

Bernard staggers back, dazed

Bernard What? What did I say?
Suzanne What a nerve! And you really thought you could get away with it.
Bernard What are you talking about?
Suzanne You and Robert's niece—that's what I'm talking about!
Bernard Robert's niece?
Suzanne Are you going to deny it?
Bernard Deny what?
Suzanne Sleeping with her.
Bernard Sleep . . . I didn't even know Robert had a niece.
She slaps his face again
Suzanne You've just given her dinner!
Bernard Who?
Suzanne That—that creature in there!
Bernard The cook?

She slaps his face again

Will you stop hitting me!
Suzanne She's no more a cook than I am!
Bernard Well that's not saying much.
Suzanne (*threatening him again*) Watch it!
Bernard Sorry, sorry. What do you mean she's not a cook?
Suzanne Don't pretend. I'm telling you I know all about her.
Bernard What are you blathering about? How the hell can she be Robert's niece if she's the cook, and how the hell can you know all about her if I didn't even know he had a niece, which he hasn't anyway, and how the hell can I be sleeping with his niece if I'm sleeping with you and Robert's sleeping with his niece, which she isn't in the first place?
Suzanne Yes.
Bernard What do you mean, yes?
Suzanne Yes, she is his niece, and yes, you are sleeping with her, and yes, you're trying to sleep with me at the same time, and yes, you're a prize shit! Your wife has told me everything.
Bernard (*pacing*) This is insanity! I'm going out of my mind! (*He stops*)
 Wait a minute—a love letter! You mentioned a love letter.
Suzanne Yes.
Bernard From you to me?
Suzanne No, from her to you.
Bernard (*puzzled*) From Jacqueline to me?
Suzanne From Robert's niece to you!
Bernard Ah! But she doesn't know about you and me?
Suzanne Robert's niece doesn't know?
Bernard (*frantic*) *Jacqueline* doesn't know!
Suzanne Oh, no—not so far as I know.
Bernard (*with a sigh of relief*) Thank God for that at any rate!
Suzanne However I know about her.

Bernard What?
Suzanne And in the circumstances I think you should too.
Bernard What?
Suzanne She has a lover also.
Bernard Robert's niece has a lover?
Suzanne Your wife, you fool!
Bernard Jacqueline . . .
Suzanne Yes.
Bernard How do you know?
Suzanne She just told me.
Bernard I don't believe it.
Suzanne Not so funny when you're on the receiving end, is it?
Bernard Jacqueline has a lover?
Suzanne Yes.
Bernard My little Jacqueline?
Suzanne (*cheerfully*) Yep.
Bernard Who is he? I'll kill him!

The door to bedroom I opens and Robert comes out wearing his pyjamas and dressing-gown

Why are you dressed for bed?
Robert I might ask you the same thing.
Suzanne It seems like a very good idea. I'm exhausted. Mind if I get ready for bed too?
Bernard (*going to her*) That's the best suggestion I've heard all evening.
Suzanne (*slapping his face*) Don't read too much into it.
Suzanne goes upstairs, taking off the waitress's things
Bernard marches to the kitchen door nursing his cheek
Bernard (*calling brusquely*) Suzette, come in here!
Suzette comes out of the kitchen with a dish mop in her hand
 (*Turning to Robert*) Right—what's this about the cook being your niece?
Robert Suzanne is my niece?
Bernard Not that cook—this cook.
Robert I thought this cook was meant to be my mistress.
Bernard So did I, but Suzanne says she's your niece.
Robert I haven't got a niece.
Bernard I know that!
Robert How did Suzanne know?
Bernard What?
Robert About Suzette being my niece?
Bernard You just said you haven't got a niece!
Robert I haven't, but Jacqueline thinks I have.
Bernard *Jacqueline* thinks you have?
Robert (*caught*) Oh dear. Er . . .
Bernard Why does Jacqueline think that?