

Side 1 Veronica monologue

*(SHE puts the gun back in the drawer, goes to the wall, looks up at the bullet holes. Thinks about it carefully, her mind racing, realizes she has some explaining to do.)*

***(Note: She begins experimenting with voices, practicing what to say)***

VERONICA

***(speaks in her own voice)***

I was cleaning the gun, Roger, and it accidentally went off. *(pause)* Yes, both times. *(sincerely)* I am so embarrassed.

***(alters her voice, talks like Roger)***

*Why were you cleaning my weapon? I've told you never to touch it unless there was an emergency.*

***(pause, then speaks in her own voice)***

I saw an intruder, Roger! It was horrible.

***(speaks again as Roger)***

*An intruder!? Oh, my god, Veronica! Did you call the police? (pause) What??! You didn't?! Why didn't you call for help?*

I was afraid, Roger. I was scared out of my wits. He was armed. He had filled his hand. We both had guns.

***(as Roger)***

*Oh my god, Veronica. You were in a gunfight?!*

***(pauses, clearly disappointed, realizes it won't work, starts over)***

There was a mouse on the wall, Roger. A rat actually. It was this big.

***(she spreads her hands several inches apart)***

It frightened me. I didn't know what to do. All I could think of was shooting it. I knew you had a gun in the drawer, and well, you know the rest.

*On the wall? There was a rat on our wall? My God, how could a rat that size get on our wall?*

***(pauses, disappointed; starts over, with a new version)***

The truth is, I wanted to end my life, Roger. I aimed the gun at my head, but at the last second I must have moved because I missed. *(pause)* Yes, twice.

***(pauses, starts over)***

Why did I do it? Why did I remove your gun? I can't explain it. Perhaps I was drawn to it. Drawn to your gun, the way a lemming is drawn to the sea.

***(pauses, changes her voice, softens it)***

I have a confession to make, my love. I've been unfaithful to you. I've been having an affair. But it's over now, I promise.

***(earnestly)***

Wait, please. Please listen to me. I've ended it. I swear. It's finished. I fired the gun to drive him away.

***(pause)***

I had to. He wouldn't leave. *(pause)* But it's finished, my darling. Never again.

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*(pause, guiltily answers his question)*

Three months.

*(pause)*

Oh, just a man, an ordinary man. A gardener, actually—the gardener who works at the health club. *(pause)* Yes, that's right...landscape consultant. His name is Michael. Michael Flanders.

*(pauses, emphatically)*

No, of course not. It was never love. It was lust. Lust and boredom.

*(pause)*

Pardon? *(impatiently distracted)* Yes, topiary, the hedges that are shaped like animals.

*(pause, impatiently)*

Yes, Roger, I agree...very talented.

*(pause)*

*Why?* You need to ask me *why?* Because I was angry at you. I was furious.

*(pause)*

I was reduced to reckless rage, Roger.

*(pauses, repeats the words to herself slowly, alliteratively)*

Reckless rage, Roger. *(changes the phrasing)* It was a case of simple rage, my darling.

You've been so neglectful.

*(pauses, indignant)*

How? How have you been neglectful? Are you serious?? *(louder)* Our toaster-oven hasn't worked for weeks. *(pauses, speaks impatiently)* Of course, the one by the sink. What other toaster-oven do we have?

*(pause)*

Tell you?! I *tried* to tell you. I tried telling you a dozen times, but you were always too busy.

*(pause)*

Are you joking? *(loudly)* You're asking me what you were busy with? Busy with your calls...with your medical conventions....busy with your patients. Busy with your whole damn career.

*(pause, bewildered)*

Your *muffin*? *(pause)* How do you think I've been heating it? I've been using the microwave.