The Chalice

Sample

By Emily Claire Schmitt

Contact:

Emily Claire Schmitt
404 E 88th St.
Apt. 3E
New York, NY 10128

eclairedrama@gmail.com
(513) 235-5476
SCENE ONE

(ALEX sits at the breakfast table with KEVIN. Both of them look as though they have been up all night. Kevin is pouring over a newspaper. A large, unopened, envelope sits on the table. Alex stares at it.)

KEVIN
(Reading.)
“Leo can expect to find himself in a new place.”
(Puts down the paper.)
That answers it.

ALEX
I don’t think so.

KEVIN
Open it up, see if I’m right.

ALEX
And if you’re not?

(KEVIN shrugs.)

ALEX
So if you’re right, it’s proof that astrology works. If you’re wrong, it’s nothing?

KEVIN
It’s not hard and fast, babe.

ALEX
Uh huh.

KEVIN
The more you do it, the more you start noticing how often it’s right.
ALEX
“A new place” could mean anything. You drove down from Cleveland this morning.

KEVIN
But I’m not Leo.

ALEX
But if you were, it would still apply to you.

KEVIN
I’m missing the part where that means it’s not true.

(Alex stands up and moves the envelope to the counter.)

ALEX
It doesn’t help anything to get our hopes up.

KEVIN
All right.

(Beat.)
Have you heard from your sister?

ALEX
Nope. The lawyer just dropped it off this morning and that’s it.

KEVIN
So are we going to the funeral?

ALEX
It depends.

(Beat. Indicates the envelope.)
Not on that.

KEVIN
I know.

ALEX
I want Angela to invite me. Is that completely pathetic?
KEVIN
Of course not.

ALEX
But?

KEVIN
He was just as much your dad as hers.

ALEX
Until I came out. To spite him, of course.

(Kevin smiles a little and shakes his head.)

KEVIN
Okay, you’ll never believe what mine says.

ALEX
Hit me.

KEVIN
“Virgo should prepare himself for a major change in financial situation.”

ALEX
Oh God...

KEVIN
Babe, come on, that’s both of us now.

ALEX
I know you have your heart set on a house-

KEVIN
We wouldn’t need to buy a whole house. Just enough for you to make the move up and start renting somewhere.

ALEX
I just don’t think we should get our hopes up.
KEVIN
It’s more than just a coincidence that both of our horoscopes would say something about this today.

ALEX
I think it’s selection bias.

KEVIN
What?

ALEX
You already believe something so you look for evidence to support it and ignore evidence against it. You only remember the horoscopes when they’re right.

KEVIN
Then how do you explain all the really amazing things Astrologers have predicted?

ALEX
Like...

KEVIN
Nostrodamus predicted September Eleventh and World War Two.

ALEX
Babe.

KEVIN
Just listen.

(KEVIN goes to his suitcase and takes out a large book.)

ALEX
You’re traveling with that now?

KEVIN
I was reading it on the bus.

(KEVIN finds his place. Reads.)

“From the depths of West of Europe, a young child will be born of poor people, he who by his tongue will seduce a great troop, his fame will increase towards the realm of the East.”
(He puts down the book.)
It has to be Hitler.

ALEX
Dad believed the Virgin Mary predicted World War Two at Lourdes. And she was a lot more specific.

KEVIN
How?

ALEX
She said a great war would break out during the reign of Pope Pius and the Chosen People would be persecuted.

KEVIN
That’s impressive.

ALEX
Except they didn’t make the prediction public until after the war started, so really not that impressive.

( Kevin laughs. )

ALEX
See what I mean, though?

KEVIN
I do. But I’m not like your family.

ALEX
I never said you were.

(Pause.)

KEVIN
Why don’t you open the envelope?

ALEX
It’s wrong.

KEVIN
You deserve to know where you stood.
ALEX
I know.

KEVIN
Okay, I admit it. I want the money. We’ve been waiting a long time live together and I really hope that’s going to change.

(The phone rings.)

KEVIN
Maybe it’s Angela.

ALEX
Thank God.

(Alex picks up.)

ALEX
Hello?

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR (V.O.)
Hello, this is interpreter number seven seven one five. You are receiving a call from a Deaf person.

ALEX
(Covers mouthpiece.)
It’s Aunt Janice.

(Kevin nods.)

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Have you used Video Relay before?

ALEX
Yes.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
I will connect your call.

(Janice appears in spotlight, signing.)
Alex sets his phone on speaker. It appears as though they are having a simple conversation.)

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Hello, Dear. How are you holding up?

ALEX
All right. Kevin is here.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Kevin! How was the drive?

KEVIN
Good. Read most of the way.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Good boy. He’s a keeper, Alex.

ALEX
I know. How are you doing?

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
I don’t think it’s quite hit me yet. My brother being gone is... but he’s not gone. He’s in Heaven.

ALEX
I... yeah.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
It’s actually easier for me to talk to him now.

(Alex and Kevin exchange a surprised look.)

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
But don’t take my word for it. The power of prayer has to be experienced.

ALEX
I know, Aunt Janice.
VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
So are you going to be at the house tonight?

ALEX
We haven’t heard from Angela-

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Don’t worry about that. I have a big surprise for the two of you.

ALEX
She hasn’t told me I could come over.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Don’t be silly. This is important.

ALEX
All right.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Promise you’ll be there?

KEVIN
We promise.

VIDEO RELAY OPERATOR
Thank you, Kevin. Love you boys. Bye bye.

ALEX
Love you too.

(A click. Lights down on Janice.)

ALEX
Kev.

KEVIN
What?

ALEX
I can’t promise to go over there if Angela doesn’t want us.
KEVIN
You wanted to be invited, and you were.

ALEX
By Angela.

KEVIN
Is she the only one who counts?

ALEX
It’s her house.

KEVIN
You really think Janice should have to be there all night without an interpreter?

(Alex sighs. Kevin has a point.)

KEVIN
What do you think the surprise is?

ALEX
Who knows. Probably rosaries for everyone.

KEVIN
(Shakes head.)
Well, she’s very sweet.

ALEX
I know. She tries.
(Pause.)
I guess we should open this before we go.

KEVIN
Might as well be now.

ALEX
Right.

(Alex stands. Kevin stops him, putting his hand on his arm. A moment.)
KEVIN
Just remember. I want you to come to Cleveland. But if this doesn’t work, we will find another way.

(Alex nods. Kevin sits back down. Alex slowly rips open the envelope. Inside is a thick document. He flips through it, slowly at first, then quickly. Finally, he stops. A long moment.)

KEVIN
Babe?

(Alex takes a long, deep breath.)

KEVIN
What is it?

ALEX
(Reading.)
“...And to Alexander Coleman, I hereby leave my server’s robes, belt, Bible, and any and all things pertaining to his role as an altar server.”

(Silence.)