

BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE

Mrs. Baker: Mrs. Benson

Jill: Yes

Mrs. Baker: Mrs. Benson, might I speak to you for a moment, please?

Jill: Well, I have an audition and I should be leaving soon. I don't know this town. I always get lost.

Mrs. Baker: Don't worry, I'll see that you get off in time. Please, come in, sit down. I thought we might have a little chat. You know, just girls, together. Can I get you coffee, tea?

Jill: No thank you. But if that apple is still there.

Mrs. Baker: I'm sure it is.

Jill: Where's Don?

Mrs. Baker: Shopping. You must be so careful to wash fruits and vegetables today, you know. They spray those insecticides all over everything. I'm not sure that the bugs aren't less harmful. I like apples to be nice and shiny.

Jill: This reminds me of something. What is it?

Mrs. Baker: I have no idea.

Jill: You handing me the apple, nice and shiny. I know. Snow White. Remember when the witch brought her the poisoned apple? I'm sorry. I didn't mean that the way it sounded. I know you're not a witch.

Mrs. Baker: Of course not. And I know you're not Snow White.

Jill: Yes, well. I certainly have enjoyed our talk, and I wish I could stay longer...but I do have my audition.

Mrs. Baker: Listen, my car is right downstairs. I'll drop you and we can talk on the way.

Jill: You're too kind, Mrs. Baker. I wouldn't dream of imposing.

Mrs. Baker: You're not imposing. I'm free the whole afternoon.

Jill: No, thanks anyway. I have to have my lunch first.

Mrs. Baker: I'd love to take you to lunch. I know the most wonderful restaurant. They have the best food.

Jill: No, thanks.

Mrs. Baker: Do you like lasagna?

Jill: Is the sky blue?

Mrs. Baker: They make a lasagna with eight different cheeses...and the sauce is a state secret.

Scene 2

Mrs. Baker: How do you manage to keep your figure, Mrs. Benson?

Jill: I wish you'd stop calling me, Mrs. Benson.

Mrs. Baker: That is your name, isn't it, Mrs. Benson?

Jill: But you don't day it as though you mean it.

Mrs. Baker: I'm sorry. Suppose I call you, Jill. That's more friendly. I'll try to say it as though I mean it. Now, Jill, you were telling me about your childhood.

Jill: I was?

Mrs. Baker: It must have been interesting, having so many fathers.

Jill: Well, yes, actually, it was. But why don't you get to the point, Mrs. Baker? I know what it is anyway.

Mrs. Baker: You do?

Jill: Well, I know you didn't ask me to lunch to discuss my childhood or to tell me how pretty I am.

Mrs. Baker: I was interested to see what you and Donnie might have in common. He likes you very much.

Jill: Well, I like him very much. He might even be the most beautiful person I ever met. Just image going through life never seeing anything. Not a flower, or a painting, or even a Christmas card. Wow! I want to die, but he wants to live. I mean really live. He can even kid about it. Wow, he's fantastic.

Mrs. Baker: Then you would want what's best for him, wouldn't you?

Jill: Uh huh. Now we're getting to it. I knew this lunch wasn't free. Alright, maybe I should ask him to leave the apartment and go home with you?

Mrs. Baker: Donnie was happy at home till Linda Fletcher filled him with ideas about a place of his own.

Jill: Well, I think that you believe that he can only be happy with you. Well there are none so blind as those who will not see. There! I can quote Dylan Thomas and Little Donnie Dark.

Mrs. Baker: You constantly astonish me.

Jill: Well, we women of the world do that.

Mrs. Baker: It's funny how like Linda you are. Donnie's certainly consistent with his girls.

Jill: Oh my goodness, it's after 3

Mrs. Baker: I'll get the check. Waiter. Check please.

Scene 3

Mrs. Baker: I hope you won't tell Donnie that we had lunch together.

Jill: Okay, but if he asks, I won't lie.

Mrs. Baker: He won't ask.

Jill: Why do you call him, Donnie?

Mrs. Baker: Well, that's his name. don't I say it as though I mean it?

Jill: He hates being called, Donnie.

Mrs. Baker: He's never mentioned it.

Jill: Of course he has. You just don't listen. There are none so deaf as those who will not hear. You could make up a lot of those, couldn't you? There are none so lame as those who will not walk. There are none so thin as those who will not eat.

Mrs. Baker: Do you really honestly think that it's a good idea for Donnie to live in that place alone?

Jill: Yes, I really honestly feel it's a good idea for Don to live wherever he wants to. Anyway, he's not alone. I'm right next door.

Mrs. Baker: For how long? Do you have a lease on that apartment?

Jill: No.

Mrs. Baker: Then you could move out tomorrow if you wanted to.

Jill: That's right.

Mrs. Baker: You couldn't sustain a marriage for more than six days, could you?

Jill: My marriage doesn't concern you.

Mrs. Baker: It didn't concern you much either, did it?

Jill: As a matter of fact, it did.

Mrs. Baker: Have you thought about what marriage to a blind boy might be like? Not even your mother has covered that territory.

Jill: Just leave my mother out of this.

Mrs. Baker: I'm sorry, I didn't know you were so touchy about her.

Jill: I'm not touchy about her. I don't want to talk about her.

Mrs. Baker: All right, we won't. We'll talk about you. You've seen Donnie at his best in that place that he's memorized. He's memorized how many steps to the drugstore, to the delicatessen. And you were probably very impressed by that. But I've seen him in strange surroundings. He didn't know I was watching. I've seen him lost. I've seen him panic. He needs someone who'll stay with him and not just for six days.

Jill: Stop worrying, Mrs. Baker. Nothing serious will develop between Don and me. I'm not built that way.

Mrs. Baker: Donnie is built that way.

Jill: Oh, please. We're just having kicks.

Mrs. Baker: Kicks! That's how it started with Linda Fletcher. Just kicks. But Donnie fell in love with her. He will with you, too. Then what happens?

Jill: I don't know.

Mrs. Baker: Well, I do know. Stop it now before you hurt him.

Jill: What about you? Aren't you hurting him?

Mrs. Baker: I can't. I can only irritate him. You can hurt him. The longer you stay with him, the harder it will be when...listen to me, let him come home with me. You go have your kicks with someone who won't fell them when you leave.

Jill: I'm not so sure you can't hurt him. Maybe more than anybody. I think you deserve all the credit you can get for raising a marvelous guy. But bringing up a son, even a blind one, is not a lifetime occupation.

Mrs. Baker: You don't know anything.

Jill: The more you help him, the more you hurt him. It was Linda Fletcher, not you, who gave him what he needed most, confidence in himself. You're always dwelling on the negative, always what he needs, never what he wants, always what he can't do, never what he can. What about his music? Have you heard the songs he wrote? I'll bet you didn't even how he writes songs. You might be dead right about me. I'm not the ideal girl for Don, but I know one thing, neither are you! And if I'm going to tell anybody to go home it's going to be you, Mrs. Baker! You, go home!