

SCRATCH. The real question at hand is: what do you want?

CUDDY. ...Me?

SCRATCH. Some men want wealth. Some men want land. And some men...many men...want love.

(CUDDY hastens to dispatch this train of thought.)

CUDDY. There's this girl, Winnifred, we're basically a thing. She works in my castle and she's like...*drawn* to me like an animal thing so.

(A beat. As sympathetically as possible.)

SCRATCH. Huh.

CUDDY. What.

SCRATCH. Hmm.

CUDDY. What??

SCRATCH. Well

I hate to say this but there's a slight problem with Winnifred.

CUDDY. There is?

SCRATCH. Winnifred is secretly married to Young Frank Thorney. So, Winnifred might be *drawn* to you. That's certainly possible. But she can't be your girlfriend...or your wife...which is a problem, considering the rumors. But maybe you don't care about the rumors.

CUDDY. (A little pale.) What rumors.

SCRATCH. They're stupid. Don't worry about them. Your father is just a little concerned, that's all about his heir

getting married and *producing* an heir he's just a little anxious that your favorite flavor might not be "wife" if you get what I'm saying.

(A beat.)

CUDDY. That's ridiculous.

SCRATCH. I'm sure it is! I'm sure it's ridiculous.

It's just *adoption* is a word that one hears floated, from time to time, in these circumstances.

CUDDY. Adoption?

SCRATCH. Frank as the "Adoptive Heir" ..you know but:

Rumor! Rumor.

Probably untrue.

CUDDY. Frank Thorney??

I hate Frank Thorney!

(This gets more intense as it goes.)

My dad gave him a horse and now he goes everywhere by horseback! It's like, you have legs, can't you walk? It's like, you're going three feet, just fucking walk! But nope, there's Frank Thorney on his goddamn horse. And I'm like, Hi Frank, and he always just *looks* at me, he just *looks* at me, and then he keeps going. And I'm like, Bye Frank. I'm like, your dad is a farmer, Frank! I'm like, fuck you Frank! I'm like, someday I'm gonna punch you in your perfectly-straight teeth, someday I'm gonna be like Hi Frank and then I'm gonna hit you so hard you fall off that stupid fucking horse and I'm gonna keep hitting you and keep hitting you and

Caddy

keep hitting you until all those straight square teeth are bashed into your stupid beautiful face and I'm gonna say EYE FRANK BYE FRANK BYEEEEEE FRAAAAANK!

(A beat. CUDDY is breathing really hard. He gets it together. He is ashamed, and also liberated. He looks at SCRATCH. SCRATCH's face is encouraging. A long beat.)

You can have my soul.
I want you to kill Frank.

SCRATCH. I think we can make that work.

end

3.

(SCRATCH and FRANK. Possibly the same bar.)

FRANK. *Who* did you say you were?

SCRATCH. *(A bow.)* Your servant.

FRANK. Have we met?

SCRATCH. I think we have some friends in common, Frank Thorne.

FRANK. Is that so?

SCRATCH. Up in the castle, for example, I think a number of our friends in the castle are friends in common.

(FRANK's demeanor changes completely.)

FRANK. Oh! well you do look a little familiar to me we must have run into each other at a banquet, perhaps? Maybe at a banquet.

SCRATCH. Yes, maybe at a banquet.

FRANK. How long are you in town for?

SCRATCH. Oh, just sort of - making the rounds.

Everybody's very impressed with you, you know.

FRANK. *(This means a lot.)* Is that so?

SCRATCH. Your bearing, your stature, your grace. Everybody's impressed.

FRANK. Oh that's very kind, that's very kind. *(Who said that?)*

SCRATCH. Sir Arthur, Sir Arthur thinks a lot of you as I'm sure you're aware.