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# Butter on the Latch

By Josephine Decker

One, one.  
One.  
One.  
One.  
I loved it.  
Well, now  
I can finally sleep.  
Thank you, you're amazing.  
Bye.  
Hey!  
Pony?  
What?  
What do you mean you  
don't know where you are?  
What do you mean?  
Your jaw hurts?  
Are you in there?  
Get out of there!  
Get out of the house,  
get out of there.  
You don't know them?  
You don't need your shoes,  
you don't need your shoes!  
You can get other shoes,  
get out of the house!  
They're waking up?  
Get out, get out right now.  
What do you mean?  
Where were you last night?  
You're in New York.  
You went out,  
Pony, you went out?  
Are you outside right now?  
What do you see?  
I promise I'm not going  
to hang up on you.  
I'm coming to get you  
out of that house.  
Who the fuck were those people?  
No!  
No!  
It's fine, totally fine.  
You get to choose him or not?  
And you get to choose...

No, but everybody  
else does, right?  
Oh my...  
Oh my God!  
Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey.  
What's going on?  
I can't believe you made it.  
I had no idea you were coming.  
You look so much happier.  
Really?  
Do you see them?  
What are you doing here?  
I had no idea you were  
actually going to...  
Really, you didn't  
get the email?  
You look great!  
No, don't lean on  
me, don't lean on me.  
Sorry.  
Are you going  
to the dance tonight?  
Yeah, we're going  
to the dance, yeah.  
Do you know what  
bands are playing tonight?  
I don't know.  
What's your name?  
- Nez.  
- - Nez?  
- N, E, Z.  
- - Nez, N, E, Z.  
And my wife is Leah.  
Leah.  
It's Isolde and Sarah.  
Yeah, thank you.  
So we'll see you...  
- Yeah, see you soon.  
- See you down there.  
- - Bye, Nez.  
Nice meeting you.  
Nice meeting you.  
So sweet.  
Was he considering

coming with you here?  
No way.  
That would be hell.  
Was it official, the break-up?  
Yeah, yeah.  
How long has it been since...  
It's been like two weeks.  
We haven't spoken, so...  
Remember Simon?  
Oh yeah, what's up?  
He went back to London.  
He also fucked me  
in my ass last week.  
It was awesome.  
He's always so  
surprising, like it was...  
I don't know how he pulled  
that off, it was as if  
we were, like, falling asleep  
and then all of a sudden...  
He just  
pulled a fast one on you?  
That's usually how  
it starts, you know?  
Gain your trust and then...  
- And he doesn't have, like,  
an ass-fucking dick,  
like, it's enormous.  
I'm sorry.  
No, those are  
tender moments, you know?  
You have to, like,  
really trust the person.  
You can't really just pull  
that on somebody, you know?  
I do trust him.  
It would be nice  
to be in kind of like a...  
Like a formal  
relationship, you know?  
Like with a man  
instead of a boy.  
Why wasn't it formal?  
He was a man, he was 30.

Yeah, but he's  
still a boy, you know?  
What happened?  
What happened that  
made it final, A,  
and B, is it final?  
Yeah, it's totally final.  
That's what  
you said a few times ago.  
I'm just curious why  
you know it's final now.  
I just like, okay, okay.  
Do you know that place  
that's like 2626,  
it's in the East Village,  
and they give, like,  
these scrubs, you know?  
- Yeah.  
So he was like,  
"Okay, go inside,  
"make yourself comfortable,"  
or whatever, I'm like,  
"Make yourself comfortable,  
does that mean,  
do you like, take  
off your clothes?"  
It's just a stranger, am  
I supposed to be naked,  
and it's a guy, what do I do?  
They didn't clarify at all.  
I'm like, "Well, if I'm  
getting my body scrubbed,  
"I probably should  
be naked, right?"  
It just makes sense, you know?  
So I was like, "Okay, this  
is all right, I understand,  
this is professional, so  
just go topless," you know?  
And then he gives me a  
scrub, but he's just this  
stranger and he's scrubbing  
salt all over your tits,  
and then rubbing oil

all over your tits,  
and was really paying  
attention to, like, areas,  
you know what I mean?  
It was just very...  
All these kids.  
There's children coming.  
Yeah, there's children coming.  
Okay, so like, he like...  
There's a part where you  
rinse off the salt, you know?  
So he lays me down,  
and he stretches me out  
in all these wacky positions,  
and there's one position...  
What the fuck?  
He was like this, he  
was like stretching me,  
and using the weight of his  
chest to like stretch me out  
and like massage  
my ass like this.  
- That's completely hot!  
- It was totally hot.  
I was like, dude, my boyfriend  
never did that before.  
This is insane!  
Did he speak English?  
- Yeah, but like...  
- But like no.  
No, but that's good, you know?  
Oh my God,  
that is the hottest.  
So then, after the scrub,  
they wash you off,  
you know, and then...  
And then like, you know,  
he's soaping up your body  
and then he comes back in,  
you know, professionally  
wiping the salt off of  
your tits, like this,  
and then professionally,  
under the context of that this

I don't think I can fucking  
handle this anymore.  
Like, I can't hold it together,  
this is way too steamy.  
This guy is a babe,  
he's rubbing my tits,  
- he's all over me.  
- - What was he wearing?  
These big fucking hot hands,  
and he's just wearing, you know,  
one of those dorky  
"I am from 2626,  
"I am a masseuse," buff T-shirt,  
like bodybuilding T-shirt.  
And then he had  
this big dorky chain  
around his neck, really sleazy.  
And then he leans like this  
and just starts breathing  
into my ear like this a  
little bit, like just enough  
distance so you know that  
like, just enough distance  
so it's kind of like pushing,  
and then it was like  
boom, bam, boom...  
- How much was he...  
- Down.  
How much was he aware...  
Oh, just...  
- Boom, bam, boom, on it.  
- Doom tech doom.  
- - Doom tech doom.  
And then I went and  
left, and I was like,  
"Seven passes please."  
Was the place nice?  
Did it obviously...  
- No, it was fucking filthy.  
It's really dirty, and all  
these people who go there,  
I think know what goes  
on there, you know?  
So everyone has this

kind of guilty look  
when they pass each  
other, you know?  
2626, you should go, man.  
- I'm kind of...  
- Victor, his name's Victor.  
Kind of considering it.  
"A dragon loves  
me, and he'll take me.  
"Every evening he'll  
come to see me,  
"and this evening  
he'll come too.  
"One day with a sound  
like a rifle shot,  
"the dragons descend on the girl  
"and entwining  
themselves in her hair,  
"carry her away, burning  
the forest as they go.  
"In the dragon's  
house, she brews  
"an herbal drink that renders  
her suitor powerless."  
It's so, so beautiful.  
Let me see what I can remember.  
- You should sing it.  
- Yeah.  
It can be my bedtime lullaby.  
All right, are  
we okay with this?  
Those of you that have  
been playing for a while,  
the pattern is simple for you.  
Start working on getting  
that shake in there, okay?  
So you're, you know, you're...  
That hand and this hand.  
So it's not really  
this, it's really this.  
So you're pushing with this...  
But are you into music  
and other kinds of music, or...  
I mean, I sung



in choir when I was young,  
but I don't have a lot  
of control, you know?  
Well, that's practice.  
You have a lot of control.  
You have amazing control,  
you seem like a singer.  
So what are you taking?  
What classes are you taking?  
I'm taking  
the Greeks, the Greek...  
Greek singing with Christos.  
That one, and maybe  
a few dance classes.  
I've mainly just been wandering  
around the woods, actually.  
She just wanted to get  
away from the madness.  
That's a great base.  
What is this?  
Slivovitz,  
it's like a plum brandy.  
Bulgarian, Balkan plum  
brandy, slivovitz.  
- Cheers.  
- Cheers.  
Wait, who was the  
woman that we were talking to  
earlier who was, said  
that she sang with Merita?  
Marianne said she  
sings with Corinna,  
from like 30 years ago  
or something like that.  
Can you do me a favor?  
Can you not tell people  
that I just got  
out of something?  
Is that okay?  
I just don't want to like...  
I didn't say  
anything to anyone.  
Well you were like, you know,  
it was like an

introduction to someone.

I mean I was being  
introduced to her, and then  
my introduction was  
like, "Oh, she just got  
out of of this relationship."

I'm sorry.

I don't want to make  
it into a big deal,  
but I don't want to be introduced  
as someone who just got...

I'm sorry, I can totally see  
how that would feel  
strange for you.

I'm sorry, that was  
kind of insensitive.

I guess I was just  
trying to open up the,  
the door for you to talk openly  
about what's been going on  
with you, so I wanted...

Well I've slept with  
like three different people  
like over the course  
of four years.

And like, you'd have  
to be a fucking saint  
to stay with someone  
like that, you know?

What?

You'd have to be  
like a saint to stay...  
You'd have to be a saint  
to stay with someone who's  
trying to get rid of  
you for four years.

But it's just fucked up  
because he was the one  
who actually was  
totally in love with me,  
and I was the one  
who pushed him away.

Because I didn't  
just have the...

The guts to leave him.

- Yeah, I know he's in love with you, but it seems like it's gone on and on and every single time, you got to a point where...

You know what I mean.

This guy is so annoying.

Yeah, it's okay.

But I mean, do you know what I mean?

Yeah.

It's fine, we don't have to talk about it right now.

No, that's why I

want to talk about it.

I want to understand.

I feel like that's going to help you through the entire...

Let's just drink, okay?

- Isolde.

- Let's finish these drinks.

I have to slowly be pried open, you know.

Let's just finish these drinks and then we'll dance.

Maybe I'll find some, like, cute banjo-violinist and we can all go...

- That guy plays a banjo.

Skinny-dipping in the pool or whatever.

- He's cute.

- There's a waterhole.

Who?

- That guy is so cute.

Do you think?

- No, he's...

No.

- He is so cute.

I'm sorry, not the timing, the time and place.

It's okay.

I'm following you,

you're following me,  
neither of us know's  
what we're doing.  
My name's Steph.  
I don't want to be at the end  
of the line, it  
makes me nervous.  
Did I, I have a habit of...  
- Hi.  
- - Hi.  
This is exhausting.  
It was a pleasure  
dancing with you.  
She put it down in  
front of my father,  
and just sort of looked up  
at him expectantly, and as...  
And he was like  
As she was making  
eyes at my father,  
the bunny got up and ran away.  
The bunny was just  
paralyzed with fear.  
That's it, it was fine.  
You missed a good,  
you missed a good pet story.  
What was it?  
I can't even tell it.  
Which one,  
the triple homicide?  
Oh, now you  
ruined the punch line.  
My cat brutally  
murdered my parakeets,  
three all in one afternoon.  
Nice.  
- Yeah.  
How are you?  
- Good.  
- - No, I mean...  
No, I mean, how are you?  
Like, how are you  
since everything?  
When?

New York in that  
really awful house?  
Oh, yeah, she's fine.  
Grandma, she just needs  
to switch her medications.  
No no no,  
that really awful house,  
and you were with those guys?  
Did you go to the  
hospital, or end up  
filing a report of any kind?  
Oh, oh, I just remembered it.  
Someone taught me when I was  
in first grade, and it was...  
A bad joke, it was  
like a dirty joke.  
And it was, "Why did  
Raggedy Ann get kicked out  
"of the, the toy box?  
"Because she sat on  
Pinocchio's head."  
Fuck.  
You disappeared  
after our dance.  
I was looking for you, I was  
like, "I want to dance more!"  
Dancing.  
Yeah, cool.  
Well, I'm headed to lunch.  
Cool.  
Because they are eating.  
- What time is it?  
- - Lunch time.  
Do you want company?  
- Yeah, sure.  
- All right.  
Oh shit!  
What happened?  
It was too much caffeine,  
that is disgusting.  
I'm so sorry.  
- You're just, "I just OD'ed.  
"My body is rejecting it.  
"It's like a bad transplant."

Would you be friends with  
me if I was like this?  
I don't think I could  
be friends with you.  
No, I don't think I would be.  
Okay.  
But I think I would be  
more likely to be friends  
with you if you were like  
that, than you would be  
likely to be friends  
with me if I was like...  
Big set-up.  
You're not going to like this.  
It actually scares  
me a little bit.  
I think I know what's coming.  
You might really not like it.  
I think I know what's coming.  
No, but it's worse  
than with other people.  
I really have to...  
I cannot wait for this.  
I cannot wait, you've really  
built it up very, very high.  
Don't look at me for a second.  
I can't stop looking at you.  
You'll be able  
to stop shortly.  
- Oh.  
- Oh shit.  
Hey, Steph.  
- It changes your voice, too.  
You are so beautiful.  
Thank you so much.  
I love the smacking  
of your lips and tongue.  
Yeah, it's really good,  
it's very rodentine.  
Don't I have almost like...  
It's gorgeous, it's gorgeous.  
It's gorgeous.  
The four so it's a little  
bit faster, so it's going...

Because it's a lot faster, okay?  
So let's practice that, two  
nines into a faster four.  
One two, one two, one two three.  
One two, one two, one two three.  
So let's listen to it.  
It's in us, you know?  
And these are like,  
very old rhythms  
that are, like, biological.  
Even the seven and the three.  
And the idea, the  
idea that a four...  
So what do you  
do when you hit someone  
immovable like me and it  
just doesn't even affect me?  
- I'm not hitting you hard.  
- - Can you?  
Yeah, hit  
me like it would be...  
Run away!  
Cool, cool.  
Ouch, God.  
Man, I am going to fall  
asleep on this table.  
I am so sleepy.  
Do you want your cigarette?  
Yeah.  
I think it's the only thing  
that's keeping me up right now.  
What is this stuff?  
What is that drink  
called again, schluzo?  
Slivovitz.  
You didn't have that much.  
No, I didn't.  
How far are we?  
Sarah?  
I feel like you were the one who  
was kind of leading  
us, so where...  
I don't know where we're going.  
Maybe...

Maybe this way.  
What do you  
mean "maybe this way?"  
I mean I don't,  
I'm not 100 percent sure.  
I need to pee.  
You're absorbed.  
Like in that you're no longer...  
Jesus, man.  
I need to pee.  
Where's the, did  
you bring the wine?  
I have it, it's in my hand.  
Did you drink all of it?  
Because I don't,  
because I still...  
We still need some when  
we get back to the cabin.  
Yeah, we have  
like half a bottle.  
We're good and you  
don't need anymore.  
In fact, you're not  
drinking anymore.  
Don't be my fucking mom.  
Because he had  
a trampoline, and I knew  
he had a trampoline, and I  
wanted to play on the trampoline  
so I took my pony over to his  
house but he wasn't there.  
Because I wasn't supposed  
to take my pony on asphalt,  
because he didn't have shoes.  
You're 80 percent sure.  
Correct.  
How sure are you?  
I wasn't  
doing anything because  
you seemed like you  
knew where you were...  
This is so not where  
we were before.  
Sarah, this is



not where we were.  
We have no idea where we are.  
- Sarah?  
- - Hmm?  
- What do you  
mean, "Hmm?" - Hmm.  
We should go  
back and then go back  
on the big trail and  
that's the route,  
that's what I said before  
we left, where we should go,  
we should follow the big route.  
But we got a little lost.  
Are you implying  
that I got us lost?  
I'm not, like...  
It's not your fault,  
but we are now lost.  
I should have just, like...  
No, I'm saying, if  
you're the one who told me  
that I was leading  
and now we're lost,  
- it's somebody's fault.  
- - Yeah, why are we,  
we're looking at fucking  
twigs and branches in front  
of our face, we're  
not on a path.  
It's not funny, I  
wanted to be home,  
I wanted to be,  
like, asleep already.  
Then go to sleep.  
I used to bite my  
cuticles like you.  
I don't...  
I broke my nail,  
shit, that's disgusting.  
Okay, are  
we going to go left,  
or are we going...  
I don't know how to get

out, I'm just going to go.  
Okay, going to be here.  
- With our fat fingers.  
- - I don't want to be  
with you because you  
brought me out here,  
and now we're fucking lost.  
I'm going to find  
my fucking way.  
Don't, you  
don't have a headlamp.  
Get the fuck out of my life.  
Isolde!  
"Isolde!"  
You're so fucking fake.  
How are you going to get back?  
Hey, I was worried about you.  
Where'd you sleep?  
- You look great.  
Entering the  
camp, they are calling her.  
They telling her, you're  
going to change bad life.  
Not anymore, Cinderella.  
That's it, okay?  
But still they need  
different character.  
Need different,  
I need the sound,  
Like that.  
This song, it's from city and  
villages, both are singing.  
Hey, what's up?  
Hey.  
It's on backwards.  
No it's not, this  
is a left-handed accordion.  
Let's watch this, this is  
going to be something, wow.  
Okay, go for it.  
Depends where I am.  
Various things, food services...  
Custodial work.  
It's guaranteed to make you

a beginner on the accordion.  
He just changed the vibe.  
Are you going to keep that?  
No, you want it?  
- I like souvenirs.  
- - Of all numbers,  
I would keep that number.  
What are you up to?  
What are you, a pack rat?  
I'm a pack rat, yep.  
I'm going to go back, I'm  
going to walk back to the cabin.  
- Really?  
- Yeah.  
All right.  
Do you want to  
walk back with me?  
No, I'm going to stick  
around and dance I think.  
I'm going to dance.  
How long, are you just going  
to be here for the night?  
Yeah, I mean,  
I'm really tired,  
but I think I'm  
going to let it...  
All right, okay, I'm going  
to go back there I guess.  
Yeah, I mean, I'll  
see you tomorrow.  
Okay, all right.  
Okay, night.  
Hey.  
- Hey.  
- - Hey.  
- How are you?  
- - Good.  
God, I'm just like exhausted,  
I just went to the auction.  
- Cool.  
- I had plate 103.  
- What is 103?  
- - I had plate 103.  
What are you doing standing

in the middle of the...

Oh, I just saw

you, I was just waiting.

Hi.

Did you get anything?

Not really,

I bid on something.

Didn't get any wins?

- No?

- - No.

Cool, all right, well,

I'll see you at the cabin.

- Okay, how are you?

- - Good.

See you soon.

- Okay.

Don't push, very

piano, very soft.

Breathe here, stay.

Don't breathe here,

don't breathe with

the mouth, with the nose.

Now all the vowels.

Sarah.

Hey.

- Hi.

Oh, that looks really good.

Yeah, you should

definitely get that.

- Yeah?

- Yeah, that looks good.

I'm going to get cookies.

I'll see you in a bit.

What is...

What is the hair symbol?

Why does that come

up in so many songs?

Let me back up a little

because you can't understand

the hair without understanding

this whole dragon thing.

In Bulgarian folklore,

there's many creatures

in nature that are either

friendly or sometimes  
very ominous, and  
in the snake family,  
they're the ominous kinds, okay?  
So there's all these creatures,  
and there's also spirits  
that reside in natural  
things, so it's not like  
the thing itself is bad,  
but a spirit may go into it  
and make it into a  
kind of evil thing.

Like even a river or a dove or  
a tree can become dangerous.

But who is that dangerous to?

There was a lot  
more romance, you know?  
People would do stuff  
like that for courting.

Right.

The culture  
itself was so restrictive  
that she had to be home  
at a certain time, and  
they'd sing in the  
streets, and it  
would resonate down all the...

How long have you  
been singing this music?

I'm so sorry.

You guys are kind  
of, you know, a little silly.

They were presented to us.

Yeah, well anyway,  
so she asked about it.

So sorry to bother you.

Let's do  
the last time through  
melody B into the gaida.  
Okay, so it goes, let me  
see if I can remember it.

- Sorry.

- - No problem.

You missed

the choreography class.

What is that?

Do you hear that?

No, no.

- Are you sure?

- Yeah.

Hey, hey, it's okay.

It's okay, it's okay.

There's nobody.

Are you okay?

- Mhm.

What are you doing?

What?

Come here.

Isolde?

Christ.

Sarah, what the fuck?

Are you okay?

What's going on?

Do you want to sit down?

Come here, come here,

come here, come here.

Come here, I'll help you,

I'll help you, I'll help you.

Sit down, sit down.

You're fucking soaking wet.

You okay, you okay?

Are you okay?

It's okay, it's okay,

it's okay, it's okay.

You okay?

Something happened.

I know, I know, it's

okay, it's okay, it's okay.

Lie down.

- I'm going to go back to sleep.

- - Huh?

I'm going to go back to sleep.

Right now?

Yeah.