

## 04- Dickie &amp; Muriel

**JUSTIN.** I am now a butterfly and my body is weightless and I am flapping gently in the warm summer breeze. Ommmmmm.

**BINGHAM.** (*Indian accent*) Ommmmmm. You are my assistant playing golf at club and if you lose I kill you.. Ommmmmm.

**JUSTIN.** Mr. Bingham!

**BINGHAM.** Sorry, *sorry!* It just slipped out. Here.

(*He sits JUSTIN at the table.*)

How do you like our little spread? Rather romantic, wouldn't you say? Champagne?

**JUSTIN.** ...Hey. Wait a second. Is this dinner for me and Louise?

(*i.e. the dining table*)

**BINGHAM.** (*modestly*) Well, it's just a little something that Mrs. Peabody and I –

**JUSTIN.** No.

**BINGHAM.** What?

**JUSTIN.** I-I don't want to have dinner with Louise.

**BINGHAM.** Why not?

**JUSTIN.** Because I know she hates me now and she'll think I'm trying to buy her affection again.

**BINGHAM.** But that's ridiculous. You want to apologize, and what could say it better than a little goose liver and steak tartare –

**JUSTIN.** No, I really can't. This is just too important to take a chance of -...I-I-I'll be outside.

(*He hurries out.*)

**BINGHAM.** Justin! *Justin!*

(*He runs out after JUSTIN just as LOUISE and PAMELA reenter through the club door – and therefore overhear the following:*)

**BINGHAM.** (*off*) Justin get back here! This is the right thing to do!

**JUSTIN.** (*off*) No! I don't care what you say! I'm not having dinner with Louise!

(*LOUISE starts hiccupping with little sobs.*)

**PAMELA.** No, don't. ...Don't...

(*But LOUISE can't help herself. Her lip starts quivering like mad – and she bursts into tears and runs out of the room.*)

Louise...Oh, Louise!

(*At which point, BINGHAM marches back in.*)

**BINGHAM.** Lord, give me strength! Were we like this when we were youngsters?

**PAMELA.** Are you kidding me? I'd have been up to the figs in cream by this time.

**BINGHAM.** Slancha.

**PAMELA.** Prosit.

(*They each grab a bottle of champagne and hurry out of the room.*)

**BINGHAM.** Justin!

**PAMELA.** Louise!

(*DICKIE hurries in through the club door, followed closely by MURIEL. DICKIE is wearing a tuxedo with an outlandish, patterned vest. Or he might even be wearing an outlandish tuxedo. Whichever it is, it reflects his hideous taste.*)

**MURIEL.** Dickie, please!

**DICKIE.** No, Muriel.

**MURIEL.** Would you listen to reason!

**DICKIE.** I have listened, Muriel. I don't want to talk about it.

**MURIEL.** But Hicks and Tramplemain are *even* now, so you should call it quits!

**DICKIE.** I have a funny feeling that Mr. Hicks is not quite over his histrionical behavior.

**MURIEL.** But if he is, you lose all that money.

**DICKIE.** And if he isn't, I acquire an antique shop.

**MURIEL.** That is so unfair! You know how I feel about that shop. I built it from nothing to fill an emptiness inside me.

**DICKIE.** Well I'm sorry, Muriel, but a wagger's a wagger.

**MURIEL.** We once meant something to each other, Dickie.

When we were youngsters at this very club. We met at that Dinner-Dance. You wore a boutonniere.

**DICKIE.** You wore a tuxedo.

**MURIEL.** You had a moustache.

**DICKIE.** You had sideburns.

**MURIEL.** Do you remember our first date together?

**DICKIE.** Of course I remember.

**MURIEL.** We saw that documentary about the Luftwaffe.

**DICKIE.** I loved that film.

**MURIEL.** You said you found all that efficiency very inspiring.

**DICKIE.** I did, I *did*. Some of those babies could drop twenty tons in a single night.

**MURIEL.** Boom.

**DICKIE.** Right on target.

**MURIEL.** Boom.

**DICKIE.** And look at you. You've barely changed at all.

**MURIEL.** Oh, stop it.

**DICKIE.** You may have put on a bit of poundage, but it's all in the right places, eh? Ha? Hahahahaha!

**MURIEL.** Oh you devil. You always had a way of bringing out my feminine side.

**DICKIE.** Did I, Muriel?

**MURIEL.** Something my husband has completely lost sight of. He married me for my warmth, but he doesn't see it any more.

**DICKIE.** The brute.

**MURIEL.** Don't call him that. It's not his fault.

**DICKIE.** He is a brute if he can't see how warm and gentle you can be when you're –

**MURIEL.** *I SAID PUT A SOCK IN IT! Now will you call off the bet or not?!*

**DICKIE.** *No!*

*(They stare at each other angrily, then suddenly kiss each other ferociously. When they break it off, DICKIE has a split-second of indecision: call it off or not. He decides not, and turns and strides from the room.)*

**DICKIE.** No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no...

**MURIEL.** *Dickie, get back here!*

*(She runs out after him. Immediately LOUISE marches in through one kitchen door as JUSTIN runs in through the other. In surprise they see each other. Then they speak simultaneously:)*

**LOUISE.**

I realize you don't want to see me after what happened and all – !

**JUSTIN.**

I'm sorry if I'm just making things worse by seeing you again and – !

**JUSTIN.** What did you say?

**LOUISE.** I said I can understand if you never want to see me again.

**JUSTIN.** See you again? Louise, I want to see you all the time!

**LOUISE.** You do? After I lost Granny's ring?

**JUSTIN.** Of course I do! That was just an accident. And I was so unfair about the car and all.

**LOUISE.** Oh, that doesn't matter. I was just bein' psychosomatic or somethin'.

**JUSTIN.** Really?

*(She nods.)*

Do you want to go talk about it?

**LOUISE.** I'd love to, if it's all right with you.

**BINGHAM.** *(off) Justin?!*