

"AULD LANG SYNE"

By

Alexander Lee-Rekers

EXT. APARTMENT BALCONY - NIGHT

ASH checks their watch: just minutes left until midnight. They look up and out at the city before them and sigh through their nose.

They're standing on the large, wraparound balcony of a nice apartment. Inside, a New Year's Eve party is in full swing. Out here, in the cold, various guests have stepped out for various reasons: for fresh air, for a smoke, for a break from the crowd, for privacy with one another. ASH does their best to ignore the lot of them--to keep their distance. They check their watch again.

The sounds of the party crescendo for a moment as the sliding balcony door is quickly opened and closed. Out of the party steps ASH's friend CHARLIE, carrying a bottle of champagne and two glasses. CHARLIE joins ASH by the railing.

CHARLIE
(pouring drinks)
I've got it!

ASH
(taking a glass)
Nice! What have you got?

CHARLIE
I've been thinking.

ASH
You've been thinking...

CHARLIE
It's a thought. A bold thought.

ASH
A New Year's resolution?

CHARLIE
God, no! It'll be far too late by then.

ASH
So let's hear it.

CHARLIE
Not yet: first, we drink.

They 'cheers!' And drink. CHARLIE pours another round.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
So far, so good.

ASH
This isn't even "the thing".

CHARLIE
So what is "the thing"?

ASH
Drink again and I'll tell you.

ASH drinks. CHARLIE doesn't.

CHARLIE
I think we should kiss at midnight.

Pause. ASH performs the longest drink swallow of their life. CHARLIE fills ASH's glass again.

ASH
You and me?

CHARLIE
Yep.

ASH
You want to kiss?

CHARLIE
At midnight. For New Year's.

ASH
I'm confused.

CHARLIE
Don't be. It's a tradition, where-

ASH
No, I get that bit. You want us to kiss at midnight?

CHARLIE
I figure with you, I'm guaranteed a kiss. If I look elsewhere, I might not be so lucky.

ASH
So it's insurance? Isn't that guy here? That one you want to...

CHARLIE
Nathan. Yes, Nathan is here. And I thought about shooting that shot-

ASH
But instead-

CHARLIE
...I came out here.

ASH
For me?

CHARLIE
Little bit wishing I hadn't now...

An OBNOXIOUS GUEST bangs on the glass door and mouths "GET READY!" Charlie downs their glass and pours another.

ASH
What are you doing?

CHARLIE
Catching up with you.

ASH
You know that's not what I meant.

A "WHOOOP!" from the crowd inside. CHARLIE smiles at ASH.

CHARLIE
It might be nice?

ASH
I think it could be.

CHARLIE
Not where I'd planned the evening
was gonna go...

ASH
You can still go and find Nathan.

CHARLIE shakes their head. Inside the apartment, a muffled countdown begins: *TEN*, *NINE*, *EIGHT*, *SEVEN*...

CHARLIE
So are we doing it?

ASH
Is it a good idea?

CHARLIE
That sounds like next year's
problem.

ASH
Just a kiss?

CHARLIE
Maybe?

... *THREE*, *TWO*, *ONE*! The party erupts. Champagne, cheering, laughter, hugs, kisses. And ASH and CHARLIE together in the middle of it all.