

Scene Six

Midnight. The orange light of the street lighting through the window. Dor is alone in the shop watching through the window from a point at the edge of the shop. He reacts to something outside and moves to the door. He locks it and goes to the shadows.

McGregor and Margaret are outside the window. They are drunk. McGregor tries several keys in the door before Margaret takes them from him and opens the door herself. They fall into the shop.

McGregor You see, what did I tell you. My girls won't ever let your down.
Margaret **(Testing a surface with a finger.)** There'll be something. I'll find it.
McGregor Maggie darling, do you always need to be such a cow?
Margaret You'd have them as slack as yourself. Then what sort of cake would they make?
McGregor Like meself of course. A sweet one, Maggie, a fine cake.

He takes out a wad of money and puts it triumphantly on the counter.

McGregor Not a bad day. The gee gees done us proud. Two days on the run. The gods're smiling on us. I think I'll treat them both – and you, Maggie. I'll treat all the wonderful ladies in me life.
Margaret And your wife?
McGregor Don't start with your blasphemy, Maggie, me darling. You're the only one for me.

He grabs here around the waist. He kisses her. As he does so he reaches for a cake and brings it round to her mouth. She makes reluctant noises but allows McGregor to feed it to her. She loses some dignity in the force of the feeding. As she finishes the cake he reaches for another and puts it into her hand and raises it to his own mouth. She pulls away a little but he holds her hand. His mouth is a gaping and desperate hole. His neck straining forward. His eyes closed in anticipation.

She knows she must feed him and does so very gingerly. This excites him further. He giggles and grunts. His eyes still closed.

McGregor O, Margaret.

He takes her hand and puts it on his own face.

McGregor Please, Margaret, please.

He leads her behind the counter and off.

Dor steps out of the shadows and sits on the chair. Almost immediately Veronica enters. Her earlier clothing, designed to hide her, is gone and we see her in more relaxed, domestic style. She is strikingly beautiful. She goes straight to Dor and kisses his hands. For the time being she's in a soap opera. He isn't.

Veronica Where were you? I've been frantic. Searching. I've been out all night. You mustn't do this to me.

Dor Mustn't I.

Veronica No. **(Softly.)** You naughty boy.

Dor Where have you been looking? You've been out all night! Tell me where.

Veronica All your haunts.

Dor Haunts. I can barely walk. I don't have haunts.

Veronica I was worried.

Dor I'm stuck where I am. Always. You're the free-flowing one. You're the one with legs. **(Points out of the window.)** Look, I crossed the street. That's my window. The light's still on. Why would you go anywhere to look for me?

Veronica Please.

Dor Other men. I know. You put yourself out there like a flower, for other men. Admit it.

Veronica **(At his feet.)** No, no, no my sweetness. There is only you. Only. Only. And you know why. Only. Only you.

She has her head in his lap. He places a hand on her head and strokes her hair. Then stops.

Dor You know where I will be. All of the time. I must know where you are.

Veronica I'm sorry.

Dor I don't deserve you.

Veronica No. No.

Dor It makes no sense.... That you should be mine.

Veronica Please.

Dor I know what it is... it's perverse.

Veronica No. **(She is snuffling into his trousers like a truffle-hungry boar.)**

Dor **(Pushing her away.)** Away with you, woman. Stand up. You sicken me. Why do you hate yourself so much you come to me?

Veronica But I see you. The 'you' inside.

Dor My insides! You love my guts!
Veronica Yes, guts. Everything..... No, your mind. I love your mind.
Dor My mind.
Veronica Your strength.
Dor Not my mind?
Veronica Your strength. Your mind. I love your mind!
Dor The not my insides.
Veronica Your insides, your outsides. Your tops, your bottoms.
Dor There is no 'me' inside. If there was he'd be a twisted, sorry mess.
Veronica Please. Not again. Do we have to go through this every night?
Dor Yes. Every night.
Veronica ... and then we make love and everything goes away. And we are beautiful and you know I'm yours. **(Approaching him again.)** Let's make love now. Here. I'll lie you down on an acre of cake. We'll crush them to powder. Together. The weight of us both. You'll know then that I love you.
Dor Please!

Dor remains turned from her.
Veronica gathers herself and stands straight. She walks to the sink and fills a glass with water. She brings it to him.

Veronica Drink it. **(He does so.)** You must be hungry. I'll bring you cake.

She looks through the display cases naming each cake – not questions but assertions.

Finally, she chooses a cake and brings it to him. He doesn't take it from her. She holds it close to his face. He looks at it but doesn't react.

She moves the cake so that it touches his lips. Now he looks to her in defiance.

She pushes it into his face. He clenches his teeth.

She puts a hand behind his head to hold it firm and pushes the cake into his closed mouth.

She places her feet in a firmer position and pushes with great force again. She is breathing heavily.

She comes away from him.

Quickly, he opens his mouth and licks the cake from around his mouth, with an un-naturally long tongue.

She slaps his face heavily.

Veronica I only keep you to watch you eat! **(Stop.)** You're something. Something. You need to be here. **(Wait. Quietly.)** You need to be here for me.

Dor Tell them. **(Gesturing directly to the audience.)** Tell them how it was.

Veronica I saw his photograph. He wasn't for me. His skin, full and stretched. Veins of mounting stress. Fabric tears. The shine of

water through over-loaded rubber skins. He wasn't for me. But he was still. Without guilt or shame. Looking through and into. I must know this look. You've heard his voice. It is the voice of fruit. I could live off a voice so rich. A deep and red cake of living fruit. **(Wait.)** To think like that is love. My reckless, obsessive love. There. You all know. I don't feel shame. I have allowed love. A leap of faith.

They share a look.

Dor Here's a deal. I will eat. If you eat.
Veronica No.
Dor That's the deal.
Veronica No. Why? You know my nutritional regime. You wrote it for me. Calorific discipline. Rigor. They're your words. No.
Dor That's the deal.
Veronica Sweetheart, you want me to look my best.
Dor One cake. You can look for the smallest. But it must be a full one. Then... you can fill me my trough.

Veronica looks around the displays. He fixes on her.

Dor You're looking. Sugar. Seduction. You uncross your legs. **(She does.)** Frost is diamond 'till it falls away. It's OK. You melt. For me. For the fruit-cake mouth. I want to see the pleasure on your sugar-spun, holy face.

She stands convinced, looking hungrily around the displays.

Dor Please. Let me choose for you. No. Behind. The window. Further. No. Above.

He directs her to a cake that he has 'poisoned'. She brings it forward to him.

Dor Stand there so that I can see your face.

She looks at the cake. Then at Dor. She takes the tiniest nibble from the edge of the cake. She nibbles all the way around the edge.

Take a bite.

She hesitates. Then takes a huge bite.

Now stop. Hold it in your mouth. Let it break down. Feel it. Let me see your face. See. **(Half glance to audience.)** Exactly like cobweb. Feel it. Ooooh. Don't swallow. Not yet. Promise me. **(Wait.)** Earlier. I was here alone. I had come prepared. Some

ideas I got off the net. Poison. Wicked witch dot com. Poison. Made it in our kitchen. In our pans. On our gas lights. Stirred it with our breakfast spoons. I don't know it its lethal. But even the first few ingredients should stop an ox. Have you swallowed yet? What I say is true. Or I may be joking.

Veronica spits the cake out onto the floor. Then makes herself sick. The smell of vomit makes Dor wretch. He falls on his knees and is sick in a different area. He recovers quickly and looks at the two pools of vomit. He laughs. They both laugh. This could be the culmination of a routine situation.

Veronica I'm such a baby. I'm as sick as easily as a child slips down a slide. Now, deal. You promised. Your turn.

Dor I might need an adjudication. You didn't swallow.

Veronica Can I choose?

She gives him a cake. He eats it without pleasure. She watches him. Her attention is then drawn to the shop. She looks around.

Veronica So much glass. **(He eats.)** We agreed. Not.... **(He eats.)** When the time...

Dor Perhaps... this...

Veronica No! No. **(He eats.)** No, my love. A lovers' promise is a solemn thing. Together. In time. **(Wait.)** Poison! Not becoming of you. No imagination. I knew.

He has finished. Licks his fingers.

Veronica No, more now. I want to take you home. I want to bathe you. And change you. And tuck you in.

She assembles a delivery box and fills it. She makes a joke, in gesture, about the 'poisoned' cakes. As she does this Dor attempts to stand. He staggers into a number of display cases, knocking glass and cake to the floor. Veronica goes to him and leads him back to the chair.

Veronica Now sit. Don't move.

She goes outside and returns quickly with a porter's trolley. She places it carefully.

Veronica Now stand.

She helps him to his feet.

**She leans him forward onto his toes as you might a fridge
and passes the trolley blade under his raised feet.
She leans him back.
She takes his weight and wheels him out backwards.**

**As he exits he is horrified to see the syringe he used earlier
to inject a cake (Scene 5) lying obtrusively on the chair. He
stares at it and reaches out desperately and hopelessly to
retrieve it. He is still trying all the way out of the door.
He clutches his chest.
He is writhing as he disappears from view.**

Black.