

THE POET'S PIG  
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A timely meditation on the dangers of enthusiasm.

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## CHARACTER LIST

Charles Woodward: A young, brooding, self-proclaimed poet/psychiatrist with a lot of passionate ideas and very little experience to support them.

Sydney Folley: An aging amnesiac who loves fish.

Rebecca Folley: Sydney's daughter, and Charles's patient. Caught between a kook and a nut case.

## SETTING

A psychiatrist's office dominates, a desk and desk chair, a couch, and an altar upon which sits a large stuffed toy pink pig. On the desk is a small metal stand, and from the stand hangs a pocket watch on a chain. The case of the pocket watch is shaped like a pig with wings.

The other area is Sydney's room, filled with a cluttered maze of aquariums and a settee.

Somewhere between and around them flows a river, and over the river is a small bridge.

*Charles is sitting at his desk, chin supported by one hand; with the other he doodles on a pad of paper. Rebecca knocks on the door and enters without waiting for an answer. She takes a seat on the couch facing Charles and arranges herself.*

REBECCA: I'm ready Charles.

CHARLES: You are? For what?

REBECCA: You know very well for what. For my session.

CHARLES: For your plunge into piggery?

REBECCA: I suppose so, yes. For our talk.

CHARLES: Talk is useless Rebecca. Words no longer have meaning. Names have lost their potency, and slide off and around the in-itself like Jello off a boa.

*Rebecca starts to rise.*

CHARLES: Don't get up. Do you see this word?

REBECCA: Death.

CHARLES: What does that word say to you. What does it signify?

REBECCA: I haven't really thought about it.

CHARLES: Why not?

REBECCA: I don't know. It doesn't seem important.

CHARLES: Not important? The one terrible function that makes living itself absurd?

REBECCA: There are more important things.

CHARLES: It hounds life. Tears limb from limb what we create like a rabid, famished wolf. And you call it unimportant. Instead of your regular session today, we have a duty to perform. A duty towards death. Stand here.

REBECCA: On the chair?

CHARLES: Yes. You are doom. You oversee everything.

REBECCA: I don't want to be doom.

CHARLES: Do it or get out. Stay away from me. I am not having a fit. *He smacks himself on the head. See?*

REBECCA: Have you been drinking?

CHARLES: Everything will become obvious.

*He holds the chair. Rebecca reluctantly climbs on to it. He pulls a large black cloth out of his desk.*

CHARLES: Cover your face with this.

REBECCA: Why?

CHARLES: Your cherubic grin does not bring to mind the universal death knell.

REBECCA: I won't grin then.

CHARLES: Put it on.

REBECCA: *Doing so.* Now what?

CHARLES: Fold your hands in front of you. Now stand still, and try to look impersonally menacing.

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REBECCA: How long do I have to do this?

CHARLES: I've given you free sessions for six months. The least you can do is stand on a chair with a cloth over your head for a few minutes.

*Charles pulls two file folders from his desk. From one he takes a newspaper clipping, from the other a sheet of paper. He picks up his trash can, empties a few sheets of paper out of it and sets it on the floor by the couch. He hands the clipping to Rebecca.*

CHARLES: Read this.

REBECCA: I can't see it.

CHARLES: Don't uncover your face. Lean your head forward enough to read it by your chest.

REBECCA: This is ridiculous.

CHARLES: From the ridiculous to the sublime is but a step.

REBECCA: This is awful. They've got a very detailed picture.

CHARLES: Yes, an amateur enthusiast just happened to be close by.

REBECCA: "Ex-priest commits harikari in Hyde Park. Harold Rasmussen, a Catholic priest defrocked in 1985 for denouncing celibacy from the pulpit, committed suicide today at the age of 68. Mr. Rasmussen was reputed to be the patient of Dr. Charles Woodward, a Canadian psychotherapist condemned by the World Psychiatric Standards Council for his utilisation of domestic farm animals."

*As she is reading, Charles burns the single sheet of paper over the trash can.*

REBECCA: What's burning? *She peeks.* What are you doing?

CHARLES: When I met Harold, he was a shattered man. Different parts of his character dragged along with his body, useless and cumbersome. His distressed intellect itched and burned behind his forehead. He had loved a woman for twenty years, a love that was fully returned, but he never touched her. When she died...I told him about the pig, and its importance. Then I wrote a poem for him, a poem of him, showing him the way to recreate his life.

REBECCA: And that's what you burnt?

CHARLES: Yes. He gave me all this, the building, the idea to set up a practice, before he returned to England.

REBECCA: I'm sorry Charles.

*Charles stands, hands her another clipping, and takes two sheets of paper out of the other folder.*

CHARLES: More Rebecca. Thrash me even to the brink.

REBECCA: "Suicide heard singing as he plunges to his death."

CHARLES: That was Francis Mason. He was scared of heights when he came to me. Well?

REBECCA: "Francis Mason, a native of Toronto, threw himself off the balcony of his twelfth floor Bloor St. apartment today, reportedly singing 'Puff The Magic Dragon' as he plummeted to the sidewalk below. His wife of fourteen years, Mrs. Imelda Mason, interviewed later in her room at the Grey Nun's Hospital where she was being treated for shock, told this Sun reporter that Mr. Mason's last words were; "I don't mind heights love, but you drive me crazy." Mason recently returned

from Edmonton, where he was in the care of Dr. Charles Woodward, a practitioner of the notorious Back To The Farm therapy whereby patients are asked to embrace and spend long periods of time in isolation with pigs and other domestic farm animals."

CHARLES: Idiot scandal mongers. All journalists should be shot.

*He has burned the paper as before.*

REBECCA: Can I come down now?

CHARLES: No. *He is looking at the last sheet of paper in his hands. He holds a lighter to it.* Repeat after me. In as deep and dolorous a tone as you can manage. "Today..."

REBECCA: "Today"

CHARLES: "The so called Dr. Charles Woodward."

REBECCA: "The eminent Dr. Charles Woodward."

CHARLES: Becky, please. "Doth end his creative existence."

REBECCA: No!

CHARLES: *Lighting the paper.* Say the words.

REBECCA: "doth end his creative existence."

CHARLES: You're breaking the tableau.

REBECCA: I don't care. Was that your life poem?

CHARLES: Yes.

REBECCA.: What did it say? You never told me about it. Why not?

CHARLES: It was none of your business.

REBECCA: What about mine? Did you write one of me? Is that my business?

CHARLES: No, I didn't.

*She rifles through the file folder on the desk.*

REBECCA: You've got one here for every one of your patients Charles. Everyone except me. Why? Anyway. You can't quit your practice. You have your patients to think of.

CHARLES: Of the twenty patients that I've had ten have disappeared, six have had themselves committed, one has had a sex change, and now two are dead.

REBECCA: That leaves one Charles. One very important patient who realizes your talent.

CHARLES: One in twenty is not an encouraging average.

REBECCA: The ones that disappeared gave you everything they owned before they left. Doesn't that mean something?

CHARLES: I don't know. I feel very empty and light. Its strangely pleasant.

*He goes and picks up his pig off the altar, and Rebecca follows him.*

CHARLES: Please stay away. I can't think when you're near. I want to be alone. I just want to lie down, alone.

*Charles lays down on the couch, clutching his pig. Rebecca takes it away from him, and puts it back on its altar.*

CHARLES: What? What are your doing?

REBECCA: I've got something better for you to hold on to.

*She lays on the couch beside him. He lies stock still, his eyes wide open, as she falls asleep. After a time, he rises, and starts to pace the room in a panic, stopping frequently to look down on Rebecca. He kneels, awkwardly, in front of the altar, and then stands to take down the pig. As he holds it he gains certainty, and goes to his desk. There he pulls a stuffed fish out of a drawer, and lays it on the couch beside Rebecca. Then he sits at his desk, and makes noise, rustling papers, opening and closing drawers, until she wakes.*

CHARLES: Good morning Sleeping Beauty.

REBECCA: Sleeping Beauty was wakened with a kiss Charles. hat was the best sleep I've had in years.

CHARLES: Good. Look beside you.

REBECCA: Its a fish.

CHARLES: Precisely.

REBECCA: Get it out of here. Please.

CHARLES: You do it.

REBECCA: Charles...*She moves toward him, and he pulls a picture of a shark out of his desk.* Charles!

CHARLES: Pick it up.

REBECCA: No. I can't.

CHARLES: Six months ago you would have gone into hysteric convulsions at the sight of it.

REBECCA: I can't.

CHARLES: What were you doing just now Rebecca?

REBECCA: I was sleeping on the sofa, with you.

CHARLES: You were sleeping on the sofa with a fish. You two largest fears, falling asleep and fish. You conquered them. Both at once.

REBECCA: Because of you. I did it because of you.

CHARLES: Whatever the reason. You did it.

REBECCA: I did?

CHARLES: Go to the fish Rebecca. Now pick it up. Now go outside, and throw it away.

*She does, and then comes back in again.*

REBECCA: Oh Charles!

CHARLES: You've taken up much more than your hour today.

REBECCA: I feel released. Thank you.

CHARLES: If you will excuse me. I have work to do.

*Rebecca sits on the couch, while Charles pretends business at the desk.*

CHARLES: I said excuse me.

REBECCA: What for?

CHARLES: Your session is over for today.



REBECCA: I realize that.

CHARLES: You may leave now.

REBECCA: You just cured me. Don't you want to talk about it or anything?

CHARLES: I was just doing my job.

REBECCA: Didn't we sleep together? Didn't something happen here, between us?

CHARLES: It should never have happened.

REBECCA: What!?

CHARLES: You are my patient. I am your doctor. It is a sacred relationship that must not be sullied by anything personal or...sexual.

REBECCA: We slept together Charles. S.L.E.P.T. There was nothing sexual.

CHARLES: Everything is sexual.

REBECCA: What piffle. And what do you mean "doctor" and "patient". You just gave up being a doctor.

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CHARLES: That is why I must go away.

REBECCA: I don't understand you. Tell me why you're doing this.

CHARLES: Please leave.

REBECCA: No. Not until you explain.

CHARLES: Do you know what I hate about you?

REBECCA: You hate me?

CHARLES: I hate your innocence; your absurd, childish, ignorant faith. Everything is not coming up roses. Life is both more profound and more terrifying than any of us know, and up against it all, in between yourself and the whirling, chaotic, nightmarish maelstrom of existence, you hold your innocence.

REBECCA: I know you're upset.

CHARLES: You're pathetic; a whining, squealing bug about to be flattened by the indifferent hand of circumstance.

*Rebecca leaps forward and slaps him across the side of the head.*

CHARLES: Thank you. I needed that.

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*The room of Sydney Folley. Sydney is lying on his settee, leading fish calisthenics, surrounded by his aquariums.*

SYDNEY: Ready now? With me. Fins two three up. Fins two three down. Fins two three up. Fins two three down. Okay now, keeping the fins straight... Swim two three up. Sink two three down.

*More of the same as Rebecca enters.*

SYDNEY: Clarence! You laggard spawn of sea slime, up on your fins. This exercise is for you young fish, you've got to be ready to fight the hook someday. You're gonna' be spitted and chewed if you keep this up. What!?! Blow bubbles at me? *He slaps the top of the water in the tank.* Take that, and that! Maybe we should toss you in with Mr. Shark.

REBECCA: Stop it.

SYDNEY: What? Who said that? Rebecca? Thank God its you. I thought the fish were talking back to me. You're late.

REBECCA: Sorry. *She takes up position beside him.*

SYDNEY: Ready? Fins two three up. Fins two three down. Pick it up Becky.

REBECCA: You go ahead. I don't feel like it today.

SYDNEY: Are you all right?

REBECCA: *Mimicking Charles.* Go to the fish Rebecca. Now pick it up. Now take it outside, and throw it away.

SYDNEY: Rebecca?

REBECCA: I'd like to be a fish. I'd lay the eggs, he could fertilize them. That would be that. I was cured today.

SYDNEY: You're not acting like it.

REBECCA: The master hand carved from me my fear of fish and falling asleep.

SYDNEY: I don't know what you're talking about.

REBECCA: Charles Woodward.

SYDNEY: Ah, the quack you've been spending time with.

REBECCA: He's not a quack.

SYDNEY: Those are your own words.

REBECCA: I've changed my mind. If I was sick, he would have cured me.

SYDNEY: He was an idiot to believe you were sick. Fear of fish and falling asleep?

REBECCA: I justified those fears with some very good stories.

SYDNEY: Like what?

REBECCA: Never mind.

SYDNEY: I'm curious.

SYDNEY: A grown man who carries on with a toy pig is certifiable.

REBECCA: What about a grown man who carries on with fish the way you do?

SYDNEY: Fish are pets. Toy pigs are ludicrous.

REBECCA: Fish are cold and slimy.

SYDNEY: Fish are glistening and multi-hued.

REBECCA: Fish are insensible and remote.

SYDNEY: Fish are discreet and non-threatening.

REBECCA: Fish are barely alive.

SYDNEY: Fish are ubiquitous. There are species alive today which have existed unchanged since the pre-Cambrian period. Is that not approaching perfection? Some types of bass live to be over two hundred years old. Let's see a pig match that. The world's largest mammal is a fish, and dolphins, who are fish too, have a common world wide language.

REBECCA: I asked Charles about you. He said that you're fixated on the symbol of Christ because you seek forgiveness.

SYDNEY: Forgiveness for what?

REBECCA: The past.

SYDNEY: That's not fair Rebecca. You know very well I've got.....

REBECCA: Amnesia, yes. I know. He also said that you won't leave the house because its your second womb, and the trial of rebirth terrifies you.

SYDNEY: Charles is a flake. And he's infecting you with his flakiness.

REBECCA: You haven't met him.

SYDNEY: I don't have to. Ready Clarence? Fins two three up, fins two three down. Fins two three up, fins two three down.

REBECCA: I'm going out. You can handle your own lunch today.

SYDNEY: I can if I have to. I might not even eat. I'll just wait for you to get back.

REBECCA: I might be gone for a long time.

SYDNEY: I'll wait. You have to come back for supper. Or to sleep.

REBECCA: Not necessarily.

SYDNEY: Where would you sleep? Rebecca? Rebecca!

*Sydney rushes out the door, rushes back in again and searches frantically for something. He finds a cap that has "Save The Whales" emblazoned on it, pushes it down on his head, then rushes back out again.*

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*Sydney stands alone. He takes his hat off and addresses an invisible person.*

SYDNEY: Excuse me sir. Did you see a girl go by? About this tall. Yes, she is pretty. Come back here, and I'll knock your head off. *He turns.* Excuse me, excuse me folks. *He runs off in that direction, and returns a moment later carrying a placard which reads 'Pigs Before Porkchops, Save The Noble Oinkers Now!'* But don't you think we should be thinking about other species too? Like fish, for example. You take that back! *He runs off again, and returns a moment later with a bare stick, and starts to walk in a circle,*

SYDNEY: Save the fish, kill the pigs. Save the fish, kill the pigs.

*Charles walks on, and watches him.*

CHARLES: Are you a member of that group over there?

SYDNEY: I was. The stupid boneheads.

CHARLES: What happened?

SYDNEY: We had an argument about which were more worth saving, fish or domestic farm animals.

CHARLES: And?

SYDNEY: I chose fish.

CHARLES: I am forced to disagree with your position, but I admire your courage none the less.

SYDNEY: You got something against fish?

CHARLES: Not a thing. I think....., oh Jesus, here they come. May I borrow this?

*He takes Sydney's stick, brandishes it like a club, and shouts off.*

CHARLES: Stay back! What do you want? You know who I am. No, I do not force pigs and other farm animals into compromising and potentially dangerous situations with mentally disturbed patients. No, I do not carry out barbaric experiments on sedated porkers. I can't help what was said in the Globe and Mail, the mindless twerp who wrote the article was obviously wrong. Because he's a moron like you, that's why.

SYDNEY: Yeah!

CHARLES: You should all be shot!

SYDNEY: And fed to the fishes!

CHARLES: Why don't you go picket a packing plant, you assholes.

SYDNEY: Why don't you go picket a fishing boat, you boneheads!

CHARLES: They're getting angry.

SYDNEY: Yup.

CHARLES: We have to get through them to reach my office.

SYDNEY: We do?

CHARLES: They cut me off while I was out for a walk. I tried to sneak back in, but failed.

SYDNEY: Why don't we just stay here?

CHARLES: And have them come after us? Look at them. They're extremists. We either face them now, or be hunted down later. Here, take this. *He hands Sydney the stick.* Ready?

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: There comes a time when irrational violence must be opposed by rational violence. If we charge them now, while their leader, if I'm not mistaken, has driven off for doughnuts, we'll scatter them. If we wait until he returns, we may receive injuries. What did they say about fish?

SYDNEY: They said fish were cold blooded and...

CHARLES: And what?

SYDNEY: Ugly.

CHARLES: I think fish are the most perfectly formed creatures on the earth. They've lived unchanged for millions of years.

*Charles walks off. Sydney hoists his stick, and follows.*

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*In the office of Charles Woodward. Charles strides around the room, jubilant. Sydney sits on the couch watching him carefully*

CHARLES: Did you notice their faces? From anger, to perplexity, to fear, to panic.

SYDNEY: That big woman with the galoshes took a swipe at me.

CHARLES: That's because you weren't fast enough. Thought like lightning, action like thunder, that's what decides the day when armies meet.

SYDNEY: There was only six of them.

CHARLES: Yes, but two of us. Outnumbered three times, and we still....

SYDNEY: Scuttled through like crabs.

CHARLES: You have a gift for the pedestrian. *Snatching up his pig and flinging it around.* Take that piggy poo - Ha! - on guard....Haaaa-ya! These confrontations are absolutely electrifying.

*Sydney notices the pocket watch on the chain.*

SYDNEY: What's this?

*Charles takes the watch off the stand, and hands it to Sydney.*

CHARLES: It's for hypnotizing people. Hold it on your finger, like this, and swing it back and forth.

*Sydney proceeds to follow the swinging watch with his eyes, and hypnotizes himself.*

CHARLES: Harold Rasmussen gave it to me. He recently chose the extreme course, and sent me a poem.

"Tell Charles Woodward his truth is clear,  
Man is whole, pig and perfection  
But my age is greater than my will  
and I have left too many stones unturned  
Half-man, I must now end a life half-lived"

He was a better priest than he was a poet. But I took him away from the priesthood, and he took himself away from life. *Looking into the pig's face.* Forgive me father, for I have sinned.

*Sydney gives a start, and gazes around the room, struggling with a memory. He goes to stand in the doorway, positioning himself, hat in hand, as if he's approaching someone of great importance. Charles watches him quizzically, then sits in the chair behind the desk, and laces his hands together in front of him.*

CHARLES: Yes, you've been a very bad student. Your grades are abysmally low and I'm going to have to notify your parents.

*Sydney shakes his head.*

SYDNEY: I think maybe I've got the wrong....

CHARLES: You're grounded for a month son. And the next time I catch you touching yourself I'll have to remove your pee pee.

*Sydney turns to leave.*

CHARLES: Wait, you are due for a confession. Come in and sit down. What sins have you committed?

SYDNEY: Father Rasmussen?

CHARLES: Yes, yes, my son. It is me.

SYDNEY: You were talking funny. I .... I wish you'd come back to the house with me. There's something wrong with Edith.

CHARLES: Is she ill?

SYDNEY: She won't talk, and she won't move. Rebecca's locked herself in her room and won't come out. She's crying.

CHARLES: Sit down.

SYDNEY: Will you come?

CHARLES: What's your name?

SYDNEY: You know my name Father, don't you?

CHARLES: Yes, yes, of course I do. How do you think Edith got this way?

SYDNEY: I don't know. Come and see, please.

CHARLES: No, I don't think I should. I think we should phone the police.

SYDNEY: Why the police? They can't help Edith.

CHARLES: Are you frightened of what the police might do?

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: Did you phone a doctor?

SYDNEY: I came straight here. Why are you asking all these questions Father? You know Edith has problems, you've visited her many times.

*There's a knock on the door.*

CHARLES: If you love pigs, take a hike.



REBECCA: I don't necessarily love... Father, what are you doing here?

SYDNEY: Rebecca, how's your mother? Is she feeling better?

CHARLES: You're Sydney Folley!

REBECCA: Mom's dead. You know that.

*Sydney faints on the couch. Rebecca and Charles look at each other for a moment.*

CHARLES: Wow.

REBECCA: How did?

CHARLES: Shush. Be quiet. *He speaks quietly but forcefully into Sydney's ear.* Sydney, you will wake up as if you've been having a nap. You will remember nothing of what has just happened. Rebecca, do you ever wake him, in the morning, or after a nap?

REBECCA: Well, yes but...

CHARLES: Do so. Exactly the way you normally do.

REBECCA: Are you sure?

CHARLES: Yes. Hurry.

*Rebecca takes a few steps back and cups her hands.*

REBECCA: Fish are up and runnin' boys, drop yer' cocks and grab your socks!

CHARLES: That's crude.

REBECCA: Sorry.

*Sydney sits up, disoriented.*

SYDNEY: You're here Rebecca.

REBECCA: And you're here. And you found it all by yourself.

SYDNEY: I had help.

CHARLES: The strain must have been too much for you. You fainted dead away.

SYDNEY: Now that you're both here, can I ask what's going on between you ?

REBECCA: I don't think that's any of your business.

CHARLES: Perhaps, Sydney, if you can leave us alone for a moment we can straighten it out.

REBECCA: Yes, could you father?

SYDNEY: That crowd is out there.

REBECCA: They're having a doughnut break.

SYDNEY: You'll tell me what's going on when I get back?

CHARLES: Yes. *Handing him the stick.* Remember what they said about the great blue tuna.

SYDNEY: Sandwich meat? *He grips the stick firmly, and exits.*

REBECCA: Do you really hate me?

CHARLES: Why would I hate you?

REBECCA: You told me that you hated me.

CHARLES: This is what I'm for Becky. This is what my art is for.

REBECCA: Are you listening to me?

CHARLES: Not to lift men like Harold and Francis so high that life itself seems small and unimportant, but to bring men like your father out of the mire to face themselves.

REBECCA: Charles.

CHARLES: Don't hit me. Kiss me.

*They do.*

CHARLES: I can cure him.

REBECCA: What about us?

CHARLES: What about us.

REBECCA: You just kissed me like you meant it.

CHARLES: How can you think about us at a time like this? I have a destiny to fulfil.

REBECCA: What does that have to do with me?

CHARLES: I don't know.

REBECCA: Well think about it.

CHARLES: My mind is spinning with endless possibilities, and you want me to think about our relationship?

REBECCA: Yes.

CHARLES: I can't.

REBECCA: We have something Charles.

CHARLES: What we have is indefinable and therefore nonexistent in scientific terms. Go fetch your father.

REBECCA: My father is happy the way he is. Leave him alone.

CHARLES: Don't you see? This is my last chance.

REBECCA: What if some of the things I told you about him were.....

CHARLES: Sorry. What if what?

REBECCA: Kiss me again.

CHARLES: Please Rebecca, my life depends on this.

*Rebecca exits. Sydney comes back in, wielding his stick alternately like a sword and a club.*

SYDNEY: Take that, and that, and this! I showed them not to swing at people with their placards. I drove them - Ha! - until they dropped. Where's Rebecca?

CHARLES: She went home.

SYDNEY: Oh. What's happening between you two?

CHARLES: She'll tell you when you get there. Are you a brave man Mr. Folley?

SYDNEY: I wouldn't want to...

CHARLES: Are you a coward?

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: Then you're not afraid to face the past?

SYDNEY: I'm not afraid, but I don't see why its necessary.

CHARLES: Sydney, you are a middle-aged man with only four years of memory. That makes you less than one thirteenth of a man.

SYDNEY: I'm whole.

CHARLES: Memory is the foundation of character. You have no foundation. Times remembered are the pith of relationships. You have only one relationship. The basis of personality is experience. You're a four year old. Reflecting on our past mistakes is the keystone of wisdom, accepting their consequences establishes the courage of character....

SYDNEY: I don't see...

CHARLES: The substance of our being is our thoughts and feelings Sydney. A whole segment of your life is missing, and you don't know what to think or feel about it.

SYDNEY: I don't mind.

CHARLES: You might have had a wonderful past Sydney. I wonder how many delightful memories you're missing.

SYDNEY: I wonder how many bad memories I'm missing.

CHARLES: What about you're wife? Would you like to remember her?

SYDNEY: Yes. I would.

CHARLES: Lie down Sydney. Make yourself comfortable.

SYDNEY: Why?

CHARLES: I'm going to help you remember your wife.

SYDNEY: How are you going to do that?

CHARLES: *Setting the pocket watch on its stand and setting it in motion where Sydney can see it.* Just watch this pig. Relax and listen to the sound of my voice. Feel only happiness. Let your body relax, first your feet, then your legs, then your arms, and your shoulders. Comfy?

SYDNEY: Yes.

CHARLES: Good. Keep your eyes on the pig, and think wonderful thoughts.

*He picks up his pig, and talks in a singsong soothing voice while playing with it.*

CHARLES: I had a dream. I saw a pig, rise up on its hind feet, and walk like a man. I saw a man, denying the pig within himself, rise up on the wings of his fancy, and fly: and when he fell, the pig caught him, and helped him to attempt flight once again. I saw a pigman, with wings stretching as far as the eye could see, flying into the stars. How are you Sydney?

SYDNEY: I love pigs.

CHARLES: Sydney, you have blocked out a large part of your past.

SYDNEY: I have blocked out a large part of my past.

CHARLES: This wilful denial of reality is a crime against the sacred pig of human potential.

SYDNEY: This wilful denial of reality is a crime against the sacred pig of human potential.

CHARLES: When you awake you will be able to remember only individual details of the past. Your mental block will crumble slowly over a two month period, allowing your conscious mind to adopt new, more rational defense mechanisms.

SYDNEY: When I awake...

CHARLES: Don't repeat me. Do you realize that the pig inside of you, and the potential in your mind, must understand and help one another?

SYDNEY: Yes, I do.

CHARLES: Do you know what the pig is Sydney?

SYDNEY: Appetite incarnate, our instinct and will to power.

CHARLES: Very good. Do you know what our mind is?

SYDNEY: A realm of untapped possibility and beauty.

CHARLES: You are beautiful Sydney. You will awake on the count of five. *As he counts he pulls a hand gun out of his desk drawer, checks it, and replaces it.* One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Get up Sydney. Walk around. You fell asleep while I was talking.

SYDNEY: I'm sorry.

CHARLES: Sorry? Sorry that you murdered your wife?

SYDNEY: Murdered...

CHARLES: You murdered your wife. Think on that. You're a murderer.

SYDNEY: I am not.

CHARLES: Can you remember your wife?

SYDNEY: Her name was Edith. Edith Marie.

CHARLES: What else do you remember about her?

SYDNEY: She was beautiful, and we loved each other very much.

CHARLES: Hogwash. Oops, sorry pet.

SYDNEY: Its not hogwash.

CHARLES: Do you remember anything at all about the events leading up to her death?

SYDNEY: No. I remember her name was Edith, and..

CHARLES: Who told you that?

SYDNEY: Becky. She said I collapsed at the funeral. I can't remember at all.

CHARLES: I'm here to help you. You were a fisherman.

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: You made your living guiding the wealthy and catching mighty fish.

SYDNEY: I couldn't have been.

CHARLES: And you boozed too, almost as much as you fished. And you fished and drank, and drank and fished, and fished and mistreated poor Edith Marie until finally she committed suicide.

SYDNEY: Why are you lying to me?

CHARLES: She was found hanging on your trophy wall.

SYDNEY: I can't.....I've got to think.

CHARLES: Think Sydney? Think about what? Your crimes? The fish you slaughtered for sport? The wife you killed?

SYDNEY: Shut up.

CHARLES: Its your conscience speaking.

SYDNEY: Shut up!

CHARLES : You can't bludgeon the past.

SYDNEY: Damn your mouth. Shut it and keep it shut.

CHARLES: You used to yell just like that at Edith.

*Sydney charges him, fists raised. Charles raises his pig and points it at him.*

CHARLES: Stand back, there's a loaded gun in this pig.

SYDNEY: I don't believe you.

CHARLES: Perhaps its a bluff. *He pulls the hand gun out of the desk drawer.* But this, is not.

SYDNEY: You're a doctor. You wouldn't shoot a man.

CHARLES: I'm a poet. And I would. Sit down Sydney, still your trembling knees. I'm going to tell you a story, a nightmare really. On your last fishing trip , off the West Coast, the weather turned bad and you holed up in Prince Rupert. Rebecca was with you, a timid seventeen, and she didn't want to stay alone in the hotel while you were out at the bar. She came to fetch you, a brave step for such a girl, and you, drunk, abusive, dragged her off for daring to interrupt your binge and locked her in the hold of your boat with the dead and dying fish. You left her there for two days and two nights. I finally just now cured her of the damage which you inflicted. Ring any bells Syd old boy?

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: Don't worry about the gun Syd; it might go off and kill you but it's a mild danger compared to the time bomb in your mind.

SYDNEY: What do you mean.

CHARLES: One of these days you're going to remember and then...

SYDNEY: And then what?

CHARLES: Ooh, it makes me shiver. It would be best if you remembered now. Repeat after me: "I am a wretch"

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: "A drunk who drove his wife to suicide and his daughter to distraction."

SYDNEY: No.

CHARLES: Say, "I remember these things."

SYDNEY: I don't remember.

CHARLES: Admit it. Let it in. Remember the trophy wall.

SYDNEY: Its not true. Its.....she was...there...and through her chest....no, no. What have you done you bastard. Kill me, finish the job.

CHARLES: I'm not going to kill you Sydney. I think we've done enough for one day.

SYDNEY: You son of a bitch.

CHARLES: Your session is over. Run along home to Rebecca. I'll give you five seconds.

SYDNEY: You were lying just now.

CHARLES: One.

SYDNEY: You've been bluffing all along.

CHARLES: But you're not sure of that, are you? Two.

SYDNEY: You're enjoying this. You're not a fit man to be helping people.

CHARLES: You are hardly an objective judge of that. Three.

SYDNEY: I've never fished in my life.

*Rebecca enters, unseen by either.*



CHARLES: Four.

*Charles raises the gun, Sydney turns and runs, and Rebecca pastes Charles over the back of the head with a book.*

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*Charles is lying on the floor with a wet cloth covering his forehead. Rebecca paces back and forth angrily.*

REBECCA: I can't believe that you'd try to shoot my father.

CHARLES: I'm surprised that you haven't tried to shoot him.

REBECCA: I don't get carried away like you do.

CHARLES: You should. Its living at its best.

REBECCA: No it's not. It's stupidity run rampant.

CHARLES: You don't know what you're talking about.

REBECCA: Yes I do.

CHARLES: Elucidate.

REBECCA: It's like your pig. It moves all of us when it moves, heart and mind. It affects us. When you get carried away its like the wind blowing farts in the tree tops. It doesn't really affect anything.

CHARLES: It affects people.

REBECCA: Like a drug affects people, or craziness.

CHARLES: Every act I commit is based on sound scientific principles.

REBECCA: Pulling a gun on a helpless old man is sound science?

CHARLES: Shock therapy.

REBECCA: Oh Charles, you don't even know yourself. Your mind is like a little boy playing war in the attic, while downstairs the rest of you is kept prisoner by his raving, senile tutor.

CHARLES: That's good.

REBECCA: Thank you.

CHARLES: Come here.

REBECCA: Is it true our sessions are over? Is it?

CHARLES: You're cured of your fear of fish and sleep.

REBECCA: Where does that leave us?

CHARLES: On the couch, if you'd come here.

REBECCA: Is that all you want? To stimulate your pig?

CHARLES: My head hurts, because you hit it. I can't get up and chase you. Come here.

REBECCA: What do you want?

CHARLES: You. I want to hold on to you.

REBECCA: Is that all?

CHARLES: Is that awful?

REBECCA: Tell me what you feel. Say it in words. You're a poet, you should know how.

CHARLES: I can't express it. Words....won't come.

REBECCA: Are you incapable? Verbally impotent?

CHARLES: Just because I can't say it doesn't mean I don't feel it.

REBECCA: No, but it means you might disown or reinterpret it at any time.

CHARLES: Its the pig in me. Its real.

REBECCA: How romantic.

CHARLES: Romance. You want romance.

REBECCA: I want you to tell me how you feel.

CHARLES: I feel like holding on to you.

REBECCA: That's not enough.

CHARLES: Words. Bullshit! They're not real.

REBECCA: They'd mean a lot to me.

CHARLES: You want me to invent a romance fairy tale? A fable of love?

REBECCA: No.

CHARLES: Then come here. Please?

*Rebecca shakes her head, and leaves.*

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*Sydney rushes into his room.*

SYDNEY: Beaten by lunatic do-gooders, shot at by a doctor. He would have blown my head off if I'd let him. If only I could see your face Edith, if only...*He closes his eyes, and they fly open in shock.* You skewered yourself on my swordfish, you hung there...while I was away...*He gazes off into the distance.* A murderer. *He reaches in to the fish tank, takes Julius out of his tank, and begins to beat himself over the head with him.* ) Die, you bugger Sydney, die! Take that, and that, and this! *He falls over, and strikes his head against the edge of the settee. He is quiet for a moment or two, then he stirs, and looks around.* ) Julius, wake up boy, breath a little bit. Oh God you're out of water. Here, there you go, back in your tank safe and sound. Feel better now? Julius, wake up, look at me boy. Swim around a little bit. You can do it. Please Julius. It was an accident, I swear, I didn't mean to be away when you needed me, I didn't mean to shout...*He gazes off into the distance again.* I'm sorry Julius, I am.

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*Rebecca is standing alone, clutching Sydney's "Save The Whales" cap, looking around anxiously.*

REBECCA: *Addressing someone.* Excuse me ma'am, excuse me, have you seen a man, about this tall...he had on a dark blue shirt I think...brown eyes, a beard, quite distinguished looking. He's not a movie star, no. Thank you ma'am. Goodbye. *She whirls around.* Excuse me! Excuse me folks! Calling it a day? How was the doughnut break? Have you seen my dad? You know, the man who attacked you. You shouldn't have insulted fish, you morons. He's not insane, you ass, you are. If you want to talk that way, you better be prepared to back it up buddy. All right asshole, you asked for it. *She rolls up her sleeves, and storms off.*

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*Rebecca is standing on the bridge, the cap now on her head, dropping rocks into the water below.*

REBECCA: I can't find you. Damn it. Damn you Charles Woodward. Damn your insensitive ego. Damn damn damn.

*She sits, and leans her head against the railing, closes her eyes, and sleeps. Charles comes on, wearing a silver cape, carrying his pig, which wears a matching one.*

CHARLES: Look at her piggy, beautiful and asleep; my heart throbs mightily.

REBECCA: Charles?

CHARLES: I am not Charles, I am Captain Poesy.

REBECCA: Captain Posy?

CHARLES: Poe-ess-ee. Champion of the inverted dactyl, scion of an ancient house which has fallen to a disreputable low in these dark times. I am a practicing romantic. Rise, and accompany me to Utopia.

REBECCA: Why are you wearing that silly cape?

CHARLES: With this cape I fly far above the herd to distinguish the broad and intricate pattern of existence. That delicate and subtle tracing outlining our lives tells me that I am to be your slave in unending love. *He drops one knee, and takes her hand.* Forgive me my foolishness, and accept me as your servant.

REBECCA: Stand up.

CHARLES: You bid me rise. Do you accept my fervent, passionate, and sexually fulfilling love?

REBECCA: Maybe.

CHARLES: Please do.

REBECCA: But how do you know what I want as love?

CHARLES: I don't, but I don't think you do either. We're both inexperienced.

REBECCA: Do you promise to be open minded?

CHARLES: I promise.

REBECCA: Do you vow to treat me as an individual, and not as a symbol, a whore, or a mother?

CHARLES: I vow.

REBECCA: Can you accept the changes that come to me through growth and experience?

CHARLES: With a heart that changes with yours, and grows fonder through experience.

REBECCA: Should I ever tire of you, will you piss off?

CHARLES: I shall give you freedom as easily and as earnestly as I give you love.

REBECCA: What if I've lied to you?

CHARLES: The lie shall be burned from your lips by the truth in our hearts.

REBECCA: I have lied to you.

CHARLES: Does not what is constantly give the lie to what could be? It is only in what we create that truth exists.

REBECCA: This is weird.

CHARLES: Weird? Everything that is precious and wonderful the lazy and uninspired call weird. This is what poetry's all about, creating your own magic, using your will like the pen of a master to write a life filled with balance, measure, and beauty.

REBECCA: Sit with me for a moment.

CHARLES: As a token of my devotion, I shall send my pig away. *He throws it away.* And let it regain its eternal position in the heavens, eating slops out of the big dipper.

REBECCA: Do you mean everything you said?

*We hear Sydney chanting.*

SYDNEY: I am a wretch. I am a wretch. I am a wretch!

*Dream Charles disappears, and Sydney comes on, holding Julius in his arms.*

SYDNEY: Look at what I've done Rebecca. I took Julius out his tank and he died.

REBECCA: Thank God you're safe. I was looking all over for you. I was worried.

SYDNEY: Julius is dead.

REBECCA: Poor bugger.

SYDNEY: I took him out of his tank.

REBECCA: What did you do that for?

SYDNEY: I don't know.

REBECCA: Are you all right? I'm sorry for leaving you alone with Charles. He didn't hurt you did he?

SYDNEY: Charles is a sick young man. He said some terrible things.

REBECCA: Don't believe everything he said.

SYDNEY: I won't. I've come to give Julius a proper burial. I killed him, I don't know why. Its awful.

REBECCA: You go ahead.

SYDNEY: I'm a murderer.

REBECCA: Not in my books daddy. Can I stand beside you?

SYDNEY: I'd rather be alone.

REBECCA: All right. Can I wait for you over there? I'll cook you supper.

SYDNEY: Okay.

REBECCA: Bye.

*Sydney hugs Julius close for a moment, and then holds him out over the railing.*

SYDNEY: The Lord giveth, and I have takeneth away. I beg for forgiveness for what I have done. I don't remember it, but I feel the things that have happened. I feel a terrible guilt.

*Charles strolls on, clutching his pig.*

CHARLES: Throwing a big one back Sydney?

SYDNEY: Get back! You tried to shoot me.

CHARLES: No I didn't. I was helping you remember the past. As long as you're not as pigheaded as your daughter, it will work.

SYDNEY: The past? *He turns away, and begins reciting.* What is ours is given to us but for a season. And as we find joy in its being, so must we find tranquillity in its passing.

CHARLES: You should have kept Rebecca locked in the hold of your boat when you had the chance.

SYDNEY: I didn't do that.

CHARLES: Yes you did, and you'll remember that episode along with all your other fishing adventures when you've built up the strength to handle it.

SYDNEY: Liar!

*Sydney swings with the fish, and Charles defends himself with the pig. They fight.*

SYDNEY: Take that, and that!

CHARLES: You've gone mad. Stop it!

SYDNEY: Vicious little fiend. I'll show you.

CHARLES: Help!

SYDNEY: Think you can say whatever you like. Take that!

*Charles draws himself up to full height, and yells.*

CHARLES: I command you to stop it!

*Rebecca rushes back on.*

CHARLES: Rebecca.

*Sydney swings with his fish, catches Charles across the head and knocks him down. He prepares for the coup de grace, but Rebecca pushes him away. He stumbles off stage, and we hear a splash.*

REBECCA: Oh shit. *She looks over the railing, and yells.* You used to be an excellent swimmer. Do you remember how? *She nods, and waves to Sydney down below, then kneels down beside Charles.* Charles? Please wake up. Charles. Please. I

love you. Charles, come on, please. *She leans down, and kisses him. His eyes flutter open.*

CHARLES: You love me?

REBECCA: Maybe.

CHARLES: *Leaping to his feet.* She loves me! Ouch, Jesus, my head. Where are we?

REBECCA: On a bridge Charles.

CHARLES: You saved my life. I would have been pulverized by an angry fisherman.

REBECCA: *Looking over the side.* Do you see what I see?

CHARLES: It looks like fish, hundreds of them, supporting him and moving him toward the riverbank.

REBECCA: I think he's going to be all right.

CHARLES: If fish can forgive the fisherman. Inter-species forgiveness. Pantheism proven. We are all modes of the all forgiving, all of us, facets of a ubiquitous love. I love you Rebecca. I want to be your servant.

REBECCA: I've heard this before.

CHARLES: Never have I spoken of it as love.

REBECCA: Yes, you have. I've told you a lie.

CHARLES: You don't love me?

REBECCA: Father never was a fisherman.

CHARLES: Never a fisherman?

REBECCA: He was a marine biologist, dedicated to the preservation of rare fish species.

CHARLES: I see. It doesn't matter. Nothing matters now. I know that it might seem odd, a doctor falling in love with his patient that he's recently cured but...

REBECCA: I was never sick Charles. That stuff, about fish and falling asleep, was all a lie.

CHARLES: A lie? All of it?

REBECCA: Sorry.



*Charles lets his pig drop.*

CHARLES: A lie?

*Charles suddenly hits himself on the head, hard.*

REBECCA: You're not having a fit.

*Charles hits himself again twice in quick succession. Rebecca picks up his pig, and tries to give it to him. He reacts violently.*

CHARLES: Keep it away.

REBECCA: It's your pig. Take it.

CHARLES: Keep it away! I don't like it.

REBECCA: Okay, relax. I'll take it back with me.

CHARLES: Where are you going? Don't leave me.

REBECCA: I'm going home Charles Woodward. And if you want to see me you can find me there.

CHARLES: My name is not Charles.

REBECCA: Who is it now? Captain Poesy?

CHARLES: I don't know.

REBECCA: Are you all right?

CHARLES: Who am I?

REBECCA: Oh shit. Are you playing Charles? Charles? Hello, are you in there? *She moves the pig toward him.*

CHARLES: Stop!

REBECCA: It won't hurt you. I promise. Do you want to come with me?

CHARLES: Where are we going?

REBECCA: We're going to find the real Charles Woodward. Wherever he is.

CHARLES: Do you have to bring the pig?

REBECCA: You might want it later. Come on.

*She tucks the pig under one arm, and takes him by the hand. They walk off.*

THE END