucy LOOKS behind the sofa at Henry. Her EYES are determined, serious. Head motions him toward the door.

Lucy's look changes from serious to smiling, lighter; as her attention switches to Carl. She kisses him softly.

Henry--head-shaking as he HEARS them in passionate embrace--crawls pass the sofa toward the door.

Henry cranes a look behind him. SEES Carl's hands all over Lucy. This is agony for him.

Henry stands up. Power surges again; LIGHT flickers above Henry's head.

Henry looks OFF-SCREEN at Lucy and Carl together. EMOTION fills his eyes.

Carl--Lucy kissing his neck--opens his EYES momentarily.

FLASH CUT CARL'S POV: Henry stands by the door.

Suddenly there is darkness! A beat or two passes and the power back comes on. Carl jumps up. Pushes Lucy away.

LUCY

What is it? What's the matter?

CARL

I saw someone. A man. A ghost.

LUCY

There's no one, Carl. It's only ever been you and I.

Carl searches the room. Behind the sofa. Behind the door.

CARL

I could have sworn that. . .

LUCY

You've been working too hard. Must have been a trick of the light.

FADE OUT: