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# Limonade Tous les Jours

by CHARLES L. MEE

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[Outdoors.

A hundred slender young chestnut trees. Late spring.

Blue, blue sky.

A café table.

Ya Ya, a young French woman,  
sits at the café table.

Andrew, an American man in his fifties, enters,  
looking out of place,  
a video camera in his hand.]

YA YA  
Are you Andrew?

ANDREW  
Oh, well, yes, I am.

YA YA  
I am Ya Ya,  
I am a friend of your friend you were going to meet but  
he cannot come  
because for some reason.

ANDREW

Ah.

YA YA

You will have a limonade or a coffee with me?

ANDREW

Oh, yes, certainly,  
thank you very much.

YA YA

Pascal sends his apologies but  
you know?  
it can't be done  
so  
he will hope to be in touch with you tomorrow.

ANDREW

And you are: Ya Ya, did you say?

YA YA

Yes.

ANDREW

Ya Ya, right.  
I'm happy to meet you.

[as he sits]

And you and Pascal:  
you are a couple?

YA YA

Oh, no, he's much too old for me.

ANDREW

Of course.

YA YA

I think he's forty.

ANDREW

Ah.

YA YA

You can understand.

ANDREW

Of course.

YA YA

I mean, not that I have anything against older men  
quite the opposite in a way  
only I was married to an older man  
and he took such a patriarchal position  
and then I  
I found I liked it  
I invited it  
so we had almost a sado masochistic relationship  
which I found I just loved  
he had other lovers  
he treated me like dirt  
he wanted always to handcuff me to the bed  
and it seems I not only fell into a sort of dependent role  
but I had sought it all along  
so now  
I'm trying to go straight  
you know  
grow up  
have a relationship with another grownup person  
as a grownup person  
if I have any relationship at all  
and at the moment I don't have one at all  
and don't want one  
because I'm still recovering  
and you?

ANDREW

Oh, yes, well, I am recovering, too.

YA YA

From a love?

ANDREW

Right. Of course. What else?

I came to Paris to forget.

YA YA

I don't know.

Maybe this is not the place to forget about love.

ANDREW

Right. Well. But now it's too late. Because, here I am.

[as they talk a Vietnamese waiter  
brings a limonade to them and leaves again  
without speaking]

YA YA

Or else maybe it's a nice place to remember how it is to be alone  
and to be starting out in a new world  
where anything could be possible again  
where you don't know what might happen next.

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

Because when you come to the end  
you need to get back on the horse.

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

I have moved into a new place  
which I love.

Of course, I am very lonely  
because after you live with someone  
you are used to not being alone  
even if you hate him and he is disgusting  
and picks nothing up from the floor  
so that even when you get out of bed in the morning  
you slide on a pile of magazines and fall to the floor  
and hit your head on the edge of the bed.

But my new place,  
it is all mine.

Very simple.

I have a fireplace  
a shaded lamp  
a box of stationery  
a lounge with a mess of cushions of all sizes  
a very simple bed in a separate room  
and of course my coffee table  
made from an old pheasant trap.

Do you know what a pheasant trap is?

ANDREW

No.

YA YA

No, neither do I.

It looks like a large  
what would you say?

a foot locker

two foot lockers together

but made of wood

with little bars, like a wooden bird cage

where you can keep your pheasants

I don't know why

maybe to keep them there

until you set them loose so you can shoot them

I don't know.

And then that delicious feeling of being alone  
when you are alone in your new home  
and lonely  
that feeling that feels sometimes like soaring freedom  
at other times like retribution almost,  
do you know?  
you are being punished for what you did wrong  
or didn't do quite right  
and sometimes it is a heavy crushing feeling  
that makes you want to hit your head against the wall.

So you are looking for a young woman  
half your age?

ANDREW

No, no, not at all.

I am not looking for a woman of any sort  
because, frankly, I'd like nothing so much as to have a little rest.

YA YA

And then?

ANDREW

Well, and then, if I ever do recover,  
I am going to look for a woman my own age  
because my wife  
my former wife  
was ten years younger than I am  
and I came to think, finally,  
that it might have been the difference in our ages  
for her to somehow know in her bones  
just where I was in my life  
biologically almost  
but certainly emotionally  
what I was thinking about  
how I felt  
and for me, too,  
she being younger and at a different stage of life  
you would think ten years would not make such a difference

but somehow, we felt as though we were from two different generations.  
So now, if I am looking for anyone,  
I am looking for someone my own age  
or older  
so that I can just relax  
and feel I am with a friend.

YA YA

I understand, yes.  
And probably part of the problem was  
you're a little bit of a stuffed shirt.

ANDREW

I am?

YA YA

Just a little around the edges.  
I like a stuffed shirt  
but many people find it boring.

ANDREW

They do?

YA YA

Just a little bit.  
I find it a little bit relaxing  
because I don't feel so threatened.  
With most men you know what they want  
they are like animals with their appetites  
they have only one thing on their mind  
and you always know what it is  
so you have to be all the time vigilant  
and if they are exciting  
well, that it makes it harder to stay vigilant  
but if a man is a little bit boring  
then you can let down your guard and relax  
because you know at least you yourself are not going to make trouble.

ANDREW  
Oh, good. Good.

YA YA  
So.  
We can have dinner.

ANDREW  
What?

YA YA  
We can have dinner together.  
Because  
I'm starving.  
Everyone here, they wait until nine o'clock to have the dinner,  
so I am always hungry  
is that what you say?

ANDREW  
Hungry?

YA YA  
Dinner?

ANDREW  
Oh. Yes.

YA YA  
Do you want?

ANDREW  
Yes, yes, of course.

YA YA  
And then you will come to hear me sing?

ANDREW  
How do you mean?



YA YA

I am a singer.

I sing in the nightclub

to make my living.

So

after dinner

we can go to my nightclub

and I will sing for you.

ANDREW

Oh, oh, well: wonderful.

[The lights sweep to darkness.

Music: the first few bars of an intro to a song.

A spotlight.

Dim, smoky light.

A microphone.

Ya Ya steps up to the microphone and sings.

YA YA

If the sky should fall into the sea

and the stars fade all around me

all because what we have known, dear

I will sing a hymn to love

we have lived and reigned we two alone

in a world that seemed our very own

with its memory ever grateful

just for you I'll sing a hymn to love

I remember each embrace

the smile that lights your face

and my heart begins to sing

your arms-----

your eyes-----

and my heart begins to sing

If one day we had to say goodbye

and our love should fade away and die

in my heart you will remain, dear  
and I'll sing a hymn to love.

etc.

[When she finishes the song,  
she turns,  
steps out of her dress,  
and gets into bed with Andrew.

The lights go to darkness  
and rise to bright morning light in a single cue.

The bed is now in the midst of the 100 trees.  
And the trees have moved just a little.

As they talk, she is getting dressed quickly.  
And he follows her lead, more slowly and uncertainly.]

YA YA  
Well, you see, this was a mistake.

ANDREW  
What?

YA YA  
I don't mean to say I didn't have a wonderful time.  
In fact, with you, the sex:  
I'll say no more.  
Because I like to be kissed  
what do you say?  
all over

I had a wonderful time.  
I'll say no more.

But, to be honest, this was not a good idea  
except for the kissing  
or unless one thinks it was not serious.  
If one thinks it was just an escapade

ANDREW  
An escapade.

YA YA  
A fling.

ANDREW  
A fling. Yes.

YA YA  
And then, too, not just the kissing  
let's be honest  
but still  
I'm not ready even for a fling.

ANDREW  
No, of course not.  
Well, I don't think I am either.

YA YA  
You liked making love with me?

ANDREW  
Yes, I did. I certainly did.

YA YA  
So, that's no good.  
We are damaged goods  
both of us.  
With the experiences we have had  
we can't be with anyone just now.

ANDREW  
No.

YA YA

The point is: we can't trust anyone.

ANDREW

So.

YA YA

This is crazy.

ANDREW

You could find yourself suddenly in a relationship with someone  
all over again

YA YA

and you don't know anything about him

ANDREW

so you are just falling into the old patterns

YA YA

because you are doomed  
to repeat who you are over and over again

ANDREW

because  
probably

YA YA

you don't know who you are.

ANDREW

Right.

[silence]

YA YA

So, forget about it.

I am going to take you somewhere

and drop you off.  
Where do you want to go?

ANDREW  
Well, I don't know.

YA YA  
It seems you are a little bit helpless.

ANDREW  
Well, I just arrived, you know,  
and then  
well  
things happened so  
I don't actually know quite where I am.

YA YA  
How does this happen?  
You think I am promiscuous?

ANDREW  
No. Certainly not.

YA YA  
Do you think I just sleep with any man the moment I meet him?

ANDREW  
Certainly not.

YA YA  
Why not?

ANDREW  
I don't know.  
It's not the sense I have of you.  
I mean I even thought possibly  
for you  
there was something about me in particular.

YA YA  
You did.

ANDREW  
Well, yes.

YA YA  
And you?

ANDREW  
And me?

YA YA  
Are you just sleeping with everyone  
and spreading death by virus wherever you go?

ANDREW  
No, certainly not.  
I've been...  
I haven't been interested in any sort of intimacy of any kind  
since I separated from my wife.

YA YA  
You've been celibataire?

ANDREW  
Celibataire?

YA YA  
You speak no French at all?

ANDREW  
Almost none.

YA YA  
And then why did you come to Paris?

ANDREW  
I didn't think about speaking French.

YA YA

This is a French speaking town.

ANDREW

Yes, I suppose it is.

YA YA

Because you are from America  
you expect everybody to speak English?

ANDREW

I didn't think about it.  
Probably I do.

YA YA

This is the trouble with Americans  
they don't need to think about anything any more.  
Is English the only language you speak?

ANDREW

And a little bit of Greek  
some Serbo-Croatian  
Sanskrit  
you know, the usual,  
German, high and low German,  
Italian, old Italian and modern Italian  
Arabic  
a couple of tongue-clicking languages  
and Creole.

YA YA

So, nothing but English.

ANDREW

Right.

So you could say: here is a stupid person,  
parochial and arrogant.  
Or else you could say:

here is a wonderful person  
stepping out into the unknown  
taking a chance  
not afraid.

YA YA

And yet  
the man I loved  
would say to me from time to time  
don't you think you should go home now for a while  
to visit with your parents  
because he didn't think where he and I lived was our home  
and because he wanted to have a fling  
and even to have his fling in the bed we slept in

because he, too, was not afraid of anything

and sometimes I would come home—because it was home to me—  
and he would be there with a mistress  
and I was expected to make conversation with her  
and I did because—what did she know?  
she must have been as confused as I was—  
and sometimes he would even expect me to take his mistress out for a walk  
because he was expecting another lover  
and so his mistress—is this what you say,  
these days still: his mistress?—

ANDREW

Yes. You could.

YA YA

his mistress and I would go for a long walk  
and sit in a café drinking coffee  
while my husband was making love with someone else  
who could do this now that you think back on it?—  
why would I live like that?  
but the one thing that is for sure is  
if I am so untrustworthy a person  
so unable to look out for myself



for sure I don't want to get mixed up with another man  
before I know what I am doing  
and what just happened if it wasn't that?

ANDREW

I understand.

Absolutely.

And I myself: in the same way

I married a person because I fell in love

but I don't know with whom or what.

She was very beautiful and smart and quirky

and she seemed stable

not a crazy person

because I had had some hot romances before

but with women who were crazy

because I like a passionate person

YA YA

Of course.

ANDREW

and it turned out I was always falling in love with crazy people

who would fly off the handle and curse and scream and throw things

YA YA

I do that myself.

ANDREW

and, of course, sometimes it must have been my fault

because, partly, I was cool and rational

in a way that would drive any normal person crazy

YA YA

Right.

ANDREW

but also I think I chose people who were erratic and unpredictable

because I was so rational

and I wanted someone who would take a sudden turn

you know and take me to some surprising place  
and then only later did I discover that people who did that  
are often crazy people

YA YA  
Oh , yes.

ANDREW  
they take these unexpected turns all the time

YA YA  
Yes.

ANDREW  
and you don't always appreciate it  
you wake up in the morning  
and find a note on the pillow saying  
"I'm going to see Ulu, going to see Ulu,  
going to see Ulu Skrebenski"  
and you don't know whether it's a poem of a kind  
or she is just feeling really light-hearted  
or she is already drinking at seven o'clock in the morning

and then when we stayed in a hotel  
and she ripped up the pillow cases so we could take turns  
tying one another to the bedposts

and she had her period so she made sure she got blood on her fingers  
and reached back up behind the headboard of the bed  
and streaked the wall with blood

or sometimes when she was just happy  
she would throw dishes  
dish after dish against the wall  
just because she felt a little bit abandoned

YA YA  
Oh.

ANDREW

You'd like to do that.

YA YA

Well. Yes.

ANDREW

Unh-hunh.

So when I found a stable person at last who was also sexy  
I thought: ok, at last, I've found a person I can marry  
and that was the fatal thought, I think,  
"I've found a person"  
which is to say, I'd found a kind of person  
a category of person I felt good with

YA YA

Ah.

ANDREW

not always sitting on the edge of my chair  
wondering what might happen next  
someone I could just feel  
OK, this is going to be a quiet evening at home  
and so I married her

YA YA

Oh.

ANDREW

and it's still not clear to me if my mistake was thinking categorically  
or, on the other hand,  
if the mistake was just that the category was wrong:  
stability

YA YA

Yes.

ANDREW

or if the mistake was just thinking at all  
instead of following my instincts  
because I think sometimes I think too much  
and not always very clearly or intelligently  
and I'd be better off just to say:  
oh, right, good, okay, hot, go for it

YA YA

Right.

ANDREW

and live life moment to moment  
without thinking about the consequences  
weighing and balancing  
trying to use a lot of forethought  
because that kind of thing always puts you living in the future  
which we can't predict  
and know nothing about  
and simultaneously takes us out of the present  
where we are living  
and might know something about it if we only paid attention.

So, as you can see,

I don't think I'm a person

who ought to be getting involved with anyone else either.

YA YA

Right.

ANDREW

I mean, my intentions are not so clear either.

YA YA

Right.

ANDREW

And it's no good to be involved with someone  
whose intentions are not clear.

YA YA

No.

ANDREW

Although, I have to say,

if we were involved with one another

I don't think I'd ever tell you you ought to go home.

[silence]

YA YA

So

we are saying goodbye.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

So, I'll drop you off

at Pascal's

so you don't get lost.

ANDREW

Pascal's?

YA YA

Your friend you were going to meet.

ANDREW

Right, of course. Pascal.

Good.

Thank you.

And maybe on the way

we could take a walk in the park

just so

parting from each other

it isn't so abrupt

so even it almost seems so rude  
so catastrophic

YA YA

OK. Yes. We could do that.

ANDREW

Just have another limonade or a coffee  
and then say goodbye.

YA YA

OK. Good. Yes. We could do that.

[Music.

Charles Trenet, the French Sinatra, sings.

A video is projected, filling the whole rear wall  
and spilling over onto the proscenium arch or side walls:  
a hand-held movie—  
we see Ya Ya, in a cafe;  
and then we see Andrew in a cafe,  
close-ups of her, then of him,  
back and forth  
as, obviously, they have passed the video camera back and forth,  
little bits of things—the waiter, and other tables,  
and, disconcertingly, all of it done extremely amateurishly:  
a bit of a shoulder, a foot on the sidewalk,  
the corner of a café table with an arm,  
the camera moving so quickly that the person is a blur,  
pictures of the two of them together  
where Andrew has held out the camera with one hand, unsteadily,  
and tried to point it back at them both,  
getting bits of them together here and there  
on the Bateau Mouche on the Seine,  
at a flea market, walking in the streets—  
panning up on a building into the sky  
and then staying on the sky for a long time—  
increasingly relaxed and enjoying themselves—  
in scenic spots.

At the end of the movie,  
Ya Ya and Andrew are in a very expensive restaurant,  
white linen table cloths.

There are a dozen beautifully set tables  
amidst the 100 trees.

And the trees have moved just a little.

The video camera is on the table.]

YA YA

The thing is  
when I was a girl  
my father was dying of alcoholism  
and my mother took me away from him  
and married another man  
and I grew up without my father  
missing him  
so that when he died  
I ran away from home  
and I lived in a car parked next to his grave  
and mourned for him and missed him

but when you think this might be an explanation for things  
that happened later in my life  
you can always think of one or two or three big reasons for anything you  
do  
and then probably you have a hundred little reasons  
you can't even remember them all  
but they come back to you  
in different clusters  
so that finally you have so many explanations for things  
you can't know any more what is true  
and your own inner self  
like the inner selves of everyone else  
just remains a mystery

Sometimes a woman will want the love of an older man  
she is captivated by an older man  
she wants to be a daddy's girl  
this is so common  
you might almost consider it normal  
even though it's wrong

One time when I was nineteen years old  
riding home in a cab with an older man  
I found myself begging him to kiss me

ANDREW

When you were nineteen.

YA YA

Yes,

and he

he thought I was too young to know what it was I wanted

ANDREW

Well....

YA YA

and so I became so jealous

the next thing I knew I was in a rage

accusing him of wanting to get rid of me

so that he could go off to sleep with his other lovers

ANDREW

Oh, that was....

YA YA

of course he denied it

and said he had no other lovers

and then I knew he wanted me

you know, because he lied

and this is how you tell about a man

if he lies to you then he wants you



ANDREW

Really?

YA YA

Oh, yes.

So I said to him:

I need a friend, I need a lover  
because autonomy it takes such a toll on me  
it exhausts me and exasperates me  
and I feel I've been looking all my life  
now I have no doubt of it  
I have been looking for a master

I said to him:

I don't know what I'll do if you won't have me  
which of course just aroused him.

ANDREW

Yes, well, of course.

YA YA

He said, again, but the difference in our ages  
and I put my fingers to his lips  
and I said don't you know  
there are a thousand thousand young girls  
who dream of being the plaything of an older man.  
It is their secret and their ugly desire  
that they can expiate only by fulfilling it.

You see how wrong this is?

He slapped me, then,  
so that I put my hand to my cheek  
and felt it burn  
and felt my love for him burst into flame  
and I knew  
this relationship is all wrong

[The Vietnamese waiter again.]

WAITER  
Madame?

YA YA  
What will you have?

ANDREW  
I'll just have a salad.

YA YA  
And then?

ANDREW  
I don't think anything else.  
You go ahead.  
I'll just have a salad.

YA YA  
You can't have just a salad.

ANDREW  
It's all I want.

YA YA  
No, no, no.  
That's no good.  
You can't go through life having just a salad.

ANDREW  
Why not?  
Sometimes that's all I have. I like it.

YA YA  
Not here, I don't think.  
Not in France.

ANDREW  
Why not?

YA YA  
That's the rule in France.

ANDREW  
It's a rule?

YA YA  
Of course, look on the menu.  
At the bottom, do you see?  
"No salad as a meal."  
That's all.  
It's not right.

Monsieur, il aurait le steak frites.

Et moi, le canard confit.  
Merci.

WAITER  
Merci, Madame.

Et du vin?

YA YA  
Ah. Oui. Bien sur. Le Bordeaux—ici.

WAITER  
Un bouteille?

YA YA  
Oui, ca va?

WAITER  
Oui, ca va bien. Merci, Madame.

[he leaves]

YA YA

So.

He said he would drop me at home...

ANDREW

This is the man who slapped you?

YA YA

Yes.

ANDREW

The man in the taxi still.

YA YA

I said to him: it's you I want to go home with  
you only want to drop me off  
so that you can go to your lovers  
the ones you love  
but they don't love you  
and they will leave you  
I know you're going to sleep with them  
and kiss them, even kiss them on the mouth  
and who's going to kiss me?

ANDREW

You said this.

YA YA

Yes.

And then I said to him:  
Why don't you want me  
at least for your daughter?

ANDREW

You said this?

YA YA

I should have been your daughter, I said,  
your friend, your lover

everything, everything  
there's no one in the world for me but you  
I could feel the muscles trembling in his arms

ANDREW  
Right.

YA YA  
and I could see  
even in the darkness in the back seat of the cab  
I could see that he was pale  
because he knew it was all wrong, too

ANDREW  
Really.

YA YA  
and then he leaned his head down to me  
and kissed me slowly on my cheek

ANDREW  
My God.

YA YA  
I struggled and leaned back  
so that I didn't know whether I was resisting him or yielding  
and he kissed me on my eyes, my hair,  
under the ear just where it makes you shudder  
and at last he kissed me on my hot mouth  
I gave my lips to him  
what could I do?

ANDREW  
Oh.  
Well.

YA YA  
and then at once he pulled back away from me  
and said

please  
I'm a poor dazzled man  
completely swept away by you  
don't tempt me any more

ANDREW  
Right.

YA YA  
and I said you are  
someone who is everything all at once to me  
someone who if he goes away  
leaves a widow and an orphan and a friendless person  
because you are a miracle to me

ANDREW  
Oh.

YA YA  
and I could see a tear come from the corner of his eye

ANDREW  
Yes.

YA YA  
he couldn't help himself

ANDREW  
No.

YA YA  
I put my arms around his neck  
and I asked him if I had hurt him somehow  
if I had made him unhappy

and he held me in his arms  
and he said to me

oh, please, don't give me time to be ashamed of what I'm doing  
I'm keeping you  
I can't do anything but keep you

ANDREW  
Men are terrible.

YA YA  
Women, too.

ANDREW  
Yes.

YA YA  
You see I don't have the problem with men  
what I have a problem with is the older man

If I am to be with a man  
OK  
I like sex  
this is OK  
I am not against it

ANDREW  
I see.

[The Vietnamese waiter again,  
putting things down.]

YA YA  
but to be the child  
no  
I don't think so  
I don't like to give up the control

ANDREW  
No.

YA YA

why should it be I give up the control?

no thank you

ANDREW

Of course.

YA YA

you want to touch me?

not there

no, not there

why?

I don't like it

you want to touch me?

touch me here

touch me here

I'm not against the touching

I'm against where the touching is

who controls this

ANDREW

Right. Of course.

And yet, even so,

not necessarily in the context you describe,

because of course that was

I mean, a person does not want to repeat that

necessarily

or even at all

not at all

but possibly in a different context,

if you don't give up the control

then how can you be surprised?

YA YA

Surprised?

ANDREW

Yes.



YA YA

I have to be surprised all the time?

ANDREW

Not all the time

but sometimes

it could be fun

don't you like to be surprised?

YA YA

No.

I don't think so.

No.

ANDREW

About anything?

YA YA

No.

ANDREW

A surprise party?

YA YA

That's the worst.

All these people.

If I wanted to see them I would call them.

Suddenly they are there

and I would never have them all at once

I would have this person and that person

but not together

and not today.

Not this evening

I am just getting into bed to read a book

and suddenly here are all these people?

No, thank you.

ANDREW

Or: here's a present!

Do you like a present for a surprise?

YA YA

That's different.

ANDREW

How is it different?

YA YA

Because I always like a present.

ANDREW

It's a surprise.

YA YA

I can't help it.

ANDREW

And if you never give yourself up to another person

how can you I don't know

how can you love someone.

because isn't that what it is?

to reach that moment

we all long for

having put ourselves completely in the hands of another human being

when we are completely defenseless

feeling the excitement and danger of that

and the pleasure when it turns out we have been safe after all

when we have been most helpless.

YA YA

Helpless.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

I don't think so.

ANDREW

You don't want to be helpless.

YA YA

No. No, thank you.

ANDREW

You don't want that moment when you don't know where you are any  
more  
you've just lost yourself in some other place  
you can't get to in any other way  
you don't know where your body is  
that moment of you know I think that's what they mean when they say  
ecstasy

YA YA

I don't need that moment.

Because what does this mean?

It means the man will want to kiss you and lick you  
up one side and down the other  
and turn you over  
and have his way with you  
upside down and backwards  
and in the armpit  
and the small of your back  
and put his hands everywhere  
and his tongue  
and fingers fingers all over the place  
and you are supposed to love it  
it makes me feel creepy  
the only worse thing is sticky

[The Vietnamese waiter again,  
refilling the glasses.]

ANDREW

Sticky?

YA YA

I don't like to feel sticky.

ANDREW

For a man, too,  
he has to surrender.

YA YA

He never does.

ANDREW

He should.

YA YA

He never does.

ANDREW

In just the way you say about your home  
you surrender to it  
you give yourself up  
and live in it  
that's the pleasure of it.

YA YA

I never see the man who wants to give up.  
I see the man who wants to have it his way  
who tries to have it his way  
and if he doesn't have it his way  
he sulks  
he gets gloomy  
he doesn't speak to you  
and then he yells at you  
and then he tells you not to yell at him  
and then he tries to explain to you  
how you were wrong  
or even he will explain to you

if he is very devious  
how he was wrong  
so that if you will only agree  
then he will have his way  
and this is what you call giving up?  
I don't think so.

ANDREW

No, well, this was not what I meant.

YA YA

With a woman  
it is unconditional surrender  
nothing else will be accepted  
and the man he will work at her and work at her  
until he gets it  
or  
if he doesn't  
he will dump her  
and try it with someone else  
this is how it is to be a man.

Especially: an older man.

Why?

I don't know.

[The Vietnamese waiter again.]

ANDREW

You know:

don't think I want to be your father  
I mean, I am somebody's father  
and that's enough fathering for me

YA YA

You are a father?

ANDREW  
Of course I am.

[he takes out his wallet to show pictures to her]

I have a boy and a girl  
no longer a boy and a girl

YA YA  
And you haven't mentioned this?

ANDREW  
a young man and a young woman  
both grown up  
with their own lives

If I had my way I would see more of them all the time  
but they are gone, you know  
to their own lives  
one of them in California, one in Texas  
Texas!  
you have to let them go whether you want to or not  
if they didn't leave home you would have failed  
everyone knows that  
so I have done my fathering

YA YA  
They are older than I am.

ANDREW  
Yes. Yes they are.  
At least probably my son is older than you are I don't know.

YA YA  
I can't have a son older than I am.

ANDREW  
No, of course not.  
I mean, was I suggesting you should be his mother?

Was I ever suggesting that?

No. No.

Frankly, I don't need to be committing incest either.

I mean with someone young enough to be my daughter.

I don't know how this came about.

Probably because I wasn't thinking

I was just following my instincts

which clearly are all wrong!

I mean, from my point of view:

I certainly don't want to be anybody else's father.

YA YA

No. No.

And yet, the point is:

you have a family.

ANDREW

Yes?

YA YA

You have a family and a history and a whole apparatus!

a whole life

more past than future in your life really

and I am a young woman

I need a fresh start in life

a new adventure

where anything is possible

even if I don't want some things

to not have the possibility of them

to have those possibilities shut down already

by definition

this is a death sentence

ANDREW

Yes. Yes. I understand.

I see.

I understand completely.

I apologize.

I don;t know what I was thinking.  
I was being selfish.  
I was taken by you  
smitten, you know  
or even more, or worse  
I thought: oh, my god  
what a chance in life  
that's only normal  
but I tried not to  
because I understand I am much too old for you  
and then, I was only trying to be a human being  
I mean, to be honest about it  
that I find you a wonderful person

YA YA  
Thank you.

ANDREW  
what am I supposed to do  
say you are a disgusting person?

YA YA  
That's very considerate,  
because I have some feeling myself  
and if you had said that  
it might have been difficult for me.

ANDREW  
no, you are lovely  
you are adorable  
but, in fact,  
that has nothing to do with me  
because I am saying that at the same time I am saying goodbye  
because if I feel any true feeling for you  
for example, if in fact what I feel is really love  
which I think it may be  
then that alone makes me want to step back  
and let you be free to find a life with a younger man  
because I wish for your happiness above all



YA YA  
Right.

ANDREW

I am not necessarily looking for someone who would wear  
nothing but a slip, a slip and nothing else  
to the opening night of a play  
or someone who wants to lift up her skirt  
and have sex in the middle of the afternoon  
in front of that diner on the coast road near Malibu  
you know  
just before the road up into that canyon  
whatever the name of that canyon is.

Plus

it is not as though I don't have health issues after all  
the next thing you know  
I will probably have a heart attack  
or a stroke  
I will be sitting in a chair leaning over sideways  
drooling  
my left arm dangling by my side

YA YA  
Oh my god.

ANDREW

and you are still a child  
well, not a child  
a grown woman  
but a person with a whole life ahead of you  
do you think I want to marry you  
and then live with you by my side  
making me feel wretched that you are still young  
while I am falling apart in front of my own eyes?  
I'll be farting and shitting in my pants  
and all of your friends will be out at discoteques!

YA YA

Now here you should slow down  
because my friends are not so stupid that they are always at the discoteque  
and sometimes I, too, read a book  
you don't need to think  
I cannot enjoy an evening by the fire.

ANDREW

Of course. Of course.

YA YA

But what do you think,  
do you think I want to be with your friends  
and they are looking at me and thinking  
look at this little bimbo he got for himself  
she is a brainless piece of ass  
she must fuck like a fire truck

[The Vietnamese waiter again.  
Andrew looks at the waiter;  
he is uncomfortable to be having this conversation  
with the waiter present.]

all the women your age  
looking at me with contempt  
what is it with her:  
she is not a liberated woman?  
she is a candy doll  
do you think they will speak to me?  
no

ANDREW

Well.

YA YA

I will go to a dinner party with you  
no one will speak to me

because they will know that you and I  
we are wrong!  
wrong!

ANDREW  
I don't know....

YA YA  
and who could be more hostile  
than your liberal friends  
with all their tolerant ideas  
except for me  
every pent up wish they have to be intolerant  
finally  
could be dumped on top of me

ANDREW  
I don't think....

YA YA  
because I would be wrong  
this much we know  
and you!  
you would be double wrong  
all wrong  
and we have all known for years how wrong you are  
and this would be frankly  
humiliating to me

ANDREW  
No.

YA YA  
So, what will I do?  
You think I can introduce you to my friends?  
And they are going to think  
he must be amazingly rich  
she fucks this old hulk  
what kind of slut has she turned out to be?

ANDREW

Oh, I don't....

YA YA

And then what would happen if it turned out that I did love you  
which I don't  
so then when I'm thirty or thirty-five  
I would watch you die?  
what?  
you would get weaker and weaker  
and I would weep and weep  
what is the point of that?  
and then I am a widow at thirty-five  
and never able to have another relationship with another man  
as long as I live  
anyway what does it matter  
because by then you would be impotent for most of the years I know you  
anyway  
even beyond the help of any drugs and suction pumps  
and so what do I have in the end?

ANDREW3

Plus, anyway, in the meanwhile,  
from my point of view,  
I should be with an older person who will understand  
what the other person is feeling  
without even talking about it  
oh, you miss your children, oh yes so do I  
and so forth  
you share this feeling  
without having to explain anything  
feelings you would never understand  
because you are still someone else's child who is missed  
not someone who is missing you  
and so forth

YA YA

Yes, I understand.

ANDREW

And then the fears of mortality  
or simply the regret of having not so many years ahead  
on the good days no fear at all  
just the relishing of each day  
because finally one has learned to relish them  
and knows they are few and precious

YA YA

Yes.

ANDREW

whereas you, you are just starting out,  
you are oriented to the future  
not the past or the present

YA YA

This is true.

ANDREW

and so what do you know of relishing a day

YA YA [disagreeing]

Well, I don't know about that.

ANDREW

or feeling you are losing your powers

YA YA

This is true.

ANDREW

it's a subtle thing perhaps  
but one can feel it  
as a sea change

YA YA

Yes.

ANDREW

so what would we have in common, you and I  
we would live in different emotional landscapes  
it would be like taking a walk in the woods with a dog  
the man is going from sight to sight  
oh, there is a beautiful flower, look at the color, the delicacy  
look at the sunlight through the leaves falling onto the ground  
the fading light, how beautiful  
and his dog is going oh, my god, here's an amazing smell  
oh, over there, over there, there's another incredible smell  
my god, let's sniff that up  
so the man and the dog are on a walk together in the woods  
but they are walking in two entirely different worlds  
the man sensing nothing that the dog senses  
and the dog oblivious to all that the man is seeing

YA YA

And I am the dog in this.

ANDREW

It was just an example.

YA YA

Still, you immediately cast me in the role of the dog.  
This is the thing women object to, you know,  
and perhaps you can see why.

[The Vietnamese waiter brings the check.]

ANDREW

I was trying to make an example.

YA YA

But you can see how a woman might object to being a dog.

ANDREW

Yes, yes, of course.  
I apologize.

YA YA  
Fine. OK.  
Then you be the dog.

ANDREW  
OK I am the dog then  
A woman takes a walk in the woods with her dog.

YA YA  
OK.

Come on. I'll take you for a walk.

ANDREW [looking at his watch]  
Probably I should get on over to Pascal's.

YA YA  
I'll drop you there.

ANDREW  
OK.

[Street music: an accordion player.

Another video:  
this time we see Ya Ya, terrifically happy,  
running toward the camera in the Tuilleries or the Luxembourg Gardens;  
but the video is made in such super-extreme slow motion,  
like the video installations of Bill Viola,  
that we can see a thousand emotions flicker across her face  
within this happiness are also anxiety, terror, disgust—  
whatever the camera catches.

When the video ends,  
Ya Ya and Andrew are sitting on a park bench.

Andrew has a sailboat in his hands,  
of the kind that is sailed on the Luxembourg pond,  
and he is fixing its rigging.

Again, the bench is set amidst the 100 trees,  
which have moved again just a little.]

YA YA  
Do you shop?

ANDREW  
You mean, for groceries?

YA YA  
I mean for things you don't need.  
For dresses or lingerie.

ANDREW  
Oh, no.

YA YA  
Oh, well, you need to do that.

ANDREW  
Why is that?

YA YA  
Otherwise, how do you let your imagination run free?  
You see a dress, you think:  
oh, I can see her in that  
she moves toward me  
the breeze ruffles the skirt  
it is silk  
it is so sheer  
I see the shape of her leg  
I see even the contour between her legs  
I can think: OK, now, how would I get her into bed?  
I take her to a cafe  
and then I am thinking



we are in bed making love  
I smell her perfume  
and so, yes, the next thing  
you go to a perfume shop  
you get some perfume  
you give it to her  
she puts it on  
it fills your senses  
you don't know where you are any more  
you are in heaven  
the world has disappeared  
and you are living in eternity with love

ANDREW

I don't know  
it seems wrong to me.

YA YA

How can love be wrong?

ANDREW

But really a fantasy of sex  
of seeing a woman as a sexual creature  
or even object

YA YA

So?

ANDREW

Well, I don't know.  
I mean, also  
you are a whole person.

YA YA

Of course I am a whole person.

ANDREW

And not just an object of desire.

YA YA

Yes, of course.

I am a person.

But also I hope I am a desirable person.

ANDREW

Also, frankly,

I don't think I am going to discover myself

and set my imagination free

by becoming a sort of reckless consumer

sort of find myself by shopping.

YA YA

How will you do it?

ANDREW

I don't know.

I will go to museums.

YA YA

Are things there for sale?

ANDREW

Of course not.

YA YA

So you can look

but you can't touch

you can't have

you can see these things as part of someone else's life

but not part of your own life

that's the real art

when it becomes yours

you take it into your own life

and it transforms your life

how you feel

how you live.

Of course, if I could afford it

I would buy what?

Andy Warhol.  
But if I can't  
I buy a skirt

ANDREW

It seems wrong to me  
that's all I'm saying.

YA YA

You know, where I've lived, in my country  
in my lifetime  
I've seen much worse.  
And just because you buy a skirt  
and live during your life  
doesn't mean you can't do the right thing and be a voyeur too  
and look at Picasso all you want.  
I like to look at Picasso.  
How is your home?

ANDREW

My home?

YA YA

Yes. How is it?

ANDREW

Well. It's fine.

YA YA

What is it  
some orange crates with a lot of books in them  
a mattress on the floor  
you need a lot of pillows in a home, you know,  
and rugs with many kinds of red and yellow and blue  
little designs that make you dizzy  
and some mirrors  
and a nice big couch with inlaid wood of little scenes of hunters  
and some velvet  
and gold leaf on the frames

pictures on the walls  
and puppets from India  
and a Zulu fighting stick  
do you know those fighting sticks  
all painted with bright designs  
and you can hit someone in the head with it  
and break their skull  
do you like to make a home?

ANDREW

Well, I don't know.  
Do you?

YA YA

Yes. I love to make a home.  
A place to live in  
to have it fill your dreams  
to feel soft and you can drift in its arms forever  
that's it: a home  
where you live  
and then, after you have lived there for many many years  
you can look at it and say  
I have had a life here on earth.  
I had a place.  
I was not a mosquito who floated over a swamp here and there  
and don't know where I've been or what I'm doing here  
but this was my place  
for as long as I was blessed to have it.

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

You buy things for your home  
or not always buy them  
friends can give them to you  
or you find them on the street  
it doesn't need a million dollars  
you get the beautiful things from the world

and bring them to your home.  
Acquiring things:  
this is a good thing to do  
like a squirrel  
like a rat  
it's OK  
people can do this, too  
and they like it  
you could do it  
You and I  
we could have a whole relationship  
based on shopping.

ANDREW  
We could?

YA YA  
Of course we could.

ANDREW  
I am maybe more of a Buddhist  
you know, I like a bare floor  
and even just a mat on the floor  
and a few books  
a cup of tea  
I don't buy things  
I never have

YA YA  
Maybe you're just a cheapskate

ANDREW  
Maybe I am.

YA YA  
Or maybe you have a philosophy.

ANDREW  
I thought I did.

YA YA

That's an interesting thing to me.

[A rack of clothes amidst the trees.

They are shopping for a dress.

She steps right out of her dress and lets it fall to the floor,

puts on something from the store,

looks at herself in it,

steps out of that dress,

tries on another,

and so forth,

so that a succession of dresses

just falls to the floor like autumn leaves

as she goes from dress to dress

and they talk.

Each time she sheds a dress, however,

it stops him in mid-sentence;

he can't speak or concentrate for a moment,

and then he resumes.

The Vietnamese waiter is in attendance;

he is the shopkeeper,

and occasionally he will stoop down and pick up a dress

very delicately and tentatively.]

ANDREW

It seems to me,

the trouble always begins with love.

People always say the trouble is differentness

or even hatred or prejudice

or some such bad thing that is the root of all troubles

but really it's love that always disrupts everything.

Once you've set love loose in the world

anything can happen

if human beings give free rein to love

—and, if they don't, you can hardly call it love—

YA YA  
How is this?

ANDREW  
Very nice. Very nice. I like it.

[she takes his faint praise for condemnation  
and immediately slips out of it]

And love pays no attention to what is useful or considerate  
then we throw the world into turmoil with every breath we take  
not just love of another person  
but love of the earth  
love of trees  
love of the country  
of little green farms  
and fenced-off tracts of wild quince with great pink flowers  
the blue air chill but full of the new and subtle warmth of spring

YA YA  
How is this?

ANDREW  
I don't know about the color.

YA YA  
You don't know about the color?

ANDREW  
I don't know.

[she lets it slip to the floor]

all these things we cherish and covet  
and protect from the intrusions of others  
love of one's own country  
of one's own friends  
of the familiar ways our friends have

their manners and the way that they are dressed  
and then  
love of wine

[Ya Ya through this is putting on dresses and letting them slip off,  
he stopping each time she does,  
and then resuming when she is buttoning another dress  
or fixing the straps on her shoulders]

love of pleasure  
of a picnic in the woods  
and sweet red peppers with a pinch of thyme  
love of music  
love of riches, of speed, of power  
all the things that we desire  
and even love of sorrow  
love of tears  
love of heartache  
love of anguish  
love of exhaustion of sleep of solace  
love of warmth, love of pain  
love of lasting longer than we think we can  
love of loud noises and of cheering  
of marching steps  
of martial music  
of causing death

with all these kinds of love  
what need is there of hatred?

Hatred is just the kerosene put on the fire.

This must be why there's nothing to be done about it.  
You cannot eradicate the human heart itself.

Because it's not the worst in us that leads us into trouble  
it's the best.



[silence]

YA YA

Do you think you could....

[she has a button snagged in her hair,  
or can't button a button at the back of her dress;  
he stops talking and gives full attention to the button  
for several minutes:

this is several minutes of complete silence,  
the only such silence in the play,  
while, in a perfectly tender and solicitous way,  
with no agenda other than helping her—  
nothing flirtatious or lascivious about it—  
he helps her.

At the end she stands back.

He looks at her.

ANDREW

Oh, that's beautiful.

[The Vietnamese waiter, a castrato, steps forward  
and sings a heartbreaking aria,

Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

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Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

Handel's "Pena tiranna" from Amadigi

And, while he sings,  
Andrew picks Ya Ya up in his arms  
and lifts her high above his head  
so that she is a flying angel

and they dance

her dress flows out in the breeze of their movement

and the dance is almost entirely  
his lifting her into the air so that she flies

the castrato might put several park chairs in a row as he sings  
and Andrew lifts her as her toe touches first one, then another, then  
another  
of the chairs  
as she flies to a bench  
and flies from there again  
to touch the ground lightly  
and be picked up in his embrace.

At last, her dress drops to the ground  
and Andrew puts her down into a bathtub  
as the aria ends  
and then he joins her in the tub  
amidst the 100 trees.]

YA YA

What I had in mind was  
I would come to Paris and make a life  
because I grew up in the country  
so I made my hair red  
and tied it in a fountain on the top of my head

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

and I didn't know what I had in mind  
I came to the Sorbonne  
and there I was  
a young person going from day to day  
thinking of what I did  
of singing  
of the clothes I wore  
of where I was living  
that's all

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

thinking of some friends I made  
of the bookshop I meant to go to  
the book I meant to pick up there

ANDREW

Your mind just drifting.

YA YA

and of the little basket I might buy to keep ribbon in  
there was a room in a little hotel in Provence  
where I once stayed  
with its faded yellow walls  
and the shutters opening out onto the interior courtyard

ANDREW

It's like a dream.

YA YA

the white arum lilies, purple irises,  
a hundred little tulips with pointed cups,  
and pittosporums whose scene paralyzes the will  
I thought I would have pittosporums in my Paris apartment

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

and then I met this man in a cafe  
who was very intelligent  
and not at all handsome  
because I thought if he is handsome I cannot trust him

ANDREW

You can't trust a handsome man.

YA YA

No.

and I guess I thought  
if he is ugly I can trust him  
which was my first mistake  
and then he had a book that he was reading  
which of course, for a student  
is right away a good thing  
and he was an editor at a publishing house  
very distinguished, a literary person already  
I was so flattered  
and I could see he just licked me up with his eyes  
so I liked that even though I knew it was wrong

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

and pretty soon  
in this world I was carrying around in my head  
he would drift in and out  
and sometimes I thought he was living there  
and I was living with him  
so that my thoughts of my world took form around him  
and it seemed quite natural  
so that I never made a decision

I just moved into my life all the time I was thinking  
I am a young woman  
just trying on my own life

ANDREW  
Right.

YA YA  
seeing what it is to have a life in a big, beautiful city

ANDREW  
Right.

YA YA  
I couldn't possibly think of having a life that involves another person  
as a couple

ANDREW  
No.

YA YA  
it has nothing to do with my life that I am living  
and yet, how can I not,  
what if I should let the choices of my life slip past me  
so that I have no life at all  
and so I married him

ANDREW  
Oh.

YA YA  
is this the way people get married these days?  
I don't think so.

ANDREW  
I don't know.

YA YA

Other people think about it so much more  
and so much more clearly

ANDREW

Well....

YA YA

but there I was  
and I didn't know at all how I had gotten there  
and then it turned out  
he was a prick.

ANDREW

Ah.

YA YA

Who knew?

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

Well, it may be everyone knew but me  
men are pricks

ANDREW

You mean....

YA YA

It seems to me all men  
this is how it seems to me now  
of course I know this is wrong  
I try not to make a sweeping judgment  
but how else can I judge?  
In my experiences this is how it is  
and I look through the brown-colored glasses that I have  
and this is how I see men.

ANDREW

Oh.

YA YA

You know what it is with a man?

They are there, they are there, they are there

all the time they are pursuing you

and then,

once they have you

they are gone.

You turn around

all of a sudden they are gone.

You can't count on a man

because

just when finally you decide OK I can count on him

that is the moment

he just disappears

and you never see him again.

And what you have left is just a big dearth.

Is that what you say?

ANDREW

A dearth?

YA YA

Yes.

ANDREW

Yes. You could.

[silence for a moment]

When I met my wife for the first time

she was riding a bicycle

a friend of mine introduced us

we said hello

nothing special

until she said she was on her way somewhere

and she turned around

and got onto her bicycle  
it was a boy's bike  
and as she got on  
and swung her leg around over the seat  
to sit on the bike  
she was wearing blue jeans  
a little bit tight  
and I saw her back  
her hands and arms and shoulders as she took hold of the handlebar  
and the small of her back  
and her butt  
and I thought then that  
I wanted to marry her.

YA YA  
Because of her butt?

ANDREW  
Yes.

What I always had in mind was a real friend  
so we would share feelings  
and be coming from the same place  
this is such a complicated thing  
because people come from different places  
I mean to begin with if they are a man and a woman  
their lives have been so different  
and then if they are different ages

YA YA  
Even generations.

ANDREW  
Even generations  
how can you bridge such a gap

YA YA  
then they come from different countries



ANDREW

and one from this town, one from that

YA YA

different families

ANDREW

one had brothers the other sisters whatever  
the thousands and millions of minuscule things  
that make us so different from one another

and if it is hard for just anyone  
you can imagine how hard it is for someone who comes from Serbia  
and someone who comes from Montenegro

YA YA

how can two people then ever share the same feeling exactly

ANDREW

and without effort

YA YA

with comfort even

ANDREW

easily

YA YA

so that they can relax together

ANDREW

and feel  
there is someone in the world who really understands me

YA YA

really knows who I am in the deepest sense

ANDREW

where we both look at a piece of beach and say:  
oh, how beautiful

YA YA

or—at the same moment we both feel:  
what an ugly place

ANDREW

so that these two people can go arm in arm through life  
knowing they have someone who will always be there for them  
because they know exactly how it is for you

YA YA

even sometimes they are there already before you've gotten there

ANDREW

so  
you face some trouble?  
no problem  
I know exactly how you feel  
and we will come through this together.

YA YA

Right.

ANDREW

Do you think this can never happen?  
That two people can never really know one another?  
Or really feel the same?  
This is just a romantic wish  
no one ever feels it  
it's just not possible  
that's the tragedy of life  
we are all alone.

YA YA

I don't know.

ANDREW

No. Neither do I.

[MC Solaar sings French rap music.

Another slow motion video:

this time amidst the carnival entertainments in the Tuilleries

emerging from a scary tunnel ride—

again the slow motion so extreme

that we see a thousand expressions in one:

this time it is not the anxiety that pops up through the happiness

but vice versa,

the relief and pleasure and exhilaration

that pops up through the terror of the tunnel ride.

They are in a café amidst the 100 trees.

They are having dessert.]

ANDREW

You'll have a limonade?

YA YA

Yes, bien sur.

[he looks around for a waiter]

You see,

we've had a good time together.

This has been a nice little romance after all.

ANDREW

Yes. Yes, it certainly has.

YA YA

We were afraid to have a fling

I won't speak for you,

I was afraid

but it turns out it was OK.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

And I hope, when you go back home,  
you will keep me in a good place in your heart.

ANDREW

Yes, I will.

I certainly will.

YA YA

You know, in France,  
this is how it is  
you have a lovely time  
you hold your life with a light touch  
and it's not a tragedy.

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

All we did was talk about how we can't get together  
and all the time we got together anyway.

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

Because we liked it.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

We thought  
we are too damaged  
we can't do this  
because of our histories

they hold us in a grip and  
we can't go on  
but then we do.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

We don't go on to be together, of course,  
because still  
when we are just being quiet and considerate with each other  
still we know  
it's not right for us  
because we are grownups.

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

Because we are different in age.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

And because we still do have our histories  
they don't go away all at once  
a person cannot suddenly  
all over again become a different person.

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

And because you are still a little boring.

ANDREW

I know.

YA YA

And you have some ways of being I don't know  
I won't say I don't have some ways of being that aren't wrong  
but with me  
these ways of being are passing things  
because I am young  
and maybe I don't know any better  
Or anyway I will learn  
because I will see what these bad ways of being get me into  
and I won't like it  
and I will have other ways of being

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

But you,  
I don't mean to say:  
after all, you are a nice person, I think

ANDREW

Thank you.

YA YA

and I think you still have the capacity to learn

ANDREW

I hope so!

YA YA

and nothing is to be said against a person  
who is so considerate  
a real gentleman I think

ANDREW

Thank you.

YA YA

but still

with you, you have some ways of being that you have  
because they are so old  
and you haven't gotten over them  
and even if I wouldn't care  
because I would love you  
you know  
I would see right through your ways of being to you yourself  
and say, well, so what  
he's a little stupid  
but he's a nice guy underneath it all  
even so, after I would do all that  
still the things I think are fun  
you think are silly  
and what you find interesting  
to me is just incredibly tedious

ANDREW

That could be.

YA YA

So finally you would bore me to tears  
I wouldn't be able to stand it  
I would be feeling guilty about it  
because here you would still be  
being considerate and supportive and generous and loving  
and I would just want to hit you in the face with a frying pan  
so it would be wrong  
it would be bad  
that would be no fun for you.

ANDREW

No.

YA YA

So, if we have had our little fling  
and you go back to America  
and I go back to my life  
maybe we think of each other

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

and we think of each other in a way of warmth  
and affection

ANDREW

Yes. I know I will.

YA YA

and I think  
OK maybe a man is not such a bad thing  
and I could have a life with another man

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

and you could think maybe a woman is not such an evil species  
and you will find someone  
or you will have your old friend  
because an old friend is a good thing  
and when you get to be your age  
probably this is more important than anything else.

ANDREW

A friend?

YA YA

Yes. And solace  
and, you know, getting ready to calm down  
to enjoy being in the twilight of your life  
wallowing in that a little bit so you don't miss it  
and you don't have some frantic bimbo  
trying all the time to get you out of the house

ANDREW

Right.



YA YA

You can have your grandchildren.  
And they will play around your feet  
next to the dog  
and you will doze off in the afternoon sunlight coming through the window  
I think this will be good for you

ANDREW

You do.

YA YA

And me, I am at the beginning  
I want some excitement, you know,  
I am going to want to travel quite a lot  
and maybe even have sex with a lot of guys  
who knows?  
or maybe not  
because I am not so wild  
or just looking for the thrills  
but to be free to be with whoever it is I want  
to have the adventures  
it's a little bit, you know,  
with each person  
you enter into their world  
you live in their world for a while  
it is like a trip to the moon

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

to step into their lives for a while  
it is to have another entire life for yourself

ANDREW

Yes, it certainly is.

YA YA

and a person wants these things

to have many lives in one life  
not a thousand lives maybe  
because then you don't notice any one of them  
but to have some lives  
since you won't have another chance if you only have one life yourself

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

Or you might say  
why can't you find all people in one person?

ANDREW

Right.

YA YA

This is what a man I once knew used to say  
I was interested in him  
in a romantic way  
and I tried to seduce him  
I have to admit it  
and he was in love with another woman  
and I said to him  
how can you just be faithful to her  
isn't this a little boring  
because if you would be with me, too,  
then it's another whole world for you to live in before you die

ANDREW

Yes.

YA YA

and he said  
yes, but,  
with this woman I love  
I find all the women of the world in one woman

and I thought  
oh, yes, well, this could be what people want  
and they never find it.

ANDREW  
Right.

YA YA  
So  
you are leaving.  
You wish I would drop you at Pascal's?

ANDREW  
I can find my own way.  
Thanks.

YA YA  
I'll say goodbye then.

Probably I won't ever see you again.  
Probably not  
not for a million years.

ANDREW  
Right.  
Well.

Goodbye then.

[Do they shake hands or kiss goodbye?

The lights sweep at once to darkness.  
Music: the first few bars of an intro to a song.  
A spotlight.  
Dim, smoky light.  
A microphone.  
Ya Ya steps up to the microphone and sings.]

A French cabaret love song  
A French cabaret love song  
A French cabaret love song  
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A French cabaret love song  
A French cabaret love song  
A French cabaret love song  
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A French cabaret love song  
A French cabaret love song  
A French cabaret love song

[At the end of her song,  
she turns, and Andrew is standing there  
with his hand out to her.  
She takes his hand.]

YA YA  
Oh.

[Silence.]

ANDREW  
How time flies.

[Silence.]

YA YA  
Yes.

[He leads her back into the darkness as the lights fade to black.]

Charles Mee's work has been made possible by the support  
of Richard B. Fisher and Jeanne Donovan Fisher.