

The masseuse

From life to survival

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1. Foreword

Mireille, a young masseuse, lives with her family in a small village in Brabant. With her family, parents and friends, she lives a nice life. Until one day a pink envelope arrives on her doormat. From that moment on, her life changes completely. A silent admirer makes herself known to her. Her rejection leads to horror in her life. Intimidation, sexual assault and assassinations dominate her life. Mireille goes into a survival mode.

2. Introduction

Mireille is a young woman in her early forties. Many find her an attractive appearance. Many a man looks back when she walks by. Slim, green eyes, black long hair, usually in a braid. Happily married to Hans, with two beautiful young children.

Mireille had a happy childhood. As an only child, her mother showered her with love. A father who treated her like a princess. At school, she had many friends. She married her childhood sweetheart Hans.

Mireille is a loving and passionate woman who loves Hans dearly. Her two sons are true love babies, she always says. As a mother, she is as loving as her parents were to her.

Even as a child, she knew she wanted to be a masseuse. Not just any masseuse, but a real, professional one. After secondary school, she went on to an intermediate vocational course in physical care. At an early age, she became a professional masseur and attended all kinds of training courses abroad. She became a masseur for famous athletes. But she kept her own business in a small village in Brabant.

All the villagers knew her and she them. Many wanted to be massaged by her. Mireille is a cheerful woman who puts customers at ease. Clients tell her their worries and

even secrets. But Mireille is someone who keeps their secrets and they know it.

She also has many girlfriends and friends with whom she enjoys doing fun things. Mireille is also always up for an in-depth conversation about the things of life. Mireille and her family have a busy social life. For years she has been happily married to Hans. He adores her and nothing is too much for him. Hans is also always busy with his own business. He is very technical and the orders are pouring in. For the family, keeping the household running is hard work, but there is always grandma who babysits a lot.

Recently, Mireille has been winding down her training activities. She is now working full-time in her massage parlour. COVID has required a lot of stamina from her, but all the clients have remained loyal to her.

One day, she finds a card on the salon doormat. A pink envelope. Curious, she opens the envelope.

*'Dear Valentine,
My present, my future,
My love and suffering,
Everything we share together,
You who know everything about me,
I can't miss you,
Always want to be with you,*

*That's why you are
My valentine.'*

Ooh, how sweet of my hubby. He thought of me on Valentine's Day. Quite special, she thinks. He's never done that before. Another quick buy for him. I will reward my hubby tonight.

When she gets home, Hans is sitting at his desk, doing his administration. 'Hi,' she says and bends towards him and gives him a long kiss. 'Hi, to what do I owe this lovely kiss?' he asks. 'Thank you for the lovely valentine, Hans,' she replies and she looks at him in love. 'Euh... A valentine card Mireille? I didn't send a card, girl,' he replies in amazement. 'Oh, so not from you?' There is a hint of disappointment in her voice. 'I do have a present for you for Valentine's Day, Hans,' and she hands him the gift. 'Honey, you didn't have to do that. We don't need Valentine's Day to show each other that we love each other, do we?' asks Hans. 'No, that's true. But I thought: this card can't be from anyone but you,' Mireille replies. Hans unwraps the gift and gives her a long heartfelt kiss as a thank you. 'Thank you, love.' He grabs her and they merge into each other.

As she lies in bed later, after a wonderful lovemaking session, her thoughts go back to the valentine card. Who could that card be from? No one has made any advances, or comments to that effect. 'Tis certainly odd. With that thought, she falls asleep.

*

A few kilometres away, Willem lies in bed. He fantasises about the envelope he threw into Mireille's letterbox this morning. He had got out of bed extra early so no one could see him. Willem is 50 and has always remained single. In fact, he has never really loved anyone. His mother, yes, but she sadly died a few years ago. He never knew his father. He left as soon as he knew his mother was pregnant. Things were difficult at home and they could barely make ends meet. Mother had many boyfriends who regularly stayed over. He would lie in bed and hear the love-making. He smothered the sound with his pillow.

Willem was teased a lot at school because he had quite a wide head as a child. They called him 'melon' and regularly chased him home when school was out. When he walked home from school, he was always chased and had to run for his life. Until one day he chose the attack. A haze came before his eyes and he kept hitting the bully. A teacher had to pull Willem off.

One of his mother's friends beat him. When his mother didn't see it. At 13, he got into drugs. He used to blow all day just to escape reality. After high school, where he doubled twice, he joined the army. Only there did he experience camaraderie. He decided to become a professional soldier and after a rigorous examination, he was allowed to train as a commando, which he

completed. He served in Afghanistan, Yugoslavia and Iraq where he saw things that a normal person does not see. Comrades who died or lost limbs to roadside bombs. He himself was once captured and tortured by Iraqis. A prisoner exchange got him released. The psychological damage was great. The torture had also left physical marks. His feet had been worked on with a gas burner and in several places he had been slashed with a knife.

When he returned home, Willem ended up in crisis. Could not concentrate at work, made mistakes. Talks with psychiatrists did not help and eventually he was rejected with PTSD symptoms, honorably discharged and retired.

Since then, he has been sitting at home and in the pub every night with a few drinking buddies. His once muscular body has disappeared. Willem has a wiry face, a big beer belly and is somewhat neglected. The only thing he does not neglect is his hygiene. Every fortnight he goes to Mireille. The conversations they have during the massage are so nice. He enjoys when her hands go over his body. Over the years, his feelings have grown towards her. He has come to love her. Every night in bed, he dreams of her. How they make love and how he cares for her. Mireille is the one who keeps him from saying goodbye to this life.

I hope she knows who the envelope is from. We always have such nice conversations and I think I can make her happy. With this thought, he falls asleep.

3. The discovery

Mireille wakes up early and prepares breakfast for her children and Hans. Today is another busy day with lots of customers. When she comes out of the kitchen, Hans is already sitting at the table. 'Good morning girl, you're up early,' he says and gives her a kiss. 'Did you sleep well little man of mine?' she asks. She winks at him. 'I'll prepare some eggs for you. You deserve it after last night.' As Hans sits down to eat, she says: 'I'm going to get the children out of bed in advance, otherwise they'll be late for school again.'

She walks up the stairs to upstairs. Both children are still asleep. The best time of day, when my children are still asleep and I can kiss them awake, she muses. When she has cuddled with both of them and they are dressed, they go downstairs to have breakfast. 'Come boys, we are leaving, otherwise you will be late for school,' she commands her boys.

Arriving at the parlour, the boys run upstairs, where grandma and grandpa live. Grandma always takes them to school. Mireille walks to the salon and prepares some things in advance. Today a number of clients are coming for whom a special massage is needed. She looks in her diary to check her appointments and sees that the last appointment is at 5pm, with Willem. A loyal visitor, with whom you always have a nice conversation, she thinks.

She is pulled out of her thoughts by the boys coming downstairs with grandma and flying around her neck for a kiss before they leave for school.

*

William wakes up with a headache. Drank too much again last night. Should stop, he thinks. Today, like every day, doing nothing again. His house looks neglected, like he looks neglected. His house is a mess. There are clothes everywhere in his bedroom. Downstairs, you can barely move because his house is full of boxes and other objects. Willem has collected all kinds of things over the years. He likes to go to thrift shops or flea markets, where he buys all kinds of things he doesn't really need. He cannot bring himself to clear things out, so his house is increasingly full of stuff.

He decides to take a shower. Normally he does not shower, but when he goes to see Mireille he does. He wants to look groomed and good then. Today at five o'clock he has an appointment with her. He knows it is her last appointment. He has arranged it that way. Today he wants to show her his love. She cannot help but reciprocate his love. Every time he is with her, he feels the love. The hands going over his body. The touches. It must be that she loves me. Yes, I am going to take the initiative, he thinks, and he steps into the shower.