

TRANSLATING LOVE

Written by

Ramona Pojoga

3040 Aloma Ave K-6
Winter Park, FL 32792
636-579-1915

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cookie cutter suburban house with eclectic furniture. Bookshelves, knickknacks, a fireplace. A yard saler's dream.

CORA, 32, thick, looks in a mirror as she passes. She trips on an open box. A book tumbles to the floor. The cover reads, "No Coincidences, by Cora North."

Downton Abbey is on T.V. Cora hands a full glass of wine to YAEL, 26. She moves a karate uniform, and sits next to her.

CORA
No one does romance anymore.

YAEL
Greg took the blame when I clogged his mom's toilet. That's romantic.

CORA
You let him see your foof?

YAEL
I didn't have much choice.

CORA
Honestly, I need someone who's an orphan. A widower, with kids. No in-laws or crazy ex-wives. I get to be a mom, and keep my shape.

She waves her hand over her curvaceous body and winks.

YAEL
Back to the popularity contest?

CORA
I'm a big girl. Guys just ask me to oink like a pig or do gang-bangs.

YAEL
Or send pics of stained glass windows and ask to sodomize you over a pulpit.

CORA
Oh! I forgot about that one.

She lightly slaps Yael's arm, cringes, then laughs.

YAEL
And you still believe in love?

CORA

The universe provides. You're here.

She smooths down Yael's hair and rubs her back softly.

YAEL

I love you. Someone else will too.

CORA

I don't the the time. I'm always writing, editing, networking.

YAEL

Try a paid app.

CORA

What? Why?

YAEL

The guys're more mature. They don't have time to wade through ho's.

CORA

I'm not in the mood for a hundred sausage pics.

YAEL

It's not like that. They want love.

CORA

Will they romance me like that?

She gestures to Downton Abbey on the TV.

YAEL

It's a numbers game.

CORA

If there's a free trial, I'm in.

This activates their inside joke voice. They yell together.

Yael/Cora

If it ain't free, it's cheap!

They cheers.

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

A fishbowl sits on the table next to a sauce cup of fish flakes. A chalkboard on the table reads, "Happy One Week Anniversary Shelly & Ella 3." A toilet flushes. Cora enters.

CORA
I'm sorry. We're alone again.

She plops in her chair in front of a plate with a Big Mac and fries, and an open laptop.

CORA (CONT'D)
How did I kill this wife? I test
your water every day.

She leans over and feeds him some fish food.

CORA (CONT'D)
You need a dating profile.

She eats fries, scoots the laptop closer, and leans in.

CORA (CONT'D)
Where do you see yourself in 10
years? Hmm, Sheldon?

She takes a bite of Big Mac and talks with her mouth full.

CORA (CONT'D)
A millionaire with a cabana boy and
a hundred fish tanks.

She types, "I'll be a successful author. A household name."
She hits, "Submit."

Cheers play over her speakers. A certificate pops up: "You're
now ready to feed your soul."

Cora rolls her eyes and clutches her chest dramatically.

CORA (CONT'D)
I will never go hungry again! For
\$9.99 a month.

There's a knock at the door. Cora opens it. A MAILMAN, 35,
holds a massive stack of letters.

CORA (CONT'D)
Sticks. I keep forgetting to check.

He drops the bundle in her arms and tucks them in. He turns
and walks away. Cora calls after him.

CORA (CONT'D)
Sorry. Thanks. Again!

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cora grabs her laptop off a dresser and tosses it on the bed. She yanks pillows off the duvet, peels back the covers, and climbs in. She opens up her laptop, and claps her hands.

The lights go out.

Her face is soft in the glow of the laptop. The fish tank bubbles on her night stand. She clicks away. A confirmation page for a purchase pops up.

She texts an unsaved number, "They're from me-you. You're welcome." A text comes back, "What's from me-you?" She replies, "Love. You'll see."

CORA

Now, my turn.

She opens her profile and sees, "158 new messages."

CORA (CONT'D)

Let the sausage party begin.

She opens three labeled, "Click to view." She scrolls down and opens one. It reads, "What's your favorite animal?"

She types "Peacocks. Secretly fierce. In water, Tiger Barb fish. I have one named Sheldon Bubbler. You?"

Another one reads, "If you were invincible for 24hrs, what would you do?"

CORA (CONT'D)

I'd jump off a building. Get stabbed. Shot. Drown. Die a thousand ways. Then write about it.

She ends with, "No one's ever died and lived to tell us what it feels like. It'd be a best seller."

CORA (CONT'D)

I'm weird. Huh, Shelly?

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Yael, on the sofa, opens a wine bottle and pours two glasses. Cora puts an Elvis record on the turntable and joins her.

CORA

See? Greg's not so bad.

Yael
They were beautiful.

Cora
He remembered your favorite
flowers?

She takes a sip of wine to hide her smile.

Yael
I'm surprised.

Cora
There's hope for him after all.

Yael
Honestly, when he came home with a
Rite Aid bag, I thought he was
going to ruin my birthday. Again.

Cora
Last year wasn't so bad.

Yael
He puked on my mom.

Cora chokes on her wine. Yael slaps her back.

Yael (CONT'D)
She still calls him Corn Man.

Cora
Stop. I can't breathe.

There's a knock at the door. Cora stands up and opens it. The Mailman holds a small box. He hands Cora a clipboard. She signs, takes the package, and closes the door.

Yael
What's that?

Cora
Wife number four for Shelly.

Cora removes a fish in a bag and drops it in the fish tank.

Yael
How's your manhunt going?

Cora drops down next to her.

Cora
Don't ask. It's no "Beat Feet," but
it's also not "Corn Man."

Yael
Get your laptop.

Cora throws her body over Yael like a toddler.

Cora
Mommy. I don't wanna see boy parts.

Yael spanks her on the bottom.

Yael
I do. Greg doesn't have much.

Cora
Fine. You click away the cocks.

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Two empty bottles of wine litter the coffee table. Cora's legs are over the back of the sofa, her head near Yael's knee with the laptop on it.

Cora
I really like #52, 87, and 105.

Yael
The witty ones.

Cora
Though, I wish 87 had pictures.

Yael
Does it matter what he looks like?

Cora
When he writes like that?

Yael
He's perfect.

Cora
He could also be a serial killer.

Yael
Bet you'd write a bestselling book
after you kicked his ass.

Cora
Those aren't selling.

She kicks her foot toward the overflowing box.

YAELE

That's because no one believes in
fate, or destiny anymore.

CORA

Number 87 does.

YAELE

Go out with him, then.

CORA

He's the least pervy.

YAELE

And the most romantic.

CORA

His spelling could use work.

YAELE

Don't be such a writer.

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cora lays on her bed, dressed to the nines, makeup on. Tears leave black streaks on her cheeks. She types on her laptop, "I waited for two hours. Where were you?"

She types, "Has the last month been a game to you?"

She picks up her phone and makes a call.

CORA

Yells, we have a mission. Come now.

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cora, in all black, stalks around like a burglar. She shoves flashlights and mace into a backpack.

There's a knock at the door. Cora opens it. Yael breezes in with shopping bags, in all black and face paint.

YEALE

I bought everything they had.

CORA

The clear ones, right?

YEALE

Duh. You have his address?

CORA

I know where the billboard is that
he has as a profile picture.

YEAL

Navy Seal style?

CORA

We'll triangulate his place.

YEAL

I'll drive. You look.

INT. YAEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Yael drives. Cora holds her phone out, looking between a picture of a billboard and the streets flying by.

CORA

Go up two blocks. We're close.

Yael drives toward the billboard. She parks on a dead end street. Cora holds the picture up in front of the windshield.

YEAL

It has to be that house.

She points to a small, dingy, shack-looking house, and nods.

CORA

Not much grass.

YEAL

We'll shove 'em deeper.

They get out of the car, carrying the bags.

EXT. MAILMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They rush across the street, rifling through the bags. Cora rips open two boxes of plastic forks. She passes one to Yael.

They giggle as they shove a few dozen plastic forks, prongs down, into a small patch of grass by the garage.

YEAL

Let's make a giant dong.

Cora laughs and rips open two more boxes. They outline a slong in forks, then fill it in.

YAEL (CONT'D)
Balls?

Cora nods, laughing. Her face youthful. She steps on a rock. A frog jumps out. She leaps and slams into the garage door.

Exterior lights flip on. A light inside the house comes on. Cora and Yael bolt to the car. They get in as a MAN appears.

INT. YAEL'S CAR - NIGHT

They slam the doors.

CORA
Sticks! He'll see us. Drive!

They turn around at the dead end. Cora locks eyes with the Mailman as they pass. Rumpled with sleep, he takes a step toward her, crunches down some forks and stops, confused.

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A phone rings. Cora answers it, drops on the sofa, and throws her legs over the back, laying backwards.

CORA
Hey. What did Greg say?

She sits straight up, spins around, and slams her feet down.

CORA (CONT'D)
Oh my God. Congratulations! How?
The Rite Aide bag? Really smart.

She stands up and walks to the window.

CORA (CONT'D)
I guess I have to save his number
now. Dibs on maid of honor.

She sees the Mailman walking up to her door.

CORA (CONT'D)
Twizzle. The Mailman's here. Ttyl.

She hangs up, checks her reflection and waits.

She peeks out the curtains. He paces in front of her door, fiddling with his phone.

She opens the door, carefree. He drops a plastic bag. Forks scatter across her deck.

CORA/ MAILMAN
Sorry. / O'la.

They bend down and shove forks back in the bag. Cora flushes. He sniffs his armpit. They stand up. She takes the bag.

He pulls out his phone, types, then holds it out. Google Translate is open.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
I sorry. I don't hablo English.

CORA
No wonder your spelling's bad.
Google doesn't translate properly.

He looks confused. She takes his phone, types, "You stood me up," converts it, then hits play.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
Me dejaste plantado.

He takes the phone, types back, and hits play.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
Embarrassed. How can talk to you?

She types back, "Exactly like this," and hits play.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
Exactamente así.

She pulls him to the steps. They sit and pass the phone back and forth, talking, laughing. The sun dips behind houses.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
Tiger Barb fish kill each other.
You need six for peace.

CORA
No wonder Shelly can't keep a wife!

INT. CORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Wedding photos litter bookshelves. Cora and the Mailman on church steps, smiling at a crowd, her frozen on a toss.

Flowers hang in the air, aimed at a pregnant Yael. A close up of wedding bands.

Six fish swim around a bigger tank. A book on Tiger Barb fish sits nearby. A flier next to it reads, Reading today: Best-seller "Translating Love" by Cora Cruz.