About Katherine Hardy

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by Caroline Roberts

Introduction:


Tonight’s host arrives. The audience roars. He bows deeply. Nose touching knees. His eyes sparkle. Smile is wide. A short pause…. At long last! The players enter. Two insignificant individuals. The audience subdues. Introductions are made. Down the line. Pay close attention.

“Bienvenue, mon public. To Katherine’s mind.” Applause thunders, echoing.

“Now, let’s begin! Character: Katherine Hardy. Character: Jeremy Finn.”


The scene, set. Hush the crowd. Dim the lights. Cue the action.

Act 1: Expectations. (The music swells. The Ice Dance. Score: Danny Elfman. Enter Katherine Hardy)


A party justification. An after-class special.

The crowd parts. Cue the spotlight. There she is. Lovely, Katherine Hardy.


Meeting is inevitable. Although lacking reason. It doesn’t matter. They draw together. Led by fate. A dream-like march.


Stage fades black. Music tiptoes out. The players exit.


He’s in sight. Lovely Jeremy Finn. From Geology lecture. Talking with friends. Any minute now. He’ll look over. Time will stop. Conversation will ensue. He’ll fall deeply. Hours will pass. In this moment. Expectations meet reality.


Why not her?

Time momentarily pauses.

She looks back. He’s still there. Leaning against wall. Talking with friends.
She breathes deeply. Smoothes her hair. This is reality.

Now or never.

Katherine walks over. Her heart pounds. Nervousness tightens chest. Her smile flashes. He smiles back. He remembers her.


Time passes quickly. Panic begins boiling. What to say?

"Wanna go out?"

"Roses are red. Violets are blue."

"You’ve had Starbucks? Because you’re hot. Like a latte."

In the end. Wit is unnecessary. She merely asks. A ten-digit promise. Tap, tap, tapping. Phones click closed. Future is uncertain. Nothing to expect.

They leave separately. Perhaps meeting again. But perhaps not.

(The violins carry. Swelling slowly, ending. Smoldering lights brighten. Illuminating audience faces.)

**The Last Call.**


Many shrug, unconcerned. They’ll continue on. Boats against current. Struggling with expectations. Waiting for something. Perhaps for nothing.


Flip the switch. Bing, bang, black.