

GREG: *(Taking leash out of her hand.)* You look particularly glamorous today, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: Thank you, Greg.

GREG: You know why, don't you?

SYLVIA: Tell me, while I check out *le kibble du jour*.

GREG: You look particularly glamorous because we've come to a major moment in our relationship.

SYLVIA: A major moment?

GREG: A turning point. And at turning points in our lives, good or bad, we instinctively shine. Our eyes sparkle, our hair glistens, our bodies seem to know.

SYLVIA: But why is this a turning point?

GREG: We're going to lay our cards on the table. Both of us.

SYLVIA: I thought we always did that anyway.

GREG: We did. We do. But this will be even more so. Up until now, you've been saying what I hoped you'd say. This time, I want you to feel you're totally on your own.

SYLVIA: Sounds exciting.

GREG: Would you like to sit down, Sylvia.

Sylvia: *(Slyly.)* Where shall I sit?

GREG: Anywhere you want.

SYLVIA: Can I sit on the couch?

GREG: You may, Sylvia. Come on. I'll even give you a hand. *(He helps her onto the couch.)*

SYLVIA: *(Making a big deal of it.)* Dis is da life! I like these major moments, Greg.

GREG: Sylva, I have to send you away.

SYLVIA: Away?

GREG: To somewhere else.

SYLVIA: Oh you mean that kennel you put me in when you went off on that weekend? I can live that. As long as it's just a few days.

GREG: It's not a kennel, Sylvia. I've found a family for you.

SYLVIA: Fine. Sounds better than a kennel.

GREG: And it won't be for just a few days.

SYLVIA: How long will it be? Two weeks? Three?

GREG: Forever, Sylva.

SYLVIA: Forever?

GREG: It boils down to you or Kate, Sylvia. And I'm choosing Kate.

SYLVIA: You're choosing *Kate*?

GREG: I have to, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: You can't have us both?

GREG: I guess I can't.

SYLVIA: (*Leaving the couch*) Is this because she hates me?

GREG: She doesn't *hate* you, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: She sure doesn't like me.

GREG: She doesn't like *me*, Sylvia. When I'm with you.

SYLVIA: Lord knows I've tried to please her.

GREG: You have, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: I always greet her when she comes home.

GREG: I know that.

SYLVIA: She seems to like it when I lick the plates before they go in the dishwasher. She even encourages the habit.

GREG: That's only because she doesn't like waste, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: So you're choosing her over me.

GREG: She's my wife, Sylva. She's the mother of my children. We've lived together a long, long time.

SYLVIA: Do you love her?

GREG: I do. Very much.

SYLVIA: I thought you loved me.

GREG: I do, sweetheart. But in a different way. And it's not a good way, as far as Kate is concerned.

SYLVIA: I thought there was talk of you and me moving out.

GREG: There was.

SYLVIA: I thought there was serious talk of you and me getting a studio apartment over on 69th Street, right near the park.

GREG: There was talk of that, yes, Sylvia. In the heat of the moment.

SYLVIA: I thought we were going to take a camping trip on Chesapeake Bay. I thought you were going to teach me to retrieve ducks.

GREG: I was going to do all that, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: And you've suddenly chickened out?

GREG: That what I've done. Chickened out. *(Pause.)*

SYLVIA: I feel awful.

GREG: So do I.

SYLVIA: Know what I wish I could do? Mix myself a double Absolut vodka on the rocks with a twist.

GREG: I did that earlier, Sylvia. For myself.

SYLVIA: yeah, well, being a do, I don't happen to have the solace of alcohol, Greg.

GREG: *(Reaching into his jacket pocket.)* I've got a Bark Bar for you.

SYLVIA: A what?

GREG: A Bark Bar. Remember? Bought you one on our last walk over to the East Side. You loved it. *(He holds it out.)*

SYLVIA: *(Take it, looking it over.)* It's in the shape of a cat.

GREG: I thought you'd be amused by that.

SYLVIA: Amused? Amused by those fuckers? *(Takes a bite.)* Not bad. *(Chews.)* But not good enough. *(Sits in the char.)* Tell me about this family you're shipping me off to.

GREG: *(Kneeling beside her.)* They're great, Sylvia. I advertised in the Westchester newspapers. I interviewed a number of applicants.

SYLVIA: Thanks for letting me in on it.

GREG: You'll be living in the suburbs, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: I hate the suburbs.

GREG: What? All that green grass? This family has half an acre, all fenced in.

SYLVIA: That Akita in the park used to live in the suburbs. He said you're totally alone out there. There's no sense of being part of a pack. And if you try to meet someone by taking a walk there's a good chance you'll get run over.

GREG: you won't want to talk walks, Sylvia. You'll want to stay close to home.

SYLVIA: Why?

GREG: Because you'll like this family so much.

SYLVIA: Why?

GREG: Well, for one thing, they have children.

SYLVIA: How many?

GREG: Three.

SYLVIA: Any babies?

GREG: One.

SYLVIA: I hate babies.

GREG: You don't, Sylvia. You're always licking their faces.

SYLVIA: Their mouths taste good, but they're always stepping on your tail.

GREG: Well there are also two teenagers, Sylvia. They're eager to have you. They want to teach you to play Frisbee. They want to take you to Little League games. They'll be much better for you than I could possibly be.

SYLVIA: I hate teenagers.

GREG: You don't.

SYLVIA: (*Getting up.*) I do. I hate them. They're totally unreliable. They forget to feed you. They play music which hurts your ears. One minute they're showering you with love, then they leave you locked in some car for hours on end- (*Throwing her self on him.*) Oh Greg, don't do this to me! Please! Don't send me away! Keep me here with you! Please!

GREG: I can't.

SYLVIA: I'll change, Greg. I'll change my ways. I'll stop chewing shoes. I'll bring Kate the New York *Times* every morning- well I won't do that, that's too corny- but I'll do something else! Just tell me what to do, and I'll do it!

GREG: I promised Kate I'd give you away, Sylvia. I made that promise. To my wife.

SYLVIA: When?

GREG: Today.

SYLVIA: *Today?*

GREG: I'm driving you out right now.

SYLVIA: Can't I even say goodbye to Bowser?

GREG: You just saw hm n the park.

SYLVIA Jesus, you're something, Greg. You really are. You bring me home, you get me all dependent on you, you spay me...

GREG: Sylvia...

SYLVIA: You had me *spayed*, Greg! You destroyed my womanhood. And then, when I get over that, when I still decide that the sun rises and sets only in your direction, then suddenly you're packing me off to some boring nuclear family in Westchester county. Christ, Greg! Don't you feel guilty about this?

GREG: I do, Sylva. I feel terrible.

SYLVIA: I mean, sht. You have a moral obligation here! What would the Humane Society say about this? How would they react at the A.S.P.C.A.?

GREG: They'd say I'm doing the right thing!

SYLVIA: Bullshit! That's just bullshit, Greg!

GREG: They'd say that a week out there with your new family, and you'll forget all about me.

SYLVIA: Never!

GREG: Sure you will. If I came out to visit you, you might run up for a pat and a sniff, but that would be that.

SYLVA: You're so wrong, Greg! You're so goddamn wrong! Read the *Odyssey* some time. That guy was gone for twenty years, and when he finally got home, the first person to recognize him- before his nurse, before his son, before his own *wife*, goddamnit- was his dog! That dog was lying outside the palace for all those years, waiting for him, Greg. Lying on the dung heap just waiting for his master. And when his master finally showed, what did the dog do? He raised his head, wagged his tail, and died.

GREG: (*Hugging her.*) Oh don't, Sylvia!

SYLVIA: I'll never forget you, Greg! Ever!

GREG: Stop, Sylvia, Please! I can't stand this.

SYLVIA. Well. (*She finishes her biscuit.*) Let's get it over with. (*She gets up, takes his arm a la Blanche Dubois.*) I'll have to depend on the kindness of strangers... Take me to the suburbs. I hope I can at least sit next to you on the front seat. Afterall, her majesty won't be there to object.