

man/underworld lord

EURYDICE

23

There's Orpheus!
He's not dancing.

MAN. (*Shouting from off-stage*) So, who's this guy you're marrying?

EURYDICE. (*shouting*) His name is Orpheus.

MAN. (*as he attempts to open the champagne, off-stage.*) Orpheus.
Not a very interesting name. I've heard it before.

EURYDICE. (*shouting*) Maybe you've heard of him. He's kind of famous. He plays the most beautiful music in the world, actually.

MAN. I can't hear you!

EURYDICE. (*shouting*) So the letter was delivered – here – today?

MAN. That's right.

EURYDICE. Through the post?

MAN. It was – mysterious.

*The sound of champagne popping.
He enters with one glass of champagne.*

MAN. Voila.

He drinks the champagne.

So, Eurydice. Tell me one thing. Name me one person you find interesting.

EURYDICE. Why?

MAN. Just making conversation.

He sways a little, to the music.

EURYDICE. Right. Um – all the interesting people I know are dead or speak French.

MAN. Well, I don't speak French, Eurydice.

*He takes one step toward her.
She takes one step back.*

EURYDICE. I'm sorry. I have to go. There's no letter, is there?

MAN. Of course there's a letter. It's right here.

He pats his breast pocket.

MAN. Eurydice. I'm not interesting, but I'm strong. You could teach me to be interesting. I would listen. Orpheus is too busy listening to his own thoughts. There's music in his head. Try to pluck the music out and it bites you. I'll bet you had an interesting thought today, for instance.

She tilts her head to the side, quizzical.

I bet you're always having them, the way you tilt your head to the side and stare...

She jerks her head back up.

Musky dripping sounds.

EURYDICE. I feel dizzy all of a sudden. I want my husband. I think I'd better go now.

MAN. You're free to go, whenever you like.

EURYDICE. I know.

I think I'll go now, in fact. I'll just take my letter first, if you don't mind.

She holds out her hand for the letter.

He takes her hand.

MAN. Relax.

She takes her hand away.

EURYDICE. Good-bye.

She turns to exit.

He blocks the doorway.

MAN. Wait. Eurydice. Don't go. I love you.

EURYDICE. Oh no.

MAN. You need to get yourself a real man. A man with broad shoulders like me. Orpheus has long fingers that would tremble to pet a bull or pluck a bee from a hive -

EURYDICE. How do you know about my husband's fingers?

MAN. A man who can put his big arm around your little shoulders as he leads you through the crowd, a man

who answers the door at parties.... A man with big hands, with big stupid hands like potatoes, a man who can carry a cow in labor.

The man backs Eurydice against the wall.

MAN. My lips were meant to kiss your eyelids, that's obvious!

EURYDICE. Close your eyes, then!

He closes his eyes, expecting a kiss.

She takes the letter from his breast pocket.

She slips under him and opens the door to the stairwell.

He opens his eyes.

She looks at the letter.

EURYDICE. It's his handwriting!

MAN. Of course it is!

He reaches for her.

EURYDICE. Good-bye.

She runs for the stairs.

She wavers, off-balance, at the top of the stairwell.

MAN. Don't do that, you'll trip!

EURYDICE. Orpheus!

From the water-pump:

ORPHEUS. EURYDICE!

She runs, trips and pitches down the stairs, holding her letter.

She follows the letter down, down down....

Blackout. A clatter. Strange sounds - xylophones, brass bands, sounds of falling, sounds of vertigo.

Sounds of breathing.

End