

**Scene Ten: Terra's House - Patio - Night**

*(We hear the offstage voices of TERRA and JACK talking dirty: "Oh, yeah, baby," "God, I love your cock. Deeper. Yeah!" [improvising] ...as we bisect the stage and the lights come up to full on...)*

*(MILES and MAYA, wineglasses in hand, looking alternately embarrassed, bemused... and amused.)*

**MAYA.** What do you think of this Tantara?

**MILES.** Razor sharp. Doesn't knock you over the head like those Syrah-laced fruit bomb Pinots some of these charlatans make.

*(TERRA and JACK's offstage amorousness becomes more vocal, interrupting MILES and MAYA to the point where they can no longer ignore it.)*

**MAYA.** I guess our friends are hitting it off.

**MILES.** Sounds like it.

**MAYA.** Terra's been on this new computer dating site and kind of going through different guys since she split up with Derek. She's a great girl. A little impetuous at times.

*(MILES nods, hides his guilt in the wine, grows taciturn.)*

So, what's your novel about, Miles? I'm dying to read it.

**MILES.** Oh. It's a mystery. Kind of Chandleresque. About a detective who can only crack cases when he's drunk on Pinot.

*(MAYA chuckles.)*

I'm burned out from talking about it.

**MAYA.** Just so great you're finally getting it published. I'm really thrilled for you.

*(MILES bites his upper lip. There's an awkward silence.)*

**MAYA.** Can I ask you a personal question?

**MILES.** Sure.

**MAYA.** What's with you and Pinot anyway? I mean, it's one of my favorite grapes, too, but you seem to harbor a certain fetish for it.

*(MILES grows introspective, stares fixedly into his wineglass, which he occasionally swirls as if trying to promote the seed of an answer.)*

**MILES.** I don't know. It's the heartbreak grape. Maddening to vinify. For me, it's a metaphor for the process of art. You struggle and suffer against seemingly insuperable microclimatic odds, and only when everything comes into a...perfect confluence can you really *alchemize* something transcendent. And it doesn't happen often. But, forsaking money, and with no apparent concern for one's well-being, like artists, true artists, Pinot vintners persevere for that one preternatural moment. Which, when imbibed, is then only but a memory, nothing really enduring, like a book, or a painting, or a movie, admittedly. But...unsurpassable in all other sensory delights in that one sublime, albeit ephemeral, moment.

*(MAYA is struck by his words and just stares at him, transfixed.)*

~~x **TERRA.** (Offstage.) Oh, baby, fuck me hard! Yeah. Ow! Harder!~~

~~*(They blush at the offstage pornography, including spanking [!]. MILES and MAYA patiently wait until it has subsided.)*~~

**MILES.** What about you, Maya? How'd you become so... passionate about wine?

**MAYA.** Oh, well, my husband – ex-husband, excuse me – is one of these pretentious Parker sycophants. Bought everything off his recommendations. So, when he started not coming home – that darn book on Roland Barthes and the *nouveau roman*, you know

– I started drinking. And I thought: if I'm going to drink to get drunk and forget, and he's going to diddle undergraduates, I might as well indulge myself in my future community property.

*(MILES chuckles, finds this thumbnail account funny, in a bleak way.)*

So, I started pillaging his precious cellar. The older, the more expensive, the fabled vintages – basically, I wanted to rob him blind.

*(Sips, MILES laughs.)*

But as my retribution progressed, I began to realize I had a pretty good palate. So, I started gravitating to these really incredible Burgundies and rare Nebbiolos, and Côte-Rotis that he had some wine shop snob buy him on allocation. Then, as my interest piqued, I started reading – Jancis, Hugh, Tanzer, you know, the big guns – and the more I read the more I realized that wine, the world of wine, was a bottomless ocean of mystery, that you could never ever completely master it, and just when you thought you had a handle on it, another year came and brought something new and different from countless regions and hundreds of vinifiable grapes, and that wine knowledge wasn't just this finite little discipline, but a vast universe of fascinating discovery. And...that it wasn't just for this effete group of pedants like my ex, but for everyone. You...me.

*(Clasps MILES's wrist.)*

And the truth is: I discovered way more pleasure in his vintage *La Tâches* than when he laid his filthy hands on me.

*(Their eyes lock. You think they're going to throw themselves at each other in a passionate kiss. MILES's eyes grow dreamy.)*

~~**MILES.** You have *La Tâche*?!~~

~~**MAYA.** (Nodding.) A case of the ninety. But, it's not ready to open yet. Unlike your eighty two. Which is, sad to say,~~