

Chain of Fools

by Michael Olsen

Characters: JAY
FLEUR

Lights come up on JAY and FLEUR asleep under a sheet. To one side is a chair with Fleur's clothes slung over it.

Fleur wakes up and slides out of bed trying not to wake Jay. She is wearing a watch, panties and a T-shirt. She starts to tip toe away, but falls over when a chain around her ankle tightens. Jay slowly wakes up.

FLEUR: What the hell!

JAY: *(brightly)* Morning.

FLEUR: What the fuck is this?

Fleur pulls at the chain and reveals the other end is around Jay's waist.

JAY: It's a chain, Fleur.

FLEUR: I can see it's a goddamn chain. What's it doing around my ankle?

JAY: I've tried, Fleur. I've really tried. God knows I've tried. But nothing will stop you, will it? Not my Napolese bolognaise, my Sicilian pancakes. Even my Syrian salad which you described as "beyond heaven." Nothing will keep you here, and you were going to leave without saying goodbye, weren't you? *(louder)* Weren't you?

FLEUR: OK OK. Goodbye. Does that make you feel better?

JAY: Oh. You're worried about how I feel now?

FLEUR: No I'm worried I'm going to miss my morning meeting if I don't leave now.

JAY: You're not going to make that meeting.

FLEUR: What?

JAY: Well, not unless I come too.

Fleur looks around desperately searching for something to break the chain, then dives into her pants and pulls out a nail file. She starts sawing through the chain.

JAY: You should be done by about Tuesday next week.

Fleur stops, and rushes at Jay, wrapping the chain around his neck.

FLEUR: Where is it?

JAY: Where's what?

FLEUR: The key? Where's the key?

JAY: Do you see a lock anywhere? (*Fleur flexes the chain but finds no lock.*) This is forever.

FLEUR: Bullshit. I'd rather die first. Or you die first.

Fleur tightens the chain around Jay's neck.

JAY: Sure you can do that, but you'd be chained to the evidence. Besides, I would start to smell sooner or later and the people downstairs would wonder what the hell I'm cooking.

In frustration, Fleur pushes Jay away. Finally:

FLEUR: OK, well let's go.

JAY: Where?

FLEUR: To the office. I have to make that meeting. I have to oversee the Spring collection.

Fleur pulls on the chain, pulling Jay with her.

JAY: Just like that. Aren't you going to get dressed?

Fleur grabs her shirt, pulls it on, then goes to pull on her pants and finds she can't because of the chain.

FLEUR: Shit!

JAY: Don't worry. I'll explain. I'll tell them the truth.

FLEUR: Which is what? That my boyfriend is a psycho?

JAY: That it's your new line of accessories: "Chain—you can't break the link."

FLEUR: This is too crazy.

JAY: As crazy as leaving me every time you've had your fun? As crazy as saying you love me then running for the door? Not this time. (*standing up*) How do you like your pancakes? I've kept them warm all night—just for you.

Jay drags over a covered tray.

FLEUR: How do I—? I am not having breakfast here.

JAY: You don't like breakfast here?

FLEUR: I've never had breakfast here.

JAY: Exactly. So how do you know?

FLEUR: I am not about to start now.

JAY: I don't think you have a choice.

FLEUR: Oh really? Watch this.