

blue wings.

SIDNEY. Don't be so sure I'll not blast those wings!

REVEREND. Hand me that gun, you ridiculous maniac. How dare you endanger these people?! (*The Reverend walks toward Sidney.*)

SIDNEY. Halt! Halt!

FLORAL. Halt!

REVEREND. Please, do you doubt for one instant I would not relish a bullet to the brain? Better yet, the heart. Blast it to shreds, all to shreds.

SIDNEY. You are mad. Be reasonable. I will shoot.

FLORAL. No!

KANDALL. Sidney, if you shoot that Reverend, I'll never speak to you again!

SIDNEY. Kandall, please don't say that! (*Sidney accidentally shoots his own foot. He falls to the ground. everyone is aghast.*)

FLORAL. My God, he's been shot.

KANDALL. Yes, he has.

SIDNEY. I'm such a failure, a failure, an abject failure.

PANDORA. You saved us, Reverend. You're such a very good man.

SIDNEY. I don't know what to do. I'm bleeding. Help me. Reverend, help.

REVEREND. Don't ask me for help. I'm through giving help. Here, take this collar. Have it. It's more fit for a beast than a man. I'm sick from answering prayers and doing good deeds. It has turned me into a raving lunatic and left me with desperate, unquenchable desires. I want to spit on all altars for the remainder of my days. God, I am wretched. (*He exits to the woods.*)

SIDNEY. Someone, help me.

PANDORA. You got what you deserved.

SIDNEY. I cannot bear the sight of blood.

KANDALL. Mercy, mercy. Take him back to the manor, our house physician must tend his wounds. (*Jonsey and Edvard go to lift Sidney. Sidney winces in pain.*)

SIDNEY. Oh Father. Father.

EDVARD. There, there. (*Reciting from Dylan Thomas' "Lament".*)

"When I was a windy boy and a bit
And the black spit of the chapel fold

(Sighed the old ramrod, ...")

SIDNEY.

"... dying of women) ..."

SIDNEY and EDVARD.

"... I tiptoed shy in the gooseberry wood ... The rude owl cried like a telltale tit ..."*

(*Pandora, Jonsey, Sidney, Edvard exit to the manor.*)

KANDALL. Amazing. It all has gone off so much worse than expected.

FLORAL. A surprising turn of events.

KANDALL. Yes. And I wonder, Floral, how Sidney came across my grandfather's silver pistol?

FLORAL. I confess ...

KANDALL. What?

FLORAL. I confess I did not want things to go off smoothly; so I orchestrated a few bumps.

KANDALL. You wicked thing! To do this to your sister.

FLORAL. She'll be grateful. After all, marriage isn't for everyone. Once you are married you're stuck. Nothing ever changes. Every year there's a turkey at Thanksgiving and a goose at Christmas. Jonsey gives me one more letter opener for my collection and no one ever sends me any mail.

KANDALL. Tradition cements our sanity.

FLORAL. But if I wanted things to be different, would it all crumble?

KANDALL. Are you saying you want a goose for Thanksgiving?

FLORAL. I'm saying this is not Jonsey's child.

KANDALL. Dear. Dear, dear, dear, dear, dear.

FLORAL. What shall I do?

KANDALL. Don't tell Jonsey.

FLORAL. I haven't.

KANDALL. Good.

FLORAL. But I suspect he knows.

KANDALL. How?

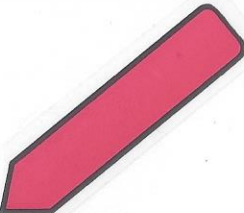
FLORAL. We don't have sex.

KANDALL. Since when?

FLORAL. Ever.

*From "The Lament" by Dylan Thomas. Copyright 1937 by Dylan Thomas

KANDALL. Oh dear, dear, dear, dear, dear, dear. What does he say?
FLORAL. He says I'll make a wonderful mother. That all along he has wanted a child and we'll have a beautiful happiness ... Something. I don't know.
KANDALL. This is all good.
FLORAL. I don't love him.
KANDALL. Of course. I see. You have a lover.
FLORAL. No.
KANDALL. But you did.
FLORAL. That one.
KANDALL. What does he say about the child?
FLORAL. I haven't told him it is his. He assumes it's Jonsey's.
KANDALL. This is really quite a mess. And on the day of your sister's wedding. It reminds me of when you got that horrid green gum stuck in your hair on Confirmation Day. Well, we can't cut this out with scissors and cover it with a wide-brimmed hat.
FLORAL. *(Weeping.)* No.
KANDALL. Don't cry. Well, do if it helps.
FLORAL. Nothing helps. You see, all along all I have wanted was to emulate you and Father. How you loved each other.
KANDALL. We didn't love each other.
FLORAL. You always said you did.
KANDALL. Yes, because we didn't want you children to know how much we suffered. You might have gotten the wrong idea about marriage.
FLORAL. We might have gotten it all wrong.
KANDALL. I couldn't let that happen.
FLORAL. No, no. I love you, Mama.
KANDALL. I love you too.
FLORAL. Tell me what to do.
KANDALL. Think of it like this. Eventually, we'll all be dead. Your travails will have ended and you can rest in peace, knowing you have experienced the pain, confusion, and various contretemps that give life girth.
FLORAL. But what about the scandal?
KANDALL. It shall be monumental. All will be raked over coals and publicly crucified without mercy.
FLORAL. I'm so sorry.



KANDALL. Oh, after all, who gives a damn? *(They embrace. Pandora enters from the manor. She wears her wings over her honey-moon suit.)*
PANDORA. Mother, Edvard and I have decided not to be bullied and blackmailed by his deranged ex-spouse. We're driving over to Lordsley County, where we will be wed at once by the Justice of the Peace who awaits our arrival.
KANDALL. Darling, you are determined.
PANDORA. Yes, quite. And please do not suspect it is because I am in her woeful condition. I've no intention of ever having children. What they can do to you.
KANDALL. Yes, I know. I'm aware. How's Sidney?
PANDORA. A scratch, a flesh wound, nothing of note. He turned out to be entirely unremarkable. *(Kandall takes a breath of relief.)*
KANDALL. I'll go in and wrap up the top tier of your wedding cake for you to take.
PANDORA. Thank you, Mama. Oh, isn't this romantic! We're running off to be wed outside the arms of the church.
KANDALL. Also some rose petals and champagne. *(She exits to the manor.)*
PANDORA. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! What do you imagine happened to the Reverend? Such scandalous behavior.
FLORAL. Pandora.
PANDORA. Good-bye, Floral.
FLORAL. I love you.
PANDORA. I love you too.
FLORAL. Having said that, I must tell you, I am very jealous of you.
PANDORA. Of course you are.
FLORAL. I've plotted against your wedding.
PANDORA. I know you have.
FLORAL. My marriage is a morbid predicament without passion or hope. You have such brave gaiety, romantic notions, youthful daring and translucent beauty.
PANDORA. Yes, but there's a terror to it.
FLORAL. What terror?
PANDORA. I play the lovely, joyous child everyone adores and is drawn to, but sooner than later my face will be less round, my eyes