

INT. APARTMENT

The apartment is small and dark. Sparsely furnished with worn handed down furniture.

PAUL enters through the doorway. He is very short and balding. He waddles more than walks. The door creaks loudly, a light clicks on in the hallway. He is carrying some roses, maybe a dozen or more, wrapped in newspaper.

ALEXANDRA

ALEXANDRA has a thick Eastern European accent. From the bedroom down the hall.

Paul?

PAUL

Yes, my dear. It is me. I brought you a present.

ALEXANDRA

If it's roses again, just leave them on the table.

There is a vase on the table with some roses. PAUL dumps the other roses out in to the garbage, pours out the water and refills the vase with fresh water.

PAUL

Oh, my dearest little sweet pea, I always save the most fragrant and beautiful roses for you.

PAUL puts a dozen roses into the fresh water.

ALEXANDRA

Shut it. You bring me the roses that you didn't sell.

PAUL

Oh, my dearest little sweet honey bee, I sell roses every night and you are only happy when I don't bring you any of them.

PAUL puts the vase full of new roses in the middle of the small kitchen table.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, because that means you have made the most money that you can make and someday we can move out of this infested hovel.

PAUL

I know. I know. You are right, my
dearest little sweet bud. You
deserve a wonderful new apartment.

ALEXANDRIA comes out of the hallway. She is dressed in a
house coat, buttoned up to the top button and smoking a
cigarette. She is much taller than PAUL and was once
beautiful.

ALEXANDRA

Where's the money. Give me the
money so that I can count it.

PAUL hands her a roll of bills.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

This is it?

ALEXANDRA counts out the money quickly onto the table and
then counts the roses in the vase.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

You're light three dollars. Where
is it?

PAUL

(stammers) I...I...I...got a candy
bar. I was so famished. Don't be
upset, dear.

ALEXANDRA

A candy bar? Your job isn't to eat
Snickers, Paul. Your job is to sell
roses. To drunk, desperate men
trying to get laid. To men who will
buy roses for their women. You are
disappointing.

PAUL

Oh, my dearest little sweet potato.
Perhaps I have failed you, but you
don't know what it's like. I walk
up and down that street night after
with my arms full of roses. I would
much rather bring them home to you.
Remember how you would blush when I
brought you roses at the bus
station? (Pause) No one wants roses
anymore.

ALEXANDRA

That's a pathetic excuse. You are lazy.

PAUL

I'll do better tomorrow night, I promise. How did you do?

She reaches into her housecoat pocket and tosses two still wrapped condoms onto the table.

ALEXANDRA

I did fine. I made my money. I did better than you, and I did not get a candy bar.

PAUL

Yes, my dearest little sweet peach. But, you are beautiful woman and the men you meet buy you things and take you to eat. I am little more than a beggar.

PAUL moves to touch her. She moves away to the sink.

ALEXANDRA

You think I am not a beggar? I let fat, ugly troll men stick their tiny penis inside me and I have to act like I love it. What do you have to do? Look pathetic and hold out a rose?

PAUL

We are both selling the illusion of love, no? I sell a symbol of love and you sell the act of love. We are purveyors of love in a city woefully lacking it.

ALEXANDRA

(takes a drag on her cigarette) I suppose you are right, my little Zagajewski.

PAUL

My dearest little sweet concha. That is how I sell the roses. I go from couple to couple, looking for the spark of love in their eyes. They are the ones who buy them, the true lovers, as it should be. The rest I bring here to you.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

My true love. You deserve romance
and poetry.

ALEXANDRA

Oh, you silly little man. Come
here.

They embrace. His head buried in her breasts. Then they turn
and she leads him by the hand around the corner and into the
hallway. PAUL scurries back in and grabs the condoms off the
kitchen table and scurries back around the corner.

The light down the hall turns off.

END