

# Dinner at Home

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## Stories of a Reckless Girl

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She's been waiting for him for two hours. She's sitting with her knees clutched to her chest and her head leaning back, keeping her eyes closed. She's set beside, on a round walnut table, a dinner set and a vase with orchids. Half burned candles are strewn *haphazardly through the room*.

She's wearing a voile layer dress and several metal bracelets hang from her wrists. She's wearing her long, curly hair in a loose bun.

She hears the key turning in the lock. She shifts her position, stretching on the couch, crossing her legs and holding her right arm over her forehead.

"Hi!"

He approaches the couch and gives her a swift kiss on the lips.

"What are we having for dinner, tonight?"

"Is that all?"

"'Is that all' is some kind of an experiment of yours? Does it at least have meat?"

"Please stop fooling around. You could apologize for being late, or at least you could have given me a call first."

"My apologies, ma'am, telephones are kept off at all times, during rehearsals."

"So are the ones in the rehearsal hall."

"You called the theatre?"

"Maybe."

"Stop playing games, did you or did you not call?"

She gets off the couch and kisses him on the forehead.

“Come one, give me your coat and sit down. We’re having lasagna for dinner. Would you open the wine bottle, please?”

...

“It was very good.”

“Thank you!”

She takes a sip of wine, making her bracelets clatter. She lights up a cigarette.

“Guess whom I ran into today.”

“Well, weren’t you at the market?”

“Yes, but guess whom I ran into!”

“You ran into a sexy butcher who gave you a discount on a beef steak.”

“Hmmm... close enough. I mean the “sexy” part. I came across David.”

“Da-vid...uhm...David who?”

“David, my class mate from college.”

“That long-haired guy who was crazy about you and who was looking daggers at me?”

“The very same. Only he no longer has long hair, and is remarkably good looking.”

“You don’t say! Good for him!”

“Is that all you have to say?”

“Well, what else?”

“He invited me for coffee.”

“And? Was it good?”

“No, ‘cause we had wine.”

“Really, he’s not wasting any time, that good-for-nothing sneak!”

“Don’t be ridiculous!”

“But I’m being perfectly rational, my dear.”

“You’re being jealous.”

He bursts into laughter.

“Do you mean that I’m not as attractive as I used to be? That I wouldn’t be able to seduce another man? To make you jealous?”

“In what order should I answer?”

“You’re being rude.”

“And you’re being crazy! I’ve told you before that I’m not the jealous type. It’s a sick feeling that doesn’t get you anywhere.”

“You don’t know anything.”

“I suggest you light me a cigarette too, and just drop the whole thing.”

She puts out her cigarette, in the ashtray, and takes another one out of the pack. She puts it between her lips and lights it. She takes a puff and hands it over to him. She hums Aznavour’s “Le temps”. She slowly starts moving to the rhythm. She “studies” him. She approaches him, sits down behind him, embracing him and whispers in his ear.

“And... what if I told you that after we drank the wine, he took me to a hotel room, undressed me and...”

He opens his mouth to say something, but thinks it over and pauses for a few seconds.

“I’d ask you if you remembered to buy some celery.”

She releases him. He grabs her hands.”

“I wouldn’t believe you. I don’t believe you. Not as long as I know you still love me.”

“What about you, do you still love me?”

“Are you set on asking cliché questions?”

“Answer me!”

“What do you think?”

“Obviously I don’t know what to think. If you loved me, I assume you wouldn’t cheat on me with all the little sluts that cross your path.”

“See, jumping to rash conclusions, as usual. Who told you that men and women love in the same way?”

She bites his shoulder hard and gets up. She lights a cigarette. She offers the ashtray for him to put his out.”

“I should get an anti-rabies shot, nonetheless.”

“You’re clueless.”

“Of course! Always! Still, what do you mean?”

The phone rings. She blinks away the tears in her eyes and clears her throat.

“Hello?”

Pause.

“Hello? They hung up.”

She puts down the receiver.

“Maybe it was that guy, what did you say his name was?”

“David.”

“David. Maybe it was him and you intimidated him with your rough sexy voice.”

“Or maybe it was one of your whores.”

“Come on over here.”

“Don’t you put your hands on me!”

“God forbid! You’ve already given me a dose of your venom!”

She laughs for a few seconds, and suddenly becomes serious again.

“In fact, you don’t know and you never will.”

“What?”

“If I still love you.”

Translated by: **Elena – Cătălina Bodolan** and **Diana Maftei**

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