

MAMBO FOR ONE
Side 1

5. INT. WALDORF MADAM'S SUITE - DAY - CONTINUED

Oscar stands behind Madam and brushes her long hair with a small wooden comb. He has a few strands of gray hair in his hand. Madam is eating the red bean cake. Madam's left wrist is wrapped in gauze. Madam stares at the wall of portraits.

MADAM

~~(In Shanghainese)~~

Which one should I bring with me?

Among the wall of Madam's family portraits and self-portraits is a square photo of a young Madam (10) and a young Oscar (15) posing for a portrait.

OSCAR

They are all beautiful, Madam.

MADAM

~~(In Shanghainese)~~

Pick one, Oscar.

Oscar examines each photo to make a decision. He is distracted as he forcefully tries to comb through Madam's intertwined split ends. Madam gasps and reaches her left hand to the back to protect her hair.

OSCAR

Pardon me, Madam.

Oscar sees Madam's left wrist is still wrapped in gauze. Madam is aware that Oscar saw her injured wrist. She puts her right hand over her left wrist. Oscar finishes twirling her hair into a bun and wraps the hair and the comb with the handkerchief.

OSCAR

(cont'd)

Check-out time is at twelve, Madam.

MAMBO FOR ONE
Side 2

They lock eyes again. This time at an arm's length distance. Suddenly, the music begins to slow down to the tempo of a slow social dance. Madam takes her heels off and looks at Oscar. Madam steps barefoot onto Oscar's shoes. They begin to slow dance, hugging each other. Madam buries her face into Oscar's chest. Oscar closes his eyes to savor the moment. Madam's eyes are wide open. She tries to contain her tears from falling down.

MADAM
~~(In Shanghainese)~~
I'm sorry. I tried my best.

OSCAR
It's not your fault, Madam.

MADAM
~~(In Shanghainese)~~
What will I do without you?

OSCAR
You will be just fine, Madam. Trust me.

A smart phone NOTIFICATION TONE interrupts. Madam steps down from Oscar's shoes. Her face is lit by the screen light as she checks her phone.

MADAM
~~(In Shanghainese)~~
My ride is here.

The music ends and the record spins on empty grooves. Madam and Oscar cease dancing.