

Goes toward him. I also saw ya following me home all the time.

MARTIN: I didn't.

SALLY: I saw ya.

MARTIN: You couldn't have. I cut in and outa doorways. *He smiles.* Peter Lorre taught me how.

SALLY: Woulda stopped and talked to you except I was scared of all you guys from the Golden Avengers. I mean, you weren't as tough as Whitey Arkish, but still I was scared. *She puts her arms around him.* Coulda had me at fifteen. How about that? We coulda been divorced by now.

MARTIN, *his arms around her*: Whitey Arkish wasn't so tough . . .

SALLY, *tenderly*: First real date we had was four years later . . . we broke into Loew's Delancy with a crowbar . . .

MARTIN: Take Whitey's knife away he fell apart . . .

SALLY: We pried open the fire door at three in the morning, you put me in the middle of the eighth row . . . and then you got up on the stage and played your flute for me, "Blue-Tail Fly" and "The Streets of Laredo," fantastic repertoire . . . and over your head on the curtain, it said . . .

MARTIN, *softly*: "Loew's Delancy, Home Of The Stars . . ."

SALLY: And then the cops came— *(holds him tightly, inspired)* Jesus, sirens . . . sirens and everything . . . runnin' through alleys, all those alleys, halfway across town, outa breath, gettin' away with it, gettin' away clean. . . . *Tenderly*: Oh, Marty, how'd you do it?

MARTIN: What?

SALLY: Get to be so boring. *He walks away, she pursues him.* You had a knife and a flute and you wanted to be a teacher, you were a Goddamn interesting person.

OTHERWISE ENGAGED

by Simon Gray

ACT II

Simon has a simple desire today. He has taken the day off from his publishing firm in order to listen to his newly purchased recording of *Parsifal*. But today there is no peace for Simon. He is besieged by intruders: his young boarder who is behind on the rent and constantly pops in to borrow things; his complaining brother, Stephen; a shallow and supercilious newspaper critic; the critic's girlfriend who tries to seduce Simon into publishing a book that she is writing; an old schoolmate whose daughter Simon has seduced; and finally, his wife, Beth.

The following dialogue is between Simon and Beth. She has just returned from a trip intent on telling Simon that she has been having a secret affair and wishes to marry her lover. Simon, who knows about the affair, is trying to avoid an open discussion. Stephen has recently left the room, and Beth believes that Stephen has already told Simon about her relationship.

BETH: What did Stephen tell you, please Simon.

SIMON: Nothing. Nothing, except for the odd detail, that I haven't known for a long time. So you see it's all right. Nothing's changed for the worst, though it might if we assume we have to talk about it.

BETH, *long pause*: How long have you known for?

SIMON: Oh— *(sighs)* about ten months it would be roughly. *Pause.* How long has it been going on for?

BETH: For about ten months, it would be. *Pause.* How did you know?

SIMON: There's no point, Beth—

BETH: Yes, there is. Yes, there is. How did you know?

SIMON: Well, frankly, your sudden habit, after years of admirable conversational economy on such day-to-day matters as what you'd done today, of becoming a trifle prolix.

BETH: You mean you knew I was having an affair because I became boring?

SIMON: No, no, overdetailed, that's all, darling. And quite naturally, as you were anxious to account for stretches of time in which you assumed I *would* be interested if I knew how you'd *actually* filled them, if you see, so you sweetly devoted considerable effort and paradoxically imaginative skill to rendering them—for my sake I know—totally uninteresting. My eyes may have been glazed but my heart was touched.

BETH: Thank you. And is that all you had to go on?

SIMON: Well, you have doubled your bath routine. Time was, you took one immediately before going out for the day. These last ten months you've taken one immediately on return too. *Pause.* And once or twice you've addressed me, when in the twilight zone, with an unfamiliar endearment.

BETH: What was it?

SIMON: Foxy. *Little pause.* At least, I took it to be an endearment. Is it?

BETH: Yes. I'm sorry.

SIMON: No, no, it's quite all right.

BETH: You haven't felt it's interfered with your sex life then?

SIMON: On the contrary. *Quite* the contrary. In fact there seems to have been an increased intensity in your— (*gestures*) which I suppose in itself was something of a sign.

BETH: In what way?

SIMON: Well, guilt, would it be? A desire to make up—

BETH, *after a pause*: And did you know it was Ned, too?

SIMON: Ned *too*? Oh, did I also know it was Ned? No, that was the little detail I mentioned Stephen did provide. Ned. There I *was* surprised.

BETH: Why?

SIMON: Oh, I don't know. Perhaps because—well, no offense to Ned, whom I've *always* as you know thought of as a very engaging chap, in his way, no offense to *you* either, come to think of it, I'd just imagined when you did have an affair it would be with someone of more—more—

BETH: What?

SIMON: Consequence. *Overt* consequence.

BETH: He's of consequence to me.

SIMON: And *that's* what matters, quite.

BETH: What did you mean, when?

SIMON: Mmmm?

BETH: *When* I had an affair, you said.

SIMON: A grammatical slip, that's all. And since the hypothesis is now a fact—

BETH: But you used the emphatic form—when I *did* have an affair—which implies that you positively assumed I'd have an affair. Didn't you?

SIMON: Well, given your nature, darling, and the fact that so many people do have them these days, I can't see any reason for being *bouleversé* now that you're having one, even with Ned, can I put it that way?

BETH: Given what about my nature?

SIMON: It's marvelously responsive—warm, a warm, responsive nature. And then I realized once we'd taken the decision not to have children—and the fact that you work every day and therefore meet chaps—and pretty exotic ones too, from lithe young Spanish counts to experienced Japanese businessmen—not forgetting old Ned himself—it was only realistic—

BETH: From boredom, you mean. You know I'm having an affair because I'm boring, and you assumed I'd have one from boredom. That's why I'm in love with Ned, is it?

SIMON: I'm absolutely prepared to think of Ned as a very, very lovable fellow. I'm sure *his* wife-loves him, why shouldn't mine.

BETH: You are being astonishingly hurtful.

SIMON: I don't want to be, I don't want to be! That's why I tried to avoid this conversation, darling.

BETH: You'd like to go back, would you, to where I came in, and pretend that I'd simply caught the early train from Salisbury, and here I was, old unfaithful Beth, back home and about to take her bath, as usual?

SIMON: Yes, I'd love to. *Little pause.* I thought it was Canterbury.

BETH: It was neither. We spent the night in a hotel in Euston, and the morning in Ned's poky little office at the school, agonizing.

SIMON: Agonizing? Good God, did you really?

BETH: About whether we should give up everything to live together properly.

SIMON: Properly?

BETH: We want, you see, to be husband and wife to each other.

SIMON: Husband *and* wife to each other? Is Ned up to such double duty? And what did you decide?

BETH: Do you care?

SIMON: Yes.

BETH: His wife isn't well. She's been under psychiatric treatment for years. And his daughter is autistic.

SIMON: Oh, I'm sorry. I can quite see why he wants to leave them.

BETH: But I could still leave you.

SIMON: Yes.

BETH: But you don't think I will. Do you?

SIMON: No.

BETH: And why not?

SIMON: Because I hope you'd rather live with me than anybody else, except Ned of course. And I know you'd rather live with almost anyone than live alone.

BETH: You think I am that pathetic?

SIMON: I don't think it's pathetic. I'd rather live with you than anyone else, including Ned. And I don't want to live alone either.

BETH: But do you want to live at all?

SIMON: What?

BETH: As you hold such a deeply contemptuous view of human life. That's Ned's diagnosis of you.

SIMON: But the description of my symptoms came from you, did it?

BETH: He says you're one of those men who only give permission to little bits of life to get through to you. He says that while we may envy you your serenity, we should be revolted by the rot from which it stems. Your sanity is of the kind that causes people to go quietly mad around you.

SIMON: What an elegant paraphrase. Tell me, did you take notes?

BETH: I didn't have to. Every word rang true.

SIMON: But if it's all true, why do you need to keep referring it back to Ned?

BETH: It's a way of keeping in touch with him. If I forgot in

the middle of a sentence that he's there and mine, I might begin to scream at you and claw at you and punch at you.

SIMON: But why should you want to do that?

BETH: Because I hate you.

The telephone rings. Simon makes a move toward it. After the fourth ring, it stops.

SIMON: Oh, of course. I've put on the machine. *Pause.*

BETH, *quietly*: You know the most insulting thing, that you let me go on and on being unfaithful without altering your manner or your behavior one—one—you don't care about me, or my being in love with somebody else, or my betraying you, good God! least of all that! But you do wish I hadn't actually *mentioned* it, because then we could have gone on, at least *you* could, pretending that everything was all right, no, not even pretending, as far as *you* were concerned, everything was all right, you probably still think it *is* all right—and—and—you've—you've—all those times we've made love, sometimes the very same evening as Ned and I—and yet you took me—in your usual considerate fashion, just as you take your third of a bottle of wine with dinner or your carefully measured brandy and your cigar after it, *and* enjoyed it all the more because I felt guilty, God help me *guilty* and so tried harder for your sake—and you *admit* that, no, not admit it, simply state it as if on the difference made by an extra voice or something in your bloody Wagner—don't you see, don't you see that that makes you a freak! You're—you're—oh, damn! Damn. Damn you. *Pause.* Oh, damn. *There is a silence.* So you might as well listen to your Wagner.

SIMON: I must say you've quite warmed me up for it. And what are *you* going to do, have your cleansing bath?

BETH: No, go to Ned for a couple of hours.

SIMON: Oh dear, more agonizing in his poky little office. Or is that a euphemism for Ned's brand of loveplay? Excuse me, but what precisely has all this been about? You complain of my reticence over the last ten months, but what good has all this exposition served, what's it been for Beth? Ned's not going to leave his wife, I don't want you to leave me, you don't even think you're going to leave me—we have a perfectly sensible arrangement, we are happy enough together you and I, insultingly so if

you like but still happy. We could go on and on, with Ned, until you've gone off him, why, why did you have to muck it up between you with your infantile agonizings.

BETH: Because there's a problem.

SIMON: What problem?

BETH: I'm going to have a baby.

SIMON, *stares at her for a long moment:* What? Another moment. Whose?

BETH: *That is the problem. Goes out.*

GOLDEN BOY

by Clifford Odets

ACT II, SCENE 2

Joe Bonaparte has a talent for the violin—and for boxing. Violinists stay poor. Boxers can get rich; they can buy respect, fast cars, and beautiful women. Driven by unquenchable ambition, and against his father's wishes, Joe becomes a professional boxer. His speedy ascendance through the boxing ranks is matched by an equally rapid swelling of his self-importance and a decline in his ability to care about anyone else. Ultimately, he kills another boxer in the ring, and then kills himself in an automobile crash.

The following scene takes place on a park bench. It is still early in Joe's career, but he shows extraordinary promise. Joe's manager, Tom Moody, has asked his girl friend, Lorna Moon, to spend time with Joe, to keep him away from his father, and to prevent him from racing cars. Moody doesn't know that Joe and Lorna have already developed strong feelings for each other. Those feelings are finally expressed in this scene.

JOE: Some nights I wake up—my heart's beating a mile a minute! Before I open my eyes I know what it is—the feeling that someone's standing at my bed. Then I open my eyes . . . it's gone—ran away!

LORNA: Maybe it's that old fiddle of yours.

JOE: Lorna, maybe it's you. . . .

LORNA: Don't you ever think of it anymore—music?

JOE: What're you trying to remind me of? A kid with a Buster Brown collar and a violin case tucked under his arm? Does that sound appetizing to you?

LORNA: Not when you say it that way. You said it different once. . . .

JOE: What's on your mind, Lorna?

LORNA: What's on yours?

JOE, *simply:* You. . . . You're real for me—the way music was real.

LORNA: You've got your car, your career—what do you want with me?

JOE: I develop the ability to knock down anyone my weight. But what point have I made? Don't you think I know that? I went off to the wars 'cause someone called me a name—because I wanted to be two other guys. Now it's happening. . . . I'm not sure I like it.

LORNA: Moody's against that car of yours.

JOE: I'm against Moody, so we're even.

LORNA: Why don't you like him?

JOE: He's a manager! He treats me like a possession! I'm just a little silver mine for him—he bangs me around with a shovel!

LORNA: He's helped you—

JOE: No, Tokio's helped me. Why don't you give him up? It's terrible to have just a Tuesday-night girl. Why don't you belong to me every night in the week? Why don't you teach me love? . . . Or am I being a fool?

LORNA: You're not a fool, Joe.

JOE: I want you to be my family, my life—Why don't you do it, Lorna, why?

LORNA: He loves me.

JOE: I love you!

LORNA, *treading delicately:* Well. . . . Anyway, the early bird got the worm. Anyway, I can't give him anguish. I . . . I know