

JUSTIN. I am now a butterfly and my body is weightless and I am flapping genty in the warm summer breeze. Ommmm.

BINGHAM. (*Indian accent*) Ommmm. You are my assistant playing golf at club and if you lose I kill you..

Ommmm.

JUSTIN. Mr. Bingham!

BINGHAM. Sorry, sorry! It just slipped out. Here.

(*He sits JUSTIN at the table.*)

How do you like our little spread? Rather romantic, wouldn't you say? Champagne?

JUSTIN. ...Hey, Wait a second. Is this dinner for me and Louise?

(*i.e. the dining table*)

BINGHAM. (*modestly*) Well, it's just a little something that Mrs. Peabody and I -

JUSTIN. No.

BINGHAM. What?

JUSTIN. I-I don't want to have dinner with Louise.

BINGHAM. Why not?

JUSTIN. Because I know she hates me now and she'll think I'm trying to buy her affection again.

BINGHAM. But that's ridiculous. You want to apologize, and what could say it better than a little goose liver and steak tartare -

JUSTIN. No, I really can't. This is just too important to take a chance of -. I-I'll be outside.

(*He hurries out.*)

BINGHAM. Justin! Justin!

(*He runs out after JUSTIN just as LOUISE and PAMELA reenter through the club door - and therefore overhear the following:*)

BINGHAM. (*off*) Justin get back here! This is the right thing to do!

JUSTIN. (*off*) No! I don't care what you say! I'm not having dinner with Louise!

(*LOUISE starts hiccupping with little sobs.*)

PAMELA. No, don't... Don't...

(*But LOUISE can't help herself. Her lip starts quivering like mad - and she bursts into tears and runs out of the room.*)

Louise... Oh, Louise!

(*At which point, BINGHAM marches back in.*)

BINGHAM. Lord, give me strength! Were we like this when we were youngsters?

PAMELA. Are you kidding me? I'd have been up to the figs in cream by this time.

BINGHAM. Slancha.

PAMELA. Prosit.

(*They each grab a bottle of champagne and hurry out of the room.*)

BINGHAM. Justin!

PAMELA. Louise!

(*DICKIE hurries in through the club door followed closely by MURIEL. DICKIE is wearing a tuxedo with an outlandish, patterned vest. Or he might even be wearing an outlandish tuxedo. Whichever it is, it reflects his hideous taste.*)

MURIEL. Dickie, please!

DICKIE. No, Muriel.

MURIEL. Would you listen to reason!

DICKIE. I have listened, Muriel. I don't want to talk about it.

MURIEL. But Hicks and Tramplemain are even now, so you should call it quits!

DICKIE. I have a funny feeling that Mr. Hicks is not quite over his histrionical behavior.

MURIEL. But if he is, you lose all that money.

DICKIE. And if he isn't, I acquire an antique shop.

MURIEL. That is so unfair! You know how I feel about that shop. I built it from nothing to fill an emptiness inside me.

DICKIE. Well I'm sorry, Muriel, but a wager's a wager.

MURIEL. We once meant something to each other, Dickie. When we were youngsters at this very club. We met at that Dinner-Dance. You wore a boutonniere.

DICKIE. You wore a tuxedo.

MURIEL. You had a moustache.

DICKIE. You had sideburns.

MURIEL. Do you remember our first date together?

DICKIE. Of course I remember.

MURIEL. We saw that documentary about the Luftwaffe.

DICKIE. I loved that film.

MURIEL. You said you found all that efficiency very inspiring.

DICKIE. I did, I *did*. Some of those babies could drop twenty tons in a single night.

MURIEL. Boom.

DICKIE. Right on target.

MURIEL. Boom.

DICKIE. And look at you. You've barely changed at all.

MURIEL. Oh, stop it.

DICKIE. You may have put on a bit of poundage, but it's all in the right places, eh? Ha? Hahahahaha!

MURIEL. Oh you devil. You always had a way of bringing out my feminine side.

DICKIE. Did I, Muriel?

MURIEL. Something my husband has completely lost sight of. He married me for my warmth, but he doesn't see it any more.

DICKIE. The brute.

MURIEL. Don't call him that. It's not his fault.

DICKIE. He is a brute if he can't see how warm and gentle you can be when you're -

MURIEL. *I SAID PUT A SOCK IN IT!* Now will you call off the *bet or not?*!

DICKIE. No!

(They stare at each other angrily, then suddenly kiss each other ferociously. When they break it off, DICKIE has a split-second of indecision: call it off or not. He decides not, and turns and strides from the room.)

DICKIE. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no...

MURIEL. *Dickie, get back here!*

(She runs out after him. Immediately LOUISE marches in through one kitchen door as JUSTIN runs in through the other. In surprise they see each other. Then they speak simultaneously:)

LOUISE. JUSTIN.

I realize you don't want I'm sorry if I'm just to see me after what happened making things worse by opened and all - I seeing you again and - I

JUSTIN. What did you say?

LOUISE. I said I can understand if you never want to see me again.

JUSTIN. See you again? Louise, I want to see you all the time!

LOUISE. You do? After I lost Granny's ring?

JUSTIN. Of course I do! That was just an accident. And I was so unfair about the car and all.

LOUISE. Oh, that doesn't matter. I was just bein' psychosomatic or somethin'.

JUSTIN. Really?

(She nods.)

Do you want to go talk about it?

LOUISE. I'd love to, if it's all right with you.

BINGHAM. *(off) Justin?!*