

L'AMOUR FOU

Written by

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INT. SUBWAY CAR- DAY

CLEO, 19 sits on the subway looking out the window.

EXT. NY STREETS- DAY

Cleo walks through an alleyway.

CLEO (V.O.)
Bea-- it's Cleo, let me in!

BEA (V.O.)
Come on up!

Offscreen BUZZ.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRS-DAY

Shot of Cleo's maryjanes walking up the stairs.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM- DAY

Doorshot frame of BEA, 19 and Cleo hugging.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Bea is sitting on the bed, she taps next to her for Cleo to sit.

BEA
So, start from the beginning.
What's his name again?

CLEO
Henry. Henry Walker.

BEA
(with a cheeky smile)
And he's how old?

Cleo shoots her a sharp look.

CLEO
That doesn't matter, I'm a young
adult, plus what's a 27 year old
age gap?
(a beat)
(MORE)

CLEO (CONT'D)

Young women aren't allowed to like older men -- we're just expected to be picked up by them -- and when we do like them, we're psychoanalyzed.

Bea smiles and nods slightly.

BEA

Okay, well how did you meet?

CLEO

We haven't. Yet.

Bea raises an eyebrow.

CLEO (CONT'D)

He's an actor, but he's not even that famous really, and he lives in Greenwich Village. He's never been married...

BEA

Oh, but you're planning on meeting him? You've talked?

CLEO

Not exactly...it's not really like that--he doesn't even have social media, anyway.

(a beat)

We don't know each other--or, he doesn't know me, rather.

Bea smiles, connecting the dots.

BEA

So it's a celebrity cru--

CLEO

(serious)

No. This is different.

Bea leans in to listen.

CLEO (CONT'D)

It's just--I learned this term. It was coined by the Surrealists-- L'Amour Fou. It described these impassioned affairs and mad, consuming love--I just--I know that.

(a beat)

It's not a celebrity crush.

(MORE)

CLEO (CONT'D)

Even though I don't actually know him, I feel like I know him better than most people. And it's not even just him that I--love--it's his world.

Cleo lays on the bed, looking up at the ceiling as she speaks. Bea softens and looks at her with sympathy.

CLEO (CONT'D)

It's so random. It must mean something, right?

(a beat)

I mean, why him? Why am I in so deep? Why do I think of this forty-seven-year-old man twenty-seven hours a day? It means something. I know it does!

BEA

Well, how did it start? This obsession.

Cleo smiles, as if saying "I thought you'd never ask."

CLEO

I saw him in a small film and I was intrigued by him; something about him just stuck with me. And then I just kept thinking of him. But what set it all off was this moment...

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

Cleo stands on a corner, looking at both of the crosswalk lights.

CLEO (V.O)

So in the spirit of Surrealism, I followed this technique of strolling and allowing whimsy and chance to guide me--to be receptive to the invisible strings of fate.

(a beat)

So I followed the crosswalk lights; whichever lit up first.

Cleo walks to the crosswalk sign and looks around as she walks.

CLEO (V.O.)
 I did this for a while and just as
 I thought I was lost and wanted to
 go home, I looked up at the street
 name.

Cleo stands on the street, looking confused, then looks up,
 and shakes her head in disbelief.

CLEO (V.O.)
 Walker street.

Shot of the street name.

CLEO (V.O.)
 As if Henry Walker himself planted
 this for me, or guided me there.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

CLEO
 So I accepted his challenge, this
 game of his.
 (a beat)
 And I started researching him...

INT. CLEO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cleo lays in bed, reading a book.

CLEO (V.O.)
 In interviews, he mentioned books
 that changed his life--Auster,
 Salinger, Woolf.
 (beat)
 Plays by Pinter, Sartre, Stoppard.
 (beat)
 I read them all, looking for him as
 I flipped each page.

MONTAGE:

Cleo reading these books and plays in bed, stop-motion style.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cleo sits on the couch, eating popcorn in the dark, as the TV
 screen flickers across her face and she's entranced by the
 film.

CLEO (V.O.)
 Films too.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Cleo sits on a park bench. She takes a sip of her coffee.

CLEO (V.O.)

He said his perfect Saturday was spent in the park with coffee and a croissant.

She takes a bite of her croissant gingerly, as if she is being watched.

CLEO (V.O.)

He didn't specify which park, so I tried a few.

(a beat)

He wasn't wrong, it is a nice way to spend a Saturday.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Cleo sits at a cafe table outside.

CLEO (V.O.)

If he mentioned restaurants or cafes he liked, I would go.

(a beat)

All to get a sense of his world.

A teapot is placed down and Cleo strains the tea into her cup.

CLEO (V.O.)

In the New Yorker, he mentioned his favorite cafe. He recommended the apricot tea.

Cleo sips it and nods, then opens her book and doesn't read it, but watches the faces of people walking by.

EXT. BUILDING ON BUSY STREET - DAY

Cleo leans against a wall, and holding a cigarette, she lights it in her hands and just holds it while watching people walk by, trying to look sexy and mysterious.

CLEO (V.O.)

I heard he was a smoker, so I thought I at least had to try.

(a beat)

Maybe he would offer me a light or think I was interesting.

She takes a drag and then has a coughing fit.

CLEO (V.O.)
It wasn't for me.

EXT. WEST VILLAGE STREETS - DAY

Cleo stands in the beautiful streets of the West Village, looking around.

CLEO (V.O.)
I walked his neighborhood--to get a sense of his environment.
(a beat)
It kind of felt like My Fair Lady, **On The Street Where You Live**--it then hit me that I was approaching stalker territory.
(a beat)
If I did see him--I didn't want to under these circumstances.

Her facial expression turns from delight to dread and she quickly turns around and starts walking the other way.

INT. CLEO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cleo sits at her desk with the lamp on and writes on a sheet of paper "The Rule" in red ink.

CLEO (V.O.)
So I came up with a cardinal rule, a boundary, so I can play this game fairly.

She writes "1. Don't interfere with the hands of fate".

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

Cleo stands walking on 5th Ave and pushes her neck out to look around the corner.

CLEO (V.O.)
When I wasn't looking for him, I thought I saw him everywhere. Around street corners, in the park, in store windows.
(MORE)

CLEO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It felt like we were the only two people in New York, like we were playing a game of cat and mouse-- and maybe, just maybe, he was looking for me too.

Then she passes a pole that has graffiti on it in the words "WHAT YOU SEEK IS SEEKING YOU - RUMI". She smiles.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Cleo stands on the subway, holding the pole, looking around the car, then her eyes look out the window to the passing train.

CLEO (V.O.)

I looked for him on passing subway cars.

(a beat)

I began thinking that maybe a glance would be enough, that it could be confirmation for the future. Just a glance could tell me that my intuition was right.

INT. MUSEUM SCULPTURE HALL - DAY

Cleo walks through the sculpture hall at the museum then enters a gallery.

INT. MUSEUM GALLERY - DAY

CLEO (V.O.)

He became an imaginary friend of sorts. I never felt alone...he was always there.

She sits on a bench in front of a painting and stares.

CLEO (V.O.)

I kept having this fantasy about sitting in front of this painting at the Met, and meeting him there, and him being so impressed by my wit and art history knowledge of 19th Century European Paintings.

(a beat)

When I later went to that gallery, he had left his mark.

Shot of the gallery name- called the "Henry J. Heinz II Gallery".

EXT. MUSEUM - DAY

Cleo walks down the museum steps.

CLEO (V.O.)

When I was walking back, I realized I was in the neighborhood he grew up in, among the streets of the Upper East Side.

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE APARTMENT- DAY

CLEO (V.O.)

I walked through the rows of apartment buildings, imagining him as a kid. I don't know, it was like I knew him. It was like every little thing had brought me to this moment, all roads led to this place: where he came from. The origins of this entity in my life.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

CLEO

Like the end of a spiritual quest.

BEA

But you still want to see him, don't you?

CLEO

I don't know. I mean, yes I do, of course I do--and I know in my bones that we'll meet--but there must be a reason why we haven't yet.

CUT TO COMPILATION OF SHOTS - QUICK CUTS OF CLEO'S ADVENTURE
A SECOND FROM EVERY VIGNETTE

CLEO (CONT'D)

I fantasize about us meeting when I'm twenty-seven, and out of L'Amour Fou and we can just meet as...

A beat.

CLEO (CONT'D)
(with feeling)
As equals.

Cleo hugs Bea goodbye.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

Cleo walks out of the apartment towards the subway entrance.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Cleo gets into the subway and sits down.

BEA (V.O.)
Huh, a love story where he's not
the ending.

A long beat.

CLEO (V.O.)
He's just the epilogue.

Cleo looks up and sees the passing subway train. Her eyes
widen and she smiles.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.