

SIDE I - SYLVIA & BEAU

BEAU. (From the bathroom.) What?

Buoyed, now that he's responded, she runs to the bottom of the stairs (or to the wing) and calls off to him more pointedly.

SYLVIA. I say (Water shuts off—less loudly.) are you nearly through?

BEAU. (From off.) Quite.

SYLVIA. Good.

Hopeful that his entrance is imminent, she races back to her original pose as she calls off romantically...

(As the water turns back on.) I miss you!

Just as she gets back to her pose...

BEAU. (From off.) What?

He can't hear her at all! She starts back to the bottom of the stairs...

SYLVIA. (Calling off, loudly.) I say (Water shuts off—less loudly.) I miss you!

The sound of a door shutting is heard. He's on his way

In seemingly one leap, Sylvia lands miraculously back on the sofa in her original pose, grapes and all, albeit slightly less perfect than originally intended.

Just missing Sylvia's perfect leap and return to casual elegance, Beau appears. He is tall, charming, and handsome. He wears a deep red silk robe and towels his hair.

BEAU. Ah—just as I left you. Gorgeous. My gorgeous tulip.

SYLVIA. (Regaining composure.) Am I?

Beau enters fully now.

BEAU. You know you are, darling. Why just now you've set yourself up perfectly to look coy and lovely, so that it would be exceedingly difficult for me to get properly dressed without distraction.

SYLVIA. Ah, darling. How well you know me.

BEAU. Do I?

SYLVIA. I love it when you call me Tulip.

BEAU. (Oozing sex.) Tulip.

SYLVIA. (Euphorically.) Ahhh.

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He turns to go. Sylvia quickly shifts from orgasmic to desperate.

(Pleading.) Don't.

BEAU. Don't what?

SYLVIA. (With renewed come-hitherness.) Please don't get dressed. We've only just begun.

BEAU. Just begun? Good Lord, Sylvia, if that was just the beginning I'm afraid I'm not quite up to the task of making it to the end.

SYLVIA. Let's test you and find out.

They kiss passionately.

I wish you were my husband.

BEAU. No you don't.

SYLVIA. Yes I do.

He kisses her (neck, ears, etc.), continuing foreplay throughout their dialogue.

BEAU. If I were your husband you would despise me just as you despise Clarke and you would spend your evenings wishing to make love to him and not me.

SYLVIA. Do you really think so?

BEAU. I do.

SYLVIA. Well that's not very romantic, is it?

BEAU. Romance, my dear, is for fairy tales. This is not a romance. (Getting sexier.) This is sex.

SYLVIA. Passionate, wildly erotic sex.

BEAU. (Sexier still.) Un-wifely sex.

SYLVIA. Haven't you ever had wild sex with Marjorie?

The moment's now ruined. He breaks out of her embrace, releasing her haphazardly.

BEAU. Marjorie's not in the mood for wild sex.

SYLVIA. Ever?

BEAU. Well, I suppose once when we were in the South of France, she let me...

SYLVIA. (Interrupting.) Never mind, darling, I don't want to know. (Then.) Do you feel guilty?

BEAU. For sleeping with you?

SYLVIA. Yes.

BEAU. No.

SYLVIA. (*Elated.*) Neither do I! I feel like I deserve to make love like I make love to you. And Clarke certainly doesn't do it, so I have no other choice but to turn to you.

BEAU. Is that a compliment?

SYLVIA. I'd say. If I really want to be made love to, Beau, I must come to you. And so I have—for one night, every summer, for seven summers.

BEAU. Has it been seven already? (*Distracted by the food.*) This looks lovely. Thank you Sylvie.

SYLVIA. Coffee?

BEAU. Please.

Sylvia pours and sugars the coffee demonstratively. Beau goes about his breakfast.

SYLVIA. Somehow it lasts me, you know? This one night of spectacular (*Raises the spout spectacularly.*) lovemaking will see me through another year of rare and mediocre sex with Clarke.

She plops a sugar cube in the cup.

BEAU. I don't take sugar.

SYLVIA. Don't you?

BEAU. 'Fraid not.

SYLVIA. (*As she quickly removes the sugar from his cup, putting it back—now wet—in the sugar bowl.*) Of course. Sorry. It's been so long.

She hands him the coffee, sans sugar.

BEAU. You were saying?

SYLVIA. (*Back on track.*) Ah, yes. That our one night together will make up for all our nights apart.

BEAU. Will it?

SYLVIA. Of course. When I've no choice but to lie in bed with

Clarke, I simply close my eyes and imagine *us*—here, at this perfect cottage. My most favorite place in all the world.

BEAU. You sound like Mama.

SYLVIA. Do I? (*Then.*) Oh, I love it here. I always feel like I belong.

BEAU. As do I.

SYLVIA. I picture us in that bed of satin sheets, with window boxes of tulips; and that alone will bring me to climax.

BEAU. Will it?

SYLVIA. (*Dropping the sexy playfulness.*) Will you stop saying “will it” like that? You make me feel foolish.

BEAU. Not at all. You’re not a bit foolish. You’re wonderful and beautiful. When did you put that flower in your hair?

SYLVIA. (*Restoring the sexy playfulness.*) While you were washing up. I thought it would make me look fetching.

BEAU. It does. What else do you do while I’m washing up?

Spinning on a dime, brandishing a cigarette, Sylvia deflects the question without missing a beat.

SYLVIA. Ciggy?

Note: Cigarettes, lighters, and ashtrays are always found throughout the cottage in the most unexpected places. (Think of a flower vase that’s actually a cigarette holder, or a ceramic statue of David that’s actually a cigarette holder—with a removable penis that’s actually a lighter.) People are always taking one puff and then putting their cigarettes out to make a point.

Note about the note: It isn’t that cigarettes are hidden in unusual places, but rather, that typical objects have been unusually fashioned into cigarette holders.

BEAU. No thank you, darling, I’m through with smoking.

SYLVIA. But you smoked last night.

BEAU. I know, but this morning I’m through with it. It’s exhausting as a practice.

Beau lights Sylvia’s cigarette.