

Fiona Mitchell (AH) Galashiels Academy

Livingspace

Adi: Man in his early fifties dressed in navy business suit, hair slicked with macassar.

Eve: Woman in her early twenties, wears knee-length dress, hair tied up.

Traudl: Secretary in her twenties, similarly attired.

Henry: Man in his forties, again wearing navy business suit and spectacles, hair slicked.

Scene 1:

Outside. A wide paved balcony with oak railings overlooking meadows with a view of the mountains. Midday. Adi and Eve leaning on a window sill.

(Silence. Both stare out at view. Eve glances at Adi, then turns back to the view.)

Eve: It's lovely weather. Lush. I thought I might take some photos later. Of the meadow.

(Adi stands in silence for a while longer, lifts his head a little to look at the sky.)

Adi: It's perfect isn't it? An artist's dream — look at all those colours.

Eve: Yes.

(pause)

Perhaps you should try sketching it, Adi. You used to be so good — I know you were.

(slight pause)

Adi: No.

(Inhales deeply. Looks around a little.) No, no. I don't think so, I haven't the time. *(Turns towards her, smiling broadly. Rests his hand above her uncovered elbow.)*

But I think you should certainly take a few photos, perhaps a film — a place as beautiful as this needs to be recorded.

(slight pause)

Do you like the new camera I bought you?

Eve: *(visibly delighted at his sudden attention)* Yes! Yes, it's very good — the colours are extraordinary. *(feigned shyness)* I'm just lucky I have such a great subject, if not a willing one.

Adi: *(sinking back against the sill)* Ah, well, you know I don't like having my picture taken. *(feigning concern)* I'm looking old. *(He smooths the left side of his hair from the parting downwards with his right hand)*

Eve: Aha.

(pause)

A large Alsatian pads over to Adi from the steps leading off the balcony. Adi sits on his haunches and ruffles the fur on the back of her neck, lovingly, smiling. Eve grimaces at it. The dog licks his hands then turns as Adi rises and lies down in the sun by the railings.)

Adi: *(looking at a building on the other side of the valley)* That farmhouse completely ruins the whole thing though. Who would build that eyesore there, anyway? Nothing but beautiful landscape and then this great heap in the middle, marring it all. Albert would be furious. It's awful, not a soft line in sight. Foul. It'll have to go.

Eve: *(Glances at him. Says unconvincingly)* Yes. It is rather. You can tell it's badly designed.

Adi: *(straight away, without a pause)* Henry and the others are coming over later to talk. You'll have to stay inside.

Eve: *(playfully)* But it's such lovely weather ...

Adi: I know, I'm sorry. We'll go for a walk later.

Eve: *(more seriously)* But really, Henry knows me, he knows ... and I want to use some of the 36mm ...

Adi: *(cutting her off)* Well, I'll get Traudl and you can go now, then.

Eve: No, but I want to take it in the best light and it's midday, which is hardly ideal.

(Traudl appears at the full-length net curtains on the glass veranda doors. Neither notices her.)

Adi: *(quietly)* No, you'll stay. The others don't need to see.

Eve: *(continuing almost over him)* Well, I wanted some shots of the long grass, anyway, and perhaps the lake too, so I thought we could go down to the far meadow ...

Adi: No, I really don't think that's a good idea. Not until Henry and Martin and the others have left. You can go and get dressed up in your room. *(chewing lip, warning tone)* Don't be ridiculous, now, Eve.

Eve: But I've no-one to dress up for, Adi! And besides, I'll only get dirty when I go.

Adi: Surely you'd be dressing up for me. *(cruelly)* And don't you think I can afford new things? Don't you think I can afford you to get a little dirty? *(smiling through teeth)* You're not going out, anyway, so there will be no dirt! *(Pause. All laughter gone from voice.)* Silly girl.

Eve: *(not recognising the warning)* But ...

Adi: Be quiet. *(barely a whisper, teeth gritted)* Stupid girl! Not if I say no ...

Eve: *(playfully)* You're being unreasonable. If I go down to the lake no one will see me. You can't keep me inside forever, Adi.

Adi: *(suddenly enraged, face screwed up, grips the sill behind him with great force, spitting, does not look at Eve)*
You will stay inside! You will not go out. Not if I tell you, if I tell you to stay in! You stupid whore! You, along with everyone, think — everyone here thinks they can do what they want, without consulting me. You're wrong! *(breathes heavily)*

Silence. Adi hauls breath, looking down at the ground, hands still on sill. Eve cowers, but does not move from her position, turned slightly towards him, leaning on the wall.)

Adi: *(quietly, more weary, exhausted, than angry)* You will stay inside. *(looks upward, his eyes closed)* Dogs are the only ones, *(voice lifts angrily)* the only ones you can trust. *(continues to breathe heavily, voice calms again)* Do what they're told.

(slight pause)

When a dog is scolded, he takes his opprobrium with good grace, is ashamed. I had a dog, once, a terrier. She was a fine bitch, always did as she was told. And fiercely loyal. I loved that dog. But one day she refused to come when I called. I wouldn't have it — you have to be firm with them, or your authority's

worthless. I beat her — hard, but I was fair. She did not try to run. She knew what it was to obey her Master. I loved that dog. (*A grim, mournful look crosses his face*)

(*Eve glances at Adi's face, but stays utterly silent*)

Adi: (*clasps his hands in front of him loosely, looking again at the view*) We can go for a walk later — with the dogs, yes? I could use some exercise. (*Pause. Turns to Eve*) It's lunchtime. I'll see what they've cooked.

(*Adi raises his hand to her face and caresses her cheek, holds her other hand in his. Eve stands facing him, looking down at the buttons of his jacket, hands held in front of her chest.*)

Adi: Why don't you go inside and change? Put on that nice brown dress I bought you. I'll see what Traudl's doing.

(*Slight pause. Eve continues to look down. Traudl can be seen retreating in the other side of the door. Adi kisses Eve on the lips, lopsidedly, and walks off past her to the door. Eve exhales heavily. The Alsation yelps as she kicks it.*)

Scene 2

Late afternoon. Bright sunlight. Adi and Henry stand on the balcony by the railings. In the background Eve, in a bathing suit, plays with a small terrier in the creek behind the house. Traudl stands at the water's edge.

Henry: (*looking down at Eve, pushes spectacles back up his nose*) How is ... Traudl, how are your secretaries?

Adi: (*dismissive, lounging on the railings, staring once again at the view*) She's fine, they're all fine.

Henry: And yourself? You look well. Have you lost weight? (*glances down at Eve again with distaste when she shrieks*)

Adi: (*distracted*) Fine. (*turns to Henry*) The figures for last month weren't particularly good, Henry. Herman's department is well ahead of you. Can't they work any faster?

Henry: (*stands rigidly, defensively*) I assure you that the numbers will rise. The problem lies merely in the cooperation of the local populace. You know what they're like in these foreign cultures. Our native people are much more diligent than any other.

Adi: My dear, loyal Henry, there's no need for jargon with me. I understand. You want more men.

Henry: *(in quick response)* It's not so much a question of want but need. In order to do that which is asked of us, we must have greater numbers. *(Eve shrieks and splashes, the dog barks excitedly. Henry glances towards her, then back at Adi, who has caught him looking.)*

Adi: *(challengingly)* How's Margaret, Henry? How is she?

Henry: *(mildly surprised)* Margaret's fine. *(pause, pulls at collar)*

Adi: How's your daughter?

Henry: She's well. Growing up so fast. I took her to work with me last Monday, to one of the new labour sites. She took to it better than I myself, Sir.

Adi: Ah, well, she'll be a fine figure of a woman when she grows up. *(patronisingly)* Good parentage, you see. I had a dog, once, a very good dog, when I was in the forces. You're too young to remember that, though, Henry. *(Henry squirms, looks pained.)* Totally loyal, wouldn't even take food from anyone else. And in a dog, that's something. She never disobeyed me — just the once she ran off. But I put that right. *(relishing the phrase)* Took her opprobrium with good grace. Good breeding. Good blood.

Henry: As long as she doesn't go chasing anyone inappropriate. Though I'd rather not think about that matter just yet — she's so young. *(expressing surprise)* Why, Eve's only, what, say, ten years her senior! *(realising mistake, slight pause)* What a difference those years can make!

Adi: *(insulted, reproachfully)* They grow up so quickly.

Eve: *(battling the excited dog away as he jumps up at her)* Watch the camera, Traudl! They don't tend to take to water! Are you going to take one or not?

Traudl: Yes, hold still, you keep moving out of shot. *(Eve dances in a circle, following the dog. Traudl looks up at the two men on the balcony.)* What do you suppose they're talking about?

Adi: Back to business. There's nothing that we can't achieve if everyone is *(places extra emphasis)* committed. *(Pause. Satisfied at Henry's awkwardness.)* Eve's been doing some more photography lately. They're very accomplished, you must let her show you them sometime.

Henry: *(embarrassed)* Yes. Yes, I must.

Eve: *(playfully scolding)* That's for them to know and you to guess. Not interested in his private conversations, are you?

Traudl: *(Eve poses and she takes a photograph. Pensively, venturing carefully.)* No. But I would like to know what you were talking about earlier.

(Eve stops playing, stands silently. The dog continues to run circles around her, barking madly. Traudl looks up from the camera)

Eve: *(through her teeth)* That was private.

Traudl: Well, I'm entitled to worry about you, aren't I, Eve? As a friend?

Eve: *(strutting past Traudl, back to the house, very finally)* Why don't you just leave well alone. This is mine. *(slight pause)* He's mine.

(pause)

Traudl: Don't you feel responsible?

Eve: *(angrily)* Whatever for?

Traudl: You're closer to him than anyone ... you could do something ... you know. There's a limit. I mean, I am, everyone is loyal *(struggling for words)* to him. But not everything he does can be right. Can it? Of course, no one doubts his leadership skills, we're all completely loyal ... but sometimes they way he treats ... but ... That is to say ... I don't approve of the way ...

Eve: I don't know what you're talking about. And you're wrong. He is the leader — of course he's right. Stop being so stupid. Take the bloody picture.

Henry: *(attempting to overcome awkwardness, conversationally, insincerely)* It's certainly the right setting for photography. If only everywhere were this beautiful. *(He removes his spectacles and polishes them with a handkerchief taken from his breast pocket)*

Adi: *(looking down at the Alsatian)* It's best in the morning. When the sun comes up, Henry. When the mountains perform an *(another rehearsed phrase, with much drama)* obeisance to be light. The air is perfectly clear. The silence is tangible. Over those mountains, past that wretched farmhouse. I must have that removed.

Henry: A painter's eye, Sir. *(jokingly)* That's certainly an open market at the moment, Sir. We should think of expanding in that direction. *(slight pause)* In fact, I

have had thoughts on how to ameliorate the situation as regards ... that direction. Perhaps we should set up a ... discussion, a forum, Sir. Reinhard and his aide, very effective, effective man — would be perfect for the job. I've taken the liberty of speaking to them already, Sir.

Adi: Mmm ... Set up a meeting. Unless you've already done so, my dear, faithful Henry (*thoughtfully*) But let's make this a co-operation (*forcefully*) I want everyone working together on this, Henry.

Henry: Of course. Shall I arrange it, then? It should be set somewhere agreeable — such matters aren't terribly tasteful — we should be considerate. I had thought of Wannsee ...

Adi: (*with a regretful air*) Yes. Not pleasant, but it must be done. It must be done.

(The dog nudges Adi with her head, licks his hand. Eve, coming up the steps with Traudl in pursuit, scowls at the Alsatian. She does not approach Adi. Adi sits on his haunches again and ruffles the dog's coat. He seems to have forgotten everybody else.)

Adi: We should always look east, Blondi. The sun rises in the East.