

A GENTLEMEN's AGREEMENT

By Aurora MATEOS

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

IAN-Son (16 years old)

SARAH-Mother

ROBERT-Sarah's fiancé

-----BEFORE THE MATCH-----

Sarah, her fiancé Robert, and her son Ian are a hundred yards from Gate 3 of the Football Stadium of the Manchester United.

SARAH.-I will be here at 6 to pick you up, Dear...

ROBERT.-It will be perfect, Darling.

SARAH.-*(Looking at Ian)* You Sure?

IAN.-Yeah!

(Ian is not paying a lot of attention to his mother because he is focused on his football review)

ROBERT.-The match run past 5.30, I hope, but worry; ring you up if the problem...

SARAH.-Dinner is at seven and we have to rush out...

ROBERT.-I think time.

SARAH.-Please Robert, allow Ian to spend too much time gossiping with his friends...otherwise...

ROBERT.-The stadium is big enough to meet them after dinner, Darling.

SARAH.-Wonderful!

IAN.-Yes, I wait to see your friends all together!

SARAH.-Darling, I would like so much for you to see them at least once! They ask about you all the time!

ROBERT.-By the way, who is coming?

IAN.-All of them are coming!

(He keeps being busy at his football review)

SARAH.-James, Patricia, Beverley and Richard and... Sam.

ROBERT.-Oh, Sam! I know he was back in the city

SARAH.- For some time, indeed. He called me a couple of weeks ago; he came to sell his house.

ROBERT.-Oh! I know she had died

SARAH.-But she

ROBERT.- Is that good news?

SARAH.-They decided to invest her small fortune while the market was good.

ROBERT.-Of course, why wait?

SARAH.-He will be taking care of her in York

ROBERT.-It will be a lovely change for her after spending her whole life in Leeds

SARAH.-You know, so they can be closer

ROBERT.-I am sure he is happy to...

SARAH.-I hope you that I invited him?

IAN.-Yeah! She invited everybody!...

SARAH.-Ian, please.

ROBERT.-Of course not, Dear. be delighted to see him again, actually.

SARAH.-

ROBERT.-Yes, his farewell party, the one you attend because you were feeling ill

SARH.-Ah, yes! I remember...

IAN.-We are late, Mum!

SARAH.-Of course...I am sorry, Darling! (*Arranging his clothes*) oh! You should be wearing another T-shirt, spot here.

IAN.-Only you cares about that...
(*Insisting on looking at the review*)

ROBERT.-Is he coming alone?

SARAH.-Who?

ROBERT.-Sam

SARAH.-Oh! Yes...I think so.

ROBERT.- he living with that woman, what was her name?

SARAH.-Beverley

ROBERT.-Right, a friend of yours

SARAH.-We were not really friends, actually...

ROBERT.-Oh! I thought not, but you had many things in common...!

SARAH.-Not really...

ROBERT.- she coming?

SARAH.-They are not together any longer; he found it very difficult to keep such relationship.

ROBERT.-Like his

SARAH.-Time changes things, I mean, things happen because it is their turn to happen, or...(nervous) do you know what I mean?

ROBERT.-I am glad to see good friends again.

SARAH.-Well, s, he know Peter but he is interested in how we are doing...

ROBERT.-Peter, believe me!

SARAH.-We will never be sure of that, in any case.

ROBERT.-Unfortunately not.

SARAH.-Well, he just came to visit me and...

ROBERT.-I thought he had rung you...

SARAH.-As well, but he was kind enough to pay me a visit as well, you know, it was some time ago. I been in touch.

(Ian is getting bored)

ROBERT.-*(Cynical)* Not enough...but I really am eager to see him, Darling!

SARAH.-

IAN.-So, are we going then?

ROBERT.-Of course...

(They all seem to prepare to leave)

SARAH.- shout too much because later on you will have a pain in your throat like you usually have. Understand?

IAN.-Yes, Mum, no insulting the players, no cold drinks, no mooning the tv...

ROBERT.-How long is he staying?

IAN.-Are we back on that again?

SARAH.-Well, the dinner , I think, until ten perhaps.

ROBERT.-No, I mean, how long is he going to be in the city?

SARAH.-Not sure yet, a few weeks. It depends on the real state transaction.

ROBERT.-And his work?

SARAH.-He has given it up to concentrate on his business.

ROBERT.-It

SARAH.-What do you mean?

ROBERT.-He has always been a business man at heart.

SARAH.-In fact

ROBERT.-*(Unnerved)* running late, Ian!

IAN.-*(Cynical)*. Really?

(Robert gives Sarah a kiss on the cheek)

SARAH.-Well, let you go. My men need to get on with important things and I need to get the dinner ready.

IAN.-Bye, Mum.

ROBERT.-Bye, Darling.

IAN.-Have you got the tickets with you?

(Sarah remains saying goodbye)

ROBERT.-*(Extending the tickets)* Here you are, Ian

IAN.- father got row Four.

ROBERT.-He did well, this match deserves good seats

IAN.-

ROBERT.-The Manchester is playing well this year

IAN.-If you say so...

ROBERT.-Thank you for coming. I know it makes your mother happy.
(Sarah goes off)

IAN.-

(Robert puts his arm over Ian's shoulder)

ROBERT.-Shall we go then?

IAN.-

ROBERT.-Oh! Right. (Robert hands him some banknotes) 50 pounds, it?

IAN.-(Taking the money) Exactly.

ROBERT.-The tickets were very expensive

IAN.- only a business deal.

ROBERT.-(paying) Well, I thought you wanted to watch Manchester play Real Madrid

IAN.-Just spit over Beckham, but as you said, I have some problems with my throat

ROBERT.-What a pity!

(silence)

ROBERT.-You could call some of your friends and pick you up at the end of the match

IAN.-No, we have an agreement

ROBERT.-A agreement, your mother is rather happy.

IAN.-

ROBERT.-You could just stay here by yourself.

IAN.- TV

ROBERT.-

IAN.-

ROBERT.-Just tell her the truth: that I was outside.

IAN.- be hours.

ROBERT.-You sure?

IAN.-Just this once.

ROBERT.-You are right, and business is business

IAN.-For sure! go pretty fast.

(Ian and Robert walk along slowly while Ian looks into his review)

-----*FIRST HALF OF THE MATCH*-----

ROBERT and IAN are sitting in the stadium. Ian is looking glad and Robert has binoculars in his hands. They seem very excited by the match. They shout sometimes, the noise of the Stadium

IAN.-Come on, go, go, go!

ROBERT.-Yes, yes, yes...!

IAN.-Almost got it!

ROBERT.-Yes!

IAN.-Go!

ROBERT, IAN.-Oh, no!!!

IAN.-Come on!

ROBERT.-That was a corner!

IAN.-Really?

(Silence)

IAN.-What happened?

ROBERT.-Because the fucking Spaniard elbowed him in the face.

IAN.-What? Are you prejudiced against Spaniards?

ROBERT.-

IAN.-

ROBERT.-I doubt it

IAN.- It is not healthy to doubt everything

ROBERT.-Come on! He is bleeding! you see him?

IAN.-I see him, but part of their culture...blood, think of the bullfights

ROBERT.-

IAN.-Why not?

ROBERT.-Bulls have no elbows and they play football either.

IAN.-But they have horns

(Silence)

ROBERT.-Do you want some chips?

IAN.-No, thanks.

ROBERT.-Some beer?

(Ian touches his throat)

ROBERT.-Oh, right! .Some chocolates?

IAN.-Thanks, but no thanks

ROBERT.-*(Eating)* Uhm! I thought you right, the almonds and honey are wonderful!

IAN.-*(Smiling)*

ROBERT.-Really delicious! *(Offering the paper bag with the sweeties)*

IAN.-*(refusing)*

ROBERT.-Everything all right at school?

IAN.-Yes

ROBERT.-Fine with your part-time job at...?

IAN.-Yes, perfect

ROBERT.-Things going well with that girl...uhm! Helen? I can never remember names!

IAN.-Yes, any more questions?

ROBERT.-Well, I

IAN.-We got together to watch a match, not to have a personal conversation, ok?

ROBERT.-Yes, yes, of course

(Silence)

ROBERT.-Ok...how much?

IAN.-For what?

ROBERT.-For chatting with you.

IAN.-Are you kidding? going to pay me for talking?

ROBERT.-Why not? You as my ex-wife psychoanalyst and believe me that every word was worth a fortune

IAN.-But, nobody can see you!

ROBERT.-What about the TV? Your mother would be delighted if she saw us talking

IAN.-She is cooking

ROBERT.-But everybody is watching this match, and your t-shirt will scream out on the screen.

(bad comment on the t-shirt)

ROBERT.-So, how much?

IAN.-Uhm! I know....

ROBERT.-Come on! you can buy a good negotiator

IAN.-I already got 50 pounds from you

ROBERT.-Only 50 pounds because you are a bad dealer in fact, in your position I would have had twice that at least

IAN.-I thought fifty was good

ROBERT.-You thought, you thought...the important thing in business is to know how far you can push to your adversary

IAN.-So, now I can go for 50 pounds

ROBERT.-Or 70, say

IAN.-This is crazy!

ROBERT.-Why?

IAN.-Because you pay a boy for talking to you

ROBERT.-No, but it is what friend or not, at a bar
and you spent the whole night drinking whisky and talking about money or about
women.

IAN.-Oh! you do that kind of things?

ROBERT.-

IAN.-At clubs and such?
(winking)

ROBERT.-Yes, just talking...

IAN.-Well

ROBERT.-

IAN.-100 pounds!

ROBERT.-50!

(People at the stadium shout: Goal!)

IAN.-Ok then, 70 at that is all.

ROBERT.-60

IAN.-Done!

ROBERT.-(*Giving the money*) Not so bad for starters...

IAN.-So, speak up!! what do you want to know?

ROBERT.-Relax, you remind me of her analyst

IAN.-So, what am I supposed to do now?

ROBERT.-Just watch the match
(Robert looks through the binoculars)

(silence)

(Ian is getting nervous)

IAN.-Everything all right at the firm?

ROBERT.-Yes

IAN.-Everything ok with friends?

ROBERT.-Yes, perfect

IAN.-Things going well with my mother?

(Robert is surprised by this question)

ROBERT.-Yes, I guess so. But you never know with women

IAN.-My father used to say that money was like women, you have to be happy when they come your way but even happier when they have more room in your wallet

ROBERT.-*(Smiling)* I hope he said that around...

IAN.-Of course! What kind of guy do you think my father was?

ROBERT.-Because he was really right!

(Ian smiles. Silence)

(Mobile rings)

SARAH.-Robert?

(talking from the kitchen)

ROBERT.-Darling?

SARAH.-Everything all right?

ROBERT.-Perfect, we are spending a lovely time together

SARAH.-I am so glad to hear it!

ROBERT.-Intense discussions!

SARAH.-Oh!

ROBERT.-Yes, I am teaching Ian some business savy

SARAH.-Really?

ROBERT.-

SARAH.- he can be so difficult sometimes!

ROBERT.-Oh! not at all! it is just a question of finding the right things to talk about.

SARAH.-How did you manage it?

ROBERT.-

SARAH.-Wonderful! And the match? I heard we were losing the first time.

ROBERT.-Well there was a little a misunderstanding with involving a Spanish elbow, but nothing which settled out in the second half. Dinner coming along?

SARAH.-Yes, we are going to be seven if Ian joins us.

ROBERT.-Who has cancelled?

SARAH.-Sam

ROBERT.-Why?

SARAH.-His mother is feeling ill

ROBERT.- not surprised.

SARAH.-Why? Do you know someth

ROBERT.-No, they say that people use to have the same health of their homes and as you know...

SARAH.-I have never heard that saying! well, you will still get to meet him sometime.

ROBERT.-No doubt!

SARAH.-Wonderful!

ROBERT.-Yes!

SARAH.-Perfect!

ROBERT.-Of course!

IAN.-(*shouting*) Bastard! what are you doing? stop and play, play, play...!

ROBERT.-Well, I think the second half has just started, Darling, ring you later.

-----SECOND HALF OF THE MATCH-----

Noise of the Stadium.

ROBERT.-So, we will only be seven then.

IAN.-I heard.

ROBERT.-(*unnerved*) Not eight, but seven

IAN.-Much better

ROBERT.-Why?

IAN.- more food

ROBERT.-Yes, I guess so...

IAN.-And we have to laugh at his bad jokes

ROBERT.-Well...

IAN.-Not to mention, listen to his stories!

ROBERT.-You seem to know him pretty well

IAN.-A little.

ROBERT.-Uhm!

IAN.-He used to come over quite often before...

ROBERT.-When the Past wakes up nobody can sleep...

IAN.-Come on, run, run...!

ROBERT.-How was it at that time?

IAN.-Stupid! lose the ball now!

ROBERT.-How?

IAN.-No!!! ...shit!

ROBERT.-Ok...

(silence)

IAN.-Would you like your money back?

ROBERT.-Of course not!

IAN.-You are not going to suck anymore information from me.

ROBERT.-out of question! Of course not!

IAN.-You sure?

ROBERT.-Far from my intentions!

IAN.-*(Shouting)* What? What are you doing? you animal farm!

ROBERT.-What?

IAN.-Red card! They need to substitute now...fuck!

ROBERT.-I see...

(They avoid talking to each other. They turn comically their backs to each other in a comic fashion.

(Silence. Ian starts reading his review. Robert tries to have a look at what Ian is reading but Ian doesn't allow it in an obvious intention of not sharing his things. Comic situation which is going to last some minutes)

IAN.-

ROBERT.-Nothing much.

IAN.-Do you want it? Want what? You want to read it?

ROBERT.-No

IAN.-So? No?

ROBERT.-Just wondering what made you so interested in it

IAN.-If you have any questions about me, please ask my mother.

ROBERT.-I am afraid I have to remind you that we have a deal here with your mother, Ian

IAN.-But I want...

ROBERT.-I just only want you to relax, to be comfortable with me, that all I want.

IAN.-I do appreciate your interest in becoming part of the family but...

ROBERT.-I pretend to be your family, but would just like to know you a little better.

IAN.-Why?

ROBERT.-I loved football when I was young, I used to like it as much as you do.

IAN.-And how do you manage to know nothing about it now?

ROBERT.-Because I forgot how much I like it.

IAN.-I didn't know you could forget what you used to be.

ROBERT.-Uhm! a good point...

IAN.-Really?

ROBERT.-Very good, in fact...

IAN.-*(smiling)*

ROBERT.-My parents were never divorced but if one day they had been and my mother had tried to get me to accept one of her friends I have come to a match with him, not even for 50 pounds.

IAN.-I should have asked for more...

ROBERT.-Exactly, although the tickets were pretty expensive...

IAN.-

ROBERT.-Oh, no! Not always! I d

IAN.-I am not so sure.

ROBERT.-For example, remember the first time we met?

IAN.-Yes...

SARAH.-"Ian! This is Robert, he is a very close friend and we are trying to get to know each other better.

ROBERT.-And you said:

IAN.-"It is so exciting, Mum"

ROBERT.-You have been so awful sometimes!

IAN.-Oh! Thank you...but I have also been very polite sometimes with you

ROBERT.-Oh, no!

IAN.-Yeah, for example at Christmas: " Robert, this is for you: merry Christmas"

SARAH.-"Oh! he lovely?"

ROBERT.-*(Opening the present)* "Oh! thank you...a pair of orange socks...just what I wanted..."

SARAH.-"He has been thinking about it for weeks, dear."

ROBERT.-"And he has been really inspired, I must say..."

IAN.-That was nice...

ROBERT.-Oh, no, that was not nice, Ian, that was orange!

IAN.-Did you ever wear them?

ROBERT.-*(Showing them)* but just because I anything else to wear today...not because I love your horrible present...

IAN.-*(Smiling)* I must confess something else as well

ROBERT.-Yes?

IAN.-Among all my friends, you are not the worse

ROBERT.-Thank you

IAN.-At least you have money

ROBERT.-*(Laughing)* You are great, Ian!

IAN.-Thanks

(Silence)

ROBERT.-And very interesting, in fact...

IAN.-Do you think so?

ROBERT.-Yes, you are funny, I like being with you....sometimes, I mean...

IAN.-Of course!

ROBERT.-You are not one of those stupid adolescents impossible to understand.

IAN.-Not always...

ROBERT.-And very clever!

IAN.-I have to work harder at school...

ROBERT.-And sure you will...

IAN.-Do you still have any chocolates on you?

ROBERT.-I bought this other bag for you

IAN.- (*Taking the sweeties*). Thank you

(*Stadium noise*)

ROBERT.-Your father used always to have these sweets with him, in his pocket, at home, in his car...

IAN.-You knew my father?

ROBERT.-At the school, at the lyceum?, at his office...And today is the first time for years, again.

IAN.-So, you were friends!

ROBERT.-And delicious! they? When we were the same age you are now, we used to watch matches at an Irish pub, then with our first real job we could afford a ticket...it was a wonderful afternoon, wonderful, believe me!

IAN.-Who did you see play?

ROBERT.-Manchester and York!

IAN.-Excellent!

ROBERT.-And when the match was over we went to the same pub we always went to, and there she was, your mother, laughing with some of her friends...she was lovely that evening.

IAN.-So, you both met my mother at the same time!

ROBERT.-Your father and I were the sort of people who loved and hated all the same things ...we had the same way of looking at the world.

IAN.-So you were always competing, you mean...

ROBERT.-Similar to what some brothers do.

IAN.-So, you argued and that is why I never met you before?

ROBERT.-Oh no! We always respected each other. We just drifted apart: Your parents got married and so did I, to my wife and her analyst, of course...]

IAN.-But, why I remember you?

ROBERT.-Because you were just a kid when I was transferred to Asia, Kuala Lumpur.

IAN.-So, you were that Robert! You always sent me those so high tech electronic toys at Christmas...

ROBERT.-And just when you think things are going well, time runs out on you. Just a few months after I returned to London, it happened...and I only got a chance to visit my old friend at the hospital.

IAN.-But, why did I never meet you?

ROBERT.-I guess because he and I loved the same things too much, and as I told you, we did respected each other too much.

IAN.-Do you think he could have been angry with you?

ROBERT.-
and you as much support as I could.

(Ian is silent. There is an sms on Robert's mobile phone)

ROBERT.-Your mother is outside already.
(looking at the mobile's screen)

ILAN.-

ROBERT.- be late, there will be a crowd trying to get out in a few more minutes

ILAN.-

ROBERT.-Let them be happy even without Gibraltar, Ian

(Ian smiles. They start go out)

ROBERT.-Thank you for coming

IAN.-Thank you for inviting me

ROBERT.-It was my very dear pleasure.

(Ian grins)

-----AFTER THE MATCH-----

(They meet Sarah who is waiting at the exit of the Stadium)

SARAH.-Hello, Dear, how was the match?

ROBERT.-We spent a lovely time talking about business

SARAH.-were you at a soccer match or playing monopoly?

ROBERT.-No, it was like having drinks at a night club.

(Ian smiles)

SARAH.-well, did you enjoy it?

(to Ian)

(Ian and Robert look at each other with complicity)

ROBERT.-The match had some real good moments...

SARAH.-Did you enjoy it, Ian?

IAN.-I think so.

ROBERT.-Darling, do you think next weekend we can go to the match together?

SARAH.-I think I will be busy, I have another plans

ROBERT.-Or perhaps the following weekend after...

SARAH.-I decided to give Sam a little help on the weekends, I find him really stressed.

ROBERT.-So, you talked to him again then this afternoon?

SARAH.-I have been thinking things over, and he went on so much that I...

ROBERT.-Of course he does need some help! and it is very kind of you...

SARAH.-
decision. I would much prefer to have a little
vacation time with you, but now, I think, it is not the proper moment...

ROBERT.-And the proper moment is everything, Sarah?...I fear these kinds of
choices have become

SARAH.-I am sorry, but...

ROBERT.-I only hope he will appreciate your dedication as much as I do for your honesty.

SARAH.-Thank you... re going then?

ROBERT.- you for dinner.

SARAH.- I see

ROBERT.-And I have some problems to attend to in London, so I should leave quite early tomorrow, so, I will prepare my things now. Well, Ian, thank you again for your company,

SARAH.-Don't you want me to drive you home?

ROBERT.-No, thank you, not today.

SARAH.-well...ok, but please keep in touch. Ian, come along then. T there.

IAN.-just a minute, Mum...

(Sarah is leaving for the car)

IAN.-I liked very much watching the match with you.

ROBERT.-Thank you, Ian.

IAN.-And I wonder if you would like to do it again when you get back from London?

ROBERT.-It is very tempting, think it over.

IAN.-Yes, please do.

(They shake their hands)

IAN.-If you decide to do it, you would be granted with 20 pounds.

ROBERT.-Are you kidding? I for less than a100 pounds

IAN.-I understand but...

ROBERT.-Oh!

IAN.- you to a pub I know with the most interesting ladies in the area.

ROBERT.-Ok, say 60 pounds.

IAN.-50 would be fine, ?

ROBERT.-Well, I do, I do think.

IAN.-Not so bad for starters...although, in your position I would have got double that at least.

ROBERT.-Excellent!

IAN.-Here are your 50 pounds, because I want to be sure you come back from London soon.

ROBERT.-I

IAN.-That is why you have to take the 50 pounds.

ROBERT.-I

IAN.-Please, take it...anyway.

(Robert shake his hands again)

ROBERT.-

IAN.-I will send you the schedule of matches by email, ok?

ROBERT.-Ok...

IAN.-Because Gentlemen

ROBERT.-Never...

(Robert and Ian look at each other, saying good-bye.)

(CURTAIN)