

CHANEL, THE BIC CALLER

Chanel — Nando the Scribe

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The phone rang.

The country code was +33. France, without a doubt.

What I did not know was who could possibly be calling me. I had never left unfinished romances behind; that was never my style as a Gillette man. French women always knew exactly what they wanted, and you could never leave them waiting. I had always gone along with their plans. Satisfying the customer first in desire and then in necessity had always been Mother Gillette's rule.

"Hello, good morning. My name is Claude Chiracac, and I am the manager of Intermediary Operation in the World. Am I speaking with Mr. Ferdinando Frega, owner of GILLETTENARRATIVE?"

"Yes, speaking. What can I do for you?"

"That is very kind of you to ask. Not a common answer these days. Thank you. I need to meet with you to discuss how to bring a certain project to its conclusion."

"My dear lady, I am retired first and married second. But I have always welcomed new opportunities. I remain available for new commitments. So if the proposal is appealing enough, we can certainly consider a temporary engagement."

"Thank you, Mr. Frega. Claude Chiracac is my professional name, but among friends they call me Chanel, if you prefer. I have been delegated by the management of a major French multinational to contact you and finalize several matters connected to your initiatives. You are

their official point of reference. If you grant me some of your time, I would be pleased to visit you and discuss everything openly."

"Very well. We can meet whenever you wish. I simply need the day, the time, and an estimate of how long the meeting will take."

"In that case, I could come tomorrow at 2:30 PM and remain until 7:30 PM. And from these few exchanges alone, you already strike me as an interesting person. The photograph on your website confirms the impression. Let us hope that, in addition to being intelligent, you are also a man of your word."

"My dear Chanel, after many years of honorable service, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs awarded me a commendation medal for the way I treated the women of the world. The only tragedy was that, with almost all of them, the natural conclusion would have been marriage—and that was a promise I was never able to make."

"Very well. Thank you, Mr. Frega. I will see you tomorrow. Sheraton Hotel, Reggio Calabria, 2:30 PM."

"I will be there. Thank you. Until tomorrow."

Ferdinando

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