

The Fight of Two

by Samuel Chi-Sheng Hung

Characters: the husband, the wife, the wanted man

When the light turns on, there is a room with chairs and a dinner table. A man, wearing glasses, sits on one of the chairs. Next to the man is his pretty wife, also sitting on a chair. The husband looks very nervous, but the wife looks like a cold stone and has some tiny bruises on her face. In front of the couple is a tall and thin man, who holds a pistol in his hand. He is now sitting on the table and staring at the couple without a word.

Husband: What do you want? Money? I will give you. Please don't hurt us!

[The husband's voice is nervous. But his wife is silent, even without looking at the man - a wanted, dangerous man—sitting on the table.]

Wanted: If you want to give me money, no problem. But I only want to take a rest first. And I feel a little hungry now. Is there any thing to eat?

[The wanted man's voice is cool and deep, without emotion.]

Husband: Food? Oh, yes. *[He uses his elbow to hit his wife.]* Don't just sit here. Go to the kitchen and prepare some food.

[The wife still doesn't say anything. She stands up and walks to the kitchen—another side of the stage—slowly. The husband looks at his wife with a strange face.]

Wanted: Don't do any unnecessary silly things, madam. I can clearly watch you from here. *[Without any responses, the wife disappears in the side of the stage.]*

Husband: *(Turns his head back. Tries to open his mouth, hesitantly.)*

E...Excuse me, sir? Can I ask a question?

Wanted: What?

Husband: What will you do with us?

Wanted: I have said it once. Nothing, I promise, unless you bring me troubles.

[He dangles his hand, which is holding the gun, and stares at the husband. The husband swallows the slobber and pushes his glasses. At the same time, the wife walks back to the stage. She holds a plate with some cookies on it.] Cookies? Not bad. Thank you, madam. *[He picks a piece of cookies, but doesn't eat. He sends this piece to the front of the wife's face.]* Do you want a piece? *[The wife doesn't respond. She just stands there, watching the wanted man. The wanted man doesn't move, watching the wife, too. This situation maintains for a few seconds. And the wanted man starts to*

smile—a cold smile. Suddenly, the husband nervously rushes out and pushes his wife away. Then, He takes the piece of cookies and eats it.]

Husband: No problem, you see. Oh! It looks like you also need some drinks!

[He turns to his wife and shouts] Don't just stand here. Go take some wines!

[The wife puts the plate on the table and goes back to the kitchen silently and slowly. Seeing this scene, the husband runs to his wife and strikes her on both cheeks twice and three times. Then he uses his fist to knock her down on the ground.]

You stupid! Hurry up! Can't you be a little witty? Useless Sa-Bau! *[The wife doesn't say anything, not even a cry. She stands up, puts her hand on the face, and disappears from the stage.]*

Husband: *(Turns back to sit down. Pushes his glasses.)* I'm sorry to let you see that, sir.

Wanted: I don't mind. *[He picks up a piece of cookie and sends it into his mouth. From the beginning of the muss between the couple, he just sits there and watches.]*

Husband: I don't know what's wrong with her. She keeps on trying to do daily things well at usual...however, useless is always useless. I hope you can forgive her.

Wanted: Um. *[He picks up another piece. And now the wife appears again, holding a plate with some glass bottles of wine.]*

Husband: Can I have a drink, too?

[The wanted man waves his hand to show "it's up to you." And suddenly, the wife stumbles over her husband's stretching leg and spills some wine nearly on the wanted man. The wanted man doesn't say anything at all.]

Husband: You foolish! What have you done? *[Full of anxiety, he robs the plate of his wife's hand and puts it on the table.]* Do you want to kill us? *[He grabs his wife by his wife's hair. The wife cries out painfully.]* Huh? Do you want to kill us? I feed you until now and you want to kill us? *[He pushes his wife's head to knock the chair, and then hits her by the belly. The wife groans continuously.]*

Wanted: Sorry? *[The wanted man looks at the scene calmly and says normally.]*

Husband: Ah! I'm sorry, sir. But I must teach her what politeness is. *(Says nervously.)*

Wanted: That is your business, but...*[He points at the kitchen.]*

Husband: Oh! I see. Come' in. You useless Sa-Bau!

[Keeping on grabbing his wife's hair, the husband carries his wife into the kitchen. Then, only the curse of man and the groan and cry of woman can

be heard on the stage. The wanted man holds one bottle of wine. He doesn't drink, but just sways the bottle. The curse of man sounds furious and hard to hear clearly.] Crap, Moron, Idiot, (A series of words of curses)...Do you think who is feeding you? Don't you understand? The man is serious. He will kill us because of your foolishness. Do you hear my words? Don't make troubles any more from now on! You Bitch! Fool! Useless Sa-Bau! *[After the husband finished these words, a pounding on the stage can be heard. Then, the husband, who is panting now, appears on the stage, and the wife follows. There are some bruises on the wife's face and limbs. One of her eyes is black and blue. And blood flows from her lips. The wanted man, keeping silent until now, puts down the bottle, stands up, and walks to the couple without uttering any sounds.]*

Husband: (Surprised for suddenly noticing the wanted man.) What's wrong, sir?

Wanted: Where is the toilet? (He puts the hand, which is holding the gun, behind him.)

Husband: Toilet? It is...*[When he turns to point the position of toilet, the wanted man uses the gunstock of his pistol to hit the back head of the husband. Without even a cry, the husband is knocked to the ground and loses his conscious.]*

Wanted: (Looks at the husband and says coolly.) This is your business, but I need a rest. You are too noisy. *[He faces to the wife, who is now stunned by what just happened.]* Madam? Madam? Can you give me some other drink? Not wine, just coffee. Thank you. *[The wife nods. It seems like she just recovers from the shock.]* Oh, ye. By the way, also give yourself a cup of tea or coffee. *[The wife enters the kitchen again. Not long, she appears with two cups of coffee. The wanted man takes one.]* Please sit down, madam. It is your home.

[The wife sits on one of the chair. The wanted man starts to drink his coffee. But the wife doesn't pay attention on her coffee. She just looks at the man lying on the ground and seems like she is considering something. Finally, she breaks the silence.]

Wife: Why do I marry a guy like this? My parents have a wonderful marriage. Why can't I? Sorry, sir. Do I bother you?

Wanted: As long as you don't shout in my ears.

Wife: (Smiles.) He didn't use to be like this in the beginning. When we learned each other in the club, he was so nice, so honest, and so charming. Even after the marriage, he was still full of respect to me. However, as the

time passes, he became tougher and tougher. (*Sighs.*) I can never forgive the first time he beat me just for the dust on the ground. I was totally astonished, just seeing him beat me time and again. That was when he started to abuse me for trivial reasons. He did not only beat me, but also rushed me from the stairs, burned me by the cigarette, and once even left me outside in the rain.

[*The wanted man drinks a sip of coffee. He doesn't say anything.*]

Wife: When he found that I was harmed so much that it is not proper to beat me. He still didn't stop scolding me. He even told our neighbors that I had mental problem. "A crazy woman" he said. I nearly lost all of my properties I brought to this house. Some of them were thrown by him and some of them were broken by him. Even my lovable kitty left me because he flung it to the ground....

[*The wanted man raises his gun, seems like practicing shooting.*]

Wife: I wanted to improve myself, so I bought many books. But he said "Knowledge is useless for a housewife," and burned those books. Then I bought cookbooks and other books about keeping a house, but he said I can't learn anything and threw those books away. I don't know the financial situation of our home and whether I still have the insurance or not. He said: "A wife doesn't need too much money; all you have to do is shut up and follow me."

[*The wanted man drinks another sip of coffee.*]

Wife: However, in the beginning when he became violent to me, he would cry and knelt on the ground to apologize. And I forgave him because he was so tender—so tender that I almost felt disgusted—when he apologized. I even had a thought that it was my job to heal the weakness of this man. It is strange, isn't it? But that's my real feeling. Can you understand?

Wanted: No. I'm not married.

Wife: I think so. [*She takes a glance of the man lying on the ground.*] Anyway, it seems like...no! Now, it is definitely the end of our marriage! [*She faces the wanted man and speaks in a firm voice.*] Sir, can I entreat you to do one thing for me? If you accept, I would give you everything I can give.

Wanted: Is it about your husband? [*The wanted man still speaks in a calm voice.*]

Wife: Yes.

Wanted: All right, I want to ask one...no, two questions first.

Wife: Please.

Wanted: Why don't you just leave him?

Wife: No, he wouldn't agree on a divorce. Additionally, since you are an outsider, sir, you don't know how people in this place think of divorce. People, including my parents, regard marriage as the business only belonging to couples. To divorce shows your lack of ability to maintain a family. It is very discreditable. Even the cops don't like to be involved in the conflict of couples unless one kills another.

Wanted: (*Nods slightly.*) Another question. What is Sa-Bau?

Wife: A Chinese word meaning sandbag. He likes using the term to call me.

Wanted: Chinese? I see. Then, what's the job you want me to do, madam?

Wife: (*Takes a glance of her husband once more and then says in a small but clear voice, like a prayer.*) I wish you can kill my husband.

Wanted: [*He smiles—still a cold smile. Without any response, he looks at the woman in front of him. After a few seconds, he says.*] ...Is that the reason you kept silent, spilled the wine, and stared at my pistol?

Wife: (*Stuns for a little while, but soon recovers to a normal face.*) Yes, men are easily irritated when they feel that they are being ignored or insulted.

Wanted: Maybe I would kill you first.

Wife: Then it is another kind of end.

Wanted: (*Smiles again—cold smile.*) You are a smart woman, madam. What did you do before the marriage?

Wife: I used to be a doctor.

Wanted: Then you know more about how to kill a man than I do.

Wife: (*Feels anxiety.*) You still haven't given me your decision. What's your answer?

Wanted: (*Calmly.*) I refuse your pleading, madam.

Wife: [*Her face is now full of despair and upset. Her eyes are wetted by tears. Her voice is shaky.*] Whatever, you don't like to do?

Wanted: Yes, I don't.

Wife: [*She nearly cries out. She stands up and kicks off the chairs. But quickly she kneels on the ground in front of the wanted man and grabs the man's leg.*] Why? Please! I have fed up with this kind of life! Don't you see? Don't you see how he treats me? I have been living or striving under his violent shadow until today. Until today you intrude into our lives. When I saw your gun, I understood that this is my first or maybe last chance. I believe that I can stand all the things just because I am waiting for the coming of this day. Please! Please help me!

Wanted: (*Calmly moves the wife's hands from his leg and step afterward.*) I refuse you because you commit three mistakes, madam. One, I am a

criminal, not a hired killer. Two, I can kill this asshole easily but I hate to be used by others. Last, I don't like to play the role of God, especially in the fight between couples. You are very smart, madam. Such a smart woman like you can deal everything very well, including marriage.

[The wife starts to sob. It seems that she doesn't listen to the wanted man at all.]

Wanted: *(Looking at his watch.)* It is about time for my company to meet with me. I must go, madam. *(Stands up and walks to another side of the stage. Stops before the side of the stage and turns back to look at the wife, who is still kneeling on the ground and sobbing.)* By the way, thank you for your cookies and coffee. Those cookies are really delicious. I guess they are homemade. And I wish you to have a wonderful marriage life. Good night, madam.

[He disappears from the stage. The light turns off. When the light turns on again, only the husband, lying on the ground, is still on the stage. The table and chairs are cleared up.]

Husband: *(Puts his hand on his back head and stands up with groaning.)*

What's wrong? Why am I here?

Wife: *(Appears from the side of the kitchen.)* Are you awake? *[Her eyes are red and her voice sounds a little cracked.]*

Husband: Yes, what happened to me?

Wife: The guy who broke into our house last night hit you. Then you fainted.

Husband: Oh! I remember. That son of the bitch!

Wife: I am preparing breakfast. What do you like to eat?

Husband: Don't bother. Whatever you cook is like the feed of pig. You useless!

Wife: I would like to make some bacon and eggs. *[She seems to be very happy and disappears from the stage.]*

Husband: *(Sits on one of the chair.)* It really hurts me...um? Where is the guy?

Hey! You stupid! Where is the guy? *[He shouts to the kitchen.]*

Wife: *[She is still in the kitchen. The sound of frying something with the pan can be heard on the stage.]* He has gone.

Husband: What? Do you mean he has left?

Wife: Yes, in last night...Daring? Do you know what? I have realized one very important thing!

Husband: Who cares what you know! Have you called the police yet?

Wife: (*Regardless of the man's question.*) Yes! I finally realized that there is no God or Buddhist in the world. Even though they really exist, they are not as kindly as what people say. Eventually, only human beings can solve the problem of their own. I was wrong before. I didn't make any effort but wished that everything were on my way.... I was waiting a kind magician to make my dreams come true. It was wrong. Even my parents couldn't have a wonderful marriage life without any effort. Maybe...No! It is definitely the truth!

Husband: (*Very angry.*) I say I don't care whatever you realize! Have you called the police or not? Answer me!

Wife: (*Calmly and smoothly.*) No, I haven't called the police yet.

Husband: What! I was nearly killed by the bad guy. And you didn't call the police!

You useless Sa-Bau! I want to have a morning sport now!

[*The husband angrily rushes to the kitchen. Then an acute cry comes out from the side of the kitchen. It is hard to distinguish whether it is a female cry or male cry. The light turns off. The sound of telephone ringing is heard. The wanted man answers it.*]

Wanted: Ni-Hao! This is Lai-Lai Restaurant. May I help you?

Husband: Don't fool me. I know it is you! Do you remember? I'm the one you broke in last week.

Wanted: (*Calmly.*) It is you, mister. How can you find the way to contact with me?

Husband: I make a lot of effort...it is not important. I want to plead you to do one thing for me. I would give you a big deal of money if you accept.

Wanted: What's your pleading?

Husband: Kill my wife.

Wanted: Oh? What's wrong with her?

Husband: She suddenly attacked me! Can you believe it? She used the hot pan to knock on my head! [*A sound comes from the other side of telephone. "Pu! Hmmm...." It is like someone puts the hand on the mouth and laughs. But the husband doesn't notice it.*] She even threw the eggs to hit my eyes! [*"Pu! Hmmm...." The sounds become louder, but the husband still doesn't notice it.*] Are you listening?

Wanted: (*Calmly*) Yes, sir

Husband: I can't believe it! I work hard, go home immediately after work, and talk with her on the holidays. We even have the same interests. I spend

so much time to be with her. I try to make her happy! ...I can't find out what's wrong with her.

Wanted: Do you do anything to irritate her?

Husband: I don't know. I can't remember....

Wanted: Beat her unconsciously, like this?

Husband: Well. It is true that I can't stand my wife for she always doesn't confess her mistakes. So I beat her for her good. But I also think she is a woman and don't beat her seriously. How can she treat me like this? After that, she abuses me almost every day! Gosh! Anyway, do you accept my pleading?

Wanted: No.

Husband: Why? You are the only one I can ask. I go to the police, but they say they are not going to be involved in family affairs. I can feel the laughing in their eyes! Please. I try hard to find you. Please help me.

Wanted: Sir, I can't help you because you commit three...no, four mistakes.

Husband: What? What are the mistakes?

Wanted: Nice to meet you, sir. I wish you to have a wonderful marriage life with your wife. Goodbye. [*The sounds of the wanted man disappear, leaving only the sounds of the phone.*]

Husband: Hello? Hello? No! Help me! Anyone? Please help me! Please!

[*The husband's sounds weaken and disappear, too.*]

[*The curtain is closed.*]