

*[Buggie, enters, dragging her feet. In one hand she holds a ledger that emulates an Ipad and in the other hand, a container of crumbs which she empties on the counter in front of the others.]*

BUGGIE (*dejectedly*): These smidgens are all that's left.

CRUSTY: That!

BUGGIE: This.

MR. B.: That?

BUGGIE: This! Yes, Papa!

*(She begins to write in her ledger.)*

MR. B.: Any luck with

BUGGIE: No!

CRUSTY: How about

BUGGIE: No! No gas. No pills. No oil. No sugar. No nothing!

MR. B.: No

BUGGIE: No! No, nothing, Papa! (*pointing to the crumbs*) This is it! There is nothing left to make your liquid concoction and barely enough crumbs to qualify as such. Where did it all go? I've been keeping count of everything. The storage room is empty. According to my calculations, we have a meal or two remaining and soon you'll be kissing your juice goodbye.

MR. B.: Did you look in-

BUGGIE: Everywhere, papa!

MR. B.: I guess this is it, folks. The hour has come. (*to the jar of juice*) You're all that remains.

SLISHY/SLOSHY: Oh, the bugmanity!

BUGGIE: We need to go up to the surface.

*[Mosco gasps for air.]*

Oh, my goddess, Mr. Mosco!

*[Buggie rushes to his aid.]*

BUGGIE (*cont'd*): You poor thing. I didn't see you there. Did you run out of air again? (to the others) Why didn't anybug help him? (silence) I'd expect more from you, Papa.

MR. B.: We were just having a little fun, sweetheart. Right folks?

ALL: Here! Here!

BUGGIE: There is no "little fun" when it's at the expense of somebuggy else. If that were the rule of entertainment, we'd end up a sad lot!

CRUSTY: It's the price you pay for trespassing.

BUGGIE: He has every right to be here!

CRUSTY: He's the reason we're low on the sauce!

BUGGIE: He just got here.

CRUSTY: Yea and look what he's done, already! (*to Mosco*) Hey, Maggot! Why don't you go up to the surface and get some fresh air and why you're at it, do a little scrounging for us, huh? And don't forget the john needs a little freshening up. I missed the bowl earlier. Sorry. Lazy louse!

*[The all laugh except Buggie.]*

BUGGIE: Don't listen to him, Mr. Mosco. Come on. Open your eyes. Easy. Easy.

*[Mosco is coming to.]*

There you are.

MOSCO: Wow!

BUGGY: Welcome back.

MOSCO: That was... WOW, Buggie. I was so there. You should've seen us. Me and my mosquitoette. Eyes locked. No words. Silent bliss. Our little nymphs buzzing all around us. Love was in the air. It was so real. It was so real.

BUGGIE: That's beautiful, Mr. Mosco. I'm sure your gonna find her soon. Why don't you give that meditation of yours a break. We don't want anything bad to happen to you. What would we do without you?

CRUSTY: We'd have more juice for starters!

MR. B.: Why don't you pluck the other wing and join the crawlers.

BUGGIE: Have you lost your mind, Papa? Or are the spirits moving you again?

MR. B.: It's just a little ribbing to pass the time, darling. If we can't laugh at ourselves then who can we laugh at?

BUGGIE: The time for laughter has come and gone.

MOSCO: Don't worry, Buggie.

*[Mosco begins sharpening his broken stinger.]*

I ain't waiting for death to come knocking. As soon as my wing grows back, I'm flying outta here and I ain't coming back! Check it out. See, Buggie. It's growing back. You see it? See it?

*[Buggie examines Mosco back.]*

BUGGIE: Oh, yes. I see something there. A nub of some sort seems to be popping out.

CRUSTY: That's a wart! *(to Mosco)* Why don't you just crawl outta here, Maggot! There's the door. Go find your little Maggot wench and live happily ever after!

MOSCO: I will. And your whipping bug will be miles away. You'll have no one to clean up after you or to blame for your bored miserable lives! You'll get so fed up that you'll turn on each other. Then you'll become easy lunch for the Mantises.

CRUSTY: Ohhh, no. Here you go with your Mantises malarky.

MOSCO: First they came for the bees and nobody said nothing. Now they're coming for the rest of us!

CRUSTY: Somebuggie stop this gnat before he starts with his stupid stories.

MOSCO: They're coming to eat you.

MR. B.: Enough with that nonsense, Mosco! Can't you see we are trying to enjoy a refreshing beverage.

*[MOSCO feels a light sensation in his antennae. He grabs them.]*

BUGGIE: What's wrong?

MOSCO: I thought I heard something.

CRUSTY: Oooh, I'm scared.

BUGGIE: Don't listen to them, Mr. Mosco. MR. B.: Let's get back to our match, Crusty. Now where were we?

CRUSTY: The dethroning!

*[LeRoach strikes a dissonant chord on the piano.]*

Quit with that damn racket already, Darkie! I'm trying to concentrate!

BUGGIE: Leave Mr. LeRoach alone.

CRUSTY: He's been banging on that same crappy chord all night! It's annoying as all hell!

BUGGIE: He's expressing himself.

*[LeRoach strikes another dissonant chord.]*

CRUSTY: Then write a poem. It's quieter.

BUGGIE: Music works as well as words to express one's feelings, Mr. Crusty. Sometimes better. What is music but sound that arouses the soul and at times expresses its discontent. It reminds us that we are still alive. Some would even say life sprang from sound.

CRUSTY: I don't get that fancy stuff your yapping about, Buggie. All I know is that racket is hurting my face!

BUGGIE: I'm speaking about matters of the heart.

CRUSTY: Oh, no. She's getting all feelings again!

MR. B.: Darling, lets not go down that path again. We must rely on our words.

BUGGIE: So you can sit on your rumps all day?

MR. B.: What are you getting at?

BUGGIE: You two sit there all day long playing your silly little game of battle, spouting philosophical hogwash while ridiculing everybuggy when there are decisions to be made. What if what Mr. Mosco has been saying about predator mantises wiping out entire hordes is true? Is it, Papa? Is it?

CRUSTY: It's a fake! He's freaking us out so we leave this joint and he can have all the juice.

BUGGIE: Your precious juice will soon see it's demise Mr. Crusty, no thanks to you and Papa and there won't be anything to keep you hiding down here. It's time to face the music. When are we going up? We're still down here and what we need is up there!

MR. B.: That's my Pupa. So mature.

BUGGIE: I can do without your condescension, Papa. I'm not a pupa! Look at these crumbs.

*[Buggie points to the crumbs.]*

Depressing. And look at the death count. It's two minutes past midnight!

*[She points at the tally on the wall. She then looks at her ledger.]*

The last god remains! If their fate is any indication of ours, then we are not far behind.

MR. B.: Oh, Darling. Don't be so grim.

BUGGIE: The Gods are all dead! Except for that one above that's holding on for dear life.

MR. B.: Now you're being dramatic!

BUGGIE: You've locked me down here all my life, Papa!

MR. B.: The surface is no place for my little Buggie.

BUGGIE: And neither is a cave. I want to see the sun. Meet other insects. I want to climb a tree?

MR. B.: We're cave dwellers now, sweetheart. There's nothing wrong with being hunkered down inside these walls, snuggled up and safe with the likes of all these wonderful creatures.

*[Buggy rolls her eyes at Crusty.]*

Besides, there's nothing wrong with a little diversion. When you grow wings, you'll understand.

BUGGIE: They're fused to our shells, Papa! Nature's cruel joke! Karma for living my entire existence down here! What good are wings if we can't use them to fly. Sorry, Mr. Mosco but one bug's riches are another bug's burden.

MR. B.: Cheer up, darling. You may fly. There's always hope.

BUGGIE: And hope is a good thing?

MR. B.: Why, yes. Hope keeps us waiting. It's a good way to expand time.

BUGGIE: Or waste it.

MR. B.: Look at Mosco. As much fun as we have with him, he stays focused, hopeful and committed to growing his wing back. Although we all know he never will, he doesn't see it as a waste of time. Quite the contrary. He actually relishes in his effort which is the epitome of what to do when time has nothing left for us but to "waste it" as you put it. Darling, every moment is time spent in whichever way one chooses to spend it.

BUGGIE: Then I should be free to spend my time in any which way I want, and I want to go up!

MR. B.: I was just discussing freedom with Crusty. It's an illusion. Your spirit is restless because it is unsatisfied by its formlessness. You are flustered because you are unsatisfied with your form but that's okay. You see, we are all prisoners to form. That's why you want to climb out of your shell, darling. Right, sisters?

SLISHY/SLOSHY: (*slurring as they toast*) Right between the eyes!

MR. B.: That's right, ladies. Right between the eyes! Which is why we are thankful to the gods for making us prisoners TO THE JUICE!

ALL: (*amused, they raise their drinks*) TO THE JUICE!

[*They drink merrily as Buggie watches in disbelief.*]

BUGGIE: You are all ridiculous!

[*Buggie makes a crumb count in her ledger.*]

MR. B.: Now where were we Crusty? Oh, yes. Our match.

[*Mr. B. and Crusty continue their match. LeRoach hits the same dissonant chord.*]

CRUSTY: Quit with the damn soundtrack, Darkie! We get it! You're heart aches. Boo Frickin' Who!

BUGGIE: Leave him be!

CRUSTY: Nobuggy's waiting for him to exhale, darling.

BUGGIE: I'm not your darling. I have a name. We all have names!

MR. B.: Buggie!

BUGGIE: I'm not his darling, Papa. It's obvious Mr. LeRoach is hurting yet he continues with his incessant mockery!

CRUSTY: We're just having a little fun, right B? Diversioning ourselves.

BUGGIE: *(to Crusty)* Brute.

MR. B.: Respect your elders, Buggie.

BUGGIE: One's age does not merit my respect. One's attitude does.

MR. B.: That's enough! What has come over you?

BUGGIE: His cruelty!

CRUSTY: I don't care about LeRoach's love woes! I just wanna sit here and enjoy my drink!

MR. B.: There's just no room for romance at a time like this. Besides, romance is for the symbiotic. It holds no merit.

BUGGIE: Who speaks of romance?

CRUSTY: Matters of the heart? Remember?

BUGGIE: But he's in pain.

CRUSTY: Yeah, I guess it's not easy coming home and catching your mate with another parasite. *(They laugh.)*

BUGGIE: Leave him be.

CRUSTY *(to LeRoach)*: Hey, parasite. I thought your types were the forever kind.

*[Laughter ensues.]*

BUGGIE: Papa!

MR. B.: Okay. Okay. That's enough diversion, folks.

BUGGIE: I better get back to my foraging before I come unhinged. In private!

*[Buggie exits into the storage room. Crusty approaches LeRoach.]*

CRUSTY: Hey, pal. *(mockingly)* "Honey, I'm home. Oh, wait, there's another roach snacking on my crumb! Nom, nom, nom, nom. They're doing it spider style! We haven't done that in weeks!" That's what happens parasite when you don't tend to your garden. Your tomatoes get eaten!

MOSCO: SHUUUUUUUT UP! Shut up, shut up, shut up! Blah, blah, blah! Insult after insult! Don't listen to that pest, LeRoach. He's just a good for nothing blabber mouth pest!

CRUSTY: What?

SLISHY/SLOSHY: He's calling you a pest!

MOSCO: Pest! Pest! Pest! You suck, Pest! You suck at everything! You suck at playing Battle! You suck at breathing! You suck at walking! You suck!

CRUSTY: Walking, huh? Make fun of my condition one more times and-

MOSCO: The only thing you don't suck at is being YOU! You're great at being you because you are great at being a jerk! You're amazing! You're the alpha! You're the Queen!

CRUSTY: You're walking on rocky ground there, newbie maggot! You only in this joint cuz these bleeding hearts let you stay but I don't care for you one bit! So you better watch yourself or else.

MOSCO: Or else? Or else what?! What?

CRUSTY: Or else!

SLISHY/SLOSHY: Or else? Or else? Or ELSE!

MOSCO: Ever since I got here all you've done is snip snip snip at me and now your snip snip snipping at LeRoach who ain't bothering nobbie and I'm sick of it! You're an infection!

CRUSTY: You're lucky I can't move so well no more or else

MOSCO: Blah, Blah, blah! Come on! I'm right here! Make a move! SLISHY/SLOSHY: Fight! Fight! Fight!

*[Mosco warms up for a fight as Buggie enters.]*

BUGGIE: Have you all gone mad? Enough with all the bravado! It's not doing us any good!

*[LeRoach bangs on the piano with his claws then with his head.]*

LeROACH: Aaaahhhhhh!

BUGGIE: Are you okay, Mr. LeRoach?

LeROACH *(solely)*: I'm just a parasite. Thanks for the reminder.

*[LeRoach hangs his head then stumbles to the restroom. Buggie hesitates then goes to him but he's already inside. She lingers by the door, then slowly turns and gives Crusty a death stare.]*

BUGGIE:*(to Crusty)* Your cruelty knows no limit.



*[Buggie picks up the container of crumbs and exits into the storage room.]*

MR. B.: Did you have to go that far, Crusty?

CRUSTY: We're all losers in the end, B. Some of us are just more losers than others. So where were we? Oh, yes. I was about to crush you.

MR. B.: I'd like to see you try.

*[They continue their match. Mosco stares down Crusty. He grabs at his antennae as he feels another sensation. He holds them. He looks worried. The feeling subsides. He decides to go back to meditating. Buggie stares from the storage room toward the restroom door.]*

### ***INSIDE THE RESTROOM***

*[LeRoach is taking a piss. The Pissing stops. A short Trickle. Pissing continues. Pissing stops. A trickle. Pissing stops. A fart. He flushes the toilet. He looks in the mirror. He fiddles with his necktie.]*

LeRoach: You pathetic parasite! Talkin' to a meaningless beady eyed coward! You let this happen! It was you! Now she's gone. She's gone and there's no bringing her back. You pathetic parasite!

*[LeRoach knots his necktie on an overhead beam. The buzzing of a million insects is heard. The room begins to rattle as an electrical short echoes. Mosco is heard from inside the bar.]*

MOSCO *(from the bar)*: Oh, no! The BUUUZZZ!!!!!!

LeROACH: Aaaaaaaaaaagh!!!!

*[LeRoach jumps. Darkness. The hollow sound of a beating heart. Then...silence.]*