

A LONE CAFE

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Episode 101 - "Wife"

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ACT I

INT. BAR - DAY

MARIAH, 32, owner of Le Café Solitaire, is preparing the counter for when the shop opens up.

CAROL, 30, Mariah's girlfriend, is leaning across the counter watching Mariah clean it.

CAROL

You know Mariah, keep doing this
and you'll only hurt yourself.

Mariah picks up a glass and starts polishing it.

MARIAH

I told you, Carol, I'm fine. Is it
so bad to care about others? I just
want to help people with their
problems.

CAROL

It is when you neglect your own
needs.

Mariah sets down the glass.

MARIAH

Really, I'm fine.

CAROL

You say that, but please, please
don't burn yourself out.

Mariah polishes the counter one more time. She turns to Carol once she is finished.

MARIAH

All right, I'll be careful. Will
that ease your conscience?

CAROL

A little. Thank you.

MARIAH

I'd love to chat more, but I need
to open the café.

Carol nods.

CAROL
Okay. I'll be upstairs if you need
me.

MARIAH
Sure, but I can't ask that of you
on your day off.

CAROL
Too nice...

Carol turns from the counter and heads up the stairs. Mariah
walks to the front of the café and opens the doors. People
walk in. Mariah greets them.

MARIAH
Good morning, Claire.

CLAIRE
...

CLAIRE, 46, actress, walks to a table near the window.

MARIAH
I really wish she would let me talk
to her...

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. BAR - DAY

Mariah walks back to the counter. She takes orders and starts preparing coffee. Jonathan walks to the counter.

JONATHAN
I'll take an americano

MARIAH
One americano coming right up!

Mariah turns to the coffee maker and prepares his coffee.

JONATHAN

...

Mariah places the coffee in front of Jonathan. He stares at it. Mariah continues to prepare coffee.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

...

Jonathan plays with the muddle, stirring his coffee while he stares at it. Mariah notices.

MARIAH
Something wrong, Jon?

JONATHAN
It's my wife.

Jonathan stops playing with his coffee and looks at Mariah.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
She hasn't been talking to me, and
I don't know why.

MARIAH
Have you asked her why?

JONATHAN
Yes, but she just keeps ignoring
me!

MARIAH
Maybe her job is stressful? Or
she's having a hard time at home?

JONATHAN

No, she got a promotion recently,
and it's only her and I at the
house.

Claire walks to the counter.

CLAIRE

Ahem

MARIAH

I'll be right back.

Mariah leaves Jonathan and walks to Claire.

MARIAH (CONT'D)

How can I help you?

CLAIRE

I'm done with my coffee.

Claire sets the coffee mug in front of Mariah.

MARIAH

Oh, thanks. Say, Claire?

Claire walks out of the café. Mariah watches, then makes her way over to Jonathan.

MARIAH (CONT'D)

So, about your wife, you said you
two live alone?

JONATHAN

Yeah, it's just me and her.

MARIAH

Maybe she wants something you
aren't giving her?

JONATHAN

Like what?

MARIAH

A family?

JONATHAN

She doesn't want kids, and she
doesn't like animals.

MARIAH

Hm,

Mariah leans against the counter.

JONATHAN

I keep asking her if she's okay,
but she just won't tell me what's
bothering her. I can't figure it
out.

MARIAH

Ooh. I get it.

JONATHAN

What?

Mariah points at his coffee cup and then at him.

MARIAH

Give her space.

She picks up the mug Claire brought back and cleans it.

MARIAH (CONT'D)

Maybe you're prying too much. I
don't know what goes on in her
head, but if you try giving her
space, that might do the trick.

JONATHAN

You think I'm hovering too much?

MARIAH

Exactly.

Mariah sets down the mug.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

INT. BAR - DAY

MARIAH

There was this one time I took Carol to the movies. She refused to get any snacks. I was so confused so I asked her why, but she wouldn't tell me!

Mariah puts her hands on her hips, staring at the wall.

MARIAH (CONT'D)

I was so upset. So after the movie I asked her again. She realized it was really bothering me, so she told me. Turns out she was allergic to dairy, and her stomach hurt from carbonated drinks. So,

Mariah turned to Jonathan.

MARIAH (CONT'D)

I made it a point to not go to the movies with her. I still go sometimes because I like them, but I didn't want to force her to do something she didn't like.

JONATHAN

But how does that relate to my problem?

MARIAH

It relates because relationships work like that. You help one another grow. Give her some space. If she doesn't talk to you still, we can think of something else, okay?

JONATHAN

Okay. Thanks, Mariah.

Jonathan stands from his seat and pays for his coffee. The two wave to each other as he leaves the café.

END OF ACT III

TAG

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Le Café Solitaire is closed. Mariah is cleaning the counter and tables. Carol comes down from upstairs.

CAROL

Hey, Mariah, do you want to see a movie later?

Mariah stops what she is doing to look at Carol.

MARIAH

I would love to.