

MIRAGE 2

by

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Characters

Portia: Stylish - late twenties.

James: Smooth - early fifties.

Eve: Stylish - mid thirties.

SCENE 1

(Portia's apartment. James and Portia are getting dressed.)

Portia: What's the oldest woman you've ever slept with?

James: Early fifties.

Portia: How old were you?

James: Nineteen.

Portia: Where?

James: **(Walks to mirror and admires his body.)** Her place.

Portia: Where was that?

James: Guildford.

Portia: Guildford?

James: After pub closing time.

Portia: Enjoy it?

James: **(Carries on dressing, whilst continuing to admire his body. The clothes he is putting on are a tennis top, tennis shorts, tennis socks and shoes.)**

Very pissed.

Portia: Her or you?

James: Both. Friend of my mother's.

Portia: When?

James: In the seventies.

Portia: Before I was born.

James: You'd have enjoyed the seventies.

Portia: Details.

James: What details?

Portia: The sordid ones.

James: (Finishes dressing. He picks up a tennis bag with a racquet in it and starts sorting through it.) I learnt a lot.

Portia: Such as?

James: Tell you another time.

Portia: Why not now?

James: Need to get going. I'm late.

(He takes an unopened bottle of water from the tennis bag, unscrews the top, and drinks some of it. He replaces the top on the bottle and puts it back in his bag. He takes out an energy bar, eats it, and carefully puts the wrapper back in the bag. He then takes out a brand new tube of tennis balls, opens them - the tube makes a satisfying hissing noise as he pulls off the metal lid and the compressed air escapes. He throws the metal lid in a wastepaper bin and takes the tennis balls out of the tube and starts examining them.) Sandpaper?

Portia: What for?

James: My balls don't look used.

Portia: They look very used to me.

James: I'm serious.

Portia: Try the toolbox.

James: (He walks over to a toolbox on the floor and looks in it for sandpaper. He finds the sandpaper, and looks out of window.)

Bugger! It's been raining.

(He takes the bottle of water out of his tennis bag, unscrews the top, looks at it ruefully and then tips the water over his head, so that it runs down and soaks his tennis shirt. He then starts rubbing the tennis balls with the sandpaper. After a while he glances up at Portia's CD collection.) No one buys CDs these days.

Portia: I do.

James: (Starts looking through CDs.) You can tell a lot about people by their taste in music.

Portia: So?

James: **(Amazed.)** My all time favourite song!

Portia: **(Yawning/bored.)** What's that?

James: "The Love I Saw in You Was Just a Mirage".

(Portia looks at James blankly.)

James: Smokey Robinson and the Miracles.

Portia: Never heard of it – or them.

James: It's your CD.

Portia: Some of those are my sister's.

James: It's got the most amazing lyrics **(Beat.)** "Wrecking my life like sabotage".

Portia: What?

James: Rhymes with "mirage". Brilliant songwriter, Smokey Robinson.

Portia: Whatever.

James: Must play it.

Portia: Thought you were in a hurry?

James: I am. Play it next time. **(He puts the tennis balls back in the tube and the tube in the tennis bag. He slings the bag over his shoulder.)**

Portia: Is all that really necessary?

James: Must make it look like I've been playing tennis.

Portia: Will you sleep your wife tonight?

James: Probably.

Portia: Bastard.

(James exits. Portia finishes dressing and pours herself a glass of wine. She walks over to bookcase and moves some books, revealing a hidden video camera. She takes a cassette out of the video camera and exits carrying the cassette and her glass of wine.)

SCENE 2

(Half an hour later. Another apartment. Eve is sitting at a table using a laptop.)

James: **(Entering room in his wet tennis clothes.)** I'm home. Everything OK?

Eve: The children are asleep.

James: Any problems?

Eve: They were as good as gold – apart from Jack making me read "Hello, Mr Scarecrow" twice.

James: Work?

Eve: Nearly finished. Just got a couple more emails to send. There's some supper in kitchen if you want it.

James: Thanks. What is it?

Eve: Liver and bacon.

James: You spoil me.

Eve: How was the tennis?

James: Wet.

Eve: You played in all that rain?

James: It's OK when you're running around in it.

Eve: You'll get a cold.

James: I'll head straight for the shower.

Eve: Shall I join you?

James: Later.

Eve: You OK?

James: Bit tired. **(He starts to exit.)**

Eve: You're overdoing things.

James: I enjoy tennis.

Eve: Who played tonight?
James: The usual crowd.
Eve: Who's that?
James: Nigel, Peter and Andrew.
Eve: Thought Peter was away?
James: He's back.
Eve: Anyone ask after me?
James: Not that I recall.

(James exits to take his shower Eve continues using her laptop for a short while and then shuts it down and exits.)

SCENE 3

(Two weeks later. Portia's apartment. Portia and Eve are both getting dressed.)

Eve: **(Looks at watch.)** I'm late! **(Speeds up dressing.)**
Portia: What's the oldest man you've ever slept with?
Eve: My husband.
Portia: How do you rate him in bed?
Eve: Nearly as good as you.
Portia: Going somewhere nice?
Eve: **(Finishes getting dressed.)** Book launch.
Portia: You'll be the centre of attention in that top.
Eve: The centre of attention can be a terrible thing.
Portia: When you're not!
Eve: You're a bad woman, Portia.
Portia: Because I'm sleeping with your husband?

Eve: Because you seduced me when I came round to confront you about sleeping with my husband.

Portia: *You're* turning into a bad woman, Eve.

Eve: I know.

Portia: Does it bother you?

Eve: It bothers me that I'm enjoying it so much.

Portia: What have you told him?

Eve: Nothing.

Portia: Nothing about us?

Eve: No.

Portia: Nothing about knowing about him and me?

Eve: No.

Portia: When will you tell him?

Eve: I don't know.

Portia: I thought you were late.

Eve: I am. I'm going.

(Eve exits. Portia finishes dressing, picks out a CD and puts it on the CD player. "The Love I Saw in You" was Just a Mirage" starts to play. She mimes the words perfectly and with great relish (it is obvious that she knows the song really well). She pours herself a glass of wine. She walks to the bookcase and moves some books, again revealing the hidden video camera. She takes the cassette out of the video camera and exits carrying the cassette and her glass of wine, continuing to mime the words to "The Love I Saw in You was Just a Mirage".)

CURTAIN