

Courtney & Harper

HARPER. *(Finally, in his best leading man voice.)* Once again your beauty steals my breath away.

COURTNEY. Harper. Harper. Harper.

HARPER. Yes, my love.

COURTNEY. *(Slowly descending the stairs.)* It's been a hell of a day.

HARPER. I guess it's just bad luck to see the psycho-sociopathic ex-lover on the morning of your wedding.

COURTNEY. He loves the attention.

HARPER. It's over. The worst is over. *(She moves warily to the front of the sofa.)*

COURTNEY. No, it isn't.

HARPER. It isn't?

COURTNEY. You're going to hate me. *(He lays the tux on the back of the sofa and goes to Courtney.)*

HARPER. I'd never hate you.

COURTNEY. Try me.

HARPER. Courtney, what are you talking about?

COURTNEY. Us.

HARPER. Us?

COURTNEY. This isn't going to be easy. *(She sits on the sofa.)*

HARPER. Marriages never are.

COURTNEY. I'm going to hurt you, Harper.

HARPER. And I'll hurt you, pain is a given in any marriage.

COURTNEY. Harper, we're not getting married. *(Long pause.)*

HARPER. *(Stating the obvious.)* Of course we are, puddin'.

COURTNEY. No. We're not.

HARPER. You can't be serious. *(Pause.)* You're just upset. *(Pause.)*

Am I right? *(Pause.)* I am right, aren't I? Courtney? *(Pause.)* It's him.

He makes you crazy. What if he hadn't shown up?

COURTNEY. We're lucky he did.

HARPER. Lucky?

COURTNEY. We would have made a terrible mistake.

HARPER. If you walk away from us, that would be a mistake. What is going on here? You did say yes, when I asked you to marry me. We did live together. You were happy. You told me over and over how wonderful our life was. How fulfilled you were. How you had never felt this way. And I have the notes and poems from you to prove it. Were you just practicing your writing?

COURTNEY. No, I honestly felt I was in love with you, but I realize now ... I just love you.

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HARPER. We just need more time.

COURTNEY. It's not a question of time.

HARPER. I want you.

COURTNEY. You can't have me. *(She stands and pulls away. Pause.)*

HARPER. *(Standing.)* So that's it? That's all you've got to say? I knew you were too good to be true. Some shrink I am going to make, I can't even trust my own instincts.

COURTNEY. This is all my fault.

HARPER. Aren't you the master of the obvious. So you don't want me. And you don't want him. Hell, Courtney, what do you want?

COURTNEY. I want me.

HARPER. What does that mean? That doesn't mean anything. What are you going to do, grow a penis and mate with yourself?

COURTNEY. Harper!

HARPER. What? You want me to be nice. You want me to be that guy.

COURTNEY. You don't have to be mean.

HARPER. I wasn't. I was trying to be a sarcastic prick, OK. I guess it didn't work.

COURTNEY. It doesn't suit you. You're a wonderful man, that I will always love, and ...

HARPER. And you're ... you know ... I won't say it.

COURTNEY. Say it.

HARPER. You're being an ... *(Quietly.)* asshole.

COURTNEY.

HARPER.

I know that. You had every right to say it.

I'm sorry. I didn't mean that.

It doesn't help.

HARPER. It doesn't help.

COURTNEY. Someday, when I can explain all this, I will.

HARPER. Put it in a short story. Hmmm. I think I understand. Yes, it's pretty clear. You're the new woman of the '80s. She wants everything and ends up with nothing. *(Thoughtful pause. Then, with dawning optimism.)* Well ... I may have lost a bride, but I think I've found my thesis. *(Ryan enters from basement, his clothes neatly folded.)*

COURTNEY. I'm sorry.

HARPER. We're all sorry. *(Harper leaves his tuxedo on the couch.)*