

G. baby, i got scars myself, more than i can even count. i can still feel each one, i can feel the way the skin's gone all see-through, like if you looked real hard, you could see straight inside me.

EURYDICE. you lived to tell, huh?

G. always, baby. i'm like a god, can't snuff me out.

EURYDICE. you lookin for a date, or what?

G. i'm lookin for something.

EURYDICE. what you lookin for, baby? you lookin for a little love?

G. i'm lookin for something.

EURYDICE. something is a lot of things.

G. what you got to give?

EURYDICE. old man, i ain't got nothing to give, ain't nothing free in this life.

G. now that's the hard truth. i like a woman who tells the truth. you always tell a man the truth?

EURYDICE. it ain't like i'm makin no promises.

G. no promises, no lies. ain't that how the song goes?

EURYDICE. i'll tell you what, old man, if you know all the words to that song, you ain't as dumb as you look.

G. tss. how about you take a little walk with this old man, kill a little time—come on, sweet thing, pretty thing, what you got to lose?

(EURYDICE follows G into the darkness.)

shit
INCIDENTAL TRANSFORMATIONS

songs orpheus sings to the queen of the dead and D

(Darkness. The sound of voices and laughter. D, PERSEPHONE, and ORPHEUS. The remains of fast-food wrappers and beer bottles. ORPHEUS is humming.)

PERSEPHONE. man, shut up!

ORPHEUS. how about i tell you a little story about love—

PERSEPHONE. tss. i ain't listening to none of that. cause, see, baby, i'm done with love. love, for me, that's fuckin ancient history. for real, what's some story about love goin do for me?

ORPHEUS. make you smile

PERSEPHONE. tss

ORPHEUS. make you cry

PERSEPHONE. baby, i got plenty to cry about. i don't need no story to make me cry.

D. what up? you got a story, jack? you got somethin you dyin to say?

ORPHEUS. yeah, i got something i want to say. see, what it is, it goes like this: this guy i used to know, he loved this girl, but she didn't give him the time of day. she thought she was hot shit, she thought she was all that.

D. tss. heard that, jack. heard that all before. that story is so old.

ORPHEUS. man, i wasn't talkin to you. that story was for the lady.

PERSEPHONE. baby, that girl was a fool, and a fool stays a fool no matter what. why should i give a damn about what happens to some fool?

ORPHEUS. baby, all of us are fools

PERSEPHONE. but that was one fucked-up story though, huh?

ORPHEUS. but see, baby, that's how love goes most of the time

PERSEPHONE. tss, seriously. tell me somethin i don't already know by heart

D. ok, all right, listen up, i got one for you—girl, are you listenin'?

PERSEPHONE. oh yeah uh huh, yeah i'm listenin—i'm hangin on your every word, baby, i can't wait—

D. i'm serious, don't be giving me none of that. you listen up, cause you goin like this one: story of a man who loved to love too much. he loved the girls so much, but he was old, dig, and the girls, they'd be all like, "old man, get away, you're too old for me—" but he didn't care, he told them: "girls, i ain't a man, i'm a god, and a god can turn into any damn thing he pleases. he can turn into the gold chain dangling around your neck, he can turn into the red cherry candy melting in your mouth, he can turn into some racy, lacy thing you wear right up close against your skin—"

PERSEPHONE. —man, shut up, cause that is so nasty—

D. —that old man had something going on, see, he was cagey and sly, ticklin and touchin, squeezin and kissin, getting all the love he could get, and that old man, he found love in some of the strangest places, sniffed it out like some old hound dog, and i swear, he lived happily ever after, the end.

PERSEPHONE. tss, sounds like the story of one dirty old man.

D. baby, you miss the point entirely. that man was sly, he had a plan—

ORPHEUS. give it up, man. that story sucked.

D. yeah, what do you know, jack?

PERSEPHONE. what i wanna know is why is it any way the girl's always gotta be a fool?

D. tss. i don't know for sure, but, baby, i can guess—

PERSEPHONE. —don't you go there, baby, cause you won't like it one bit—

D. —see, cause girls, dig, girls are fools when it comes to love—

PERSEPHONE. —you ain't no girl, baby, what's your excuse?

D. —tss—anyway—

PERSEPHONE. —fool—

D. —anyway—how about it girl? you got a story or you just giving me sass

PERSEPHONE. yeah, i got a story. i got one better than all y'all. story of a man who couldn't keep it in his pants, and how his woman got so sick of it, she got a little potion from this haitian girl she knew, found her old man's little missy, put that potion in the little missy's drink, turned that little missy into a pit bull bitch—beautiful little bitch, all sleek and chocolate brown, staring out at the world with these sad, dog-girl eyes. everybody was all like, "where'd you get that dog, that's a nice dog," but she didn't say a word. tied her up in back with a big old chain, and that bitch, i'm telling you, she howled night and day. heard tell later, she ran away, nobody knows where she got to in the end.

D. is that a true story?

PERSEPHONE. what'd i say? hell yeah, it's a true story

D. tss. i don't believe a word

PERSEPHONE. baby, you best believe what i say, cause i know it all

ORPHEUS. you know it all, huh?

PERSEPHONE. everything and then some

D. tss

PERSEPHONE. ain't nothing i ain't heard of, i've heard it all before

ORPHEUS. baby, i got a story i bet you ain't heard. true story.

D. man, ain't no such thing as a true story. and this girl, here, she lies

PERSEPHONE. —man, shut up.

ORPHEUS. this story is true, story of a man who loved this girl so much he followed her straight to hell. brought her back alive, too, tricked the devil, sang a song, made the devil cry

PERSEPHONE. tss. what kinda song would that be, that would make the devil cry?

D. must have been some kinda very special song

PERSEPHONE. uh huh

D. must have been some kinda crazy-ass song

PERSEPHONE. uh huh

D. must have had the devil shakin and groovin

ORPHEUS. no, man, that ain't how it was, it wasn't like that: the man, he sang this song, all about how he loved his girl, more than money, more than pride, more than his own sorry-ass life—one love, powerful love—and the devil, when he heard the song, he cried, from someplace deep in the pit of his heart, he cried, and all the lost souls in hell, they cried, too, so that all hell echoed with their crying, saddest sound the man ever heard, cause they knew that song, they knew it in their bones,

and what it was to have this pure, precious thing, to have and to hold in your hands, and then to lose it, you wasn't even thinking right, and you wasn't holding on, cause you're stupid and fucked up, and you could've done things different, but you blew it anyway.

D. damn. man, what are you trying say? cause, see, no offense, but that story sucked. and if that story is true, man, tss, my name is mud—

PERSEPHONE. —well, then fuck you, your name is mud, mud.

D. my name ain't mud, bitch.

PERSEPHONE. —why don't you get lost, mud—

D. —shut up, bitch—

PERSEPHONE. —and don't be callin me bitch—

D. —anyway—

PERSEPHONE. —fuck you, bitch, party's over—

D. —anyway then, i guess i'm going now—

PERSEPHONE. —yeah, you're going now, you got that right, unless you want to be gettin into it, you better get out of here—

D. tss. right. i'll see you later then. i'll see you around, jack. later for you, too—bitch (*Goes.*)

ORPHEUS. fuck him

PERSEPHONE. you got that right

ORPHEUS. forget him

PERSEPHONE. forget who?

ORPHEUS. there you go. how about i tell you another little story about love

PERSEPHONE. yeah, baby, i'm listenin, tell me all about love, tell me all about that shit, i'm all ears.

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STDB