

# Who Has Wrung Our Lovely Belle?

[Dramatic Personae:

Desmondo: Revenger

Lynne: The Lovely Belle, The Sweet Fig, The Songless Skylark

Annabelle: The Cracked Belle, The Strangler Fig, Lady-Mantis

Arthur: Brother to Lynne

Marcus: Brother to Lynne

Shrink: Shrink

Scene I: A coffee shop. A pasty young man, Desmondo, sits alone at a table. His eyes are sunken-in and his appearance is unhealthy. He is dressed in black from head to toe. His arms are thin and his examining eyes dart back and forth when people pass him. Desmondo is livid. He twists a napkin in his hands.]

*Desmondo:*

O! All hope abandoned! Lynne is to blame.

I loved her and she publicly said no.

My unrequited love will be her shame.

She has dealt my manhood a vicious blow.

Evil conniving witch! I'll make her pay!

Can a lover scorned create a virtue?

Now, of her features, what do I dismay?

What should I do? What action should ensue?

-I like that smile, she smiles so well,

Yes! Those lips, too long, have my madness fed.

I'll enhance her countenance, this lovely belle,

With wire cut to the back of her head.

The pain? Not enough, she must know her sin,

If I am to do this she must know why.  
Yet, one knows love only with trust therein,  
Her friendship to my intent I will tie.  
Deceive that trust with Humility's lie.  
So to her friend with my cunning-tongued arts:  
A meek visage is where deception starts.

*[He writes a letter for Lynne. He sees Annabelle, her best friend, approaching him. He realizes this is an opportune time to use her in his deceptive web against Lynne.]*

Lo! Here she comes, simple Annabelle.  
Now with these lonesome words,  
(Played with down cast eyes  
And meek intent, tied to my lukewarm  
Spirit, newly humbled, ha!)  
This simple belle will vouch-safe  
On my part and ensnare her  
Friend with the trust present  
In their loving friendship. In doing so  
I can trump a queen's heart with a friend's woe.  
Here she comes.

*Enter Annabelle, she appears to feel sorry for Desmondo but does not say anything. Their eyes meet. She shivers before moving on.*

Annabelle, you are rigid-shivering,  
Approaching falling snow.

*Annabelle:*

What do you mean Desmondo?  
Do you think I'm cold  
Because I wear my heart on my sleeve?

*Desmondo:*

No, but before seeing me  
Your misty morning coil fell warm and windy,  
As if your very atmosphere where song,  
Such sinewy long notes  
Raining down to the ground barraged below.  
O! Such poetry in mourning.  
Alas, The fallen do freeze solid  
In the 'do's and don'ts'  
Of such frightened motion.

[he grabs her hand]

So if you are not cold, why are you shivering?  
I have asked for nothing and yet you still say no.

*[The first slow crack of thunder is heard in the distance. He begins to tear at his shirt and beat on his chest like a wild man.]*

Do you hate me?  
The woe-tattered coward  
Battering this tear-dampened shirt.  
This soggy earth grows so weary,  
Will my name remain as Mud  
Made from rain and dirt?

*Annabelle:*

No Desmondo, I understand—

*Desmondo:*

I understand that I'm not stupid!  
So do not condescend me with a mock show of remorse.  
I know the routine fair lady, your falling eyes must grow  
Misty before you can change your course.

I know the part I've played. This trite and common  
World has made my manners drupe uncultured.  
I've never had a friendly spell  
Extend beyond the depths of a giving heart's well.  
--And these tears well too soon.

[He cries]

*Annabelle:*

Desmondo,  
Please shore your sorrows,  
Before your mind follows  
Your frame sinking beneath the humiliating weight remembrance.  
There is nothing wrong with dissemblance when Mercy cries in vain.  
Pass the rein of incessant weeping  
Beating the earth pleading pain.  
Let it pass to the gutter drinking,  
Let it quench the drain.  
Hush fire pleading, 'O reign of rain'.

*Desmondo:*

Why?

*Annabelle:*

Torrents of Sorrow shed both passing tears.  
Torments resemble storms to old forests,  
They rattle stocks that brink in years,  
But pass and reveal the stronger tiers  
Of maturing thought. You'll cheer up, I promise.

*Desmondo:*

Thank you. Perhaps you could give this to Lynne.  
My heart still battles a ghostly fear from  
My hasty prattle that, confessionless,

Might unravel me with sorrow.

*[Gives letter]*

*Annabelle:*

Desmondo. You think too much upon the  
Subject, yet, I will relate your heart's will,  
And give you response, so Sorrow be still.

*Desmondo:*

Thank you.

*Exit Annabelle*

Virtue is far more malleable than sin,  
It is a stupid dog! Eager to please.  
A cloaked villain's moves this fool can't perceive.  
Annie! I'm still what I have always been.  
I'll have Lynne smile though her heart I can't win.

*[Scene II: Lynne's bedroom, Lynne is talking to the mirror]*

*Lynne.*

He's not a beast, he just  
Acts like one. He sulks, like an animal,  
With down cast eyes that, upon me,  
Throw up a furious madness.  
His appetite haunts my heels.  
He thinks I'm his meals.  
No, I do not trust him. His eyes  
Size me like a cold caveman would  
Size a cozy bear—savagely!

*Enter Annabelle.*

*Annabelle:*

Look here Lynne, a letter  
From your poor courting fool.

*[She reads]*

He implores your forgiveness  
From his recent madness  
And seeks respite from his sadness.  
His days of fearful stalking  
Have given way to an upright walking,  
His heart pleas to receive no more balking.

*Lynne:*

I don't care. Just because  
He's not a beast doesn't make  
Us the same species.

*Annabelle:*

He's just a lonely boy,  
I think he's too shy. This world is cruel.  
We pour our spite on those unfit to bear it  
And wonder why they act so.  
I think that with a touch of friendship,  
You could set his bitter heart free  
To grow into something no longer so creepy.

*Lynne:*

Annie, you listen to me  
And listen well. Don't you dare bring  
That beggar to my presence  
If you value our friendship.  
Everything about his behavior

Concerns me. I do not like him,  
I do not like his behavior and  
My relations are chosen on my own terms.  
When it comes to my affection  
I have the right to be a tyrant.

*[Lynne sets down her mirror]*

What am I to do? To be whored to the  
Lunacy of the common masses?  
That, in favor of civility, I cannot  
Freely guard my constitution because  
It is deemed impolite? Should I  
Be ravaged by Mediocrity's barbarian horde  
So a stranger can feel 'honky dorey'?  
Am I saying, 'my shit doesn't stink'? No!  
But should I enjoy shitting in public?—I don't!  
Should I wear my pants about my ankles?  
Is it enough 'to be caught with my pants  
Down' or should I 'show my ass'?—I won't!  
What is he, or any other person,  
*[She gestures to the audience]*  
Whom I have chosen not to  
Invest myself in? -rhetorical flesh.

*Annabelle:*

Rhetorical flesh? Lynne, you are cruel.

*Lynne:*

Is there another way that I can be?  
Right! He loves me for personality.  
It's not the swimming pictures in his head  
But a hero's love by which he is led.  
That I should let a sea of broken hearts

Undo my identity for spare parts.  
I can't believe you feel sorry for him,  
He is a drowning soul that knows how to swim.  
Sadness is a craft made for survival,  
When sadness to madness is its rival.  
His malady was a self-cruelty  
When he mixed love with sight's credulity.

*Anna:*

[aside] She kills people everyday  
As long as there is no price to pay.

*Lynne:*

Yet every dog still has their day.  
'Beauty is transient' is what I say.  
Memory and beauty are passing things,  
They can't replace what an honest moment brings.  
It's armor that guards a weightier matter,  
For what is a skylark that cannot sing?  
A lost child to the loony Mad-Hatter.  
A scared little girl who has been hurled  
Into the madness of a fucked up world.  
Oh! I'm beautiful! Blah! flatter, flatter.  
People flatter till their heads grow fatter,  
But the fact is it's your world they shatter,  
So the sage, in a world full of danger,  
Puts their good foot forward to a stranger.

*Anna:*

Lynne, I've never heard your heart so negative.  
Listen! The sage's heart is like a sieve  
That filters out bad and leaves the good:  
'Having it all' includes love misunderstood.  
[aside] No beast alive could survive her canopies hood,

Oh! To strangle her! Sweet fig! I'll kill this host  
And let something new grow where an oppressive giant stood.  
A vacant hole that gave birth to a ghost  
Will honor her fall with a vengeful boast.

*Lynne:*

Annie, you have completely missed my points!  
I, more than anybody, know I'm flawed.  
Am I not finite? It's you that anoints  
Me 'more than mortal'. I have clawed  
A place for myself out of the dark  
And I won't go back to feeling stark.  
When you place me on a pedestal, it has begun.  
You no longer need to treat me like a human.

*Anne:*

Okay Lynne, Okay, you win, you win,  
You're above all wrong, beyond all sin.

*Lynne:*

[aside] Should I tell the reason I seem the devil?  
What the hell, I'm caught. I speak as if this life I chose.  
The truth is I want revenge! against those  
That love me because I'm beautiful.  
I'm the basest thief! But was it love I stole?  
From those that gave it all away  
Upon the assumption, that with this toll,  
I could end their 'Groundhog's Day'.  
Do I feel superior? yes I do,  
It's not because my features are pretty.  
I feel better than those sad people who  
Give love, not for love, but for beauty.