

to bring my Snow White costume.

SPIKE. Okay.

MASHA. And don't forget the shepherd's crook.

SPIKE. Okay. *(To Vanya and Sonia, friendly, wised-up.)* Women, huh? *(Spike exits.)*

MASHA. Sweetest Vanya, dearest Sonia. How I've missed you. You both look the same. Older. Sadder. But the same. It's wonderful to see you, Vanya. Oh, and you too, Sonia.

SONIA. Yes, hello. I'm easy to miss.

MASHA. You are! I often miss you! I'm in a play or a movie, and I think of my dear Sonia, and think, oh I miss her! I must call her. Then I get called to the set and months go by and I forget to call. Life happens, no?

SONIA. Not here it doesn't. We sit still a lot. We look out the window. We bicker. We long for what the world cannot give. We are in our twilight years, and we realize we have never really lived.

MASHA. *(Lightly.)* Oh, that's too bad ... *(Back to herself, happy.)* Oh I wish I had time to sit still. I'm always busy, I'm always on the TV, or flying off to some foreign country to make a movie. Oh I wish I had time to read the classics, sit in a chair, and just read. Do you read the classics, Sonia?

SONIA. No. I think of it, but I have too much free time. There's so much I could fill the free time with, I can't make decisions. So I do nothing. I am a wild turkey, I am a wild turkey.

MASHA. Really? How alarming. *(Softer, to Vanya.)* What's the matter with her?

VANYA. She's referring to falling out of bed. She's fine. Masha, you look wonderful as usual. But what did you say about a Snow White costume?

MASHA. Oh did I forget to tell Sonia?

SONIA. Um ... probably. Tell me what?

MASHA. Well I got a lovely invitation from that extremely wealthy woman who bought the Dorothy Parker house up the road. She's one of our neighbors here, and she's dying to get to know people in the area, and so she's throwing a costume party. And she asked me to come.

VANYA. Well she hasn't asked us to come.

MASHA. Well you're not famous. She's inviting famous people and literary people, and interesting people. And, of course, you and Sonia are very interesting. And I told her that, so she wants both of

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you to come with me and Spike tonight.

VANYA. Spike? *(Enter Spike, carrying a large garment bag, which holds the costume, and a shepherd's crook. He finds somewhere to hang up or put down the garment bag and the crook.)*

SPIKE. *(Friendly, charming.)* Yup, that's my name. Don't wear it out.

VANYA. I'll try not to.

SPIKE. Okay, I got the costume and this weird shepherd's thing.

MASHA. Thank you, Spike.

SONIA. Is Spike the name you were given at birth?

SPIKE. No, it's my acting name. My real name was Vlad. But my agent said that that was hard to hear, and I was wearing my hair all spikey that day, and he said, why don't you call yourself Spike. And so I do.

MASHA. Spike is a very gifted actor. He was almost cast in the sequel to *Entourage*, *Entourage 2*. HBO thought he was wonderful.

SPIKE. Yeah, I should've gotten that part.

MASHA. But, darling, you came very close. They brought you in to network. You were down to the last three.

SPIKE. Yeah. And they put me up in a fancy hotel.

MASHA. Well, of course.

SONIA. Maybe you'll come close to getting another part soon.

MASHA. Well next time he'll *get* the part.

SPIKE. Yeah, it's only a matter of time.

VANYA. I'm sorry, who is Spike? Is he your driver?

MASHA. He's my beloved!

VANYA. He looks ten.

MASHA. Oh, Vanya darling, don't exaggerate. He's twenty-nine if he's a day. And I'm only forty-one. Possibly forty-two. *(Masha and Spike kiss with abandon and passion.)*

SONIA. Hello. You're not alone in the room. Hello.

MASHA. Sorry, it's all rather new for me.

SONIA. Really? You've had five husbands.

SPIKE. I like older women.

VANYA. I'm relieved to hear it.

SPIKE. Hey, a spark is either there or it's not, right, Mashie?

MASHA. Isn't he adorable?

VANYA. He's attractive. I'm not sure if he's adorable.

SONIA. Really. Every time I see you, Masha, you make me feel bad. First you don't notice me in the room somehow, and say hello to me as an afterthought. And now here you are nearing your dotage,

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Spike  
and his...

and you've hooked up with some young stud. While I am forced to live through a succession of tedious days and tedious nights, and I never have fallen in love with anyone. Nor anyone with me. I'm sorry I was adopted into this family. I wish I had been left in the orphanage, and killed myself. Excuse me. (*Sonia exits upstairs.*)

SPIKE. Wow, intense.

MASHA. Oh, she's always been jealous of me, I'm really sick of it. I can't help if I'm beautiful and intelligent and talented and successful, can I?

VANYA. No, I guess you can't.

SPIKE. But the unhappy orphanage lady thinks I'm a stud, that's nice. (*He walks over to Vanya and says provocatively.*) What about you? Do you like how I look?

VANYA. What?

MASHA. Now, Spike, I'm sure Vanya thinks you're a perfectly nice-looking young man. Let's leave it at that. (*To Vanya.*) He craves attention slightly. But all good actors do.

SPIKE. I'm hot!

VANYA. Oh yes? Shouldn't you leave that for others to say?

SPIKE. (*Laughs good-naturedly.*) No, I mean I'm warm. The air is warm, I'm hot. (*Looking out the window.*) That pond that's out there. Can you swim in it?

VANYA. Swim in it? It's not very deep. You can wade in it.

SPIKE. Yeah. Maybe I'll do that.

MASHA. Really, darling, you want to wade in a pond?

SPIKE. Yeah, it's a hot day.

MASHA. I guess it is. There are frogs in the pond you know.

SPIKE. I like frogs.

MASHA. Did you bring a swim suit?

SPIKE. No, I can just strip to my underwear. See you later, babe, I'm gonna go cool off in the pond.

MASHA. Well, if that's what you want, darling. (*To Vanya.*) He's so unpredictable. (*Very comfortable, but also liking people to watch him, Spike takes his shoes off, then takes his shirt off, then takes his pants off. With abandon, he throws his clothes onto a couch or chair. He puts his shoes back on. He is now only in his underwear. He looks very good. He starts toward the pond, but gives Masha a quick kiss on his way out.*)

SPIKE. See you later! (*He moves quickly out of the room, but oddly ruffles Vanya's hair on his way outside. It's a playful gesture but Vanya*

*finds it strange. Spike happily exits onto the grass, looking forward to wading and frogs ...*)

MASHA. The younger generation is like that. They strip to their underwear right in front of everybody.

VANYA. Did he do that because he knows I'm gay?

MASHA. I rather think he did that because he knows I'm straight.

VANYA. Well it's very peculiar. Did you tell him I'm gay?

MASHA. No, why would I? And are you gay? I'm sorry, did we have some conversation I forgot?

VANYA. No, I guess we didn't. I just ... assumed you assumed.

MASHA. Oh, I did. I just thought maybe you were still in denial. Or had become asexual from so many years of abstinence. Oh, I've been a bad sister. I'm sorry, darling. Where is Sonia? Oh that's right, I upset her. Well I'll apologize later.

VANYA. I must say, I'm a trifle surprised to see you with this young, young man. How old is he?

MASHA. (*Takes his hand.*) Oh, Vanya dear, I'm so happy I'm with Spike. He's so adventurous and free, he gives me energy. We've been together three months.

VANYA. Well he's handsome. Is he a good idea?

MASHA. Don't be judgmental. I've been very lonely for several years ever since Robert left me for Angelina Jolie.

VANYA. Angelina Jolie?

MASHA. I just say that to make myself feel better. He left me for someone who looked a little like Angelina Jolie. So I comfort myself with saying it was she. Still I haven't been able to hold on to my husbands, I don't know why. I'm talented, charming, successful — and yet they leave me. They must be insane. (*Enter Sonia.*)

SONIA. Why is that young man naked in the pond?

VANYA. He's naked? (*Looks out the window, interested.*) Sonia, he's wearing underpants. That's not naked.

SONIA. Well, underpants, naked, it's the same to me.

VANYA. You need glasses.

SONIA. I need a life. I need a friend. I need a change. But nothing ever changes.

MASHA. Now, now, please don't get down in the dumps.

SONIA. That's easy for you to say. You have a life, you have a career.

MASHA. Oh, I wish you wouldn't feel jealous of me. It just exhausts me. Even if you were an actress, God forbid, we wouldn't ever go up for the same parts. I'm a leading lady, while you are much more of a ...

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