Lovemaking For People Who Talk During Movies

by Jennifer Donnell

Kaleb opens the bathroom door with a glass of merlot in hand and a stool in the other. His brown hair is feathered over almond brown eyes. He places the stool atop the vinyl flooring and smooths his forehead. I wonder if he's come to wash my hair, which I didn't plan on washing.

“Want to watch me shave?” I suggest and submerge my rosy right leg into steaming water, then pull it out and paint it with soap bubbles. He doesn't answer, but watches the dull plastic razor swirl back and forth, as if I were performing a magic trick or attempting a world record. It's terrifying but hypnotic.

“Don't you shave the rest of your legs?” he inquires. He hasn't watched me shave, in all the years I've known him. I proudly explain that I'm not very hairy, even if I'm only proud because our society idolizes hairless women.

He reaches out and strokes my arm, wet with bathwater and coconut oil. He tries for my lips and I pull away. He places his wine glass down, as his hand moves to my thighs, pushing them apart. I speak up, “I didn't know people could do things like that in a bath. Isn't it against the rules?” I reference the rules a lot, a latent internalized superego.

“Why do you have to be like that?” he complains, mildly. He already knows I'm not into water sports- jet skiing, diving, hot tub lovemaking, getting dirty in baths.

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“It just feels like... one's whole body is covered with sweat.” I defend, “Maybe under a waterfall... if it was warm, like, tropical.”

I prop myself up on the side of the bath and shave my bikini line.

“I can't handle watching this.” he concludes. I wonder if my superior razor skills have got him down again, but it's not that at all. “It's turning me on and you're clearly not into... *that.*”

I assume “that” refers to the sexual debauchery happening in the showers of less particular ladies. He leaves the bathroom slightly dejected. If he had a tail, it would be between his legs.

I dry off and empty out the bath. As it gurgles, I hum my favorite song. I leave my hair in the loose, sloppy blonde braids of daytime and enter my bedroom. He's on his laptop reading something for work. He looks up and I realize that I'm an elk, a deer. He's all hunter.

He pounces toward me, waiting for my resignation and consent. He slows and lies me on the bed, spreading my towel dry legs to either side. It makes me think of yoga, a naked bridge pose. As he lifts my hips skyward, toward the ceiling fan, my knees lower toward my ears. I'm in yoga's ‘deaf man's pose'. He licks at me and I pretend to like it.

Or, maybe I do like it. Half the time I can't tell whether I like something or am faking liking it to be a good sport. I'm a natural born actress. I want every sex act to have good cinematography.

“Pretend I'm a demon taking advantage of you.” he coos, in seduction. I know he's referencing the scene in a nineteen nineties film, “Dracula”, when the beast made love to a bewitched lady, as I once told him I liked it. I try and be obedient. I imagine him the way

he said- dark, dirty, dangerous. I shudder. I'm not sure I'd want a demon lapping between my legs.

I ponder this aloud, “I was thinking of something sweeter, like a... cat?” The moment it's uttered, I realize that a cat doesn't sound right. Is he perturbed that I unconsciously mentioned bestiality? Would our feature film now be rated NC-17?

He eventually stops and I hug him. I kiss his cheeks and stroke his arm, lovingly. I kiss his forehead and his neck.

“Wait....” he speaks up, catching on, “Are you not kissing me now?”. He doesn't sound pleased with this development. I think of Michael Douglas and how he thinks he got cancer from oral sex. I think of Kaleb's mouth wet and sticky, his beard coated with my vagina juices. I nod my head. *Why pretend?* Clearly I won't get this audition.

“We don't need to kiss.” I say coyly, morphing the angles of my body to look cute, irresistible. It would be easier if I'd brushed my hair. “Pretend I'm a prostitute.” I instruct, ”They don't kiss their clients.” It's a reference I've made before, but not with him.

He looks about as pleased as I did, when he said he was a demon.

“What do I have to do?” he demands, sitting up and pulling away. We're due for a never-carried-through divorce threat, it's been at least a week.

“*Doooooo?”* I ask, confused.

“Do.” he confirms, “What do I have to *do* to kiss you. I'm not doing it if we can't kiss.”

Not kissing reminds him of the year I met Cameron, when I wasn't

sure who to kiss- the year I hardly kissed him at all. I speak up, truthful, “Brush your teeth and wash your face.”

“Fine.” he resigns to the necessity of my request and heads toward the bathroom. He comes back smelling of black liquorish anise toothpaste from the health food store. I hate black liquorish, but I've already put him through enough.

“I love you.” I say between lippy kisses. When he doesn't answer, I add, “Say it, or I'm not doing this.”

It was last summer when he admitted that he doesn't tell me he loves me- that he hasn't been able to, since that year I couldn't decide who to kiss. The only problem is that it's been five years and I only noticed his omission three months ago.

“I love you.” he acquiesces, under duress. I wonder if it feels liberating, but am not convinced.

“Say it like you mean it.” I continue, insecure.

“I mean it.” he affirms, his tongue darting for mine.

We'd probably do a lot better, if we both shut up.