

Better Than Sex

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I hate to repeat myself, but my sons are dead wrong. Alma is really good for me. She makes me feel not only young, but alive. So alive that sometimes I catch myself bouncing on my feet like a little boy when she walks into a room. And I must admit, with a little guilt, more alive than I have ever felt, even when Conching, God bless her kind soul, was still around.

Alma. Just thinking of her makes me tingly with expectation. I wonder if my sons ever feel that way about their wives. They both look like overdressed skeletons, while Alma, all curves and sweet softness, looks good in anything she wears (or doesn't wear). My daughters-in-law remind me of Catrina Dolls from Mexico. Alma bought several of those laughing skeleton dolls dressed in fancy gowns when we visited Mexico City last year. Except that instead of laughing like those Catrinas, my daughters-in-law seem to be forever put off. At least, that's how they act whenever they are in the same room with Alma. As if being high-powered career women gave them the license to look down on Alma. I know they begrudge her that well-deserved vacation. It was our third anniversary, and she was so understanding when I told her I could not marry her, at least not yet, because my sons would surely raise hell.

Besides, people already address her as Mrs. Garcia. Even my business associates refer to her as my wife. My sons don't call her anything. They refer to her as "she", or "that woman." It was as if her name were a pill so bitter they could not bear for it to touch their lips. Chay, my only daughter,

used to call her Tita. She and her husband Obet were the only ones who invited us to their home for lunches or dinners. But not anymore. Not after I asked them to relocate to Laoag, after her husband lost their used car dealership to gambling. I gave him some start-up capital yet again, but only if they stayed in Laoag where I own some land planted to dragon fruit. My sons said I was throwing away money, that Obet was shitting on my head. But what do they know? All they have is gossip. I don't say anything. I love my children and all I want is peace in our family. They still visit me, but only when they know that Alma is out with friends, at the spa, or shopping.

Since I was diagnosed with diabetes a few months earlier, my sons, on their rare visits, keep bringing me ampalaya tea and those vile-tasting juices. Only Alma lets me have leche flan and chocolate cake to indulge my sweet tooth. In moderation, of course.

"Don't you just love it?" She would say, then daintily bring a forkful of the moist brown cake to her mouth. "It's better than sex," she would coo and wink.

Any other man would have been offended, but not me. I know she just wants to reassure me that everything is okay. We have not been active lately, because my diabetes has temporarily disabled me. Though Alma is so limber and bent on pleasuring me, I've had a lot of difficulty. Well, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. Lately, she had thoughtfully bought some Viagra for me. Would my sons' wives have been that considerate? I don't think so. Why, one of them even hinted that Viagra is harmful for someone my age. Something about heart complications or whatnot. She's such a know-it-all. A testy know-it-all.

Alma is the epitome of patience. I myself have been feeling so frustrated lately. I could never have the release I crave so much. I kick myself, thinking why I could not even respond to someone like her. Was I turning gay in my old age? If only I could find something else that could satisfy me, like Alma and her chocolate cake. Something that is better than sex. Of course, I keep these things from Alma. I'm sure she is also feeling bad. After all, a woman her age has needs. I want to satisfy those needs.

So, this morning, I will surprise her. While I am supposed to be at the office, I head home, after taking a pill. I read that Viagra takes effect an hour after ingestion. Good. Time enough. I unlock the garage and quietly open the main door. I know the maids and the driver are doing grocery

shopping. So far so good. The pill should be working soon.

As I expected, when I open the Masters' Bedroom, the curtains are closed, and the room is in shadows. Alma likes sleeping late. I catch a glimpse of her bare shoulders and thighs. I close my eyes, savouring the hardening in my groin. Slowly, I open my eyes. They have gotten accustomed to the dark, and I see another man in bed with her. I blink to make sure. A wounded animal growl escapes from my throat. The man jumps off the bed, scoops his clothes from the floor, and rushes out, but hesitates, eyes darting to the man purse on the wing chair. I lunge at him, but he is too fast for me. I turn my eyes to Alma, my intestines twisting.

She rises from the bed, the crumpled linen like waves to her Venus.

"I'm so sorry, Love," she says, voice husky.

She drapes soft arms around my neck and opens her plump lips invitingly. Her fragrance envelopes me and I give her a long, intense kiss. I let her pull me down to the bed. Kneeling over her luscious body, I run trembling fingers over her creamy cheeks, which are moist with tears. I slide my tongue over her swanlike neck, down to her ample bosom, and suck her perfect nipples. I look up, her eyes are shut, a smile playing on her swollen lips. I caress her breasts, tracing up her flawless shoulders till my fingers curl around her throat.

She gasps, eyes now wide with disbelief. She claws at my face and I feel my erection throb. The more she trashes about, the harder I become. This, punishing her, this is better than sex. I am breathing faster, growing harder, as I see the light leaving her eyes, and I finally find the release that has eluded me.

The maids will discover her body and call me at the office. From there, I will call the Police, and they will find the man's shoes and his silly man purse. My children will try to console me, yet will not be able to help saying, "We told you so."

But now more than ever, I know for sure. Alma, my sweet Alma, is good for me. Even in death, she is good for me. I wish I could find someone like her. Again.