

**Sonia & Vanya, Side 2.**

*They are sitting by the window, staring out into the distance.*

**Sonia:** Has the blue heron been at the pond yet this morning?

**Vanya:** Not yet. Or it was here before I was.

**Sonia:** It'll probably come later. It's such a beautiful bird.

**Vanya:** Yes, it is. *(sips the coffee)* I'm afraid the other cup tasted better.

**Sonia:** Well it's the same coffee.

**Vanya:** Well maybe I put in more milk than you did. Maybe that's why it tastes better.

**Sonia:** Don't I usually put in the right amount of milk?

**Vanya:** Well, yes. I don't usually think about it. It's just that I was drinking one coffee, and liking it, and then suddenly there's a different cup of coffee, and I'm liking it slightly less. It's no big deal. I'm just making pleasant conversation.

**Sonia:** That's not making pleasant conversation. It's first thing in the morning, and you're implying I don't do anything right.

**Vanya:** I didn't say that.

**Sonia:** Yes, you did.

**Vanya:** I didn't.

**Sonia:** Well you implied it.

**Vanya:** Forget it! The coffee's delicious, I love it!

**Sonia:** Oh, for God's sake. Here, take the original cup back.

**Vanya:** No, no, It's not that different. I'm sorry I said anything.

*Sonia forces him to take his original coffee cup back, the one he preferred. She takes the second cup back herself.*

**Sonia:** I mean I have two pleasant moments every day in my fucking life, and one of them is bringing you coffee.

**Vanya:** Sonia, I'm sorry I said anything. Really, the two cups are almost identical. I should have said nothing.

**Sonia:** All right.

**Vanya:** I'm sorry. Really.

**Sonia:** That's all right.

*She suddenly takes the cup she's holding and smashes it on the floor, in the direction of the kitchen. Silence.*

**Vanya:** Is this how you're going to be today?

**Sonia:** I don't know what you mean.

**Vanya:** YOU JUST THREW THE FUCKING COFFEE AGAINST THE WALL!

**Sonia:** I DIDN'T!

**Vanya:** You didn't??? What kind of idiot response is that?

**Sonia:** I don't know. It's an angry "I hate my life and I hate you" response.

**Masha & Vanya, Side 1.**

*Spike 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 apologise 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 3 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 Heidi Klum.

**Vanya:** Heidi Klum?

**Masha:** I just say that to make myself feel better. He left me for someone who looked like Heidi Klum. 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.

**Sonia & Vanya, Side 1.**

*The Morning Room. Sunny, a sitting place with a nice window and comfortable wicker chairs.*

*Vanya walks in carrying coffee. He sits, staring out the window. Sips the coffee, which tastes good. He feels somewhat contented. He stares a bit more. Sonia enters with coffee for him. She is unsure of herself, melancholy, though keeps hoping for impossible things.*

**Sonia:** I brought you coffee, dearest Vanya.

**Vanya:** I have some.

**Sonia:** Oh. But I bring you coffee every morning.

**Vanya:** Well, yes, but you weren't available.

**Sonia:** Well, I was briefly in the bathroom, you couldn't wait?

**Vanya:** I don't know. The coffee was made, you weren't there, I'm capable of pouring coffee into a cup.

**Sonia:** But I like bringing you coffee in the morning.

**Vanya:** Fine. Here, take this cup and give me that one.

**Sonia:** All right.

*She hands him the coffee she's brought; he hands her his partly finished cup.*

**Sonia:** Now I feel better.

**Vanya:** I'm glad.

**Masha & Sonia (Vanya can be read in) – Slide 1.**

**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....

**Vanya:** Masha, I don't think you should finish that sentence.

**Sonia:** Thank you, Vanya.

**Vanya:** You're welcome, Sonia.

**Masha:** Well, it's not as if my career has been without disappointments, just like your life Sonia. I've suffered too. I'm a movie star, but am I known as a classical actress on the stage?

**Sonia:** No, you're not.

**Masha:** Exactly! That's a path I didn't get to take. Remember when that famous acting teacher was going to cast me as Masha in *Three Sisters*. He said I was born to play that role. Imagine how wonderful would've been. (*to Vanya and Sonia, suddenly acting the lines:*) "Oh my sisters, let us go to Moscow! To Moscow, let us go."

I would have said that with an ache in my voice and my soul, and it would have been heartbreaking. I feel the public doesn't know how heartbreaking I can be. (*genuinely*) Oh missed opportunities! Regret, regret, regret!

**Sonia:** Regret, regret!

**Masha:** Please don't change the focus to yourself, Sonia. I'm talking now. You can talk later.

**Sonia:** When?

**Masha:** 4:30. (back to her story) Oh that famous acting teacher said I was born to play the classics. And that once I did *three sisters*, he said I would have one classical triumph after another. I'd be the American Judi Dench. But I had to go do that movie about the nymphomaniac serial killer. It was a terrible script, but I was so good in it that it became this enormous hit and, of course, we made five of them eventually. Did you see all of them?

**Vanya:** Oh yes, we certainly did. We like you very much. They were extremely violent, though. Sonia had to look away from the screen a lot.

**Sonia:** Yes, I did.

**Masha:** Oh darling sensitive, tedious Sonia. You can't face life, can you?

*She begins to respond, but Masha stops her.*

No, don't answer. You can talk at 4:30.

**Sonia:** Why 4:30?

**Masha:** That's my naptime....

### **Spike, Masha, Vanya & Sonia**

**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 you to come with me and Spike tonight.

**Vanya:** Spike?

*Enter Spike, carrying a large garment bag.*

**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 was hard to hear, and I was wearing my hair all spiky 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 the network. You were down to the last three.

**Spike:** Yeah, and they put me 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.

**Sonia, Spike, Vanya & Masha**

**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, 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 it 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 to others to say?

**Spike:** *(laughs good naturedly)* No, I mean I'm warm. The air is warm, I'm *hot!* *(looks out the window)* the pond that's out there. Can you swim in it?



**Cassandra, Vanya & Sonia**

**Cassandra:** Beware the ides of March!

**Vanya:** What?

**Cassandra:** Beware the ides of March!

**Sonia:** March? Isn't it late August?

**Cassandra:** Beware the middle of the month! Beware of Greeks bearing gifts!

*Suddenly she feels inspiration from above, or from somewhere – her psychic powers suddenly turn on, maybe her head moves, or her eyes flutter, she is visited by visions/thoughts, and what she says she dramatically intones, sounding a bit like a speech in Greek tragedy. We should hear her words, she should make sense of them, but they should also be said fast, her mind and psyche are receiving thoughts quickly.*

O Wretches! into the land of darkness we sail, in a pea green boat; all around us is full of fire, and the Delaware River overflows its bank, and dismal moans rise from Bucks County, where amity and enmity intermingle. Portents of dismay, and calamity, yawn beneath the yonder cliff. O fools looking behind but not looking ahead, Dost thou not sense thy attendant doom?

**Vanya:** Cassandra, I have asked you repeatedly to please just say "good morning." All right?

**Cassandra:** I see visions. Shadows of what lies ahead. It is my curse to see these shadows and my duty to warn you.

**Vanya:** Cassandra, I think you take your name too seriously.

**Cassandra:** My name? what do you mean?

**Vanya:** You know. Greek mythology. Apollo gave Cassandra second sight, but then cursed her so no one ever believed her.

**Cassandra:** Oh I know that. *(sudden psychic thought pops into her head)* Oh my God! I see something imminent. It's going to happen any moment. One of you is going to take two cups of coffee, and smash them onto the floor. *(she looks between them)* It will be you, Vanya. Don't do it!

**Sonia:** It already happened.

**Cassandra:** then I was right!

**Sonia:** No, you said it was GOING to happen, and it has already happened.

**Cassandra:** But I am correct you will want me to clean it up. Right? Where are the broken cups?

**Sonia:** *(pointing)* Right over there.

**Cassandra:** *(looks)* Oh my God! I was right. You did this, you Vanya, broke the cups.

**Sonia:** That's right, he did.

**Vanya:** Just clean it up, would you please?

**Sonia:** Clean it up, clean it up!!!

**Cassandra:** Fie on you both! I see doom and destruction swirling around you.

**Nina, Spike and Vanya** (*The morning Room*)

**Nina:** Uncle Vanya? (*looks around. Looks in the direction of the off-stage stairs.*) Uncle Vanya? I'm here.

*Enter Spike from his run. He comes in, and puts his hands on his upper legs and leans over, a kind of post-run stretch. Stands up, sees Nina.*

**Spike:** Oh, it's Nina. How's it hangin'?

**Nina:** Oh hello. I'm looking for Vanya. I was going to read the play he's written.

**Spike:** Oh, he's written a play? Is there a part for a handsome young man?

**Nina:** I haven't read it yet. My, you are in very good condition. I congratulate you.

**Spike:** Oh, thanks. Yeah, I figure if you got it, flaunt it.

**Nina:** Oh. I'm still working on projection and interpretation. I guess flaunting will come later.

**Spike:** Yeah, 'cause you never know when your big break will happen. Look at Jersey Shore.

**Nina:** Oh, I don't want to. I like Ingmar Bergman and Merchant Ivory films. I just saw *Smile of Summer Night*, it's beautiful. Have you ever seen it?

**Spike:** I don't think so. Who's in it?

**Nina:** Gunnar Bjornstrand, Eva Dahlbeck, and Ulla Jacobsson.

**Spike:** Ah. I'll have to miss it sometime.

*Enter Vanya*

**Vanya:** Nina, I thought I heard you down here.

**Spike:** Where's my T-shirt?

**Vanya:** Masha took it upstairs. She's in the third-floor bedroom.

**Spike:** Oh, I'll go see her.

**Vanya:** She said she was getting a very strong headache.....

**Spike:** Okay, I won't expect her to put out. Catch you later.

*Spike goes upstairs*

**Nina:** He's so attractive. (*they both look after him*) Except for his personality, of course.