

Mya & Jessica #1

Mya: Jessica, stop cleaning my apartment.

Jessica: Sorry! I'm a fixer!

Mya: My problem is not your problem.

Jessica: So you admit that there is a problem.

Mya: Namely the state of my apartment. Please stop touching my dirty underwear.

Jessica: I just don't understand why it's here in the living room.

Mya: It's a studio apartment. There is no living room. The whole thing is a living room!

Jessica: When was the last time you left here?

Mya: I had a class today. And then I came home and I wrote a little and then I took a nap and then I lost track of the time and now you're here. I'm not a hermit or depressed. I'm just bad at keeping track of the time. And my phone. *(She looks through things on the bookshelf and discovers the charging cord to her phone)* Ah-hah! *(She goes to plug her phone in)* Happy now?

(Jessica finds more dirty laundry and walks it over to the closet once again. This time, upon opening the closet, we find Vincent standing where the basket once was. Jessica tosses the clothes at him as if he were the basket and then slams the door on his face.)

Jessica: Mya...I just...I worry about you sometimes. You get stuck sometimes, and I just...looking around here. It kind of looks like you're stuck now.

Mya: What does that mean? "Stuck"?

Jessica: You know...stuck.

Mya: No. I don't know what you mean.

Jessica: You're always joking that I have OCD, but maybe you do.

Mya: (*Gesturing to her apartment*) I don't think so.

(*Jessica picks up another piece of garbage, throws it away, and then walks to the kitchen to wash her hands.*)

Jessica: It isn't just about being a neat freak or a "fixer". It's *Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*. You feel the need to do things *obsessively*. And you definitely get obsessed with things. You get obsessed with things and then you get stuck.

(*Mya is seated on the couch. Jessica goes to join her and takes Mya's hand.*)

Jessica: Are you okay?

Mya: I...I guess I am a little sad about something. Not sad so much...just...I'm dreading something.

Jessica: Yeah? What is it? What are you dreading?

(*Mya thinks long and hard about how she wants to say this. She finally musters up the courage and looks Jessica in the eyes.*)

Mya: It's just I...the thing is, Jessica...I really fucking hate *The Music Man*. And I really, really don't want to go see it tonight.

(*Jessica begins to laugh*)

Mya: I really, really hate *The Music Man*. It's so overdone. Why every theatre in this town thinks it needs its own shitty reincarnation of Harold Hill, I don't know. I have been dreading...*dreading!*...going to see this stupid fucking show tonight so I am asking you, nay, *begging you!* I am begging you: don't make me go.

Jessica: (*Laughing*) I am not making you go see this show!

Mya: Please don't ask me to, then!

Jessica: I am not asking you to. You are released! You are released from any obligations to see *The Music Man* tonight or ever! Good God, woman. You're a grown adult. If you don't want to see something, then just say so.

Mya & Vincent #1

Vincent: You can't just make me like all the things you don't.

Mya: It would be convenient, wouldn't it?

Vincent: Yes. I'll just eat your pizza crusts, your overripe bananas, and your water chestnuts. That's not a lover. That's a garbage disposal.

Mya: It's not the only reason I keep you around. It's just...convenient. And sweet. Like we complement each other. It's just a silly thought.

Vincent: Perhaps I do actually like water chestnuts. You could find out very easily.

Mya: An affinity towards certain foods is not something I would find on your website.

Vincent: You admit I have a website.

Mya: You listed one in your bio.

Vincent: But you've never visited it.

Mya: *(She holds up her chopsticks again with another water chestnut)* Another one!

(Vincent sighs and then goes in again, eating the water chestnut off her chopsticks. This time, however, he takes a little too long, pulling the chopsticks out of his mouth. He makes direct eye contact with Mya as he pulls them out of his mouth. It's somewhat seductive.) Mya: What was that all about?

Vincent: It's what you wanted, isn't it?

Mya: To seductively pull chopsticks out of your mouth? *(A beat)* Actually, yes, that is what I wanted. Do it again.

Vincent: No. That's all you get. Keep them wanting more. *(He smiles at her)* Tell me the story again. The story of my birth.

Mya: The story of the night I met you.

Vincent: “Met” is generous.

(*Mya considers him*)

Mya: Six months ago-

Vincent: Who are you fooling? It’s been a few weeks.

Mya: I was just laying the groundwork for the story.

Vincent: You were fabricating details in order to make it seem as though you’ve “loved” me longer than you have. Frankly, I don’t know why you’d want to do that. It’s bad enough that you’ve locked yourself away for three weeks let alone six months.

Mya: I just don’t want people to think that this is some childish fancy.

Vincent: No one else is here, Mya. You’re only lying to yourself.

(*A beat. Mya thinks about how she wants to go on.*)

Mya: About three weeks ago Vincent:

Atta girl.

Mya:...I went to Chicago and saw a production of *Macbeth*. I hate that play. I don’t know why I went to see it.

Vincent: Because you “know people”.

Mya: God, theatre is terrible that way. You get to know everyone. You do one show with someone and suddenly, they think you’re linked for life. And now you are bound by some unspoken old Germanic law that says you must attend every production of whatever so-and-so does from now on because we shared that one moment of connection three years ago while doing some batshit rendition of *The IceMan Cometh*.

Vincent: You were never in *The IceMan Cometh*.

Mya: I'm using it as an example, okay?

Vincent: So...you went to see this terrible production of *Macbeth*.

Mya: It wasn't terrible.

Vincent: It wasn't terrible or I wasn't terrible?

Mya: I think that I could forgive the show's faults because it did have excellent casting.

Vincent: One part was excellent.

Mya: You made it worth it.

Vincent: I'm flattered.

Mya: It was the dialect that caught my attention at first. It's a play about Scotland being produced in midwest America and every other actor has this thick, Yooper noise coming out of their mouths-

Vincent: Oh, it wasn't that bad-

Mya: And then out of nowhere comes you...with this beautiful queen's English.

Vincent: Oh god.

Mya: I read somewhere that we are genetically wired to be attracted to people with foreign dialects or accents because it tells our brain that they are not from our tribe and, thus, we can breed with them and not risk inbreeding.

Vincent: That's rubbish.

Mya: Possibly.

Vincent: Most definitely.

Mya: The point is, you spoke...and, like any dumb, twenty-something woman, I fell. At first because of the dialect and then...because of you.

Mya & Jessica #2

Mya: I have so many thoughts rolling around in my head. Sometimes I feel like if I don't put them down on paper, I'll go mad. "In the deepest hour of the night, confess to yourself that you would die if you were forbidden to write. And look deep into your heart where it spreads its roots, the answer, and ask yourself, must I write?" Jessica: Shakespeare?

Mya: Rilke.

Jessica: I don't know who that is.

Mya: Just another poet, lost to antiquity. This show. *Swan Songs*. It's important to me, and I'm going to see it through. I'm proud of it. I'm going to see it through to the end.

Jessica: And then what? You're just chasing a high, Mya. I feel that same high when I get done with a show. You're always asking, "What's next? What's next?" Because you really think that the next show, the next role, the next *thing* will be what catapults you into the big time. (*Shaking her head*) But it's not. It's just a high that you keep chasing until you're also just another poet lost to antiquity.

Mya: (*Considering Jessica*) You're smarter than you give yourself credit for.

Jessica: Well, thank you.

Mya: You're better than you give yourself credit for. You could do anything.

Jessica: What?

Mya: You cut yourself off at the knees. You're good. You're talented. You could make it-

Jessica: In the theatre? Mya, that's very nice of you, but there's no future for me in the theatre. Not one where I can pay bills and have a roof over my head. I've accepted that. That's okay. I'll go out for shows because they're fun, not because they're my life.

Mya: But is that what you want? What is it that you *want*, Jessica?

Jessica: I want a lot of things. I want...(She giggles) I want to move in with Stephen.

(Mya just stares at Jessica)

Jessica: Is that weird? It's kind of weird. It's fast, I know. We've only been dating a month or so. You're right. It's too fast, but
Mya: Right. Stephen.

Jessica: What do you want?

Mya: You don't want anything else? Anything? The whole world is at your feet and *that's* as big as you can dream?

Jessica: And I suppose you want every theatre in this town to come banging on your door, wanting to produce your shows, and then Vincent whatever-his-name-is will whisk you away to fairytale land and then...and then...gold will rain down from the sky or something! Is that what you want? I had big dreams, but now I have real dreams and they aren't less than yours. They're certainly not killing me like yours are killing you. You dream huge dreams! Some of us don't have big dreams like that! Some of us just want

Mya: Mediocrity!

Mya & Vincent #2

Vincent: Why did you choose me?

Mya: Because I looked at you, and I felt something. And when you find something genuine, you follow it. No matter how idiotic it seems.

Vincent: You asked me once to describe you in three words, and the three words that *you* chose were lovely, magical, and everlasting. And only you know what that means. That's how you want to be seen: brilliant, ethereal, and more than just a moment. And, Mya, you are. You are all three of those things. But Jessica picked the best one: self righteous. Wait. Don't respond to that because that's not even an insult to you. You relish in being self righteous. You love it. Anything that sets you apart from the crowd, anything that makes you different...you would gladly call yourself a bitch or a cow or a cancer if it meant you stood apart from the insufferable crowd. We're all just a herd of sheep, walking to our death in stagnant complacency. But you? You're special. You're lovely. You're magical. You're everlasting. You are the only person who can see through the smoke and see what we all should be doing, right? You're the only one who truly lives. (*Gestures to Mya*) Is this living? Is this better?

Mya: I'm feeling.

Vincent: Fuck your feelings.

(*Mya just stares at him, stunned*)

Vincent: Fuck your feelings. They're a dime a dozen. Not every feeling that fills you is good. Not every feeling inside you needs to be dissected and explored and *felt*. You feel everything, Mya! You can't stop. You're addicted to feeling. And the rush of feeling in your bubble is so much better than the rush of everyday life, but guess what? That's real. Will's catamaran is real. Jessica is real. Ken Ludwig is real! I'm not real. And pretty soon, neither will you be.

Mya: So I settle?

Vincent: So you find a balance between feeling everything like you do right now and feeling nothing like they do...(*He gestures to the door*) You're right. People don't want to feel. They don't want to *keen*...mostly because they don't know how. Because no one ever showed them. Show them. You are lovely, magical, everlasting. But you do all of that without me. You do all of that without anyone. Would you like to know the truth? The truth is I'm a fifty-something

divorced man who is dealing with the exact same issues as you are. Art. Life. Trying to make a name for myself. Look at my resume. Look at the shit films I've done. The shit plays. Not all of them but some of them. I'm not this hero that you think I am. I haven't got it all figured out. I'm just human. And I'm going to disappoint you like everyone else did.