

# **Moonrise Over Mykonos**

**By Jerold London**

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jlondon@deepweaversfaith.com**

# Moonrise Over Mykonos

## TIME, PLACE AND RESPECTIVE CHARACTERS

Present.

**Stage left:** An almost primitive stone house in the hills overlooking the Aegean on the Greek island of Mykonos. A table with two chairs; two empty wine glasses; two empty bowls, with spoons resting beside them. A brilliant full moon overhead.

**HELEN (Eléni)**, 50s. Dominick's wife. Wearing a simple white dress.

A **GREEK WOMAN**, non-English speaking.

**Stage right:** The bar of a posh hotel in a large city on one of the two coasts of the United States. Bar stools, mirrors, bottles, glass, etc.

A **WOMAN**, seated by herself at the bar, sipping wine from the rise.

A **BARTENDER**.

**DOMINICK (Nikos)**, 50s. Helen's husband. Dressed in white.



... in the dialogue indicates a thoughtful break.



## αγάπη μου agápi mou – my love

### **DOMINICK (off stage)**

Each afternoon I watched her coming back through the hot stony field after swimming, the sea light behind her, and the huge sky on the other side of that. I felt like Jack Gilbert, doing that. Falling, and failing in love.

**HELEN enters, stage left, with the GREEK WOMAN and carrying an opened bottle of wine. Her hair is wet from swimming. She motions for the GREEK WOMAN to take a seat, sits down herself, and pours each of them a glass. They drink during the scene.**

### **HELEN**

The moon's breathtaking, isn't it? Rising over the water. And the stillness.... Dominick and I have been having our troubles, lately.

### **GREEK WOMAN**

Nikos?

### **HELEN**

Yes, ναι [*naí*]. Nikos. My husband, ο σύζυγός μου [*o sýzygós mou*].

**GREEK WOMAN**

Nikos, ο σύζυγός σας [*o sýzygós sas*].

**HELEN**

My Greek's not so good, yet.  
Like your English.

**GREEK WOMAN shakes her head “No.”**

**GREEK WOMAN**

Αγγλικά, όχι [*Angliká, óchi*].

**HELEN**

No English. Yes, I understand. It's okay.  
I just need to talk ... some company to talk to.  
Nikos is busy.

**GREEK WOMAN nods.**

**HELEN**

He and I have been here two years. On Mykonos. And I never weary of it.  
I love the simplicity. I love the love here.  
I've grown used to it. Being the uninterrupted center of his attention at night.

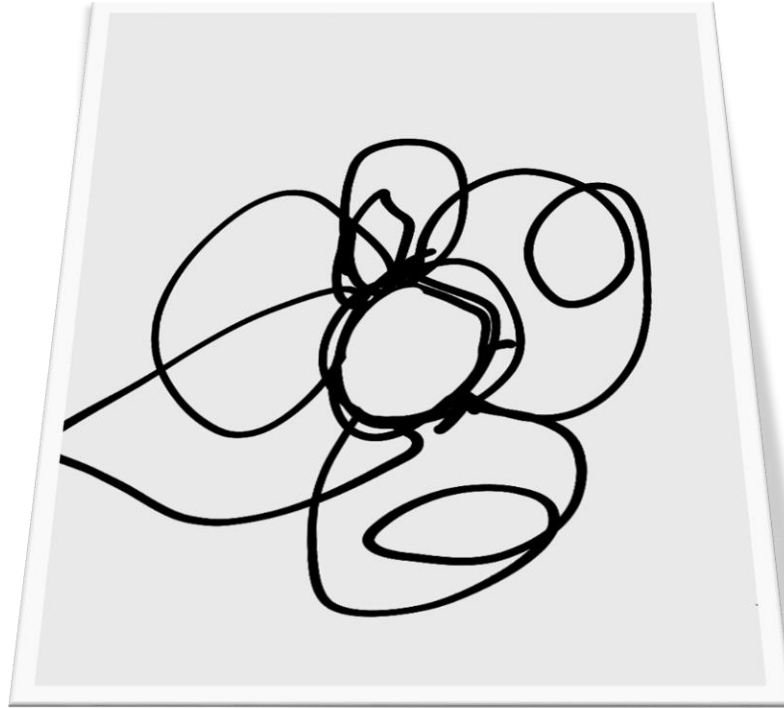
**Takes a sip of wine.**

But, like I said, we've been having problems lately. The last couple of months.  
Something's changed. He's grown moody. His mind is out in space somewhere.  
I'm sure it's his writing. I'm sure of it. But I'm not sure why.  
I'm no writer myself.  
It's not so fresh anymore. Not so vital and sublime as it used to be.  
And he's forgetting things.

**Takes another sip.**

A few days ago one of his children arrived.  
Unannounced. At least, not to me.  
Because he buries himself in his writing? Is that it? That's why he forgets to tell  
his wife that his daughter's coming to Greece? What's that all about?  
Sure, writing's his passion. Like all writers, I suppose. And me, at night.  
And before two months ago he couldn't wait to make love with me at night.  
But not telling me his daughter's coming to visit? And forgetting other things?  
It's gotten all too strange.

And what he writes now annoys me. *Annoys me.*  
I never, ever thought I'd live to say something like that. Like, Moonstruck...



**DOMINICK enters, stage right, looks around the bar (empty but for the WOMAN sitting there), and sits down next to her.**

**DOMINICK**

[to BARTENDER] Four Glenlivet doubles, please.  
Just line them up in front of me.

[to WOMAN] How's it going tonight?

**WOMAN**

Not much doing.

**DOMINICK**

Has the tenor come on yet? With his deadly granite tin can music?  
Putting the chorus girls asleep in the side booths?

**WOMAN**

What are you talking about?

**DOMINICK**

Oh, I don't know.

Nothing, I guess.

Just something I thought of, from Jack Gilbert.

Wherever he is now.

Hunting elephants in Guadalajara, for all I know.

**WOMAN**

You're talking Greek to me, Mister.

**The BARTENDER lines four Scotch doubles up in front of DOMINICK. He takes a sip from one of them, and puts it down, approvingly.**

**DOMINICK**

Dominick's the name.

Or just Nikos.

**WOMAN**

Greek, eh?

**DOMINICK**

Ever fly dumb to Greece?

**WOMAN**

*What??*

**DOMINICK**

I have.

**DOMINICK takes another sip; and, drink in hand –**

**DOMINICK**

Fluffy the Flying Pig? God!

What a vacuous idea. If I say so myself.

**Takes a heftier drink, looks at the glass, and puts it down.**

Inane. Vacuous, like I said.  
But your friend, Percy, he loved it.

**WOMAN**

What friend Percy?

**DOMINICK**

Oops. Sorry. Maybe you're not the one Percy knows here.  
Sorry. My mistake.  
But from the get-go, Percy loved it.  
I can't believe I even pitched it to him.  
What could have come over me?  
Except, we were drinking, and talking, and maybe had a few too ...  
And all of a sudden a damned pregnant pause came into the conversation.  
Don't you hate those?  
Sat down, right next to us. Uninvited.  
And, what was I supposed to do?  
It sure as Hollywood Boulevard beat my back-up plan.  
Which was flying Elton John into Vegas on a piano.  
Singing Candle in the Wind.  
Oh, my God! Where was *that* idea from?  
So I said to Percy, on a whim,  
"They say pigs fly in Cincinnati."  
"Oh?" He said.  
"Yeah. That why they call it 'Porkopolis in the sky.'"  
"They call it lots of baloney, I'm sure," he said. "Where is it, anyway?"  
"Where's what?" I asked him.  
I never figured he was *that* clueless.  
"Cincinnati. Where in Gehenna is it, Nikos?"  
"In Ohio," I told him. "Ever been there?"  
He almost choked on his Scotch.  
"Not on a *dare*....  
Ohio. Iowa. Idaho. What's the difference?  
Never been. Never will. Life's too short."  
Percy can be a bit wrapped up in himself, wouldn't you agree?

**WOMAN**

**Shrugs.**

Don't know the man.

**DOMINICK**

I figured you did. Sorry.



A crazy mutherfucker, if there ever was one. But not as bad as his friend Aaron. He's dead now, by the way. Aaron. Just so you know.

**WOMAN**

I don't know him, either.

**DOMINICK**

Percy's got a point, though.  
Life is too short to worry about life being too short.

**DOMINICK takes another drink.**

**DOMINICK**

You know, you get away from the Coast and time runs on a different time. In Ohio there's only so many dandelions you can pick. Only so many ways you can eat cow. Only so many possums and squirrels you can stand to hit on the road. Before you want to go, and puke your brains out. Not like the Coast, where time's on our side. "Young hearts be free tonight," you know. *That kind of time.* They say of Cincinnati that when the world comes to an end, they won't know it for five years. And you might think that that's a good thing. But what moron wants to die in a place like that? Besides, there's already a place in the Midwest claiming to be the "World's End." It's on the map, in the middle of literally nowhere. Indiana, not Ohio. Its main street is called "The Only Way." Which only stands to reason, right? Anyway, I met Aaron Door there. In Cincinnati, once. And I told Percy, how Cincinnati and Aaron Door gave me the idea of flying pigs. And Fluffy, and all. Stupid, I know. But sometimes stupid is brilliant. That's what Percy says. "Sometimes stupid is brilliant, Nikos." Anywho, there's a couple of old circus cannons in Cincinnati. Left over from Barnum and Bailey. Huge. I mean, beyond huge. In a park, with a collection of all kinds of shit.

Anti-aircraft guns ... tanks ... smashed-up planes.  
And we got to thinking, Aaron Door and me.  
Drinking and thinking, actually.

**WOMAN**

Yeah, I bet.

**DOMINICK**

Thinking how it would be to shoot one of their flying pigs out of a cannon.  
Mother of God, we nearly peed our pants, laughing about it.  
And one thing led to another.  
Call it sheer madness.  
I call it flying dumb.  
I mean, just think of it. Where do you shoot a flying pig to?  
A farm? Are you kidding me?  
What's there to that? *A farm*? That shit won't fit.  
How about a racetrack? They have a few around. But that didn't feel right either.

**The WOMAN raises her fingers to her forehead, as if to say, "How idiotic can this get?"**

**DOMINICK**

I know. I know. But hold on a minute. Hang with me.  
We're talking about where to shoot a flying pig to, in the air, in Cincinnati.  
To the top of their tallest building there?  
And then what? Have the pig rappel down? Hardly....  
[beat] Then, in the exact same moment, Aaron and I had the exact same idea.  
And you know what they say about great minds....

**DOMINICK takes another drink, and then raises the glass in his hand.**

**DOMINICK**

*To the moon*, of course.  
That's right. Blast Fluffy up, up, and away, like Jules Verne.  
Right into the moon's eye.  
But, but, but, but.

**Puts the glass down.**

*Our idea* was more than that. Much more spectacular.  
Fly Fluffy around to the *dark side* of the moon.

**Stage left. HELEN finishes her glass of wine and pours herself another. She looks over at the GREEK WOMAN's glass and sees that it still has wine in it.**

**HELEN**

The moon's unbelievable here on Mykonos, isn't it?

**GREEK WOMAN**

Mykonos?

**HELEN**

The moon. Φεγγάρι [Fengári].

**GREEK WOMAN**

**Points.**

Ah. Φεγγάρι [Fengári].

**HELEN**

All I can say is, what do you do when a man gets so engrossed in his writing, he forgets things?

Writing in the day. Me, into the night. His two great obsessions, he says.

Burning his candle at both ends, he says.

He wrote once that we make love like hawks mating in midair.

Rushing the ground. Forgetting fear.

At our age? Can you imagine? A couple of Icaruses!

*My* other passion here is swimming.

There's nothing like the waters of the Aegean. And getting in them naked.

I was married once before. Did you know? Mykonos was not always my life.

I lived in America. And I wouldn't have dreamed of moving to a place like this.

Never in a thousand years. Yet, here I am. And I couldn't be more thankful.

Nothing to do but water and walking,

getting naked and swimming, making love and the moon.

And I love it. Still life with grapes, wine, cheese, stifado, and the moon.

**GREEK WOMAN**

Στιφάδο [Stifádo].

**HELEN**

Στιφάδο [Stifádo], yes! And the bottomless sky overhead with our meals under it.

Nothing but the man I love most in the world now,

falling asleep inside my breathing.

Time stopped still here for me....  
Until a couple of months ago.

**HELEN takes another drink of wine.  
Then refills the GREEK WOMAN's glass.**

**HELEN**

I was a gardener at heart. Never been to Greece. Never really thought of it.  
Just finding the right seedlings and plants for just the right place in my garden.  
In Ohio. Outside Cincinnati.  
Planting them in the ground. Watching them grow.  
That's how I mostly nourished my soul back then. From the soil up.  
Comfortable in the care of my husband, and in caring for my garden.  
I filled nearly every square inch of free space around our home.  
My first husband's home, and mine.  
I covered it with trees and shrubs and flowers, and endless hours of planning.  
All resting in peace now.

After his sudden death I almost died without him.  
He left me scared, and lonely, and alone.  
I thought the world was over for me. Crazy. Moonstruck with grief.  
But then came Nikos into my life.  
He saved me. I surrendered everything to him.  
All that was left of my grieving. Feeling sorry for myself.  
And ... yes ... even thinking of killing myself.  
There's nothing like a Greek lover. Or, at least, nothing like *my* Greek lover.  
I never knew.  
What he's taught me.  
At *this* age.  
I sort of thought there was passion in my first marriage.  
But, whoa! Not like the territory I've been running in over here in Mykonos.  
There's nothing in life to compare with great sex, daily, with the man you love.  
Nothing. Take my word for it. Nothing. Nothing under the moon.  
Τίποτα κάτω από το φεγγάρι. [Típotá káto ápó to fengári.]  
It's like planting your soul in perfect soil and feeling it grow around you.  
It's what grows soul. From the heart out.  
Grows the hair on it.  
And then, suddenly, it starts to fade away. Why? Why wane? Why wane?  
What's going on?  
Is it me?

**HELEN takes another drink of wine.**

## HELEN

What is the soul of sex?  
It's a heartbeat, longing for a symphony. Something that God knows.  
You know what I mean.  
Something whose essence is to force you to connect with another's heartbeats.

## HELEN

When my husband died, his heart gave out. All of a sudden. At home.  
It happened, right in front of me, in a moment. Time stood still.  
I saw his chin drop. A flicker of pain cross his face. And his breathing stopped.  
I tried CPR. I called 9-1-1.  
It all goes in an instant. Our life together. Our home together, in an instant.  
No glue to hold it back together again.  
The 9-1-1 people came. They carried him out.  
"Cover him," I yelled. "It's freezing."  
But they're all business. They've seen this scene before.

His body. At the hospital. Mouth gaping open. Not my husband.  
His soul was gone. Nothing with you anymore, and you want to die *with him*.

At the funeral you're in a daze. People try to help, but you want to be left alone.  
You want to go with him. To the cemetery. Brutal. Freezing.  
How can you put my husband in this cold January ground? Alone?  
People are nice. Try to be nice. Faces flashing in front of you.  
Shadows whispering. She looks bad.  
I used to be so beautiful. But he was gone and couldn't tell me that anymore.

I was nobody's Valentine. Ever again, I thought.  
Then Nikos came. Not right away, of course.  
The next morning you try getting out of bed. Be yourself.  
Try putting one foot in front of the other. Barely.  
Two weeks later primal screams come.  
Months pass. Empty house. A new kind of normal sets in.  
And finally, the tears. In unexpected waves, like ocean tides.  
Just memories remain.  
You get through it. Not over it.  
My garden had died. My partner had died. Right before my eyes.  
And then Nikos came.

They say the way through grief is a path you have to find for yourself.  
Others have travelled it. But they don't leave much of a roadmap for you.  
Your roadmap is yours alone. You own it. And it owns you.  
You trim the ivy. Or the ivy grows over you. It's that simple.

Truth be told, my first husband's αγάπη μου [agápi mou].  
My love.  
My first love.

### GREEK WOMAN

αγάπη μου? [agápi mou?]

### HELEN

Ah, you recognize *that much* Greek in me, do you?  
Yes, αγάπη μου [agápi mou].  
The love of my life before the love of my life.  
You know what *that* means, don't you.  
And the seeds my first husband planted in me grew again. Somehow.  
Burst into bloom again. Somehow.  
More like wild weeds than shrubbery. But that's love Nikos' way.  
Rough, unordered, crazy, and wonderful. Moonstruck.  
And love like that makes you do crazy things. Like take a chance.

Tell me honestly:

If you were home alone, and a strange knocking came at your door,  
would you open it?  
I sure as Hell wouldn't have.  
So what came over me? With Nikos?  
I trusted him. Why?  
I hadn't forgotten my first husband.  
But ... I felt my heart turn over inside me.  
I had the heart of a new person. Of a new wife.  
I had survived, and Spring had come again.  
And Mykonos. And thank you, God.  
I'd have lived on the moon for this.

### DOMINICK

Syd Barrett's dark side of the moon.  
The side nobody sees, where bricks and fireballs go bump in the night.  
And Fluffy would see everything.  
And take pictures for us.  
Like pictures of the cat and the fiddle, and the dish with a spoon.  
Hey, diddle, diddle, and all that.  
And Alice Kramden.  
And.... And.... And.... And.  
Around on the moon are kinetic waves,  
which mysteriously produce a most curious haze.

There's water back there, under the freakiest screen,  
that turns moonbeams on end to a luminous green.  
Picture it. Just picture it.  
On the right days, in the right light, the moon is as green as green cheese.

**WOMAN**

Pl ease....

**DOMINICK**

No. No. It's true.  
Trust me.  
And more than that. Much more.  
On the backside of the moon are little domes that plant-like creatures live in.  
Walking thingies.  
Some are plump and bulgy, like potatoes.  
Some are long and slender, like carrots.  
They move around on stalks, with tendrils for arms and hands.  
But no mouths.  
They don't have mouths because they don't eat, just absorb. Like plants do.  
And they don't talk, either. Except by mental telepathy.  
They're completely peace-loving vegetarians.  
Never fighting with one another.  
Only thinking and drinking to themselves.  
Because, what's to fight about, when all you do is think and drink?  
However, we had this idea of getting them to stage a fake war for us on the moon.  
With Fluffy to film it. On location.  
Like, The War of the Roses.  
Except, we'd call it, "The Potato Massacre." Or casserole. Or something.  
Pretty catchy, huh? Aaron had a thing for things like that.  
He was big into South Park, I can tell you.

**The WOMAN shrugs.**

**DOMINICK**

Just think of it.  
Peter Pan, a flying pig. With potatoes and carrots for pirates and Indians.  
Who could resist *that*?  
Neverland on Animal Farm. Genius.  
Pure genius, if I confess so myself.  
On the dark side of the moon.  
Carrots dicing potatoes with Pink Floyd CDs.  
Potatoes snapping carrots over their heads in two.

Snap. Crackle. Au gratin....

Trouble was, Aaron started drinking. Pretty heavy, the goose.  
Thinking he might be pregnant.  
Like I said, you go too far from the Coast, and get moonstruck.

**WOMAN**

[*sarcastically*] Too bad.

**DOMINICK takes another drink.**

**DOMINICK**

No. really. Take my word for it. Take Aaron's.  
He started having hallucinations. Hearing voices.  
Which, by the way, they notice on the streets of Cincinnati, not like some places.  
He heard voices coming from under the bathtub at night.

**WOMAN**

*Under* the bathtub?

**DOMINICK**

You heard right. *Under the bathtub*.  
O my God! the hotels in Cincinnati really *do* have bathtubs. With claw feet.  
We were there because of a movie they were shooting on water pollution.  
But all we'd talk about, over Scotch, was Dear Ol' Fluffy.  
Was she still a virgin?  
Did she have a favorite companion?  
Did she have any spiders as friends?  
Was she as jolly as she was fat?  
Did *she* hear voices, too?  
That kind of thing.  
In bathrooms.  
Where I'm headed, by the way, in a few minutes.

**DOMINICK adjusts his pants accordingly.**

**DOMINICK**

Aaron said they were voices of pumpkins, or an albatross, or something like that.  
From the moon. Come to plague him.  
And he tried to set them on fire.  
In his hotel room.  
With branches he stripped off trees in the park.  
And a couple of phonebooks....



[beat] Who uses phonebooks anymore? In hotel rooms? Or Gideon Bibles?  
Well, Aaron did.  
He set the whole pile on fire. In the bathtub. With lighter fluid. And three or four  
of those e-scooters you find sitting around everywhere on sidewalks.  
The full Monty. Up in flames.

**WOMAN**

How do you set an e-scooter on fire?

**DOMINICK**

I don't know, but he did it.  
The night became a checklist,  
for everything you could possibly do wrong in a hotel room in Cincinnati.  
Crazy fucker.  
God! How precious he was.  
And what a night!  
When Aaron got a burr up his ass, he *was* a crazy fucker!  
I mean, when Aaron got a burr up his ass, there was no stopping him.  
I'm sure he never intended anything like that.  
But what's *not* to laugh at?

**DOMINICK takes a long and thoughtful  
drink.**

**WOMAN**

Is that a question?

**DOMINICK**

Damn right. A good one. A *philosophical* question.  
What's *not* to laugh at?  
Abortion, I suppose.  
And emaciated polar bears.  
And an AR-15 in your face in a bathroom when you're taking a pee.  
Or Aaron's constantly walking into parking meters in Cincinnati.  
Said they were *invisible*.  
But what Aaron did that night?  
God damn! That's all I can say. God damn!  
I mean, it's not what a man says he's going to do that matters, is it?  
It's what he does. And Aaron did enough that night to last a lifetime.  
Which is what I figured he'd get.  
Twenty years to life. In a place like Cincinnati.  
They allow about as much sin in Cincinnati as there's butter in butterflies.  
But Fate intervened, hand and glove with the Cincinnati Fire Department.

As he was out, grabbing yet another e-scooter, and a couple of lame pigeons,  
Aaron walked smack in front of a fire truck.  
That's what finally did him in. In Cincinnati.  
Cincinnati, and one of its invisible fire trucks. He never saw it coming.  
And I liked Aaron, too. Crazy fucker that he was. What bad luck.  
But I don't think Percy liked him all that much.  
I remember his telling me that if I kept going on about Aaron,  
he'd shove his shoe up my ass so far I'd think I had two tongues.

**DOMINICK takes another long and thoughtful drink. Then stands.**

**DOMINICK**

Got to take a pee. Don't run away.  
I've reams more to tell you.  
About the moon you wouldn't believe.  
Be right back.

**DOMINICK exits. The WOMAN lifts her glass, looks at it, finishes her drink, stands, picks up her clutch, begins to exit, but changes her mind and sits back down.**

**HELEN**

The moon here in Mykonos is so beautiful you wouldn't believe.  
Like both of the men in my life.  
I can say, from my experience,  
there's really nothing more beautiful than a good and beautiful man.  
Both of mine were good, and beautiful, and strong.  
And they both treated me as being beautiful, too.  
And that means more than almost anything.  
Being treated beautiful by the men you love.

**HELEN takes another drink.**

**HELEN**

From the love of gardening to the love of a writer.  
Which is maybe the same difference. A gardener of words and stories.  
Leaves from branches. Letting myself be touched again by a man....  
  
And then, a few days ago, his daughter came.

And I have no idea why.  
Probably to see if Dad's being well taken care of on Mykonos.  
But .... Is it in my voice? I don't know why. I don't know what. Is he all right?  
I remember once, when Nikos introduced me to Edward Albee in Houston.  
How he told me that life is our side of a two-sided scrim across a stage.  
And maybe we're not ready to see through to the other side until we're ready.  
Maybe, Heaven forbid, Nikos isn't well. And hasn't told me. Or has forgotten to.  
I don't see how I could take it again. To lose again.  
O, dear God, I couldn't stand it. Please. Anything but that.

**DOMINICK returns and sits down.**

**DOMINICK**

My writing's gone South on me.  
I can't seem to find the next line like I used to.  
What I write isn't me.  
What is me, I can't feel.  
What I feel I can't see.  
O my God, what I see isn't real.  
I've gone blind to the word.  
Where is this? Where in the name of Christ is this?

**WOMAN**

Are you all right?

**DOMINICK**

In my life, what I've done?  
It's nothing so bad.  
Then, why is this happening to me?  
Why does it have to be like this?  
My mind feels as though it's flying on wings of creatures and demons.  
I'm not myself. My entire personality has shifted. Off kilter.  
I'm married. I know. But I've forgotten the married feeling.  
Eléni was everything I'd waited a lifetime for.  
Every other woman was a friend, helping me get to Eléni. Even my first wife.  
Why is it gone? Why am I forgetting so much?

**WOMAN**

What's wrong with you?

**DOMINICK**

We choose our islands like we choose our friends.  
Deep.

And sincere.  
And quiet.  
And Mykonos embraced me as Eléni embraced me.  
Honestly.  
Walking.  
And writing.  
And feeling the air. And the peace. And the love.  
Drinking in the intoxication of the passion,  
without succumbing to the Jackson Pollack of it.

### **WOMAN**

You're getting weird, and it's beginning to weird me out.

### **DOMINICK**

I loved being with her before I loved being with her. It was perfect.  
And we came to the perfect place at the perfect time.  
Comfortable in a way you can't paint comfort,  
living in a place that's insignificant.  
Living with the unimproved.  
A stony hill above a quiet village on the Aegean.  
Blue, open sea. Ships, far off, inching out of sight.  
Smoke rising from a fisherman's hut against a windy sky.  
Stone walls slowly falling into ruin.  
Figs and hills. Rocks and fields.  
And most of all, peace.  
You can go a lifetime and never find better.  
It's the rest of the world that's commonplace.

Eléni and I wander down the side of this tiny island together.  
Her, for a swim. Me, to get food for the day.  
I love watching her hair coming up, out of the water. Used to.  
Her bathing suit clinging against her body.  
Watching her put on her white dress for me.  
Something's gone gone.  
It's the way I have to struggle to remember things like that.  
Maybe it's aging. The way love is after fifty.  
The way making love is after fifty.  
Like tasting life the first time.  
The way a child does. Putting dirt into his mouth to know what earth is.  
And then forgetting it.

So what if the Earth is only blue waves and blue skies here?

Why should I care?  
This island, and Eléni will take care of me, no matter what.  
Tucking me safely away in hills flayed bare by a Greek sun by day,  
and soothed by a Greek mother-of-pearl moon by night.  
We've nailed its light, you know, to the floor and walls of our house.  
It's a Hell of a lot better than the insanity of the States.

**WOMAN**

You need help, Dad. That's all.  
We want you to come home for just a little while, to get some help. That's all.

**DOMINICK**

Life's all a hurry back where you are.  
I'm safe in Greece in the absence of hurry.  
I can let life choose for me what to notice, and what to not.  
Eléni and I can stumble over each other in simple joy.  
For the rest of our lives here.  
Please.

**WOMAN**

So you can sit your life away at some small table, staring off into space?  
Nothing in the world touched by the river of your thoughts?  
You used to write to make a change in the world.  
What's happened? Who's reading anything of yours anymore?  
You haven't published a thing since you met her.  
And, get me right on this, I'm not blaming her.  
I'm not on her case.  
I just want you to get the help you need now, and then you can come back.

**DOMINICK**

I write to carry the privacy of her body inside me.  
Like fine wine.  
And I don't care who else reads it.  
It's mine. That's what's important.  
*I* live with it.  
*I* survive with it, in a vanishing world.  
It's *my* paradise, and I'm content with it.

**WOMAN**

Whose body?  
Whose body do you carry in privacy inside you?

**DOMINICK**

When gods come down from Mt. Olympus to find mortals to kiss,  
there soon will be the scent of roses and lavender in the air.  
It's her. It's her I write about like that.  
And the impossible loveliness of this place.

**WOMAN**

Who?

**DOMINICK**

[*pause*] I'm so grateful you're here with me. I forget things.  
What's going on? No one tells me a thing. Am I going crazy?

**WOMAN**

Dad, we think you've had a mini stroke, or something like that,  
and everything's going to be okay.  
It can easily be fixed, if we take care of it now.  
Come back with me.  
Then, when you're better, you can come back here.

**DOMINICK**

I can't go by myself.

**WOMAN**

Eléni can come, too.  
I'll go talk to her tonight...  
You're going to be just fine. I promise you.

**HELEN empties her glass and refills it.**

**HELEN**

[*suddenly*] O my God!! He *is sick*, isn't he?  
That's why his daughter's here, isn't it? Because he's not well.  
I should have known.  
Please, God, make it not be that.

**The WOMAN exits stage right, and  
crosses over to stage left, entering the  
room with HELEN and the GREEK  
WOMAN. HELEN jumps up with a gasp,  
maybe knocking over her full glass of  
wine.**

**DOMINICK**

Percy says, present company excluded, of course,

that you can always judge a woman by the men she sleeps with.

**END**