

"STONE FLOWER"

by

Areon Mobasher

917 Scout Drive, Unit A
Durham, NC 27707
980-428-4262

SETTING

2019. A civil engineering firm in central North Carolina.

CHARACTERS

MARY

Late 20's - Early 30's. Female. Civil engineer. Immigrant from Iran and recently naturalized US citizen. Single mother of two young girls.

DOUG

Mid - Late 30's. Male. Caucasian. Civil engineer. Corny youth pastor vibes.

Author Notes

Full naturalism. These are real people, not caricatures.

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

DOUG and MARY are walking out of a meeting with their supervisor. DOUG is distracted, texting his wife (NO SFX for texting). MARY doesn't notice. The meeting wasn't great. MARY confides in DOUG because she knows he won't rat her out. He's like a kid brother to her. Annoying, but ultimately endearing and trustworthy enough.

SFX

Two people walking down a carpeted hallway toward a concrete stairwell. One is wearing loafers and the other is wearing pumps.

MARY

Sometimes I really can't believe that man.

DOUG

mhmm

MARY

He never even really *says* anything. No *feedback*, no *ideas*, nothing *actionable* in response to what I give him. It's just so...*inefficient*

DOUG

yep

MARY

Nothing but "looks great" and "sounds good". Yes... of course it does. It always does! Because I do it!

SFX

MARY opens the door to the stairwell, they walk down
Stairwell is concrete, echoey. The low hum of fluorescent
lights is not prominent but just present enough to be
annoying

DOUG

sounds good yeah

MARY

I have to clean up after Rick and put out the fires when he
doesn't deliver but *that* doesn't matter because Rick
apparently can do no wrong!

DOUG

uh huh

MARY

Is there a term for "trophy wife" but for a male coworker?
Nevermind, I don't want to know, it would probably slip out
next meeting

DOUG

yeah

SFX

Exit door from stairwell into office space. A small but
reputable civil engineering firm. No cubicles, but there is
a clear division between workspaces and everyone can see
each other's face

ambient office chatter, printers, occasional phone ringing

MARY

Sorry. Needed to vent. Didn't mean to pull you away from
whatever it is you're doing.

DOUG

wha-? oh I'm- gosh sorry Mary, keep getting distracted.

MARY

All good

DOUG

Just getting back to all these messages from my
wife...she's mad at me again

MARY

Can't imagine why

DOUG

Right? I think she looked up those Persian words you taught
me and uh yeah. Didn't think she'd notice when I said it
all romantic-like, ruined the joke

MARY

I don't think there is a romantic way to say "woman, get me
a beer" in any language, but I--

(beat)

oh god

DOUG

oooh someone's got a not-so-secret admirer!

MARY

uh

DOUG

I mean that's...that's just amazing, there's gotta be like two dozen of these bouquets!

MARY

yeah

DOUG

I've never seen roses like *these* before. *Orange*? That's crazy!

MARY

Yeah it's uh...it's crazy alright

DOUG

Is this the guy who called last week? Y'know that whole "thing"?
(He thinks this is endearing, wink-wink and all that)

MARY

I...yeah

(beat)

Shit. Shiiit shit *shit*

DOUG

Wait, is that card made out to "Nazi"?

MARY

...what?

DOUG

Right there, the card, "For my dear Nazi," N-A-Z-I

MARY

No, that's... no it's actually... so I don't really tell anyone this -- my "real" name is Mehrnaz, but when I married my ex and we moved here he said I need to have an "American" name... so we decided I should go by Mary because it's, um, "easier"...but in Iran the eh, affectionate name for me is "nozzy". So it...yeah, I'm not a Nazi. Just a...you know... translation... uh spelling... thing.

DOUG

ohh gotcha, like Fozzie Bear! Love that guy, hehe "waka waka"

MARY

...yeah

DOUG

You people sure are interesting, I tell ya

SFX

DOUG's phone loudly vibrates on his desk

DOUG

Oh, crap, gotta take this. Yes? (pause) What do you mean "what do you mean 'yes'?" I'm at work! (pause) Oh? (pause) yeah of course honey.

SFX

Fade out the following DOUG text (we don't need to hear all of it, or even most of it). As it fades out, MARY picks up her phone, dials a number, and it rings.

DOUG

Now what's this all about? (pause) Right, right. Yeah I mean. Of course I--of course I know! I do. You didn't have to (pause) okay I know you "felt the need to tell me" but (pause) yeah okay but you shouldn't be offended, it's nothing. (pause) I mean clearly not nothing but it wasn't *something*. Don't worry about it, I've got it all figured out. Yep. (pause) yep. (pause) yeppers. (pause) mhmm (pause) Got it. Don't you worry about a thing. See you tonight.

SFX

Phone rings. We hear signs of MARY's anxiety - biting or tapping nails, sharp breathing, etc. No one picks up the call. Automated voice mailbox with a number, no name or recorded greeting.

A tone.

MARY

Farhad... This... this is unacceptable. At my *work*? After all the shit you put me through just last week alone, I-- I am sick of this. I am sick of you, and these grand gestures, and the *lies*. It has been *four. Years*. The girls are *mine*. I am not going to tell you this again.

(Beat)

You don't even *want* a family. You may *think* you do, but you *don't*. I've given you chances to prove you can be a husband again, a father again, and what do you do? You throw it all away! Every. Single. Time. If I...

(Beat)

if you ever come to my work, or my home, or anywhere near me and *my* children...

(Beat)

Never contact me again unless it's for the fucking child support that you *still* owe me. Do you understand? We are done, Farhad.
Done.

SFX

MARY hangs up and slams her cell phone down. She is on the verge of tears, tugging on her hair. She regains composure, though a little out of breath

DOUG

You wouldn't believe it, my wife called to *remind me* it's our *anniversary* today. Isn't that nuts?

MARY

Well did you know it was your anniversary?

DOUG

Well...no. But I don't like that she told me.

MARY

...so you should be glad she reminded you, no?

DOUG

I just...

I just don't know what to do.

(beat)

I never do.

MARY

Does she like flowers?

End of play.