

ROSE COLORED MEMORIES

by Connie Dinkler

Cast of Characters

TRICIA: mid-forties, dressed in business attire and almost too much jewelry, flighty, sister of NORA

NORA: mid-forties, wearing jeans, solid colored t-shirt. sensible, straight forward sister of TRICIA

CLIFF LEWISON: mid-forties, wearing a suit and a flashy tie, arrogant, vain

JACK: mid-forties, unassuming, wearing slacks and a polo shirt, glasses, ex-husband of TRICIA

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Setting: North Carolina, summer, modern day. A living room. There is a sofa, two chairs and a coffee table.

At Rise: TRICIA enters stage right with a purse and a box. NORA is sitting with a glass of wine reading a nonfiction book.

NORA

So how did it go?

TRICIA

Well I got the house, but I had to give up the camper which I wasn't too happy about but oh well.

(TRICIA sets down her purse and the box on the coffee table.)

NORA

You don't even like camping.

TRICIA

I was going to sell it.

NORA

I see.

(TRICIA sits down.)

TRICIA

I need a drink.

NORA

All we got is Moscato, is that okay?

TRICIA

That will work. Thanks.

(TRICIA sits, NORA gets up to get wine and a glass.)

NORA

I'm surprised you stayed with Doofus as long as you did the way you two fought.

(NORA pours the wine, hands it to TRICIA and puts the bottle back.)

TRICIA

I stayed for the kids.

(NORA sits.)

NORA

What a sacrificing mom. Stick it out for the kids so you can give them a good example of how a family is *not* supposed to act.

(NORA takes a sip of wine.)

TRICIA

Do you think you could refrain from making your negative comments for a day or two?

NORA

Okay but two days tops. That's my limit. So what's in the box?

TRICIA (sarcastically)

He said some of my *junk* was mixed in with some of his *belongings*. He was kind enough to give it to me.

(TRICIA takes a sip of wine.)

NORA

What a swell guy Doofus is.

(TRICIA goes to the box and starts looking through it.)

TRICIA

I haven't had the chance to see what's in it. Oh this is great.

NORA

What?

TRICIA

He left his grandfather's watch in here. He is going to want this. Just when I thought I never had to see him again.

NORA

Oh, just ship it to him.

(NORA takes a sip of wine as
TRICIA looks through the box.)

TRICIA

Good idea. He probably left it in here on purpose just so
he would have an excuse to come back to torment me. . .
Well, look at this!

NORA

What did you find now? The matching bra to the panties you
found in Doofus' glove box?

TRICIA

Nora!

NORA

I can't believe how big they were, guess Doofus likes big
butts and -

TRICIA

Nora, please!

NORA

Sorry.

TRICIA

It's my high school yearbook.

(TRICIA flips through the
pages.)

Wow I remember the day this was taken. It's a picture of me
and Cliff!

NORA

Cliff?

TRICIA

Yeah, Cliff Lewison. Don't you remember him?

NORA

Cliff Lewison . . .

TRICIA

I can't believe you forgot about him. I wanted to marry
him.

NORA

That is not a good differentiator. You wanted to marry everyone you dated.

(NORA sips wine.)

TRICIA

Not true. Cliff was the football player.

(TRICIA sips wine.)

(pause)

NORA

Oh yeah! He was that pinhead that you were so heartbroken over you stayed in bed for three weeks.

TRICIA

It wasn't that long!

NORA

It might have been longer. So what now? What are you going to do with yourself now that the kids are grown and you have no man to tie you down?

(TRICIA sets the yearbook down.)

TRICIA

I am going to look him up.

NORA

Who?

TRICIA

Cliff! Who else?

NORA

What for?

TRICIA

Why not? I'm single now. Who knows he might be too. What if he has spent all these years regretting our breakup. What if he has been thinking about me and trying to find me?

NORA

And what if he turned out to be a serial killer. Seriously? Tricia, what I meant by what are you going to do with yourself now was like . . . are you going to take up a basket weaving class or go on an Alaskan cruise or try out a new hairdo - not get back with an old ex from 20 years ago. You can't possibly still be in love with him after all this time.

TRICIA

No, but I have thought a lot about him over the years and wondered about him and I remember how much fun he was.

NORA

You were both in your 20s. He's close to fifty years old now. Do you really think he is still fun at fifty?

TRICIA

Yes I do. He made me feel a certain way that Jack never did. He had spark.

NORA

If you want spark date a lighter. You were just Cliff's back up chick.

TRICIA

I was not.

(TRICIA sips wine.)

NORA

Yes, you were. He only called you when one of his girlfriends broke up with him and who could blame them.

TRICIA

But I was the one he always called.

NORA

Yes because you were so easy.

TRICIA (offended)

What?

NORA

That's not what I mean. I mean that he knew you would always be there no matter how many times he broke your heart you would always take him back and he didn't even

NORA (Cont'd)

have to be nice to you.

TRICIA

Well I see it differently. He was just young then and trying to impress his buddies. I know he really loved me and it would have worked out. I wonder where he is now. What he's doing. What if he's a billionaire?

NORA

What if he's a drug addict? I'm surprised you haven't Facebook stalked him.

TRICIA

Great idea!

NORA

That wasn't a suggestion.

(NORA sips wine.)

TRICIA

Where's my phone?

(TRICIA gets up to look for phone, finds it in her purse.)

NORA

Don't you think if he wanted you back he would have contacted you by now?

(TRICIA sits back down.)

TRICIA

I'm sure he had his reasons. He was probably trying to respect my space.

NORA

Well your stubborn self is not going to listen to a thing I say anyway.

TRICIA

Have I ever?

NORA

No.

TRICIA

Well it wouldn't hurt anything just to take a look.

(TRICIA does a search on her phone.)

NORA

Personally I don't know what you saw in Cliff, really.

(NORA takes a sip of wine.)

TRICIA

He was handsome, witty, ambitious - unlike Jack. And he had this confidence about him. And he was so popular.

Nora

Yeah. Maybe a little too popular. Isn't that why you two broke up?

Tricia

It was 20 years ago. And we would have worked it out if things had just gone differently. What do you know, I think I found him!

(TRICIA shows NORA her phone.)

Look. Doesn't that look like him?

NORA

I suppose.

(TRICIA scrolls on her phone for a bit.)

TRICIA

It *is* him! I'm sending him a message.

NORA

Wow. You just technically got divorced today.

TRICIA

It's been long enough already. I haven't been in love with Jack for years. I never should have married him. What should I say to him?

NORA

To who?

TRICIA

Cliff!

NORA

Oh. How about hello?

TRICIA

This is important! You are no help. I want to say the right thing. Don't you have any romance in you at all?

NORA

You are just in love with the idea of being in love. That is why your marriage didn't last. Unrealistic expectations.

TRICIA

Haven't you ever been in love ever in your life Nora?

NORA

If you mean have I ever experienced that flood of dopamine and serotonin in my brain when I came across an attractive man? Sure. A couple of times. In my teens, but it passed in a few hours.

TRICIA

Seriously. There isn't a man in your past that you pine over? That you dream of him coming back into your life?

(TRICIA sips wine, NORA
thinks for a moment.)

NORA

Well there is one . . .

TRICIA

I knew it! Who?

NORA

I think his name was Curtis.

TRICIA

That soccer player you dated in college?

NORA

No. The ice cream man that used to come through our neighborhood. He had the best selection. Whatever happened to him? Why did he stop coming down our street? Not enough kids? It's not fair. It was so convenient when I had a

NORA (Cont'd)

craving for a Nutty Buddy, now I have to go all the way to the supermarket.

TRICIA

That's it? That's the one that got away?

NORA

Yes! I miss him. I knew I should have written down his number.

(NORA sips wine, TRICIA looks at her phone.)

TRICIA

He answered!

NORA

Who?

TRICIA

Cliff!

NORA

Oh right. What did he say?

TRICIA

Apparently, Cliff and his wife divorced last year and Cliff is going to be in Charlotte next week for a convention. Isn't that great!

NORA

No.

TRICIA

Not that he's divorced but that he is single and now I have a shot again. Like I said, I am not going to marry him, I'm just curious.

NORA

Suit yourself.

(pause)

TRICIA

He's going to be right here! Back in our old neighborhood! What if it's fate!

NORA

It's ridiculous is what it is.

TRICIA

Well I am going to invite Cliff over here for a drink.

NORA

Tricia! You have not seen or spoke to him in twenty years and have no idea what he is like now or what he thinks of you. What if he has bad teeth or body odor or a receding hairline?

TRICIA

Nora! I am not that superficial.

NORA

Yes you are.

TRICIA

I am inviting Cliff over and you will be here so it will be just like old friends catching up, If it doesn't work out, no big deal.

NORA

Fine. I am kind of curious to see how he turned out.

(TRICIA sips wine and types
a message on her phone.)

TRICIA

Okay. I just invited him over Friday evening. Does that work for you?

NORA

Well, I was going to see a movie, but this will be much more entertaining.

(Lights down, lights up.)

TRICIA

I need to change!

NORA

You've had twenty years to do that.

TRICIA

Nora, seriously. What should I wear?

NORA

You look fine, don't worry about it. It shouldn't matter if it's just old friends catching up anyway, right?

(There is a knock on the door.)

TRICIA

He's here. How do I look?

NORA

Fine.

(TRICIA opens the door. Cliff enters.)

TRICIA

Cliff? Is it really you?

CLIFF

Yes! Tricia! It's so good to see you!

NORA

Hello Cliff.

CLIFF

And Nora! Hi! It's been ages!

TRICIA

Come on in and have a seat. So what have you been doing with yourself all these years?

(CLIFF sits in one of the chairs.)

NORA

Last we saw you Cliff, you were working as a rep for that concrete company.

CLIFF

Oh, yeah. Well, I moved to California shortly after I married my first wife, lived there for about ten years, then got a job offer from a company based out of Washington where I met my second wife.

NORA

How many times have you been married?

Nora!

TRICIA

It's okay. Just three.

CLIFF

I see.

TRICIA

Can I get you something to drink? We have wine.

NORA

That would be just awesome!

CLIFF

We got pinot noir, zinfandel or Moscato.

NORA

Do you have any merlot?

CLIFF

No.

NORA

Okay. I'll take pinot noir then.

CLIFF

Okay, Tricia what do you want?

NORA

I'll have the same.

TRICIA

(Nora gets wine and three glasses.)

NORA

So what happened after Washington?

(NORA pours wine and hands TRICIA and CLIFF glasses.)

CLIFF

Hold on, let me get a picture with the wine.

(CLIFF struggles to take a selfie with one hand with the wine in the other.)

CLIFF

I left my selfie stick out in the car.

TRICIA

Here, let me do it for you.

(TRICIA takes the phone and takes his picture while CLIFF poses dramatically.)

CLIFF

So as I was saying, after things went South with Hailey and work, the company offered me a transfer to North Carolina and although I hate the humidity here, I decided it would probably be best.

NORA

Hailey?

(NORA sips wine.)

CLIFF

She's a former coworker.

(CLIFF takes a drink of wine.)

TRICIA

What happened with work?

CLIFF

Oh, just people gossiping and all.

NORA

Yeah, people shouldn't gossip. How do you like your work?

CLIFF

It's great. I love it.

TRICIA

It must be stressful.

(TRICIA sips wine.)

CLIFF

Oh it is but I can handle it. Nothing a few martinis won't fix.

TRICIA

So sorry to hear about your divorce, Cliff.

CLIFF

Oh it was a long time coming.

NORA

What happened?

(CLIFF takes a drink of wine.)

CLIFF

It just didn't work out between us.

(CLIFF scrolls on his phone.)

CLIFF

Oh, you know what? Tricia, that picture you took - the lighting is bad, can we redo it?

TRICIA

Sure.

CLIFF

Let's move over here.

(CLIFF stands and moves over a bit, handing his phone to TRICIA. TRICIA takes another picture while CLIFF poses dramatically then TRICIA hands the phone back and they sit. CLIFF checks the photo.)

CLIFF

That's better, thanks.

NORA

So, Cliff what happened with you and your wife?

TRICIA

Nora, maybe he does not want to talk about it.

CLIFF

Oh, I don't mind. She was just too selfish.

NORA

Oh?

(TRICIA sips wine.)

CLIFF

Yeah. She would get mad just because I had to take a business trip once in a while.

TRICIA

So she wasn't very understanding, huh?

CLIFF

No, not at all. I was only gone about nine months out of the year or so and I made a lot of money. She sure enjoyed spending the money I made. And then she was so jealous and possessive.

TRICIA

Really?

CLIFF

Yeah, she tried to control everything I did. For instance she was always demanding to know the password to my phone.

TRICIA

Oh my gosh!

CLIFF

Yeah, it was really irritating.

TRICIA

Well, how ridiculous.

NORA

Why didn't you just give it to her so she would leave you alone?

(NORA sips wine.)

CLIFF

Well then she might stumble across some messages to female clients and misconstrue them.

NORA

Misconstrue them?

CLIFF

Yes, you know how it is. Sometimes a person has to be a little flirtatious to keep important business, you know.

NORA

No, I don't know.

TRICIA

I'm sure you never gave her a reason to be so suspicious.

CLIFF

Of course not! The last time I did anything wrong was like six months ago!

NORA

And what was that?

TRICIA

Nora don't pry. That's none of our business.

CLIFF

Oh, it's no big deal. She just happened across our bank statements and found a hotel charge. But it really wasn't that big a deal. I only kissed the girl.

(CLIFF drinks wine.)

NORA

You-

CLIFF

Tricia, we need to get a picture of the two of us for old time's sake.

TRICIA

Yeah!

(TRICIA gets beside him
and they take a picture.
CLIFF looks at it and shows
TRICIA.)

CLIFF

Okay, now let's get another one - with the wine.

(TRICIA gets beside him
and they take a picture.
CLIFF looks at it and shows
TRICIA.)

TRICIA

Nice. Hey! I still have my old yearbook from high school
and I found an old picture of us!

CLIFF

Really? Let me see.

(TRICIA gets the yearbook and
flips the pages to show him.)

CLIFF

Wow. Can you believe my hair?

TRICIA

I liked it.

CLIFF

So you ladies married? Kids?

NORA

Not me.

CLIFF

Well I find that hard to believe Nora - you look just as
hot as you did in high school.

TRICIA

I have a son that works for an airline and a daughter. She
just got married last summer. Cliff, you have kids, right?
I think I saw some in your photos online.

CLIFF

Yes! I have two from my first wife, one from my second wife
and two from my third. My oldest son Cliffy is in the
military, uh army or air force, I can't remember which one,
and my oldest daughter Sierra is in college. She goes to
Pepperdine. The rest are still at home with their moms and
in school.

TRICIA

What is Sierra studying?

CLIFF

Uh. I think she mentioned it, but I'm not sure. Something to do with psychology or geology or criminology. One of the ologies.

NORA

Those are three very different fields Cliff.

TRICIA

I went back to school in -

CLIFF

Can you believe the cost of tuition these days?

TRICIA

Yeah. Pretty outrageous. As I was -

CLIFF

Boy you girls haven't changed a bit. Still just as beautiful.

TRICIA

Thanks Cliff.

(TRICIA sips wine.)

NORA

You haven't changed a bit either, Cliff.

CLIFF

I know. Hey, you know what? We should get a picture of me with both of you. Come on.

(All three get up and stand,
NORA very reluctantly. CLIFF
has one girl get on each side
of him while he takes a selfie.
They sit back down.)

CLIFF

Hey do you remember that time that we all went swimming down at the lake that one summer and we ended up staying out all night?

TRICIA

Yes, those were some good times. Hey I just -

CLIFF

Yeah and remember when I had that birthday party while my parents were gone and the police came out.

NORA

Yeah, Mom was pretty mad about that.

CLIFF

So what do you do for a living now, Tricia?

TRICIA

Well, I -

CLIFF

Hey Nora, do you mind if we switch places?

(TRICIA sips wine.)

NORA

Switch places? That chair not comfortable enough for you?

CLIFF

It's just that I have this thing about where I sit in a room.

NORA

Okay, sure.

(NORA gets up, bends to pick up her wine and trades places with CLIFF, CLIFF touches her back and slides his hand down her back, NORA stops it before it gets to her buttocks.)

CLIFF

Hey the four of us should go out some time. You know what? We could go on my boat.

TRICIA

Oh, you have a boat?

CLIFF (proudly)

Yep it's a 25 foot pontoon. Seats up to 15 people.

NORA (sarcastically)
You got a picture of it?

CLIFF
I sure do!

(CLIFF gets his phone and
shows them several pictures.)

NORA
Guess you forgot that Tricia gets motion sickness.

CLIFF
She does?

TRICIA
Yes I do, don't you remember?

CLIFF
Well Nora, you and I can still go sometime, right?

(TRICIA sips wine.)

NORA
Yeah. Maybe. Sometime. I am pretty busy these days though.

CLIFF
I get it. Hey! I didn't get a picture of just you and I
Nora. Come on.

(NORA reluctantly gets up
to take a selfie with CLIFF
then they sit back down.)

CLIFF
Oh Tricia! What happened between us?

NORA
I'll tell you what happened, you were an a -

TRICIA
Nora!

CLIFF
It's okay, I know I made a lot of mistakes. And if I could
I would go back and change everything. We had a good thing
going with us, didn't we?

TRICIA
Yes, we did.

CLIFF
I was a fool to let you go.

NORA
You were a fool al -

TRICIA
Nora!

CLIFF
Oh, she's just being the overprotective sister, just like back then.

TRICIA
So are you seeing anyone?

CLIFF
Well sort of.

NORA
What do you mean, sort of? Either you are or you aren't.

CLIFF
Girls, it's complicated.

NORA
Ah. You're one of *those* people.

TRICIA
Nora. Nora.

(TRICIA sighs and takes a drink of wine.)

NORA
Can't you just say I am with someone, but I want someone better but I don't want to be alone so I am staying with this someone until I find someone that is a better deal and in the meantime I am willing to cheat on this current someone for a while to be sure the someone better really is the better deal and then I will leave the current someone for the better deal.

CLIFF

Well I -

NORA

Which by the way, you never actually find a better deal - you just find a new someone with a slightly different set of dramatic issues.

TRICIA

Nora!

NORA

I wasn't referring to you in particular.

CLIFF

Nora, I can see how you might think that about me, but the truth is I have been seeing someone, but it has not been working out. I just have not found the right time to break it off.

TRICIA

You always were so caring of other people's feelings.

(NORA chuckles and drinks wine.)

(An alert goes off on
CLIFF's phone, he checks it.)

CLIFF

Geez, what now? Sorry ladies, I have to go. It's kind of an emergency. It was so good seeing you. Thanks for the wine, it wasn't too bad.

TRICIA

It was so nice catching up, Cliff.

CLIFF

Yeah. Well I'll message you when I take a look at my calendar and we can get together again soon ladies.

TRICIA

You do that.

NORA (sarcastically)

Don't you want one last pic?

CLIFF

Of course!

(TRICIA starts to walk over to CLIFF but then realizes he is taking one of just himself.)

CLIFF

I'll be in touch.

(CLIFF hugs NORA and TRICIA.)

TRICIA

Bye.

(Exit CLIFF.)

NORA

Well that was fun.

TRICIA

He spent the whole time talking about himself!

NORA

Yep. And taking selfies.

TRICIA

I can't believe he is so self-absorbed.

NORA

Oh, he hasn't changed much.

NORA

Well now maybe you have some closure. And you can stop pining over pinhead.

(NORA puts the glasses away.)

TRICIA (sadly)

Yeah - Wait - I'm going to need another glass of wine.

(NORA takes Tricia's glass, pours more wine and brings her glass back. There is a knock at the door.)

TRICIA

Who is that?

(TRICIA opens it.)

CLIFF

I'm so sorry, but it's a long trip back. Can I use your bathroom.

TRICIA

Sure. Down the hall to the right.

(Exit CLIFF stage left.)

TRICIA

I hope he didn't hear any of our conversation.

NORA

Who cares if he did?

TRICIA

I care. You can be so insensitive.

(There is a knock at the door.)

TRICIA

What now?

(TRICIA opens door, JACK enters.)

JACK

Hey Tricia.

TRICIA

What are you doing here?

JACK

Sorry to bother you, I think I left my grandfather's watch in that box of stuff? I had forgotten I put it there for safekeeping when we were painting the bedroom.

TRICIA

Yes. I'll get it. You could have let me know you were coming, you know.

JACK

Sorry to inconvenience you. I was passing by and just remembered it. I thought I would stop in while I was in the area.

(TRICIA goes to retrieve
watch out of box.)

JACK

How are you Nora?

NORA

Just fine, Doo-Jack.

CLIFF enters, sees JACK and
freezes.)

CLIFF

What are you doing here?

JACK

What do you mean what am I doing here? What are *you* doing
here?

NORA

You two know each other?

CLIFF

I was just visiting my old friends.

JACK

Old friends?

CLIFF

Yes. Tricia invited me over.

TRICIA

Yes, not that it is any of your business, but Cliff is an
old friend from High School.

CLIFF

How do you know Tricia?

JACK

I was married to her for seventeen years!

CLIFF

What? You're married?!

JACK

Not anymore. You knew I was married. We just got divorced,
I told you. But then again you never listen to me so that

JACK (Cont'd)
doesn't surprise me.

(NORA laughs.)

CLIFF
You never mentioned your wife's name.

TRICIA
Ex wife!

JACK
I didn't think it was important.

TRICIA
What is going on?

CLIFF
Well obviously you didn't tell her about us like you claimed!

JACK
It's complicated.

(NORA laughs loudly.)

JACK
And it took you a long time to tell your wife about us, remember? And you still haven't given me a satisfactory explanation as to why you are *my* wife's house?

NORA
Ex wife.

TRICIA
Ex wife.

TRICIA
Oh my God is he the one -

CLIFF
We're just old friends. We went to high school together. I was in the area - we were just catching up.

(TRICIA takes a gulp of wine.)

JACK
Wait a minute, Tricia had an old boyfriend in high school named Cliff.

NORA

Yep.

JACK

You're Cliff Lewison!

CLIFF

Well I'm glad you remembered my name! I told you my name the night we met but I guess you don't listen to me either.

JACK

I know your name, I just didn't put two and two together. Tricia, are you trying to get back together with him? You swore to me you had no more feelings for him!

TRICIA

What difference does it make! We are divorced! He was in the area and we all wanted to catch up that's all. But you on the other hand, you have obviously had something more going on with him. Not only did you keep the affair hidden, but the fact that you were gay!

CLIFF

He's pansexual, Tricia as am I.

JACK

It's not what you think.

NORA

Don't tell me, it's *complicated*.

TRICIA

You both need to go.

JACK

Look, we'll talk about this later.

CLIFF

Ladies, I am so sorry about all this. You shouldn't have had to witness all this.

TRICIA

Get out!

CLIFF

Okay, sorry Tricia.

JACK

Can I get my watch?

(TRICIA throws the watch at
JACK, CLIFF and JACK exit.
TRICIA collapses on the sofa.)

TRICIA

This is so mortifying. Not only was my husband cheating on me, he was cheating on me with a man. Not only that, but my ex-boyfriend!

NORA

Yep. Sucks. But that explains the triple-X undies, though.

TRICIA

It's obvious now what a player he is. I have to get better at seeing the red flags judging men now that I am single. Nora, how do you tell if I should steer clear of a guy?

NORA

All you got to do is look for one thing.

TRICIA

What's that?

NORA

If he's breathing.

TRICIA

Nora!

NORA

If he's breathing, he's going to be nothing but trouble.

TRICIA

Seriously Nora, I need your help. Who made you so jaded anyway?

NORA

Curtis.

TRICIA

The ice cream man?

NORA

Yes. He left me without even saying goodbye.

TRICIA

Oh no! I just thought of something. What if the kids find out about their father? What am I going to tell them if they start asking questions?

NORA

Just tell them it's complicated.

(END OF PLAY)