**Bathroom Secrets**

A 10 minute drama by Claire Booker

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**Characters**

Bee: A 40 year old housewife

Barry: Her husband, a civil engineer

(the stage direction ‘DIRECT’ means Bee or Barry address each other out loud. All other dialogue is internal)

**Set**

An open set represents a suburban bathroom.

*A week day morning. Bee is in her dressing gown. She applies lotion to her arms. Barry is vigorously brushing his teeth.*

Bee Habits. That’s what you marry. Regular as clockwork. Every morning - gargle and spit. Every night - nose whistling, chest pumping. And the snores, the snores! I could ram a pillow over his head and sit on it. Not to kill him, mind. Just to stop the breathing. (*pause*) He thinks he knows me. But does he know the half of it? (DIRECT) Not so hard, Barry; they’ll bleed!

Barry (DIRECT) We’ve been under-brushing for years.

Bee (*observing her arms silently*) All this flab. I’ll have to keep my arms down. Or covered. Yes. Perhaps it’ll be one of those frenzied couplings where there’s no time to undress. (*looks at Barry*) Why does he have to brush so hard? It’s like a dog with a bone. (*pause*) He never looks at me. Not a real ‘feel you over’ look. Not anymore. Same as how you stop seeing the pattern on your curtains after a while, only the dirty finger marks. (*pause*) Whereas Laszlo . . .(*she smiles with pleasure*) Laszlo sees everything. (*she sings an arpeggio DIRECT*) La, di da, Da, di, da, Da.

Barry (*DIRECT)* You’re happy. (*he gargles a mouthful of mouth wash*) Glllllll, gllllll, gllllll.

Bee It was an ordinary Wednesday, like any other. I’d got the dinner done, homework sorted, grabbed my score, only just managed to scrape into choir practice on time. And suddenly, there he is, all long and lean, sat at the back of All Saints delicately peeling the foil off a Kit Kat. “He’d better be a tenor”, I’m thinking. “We’re low on tenors.” Then he throws me a look – fierce, like flinging down a gauntlet – and bites across all four fingers of the bar. I felt the snap. (*she removes her shower cap and lets her hair fall loose. Barry starts applying shaving foam to his face*) Laszlo’s gold tooth deep at the back when he laughs and eyes like a leopard – patient, dangerous, watching. (*brushing her hair*) Well, I’ve held out long enough – against his hands and the taste of his tongue, the way it licks the crease of his mouth, how he kissed my neck, fanged it with that sweet whiskey breath like a feast, and yesterday . . . Yesterday? In another life, in another body, tasting tobacco on his fingers, sucking the warmth of them, one by one, while his other hand conducted me, made music in me. *(joyful sings another arpeggio)* (*DIRECT*) La, di, da, Da, di, da, Da . . . .

Barry (*DIRECT*) Do you have to, Bee? I’ve got a migraine.

Bee *(she raises the arpeggio by a tone)* La, di, da, Da, di, da, Da.

Barry (*DIRECT*) I think I’ll take today off.

Bee (*DIRECT*) Not a good time for taking your eye off the ball, Barry.

Barry (*DIRECT*) Things are fine. Everything’s absolutely bloody fine.

Bee *(DIRECT)* Ok. We won’t talk about it then.

Barry *(DIRECT)* The A.D. rates me. You saw my last appraisal. I’m indispensible. (*he starts to shave*)

Bee (*DIRECT*) How indispensible is traffic-calming, Barry?

Barry (*DIRECT*) It’s what the public notices that matters – potholes, bollards. The borough would grind to a halt without its roads.

Bee (*DIRECT*) Would it?

Barry (*DIRECT*) Yes.

Bee Then take a Migraleve. (*Barry searches for his tablets*) He hasn’t noticed. He can’t read the signs. He can spot the tiniest scratch on the car bonnet, but his wife of nineteen years – she’s just wallpaper, brightens the place up a bit, better than a blank wall. For Christ’s sake, Barry, look at me! Just look at me for once. There’s a woman in here. Someone with nipples. (*DIRECT*) Nipples!

Barry (*DIRECT*) Sorry? (*taking the Migraleve tablet*)

Bee (*she peers under her bra at her breasts*) But are they normal? I haven’t seen enough nipples to tell.

Barry (*DIRECT*) Look, if I lose my job, there’s the redundancy, that’ll buy us 15 weeks.

Bee Tonight’s going to be a disaster.

Barry (*DIRECT*) Milly can get a student loan. Half of them don’t even pay it back.

Bee (*DIRECT*) Why does nobody ever remember to change the loo roll? (*she sets about doing so,*) Bums and noses. How many have I wiped?

Barry (*DIRECT*) Look at me. I never went to University. People cope.

Bee (*DIRECT*) Concentrate, for God’s sake, Barry. You’re going to cut yourself.

Barry We’ll down-size. It’s not the end of the world. People cope.

Bee (*brushing her hair*) I’ve no idea where he’ll take me. Not to his own house, obviously. Please God not a hotel – strange linen, knowing looks, horrible little bars of soap. *(pause)* We’ll sit in his car. Both of us - washed, deodorised, ready. *(hears noises on the stairs and shouts)* (*DIRECT*) Millie? *(crosses to the door and shouts)* (*DIRECT*) Millie! Text me when you get there. I want to know you’ve arrived safely. *(pause)* The kids’ll never find out. I’d die rather than . . . No. It’s just an interlude. A one-off. An adventure. That’s what it is. Mum’s little adventure. A hike up a new peak. An emotional bungee jump. Why not? While there’s time. While there’s still life. Millie’s got her gap year. Well, I’ve got my gap lover. And it feels great. (*sings arpeggio*) La, di, da, Da, di, da, Da.

Barry (*DIRECT*) Shit. I’ve cut myself.

Bee (*DIRECT*) You never listen, do you?

Barry Why am I bothering to shave?

Bee (*DIRECT*) Always squeezing the last ounce out of old blades. It’s penny-pinching, Barry. You’re obsessed with money. (*searches, DIRECT*) What have you done with the TCP?

Barry (*DIRECT*) We’ve run out.

Bee How come?

Barry (*DIRECT*) I forgot to put it on the list.

Bee (*she takes a piece of toilet paper and holds his chin. DIRECT*) Hold still. (*she dabs at the cut*)

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