

Spring

1. Bondo

In the end,
of all human qualities,
the greatest is sympathy—
for clouds even
or snow
for meadows
for the banks of ditches
for turf bogs
or rotten wood
for wet ravines
silk stockings
buttons
birds nests
hummingbirds
prisms
jasmine
orange flower water
lessons for the flute
a quill pen
a red umbrella
some faded thing
handkerchiefs made of lawn
of cambric
of Irish linen
of Chinese silk
dog's blood
the dung beetle
goat dung
a mouse cut in two
In spring the dawn.
In summer the nights.
In autumn the evenings
In winter the early mornings
the burning firewood
piles of white ashes
the ground white with frost
spring water welling up
the hum of the insects
the human voice
piano virtuosos
orchestras
the pear tree

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/8/19

The sunlight you see in water as you pour it from a pitcher into a bowl.
The earth itself.
Dirt.

7. Cast

ELLEN

Hi.

BONDO

Hello.

ELLEN

Would you like a coffee?

BONDO

Thank you.

LEON

What brings you here?

STEPHEN

I'm just passing through.

BARNEY

Well.

Isn't everyone?

AKIKO

Whose woods are these?

BARNEY

I don't know.

STEPHEN

So.

I guess you could say we're lost in the woods together.

LEON

I guess you could.

BONDO

I've never been lost in the woods.

ELLEN

Neither have I.

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/9/19

STEPHEN

I'm glad I'm not alone.

LEON

So am I.

BARNEY

I like nature,
but I'm a little bit afraid of it.

AKIKO

Well, sure.

LEON

Of the dark parts especially.
I'd like nature better if it were better lit.
I think everyone is, you know,
basically afraid of the dark.

STEPHEN

Even amoebas.

ELLEN

I mean, every life form,
you take them out of the light
and they begin to feel some anxiety.

BONDO

I do.

ELLEN

I do.

STEPHEN

Light, basically, is how you orient yourself
and a person without a sense of orientation
I mean, if you don't know where you are

LEON

and where you're going

AKIKO

and about where you are on the line of the place where you are

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Updated: 9/9/19

BARNEY

and the destination where you're going

STEPHEN

a person begins to freak out.

LEON

I think that's why in jazz

they always play the melody at the top

BONDO

and then

once you know the tune

you think: right, let them riff

ELLEN

because I know where I am

and I know that, in the end,

they're going to come back to the melody

You know what I mean?

BONDO

Well. Sure.

ELLEN

It's like a love story

you can just get lost in a love story

because we know whatever happens along the way

we might get confused or we might get lost

BONDO

or it's on again off again

ELLEN

and it goes down some blind alley

BONDO

but that's how real life is

that's how it really is to be in love

Summer

8. Barney and Fabio

BARNEY

I think I fell in love with him
and I mean I fell in love with him like
the first time I saw him
I just couldn't stop looking at him
he was a soccer player
and I don't go to soccer games
and I don't like jocks
but I was there because a friend had taken me and bla bla bla never mind
but I was walking to our seats in the bleachers
and I saw him walking along the sidelines
and I just couldn't take my eyes off him
I was like a cartoon joke
I was looking at him and walking
and I could have walked right into a wall
and I think the reason I fell in love with him
is that he reminded me of a friend from high school
who reminded me of a guy I saw in a movie.

9. Ellen and Bondo

ELLEN

The fact is:

I've never been in love before

I thought I was but I never felt like this

BONDO

Things happen so suddenly sometimes.

ELLEN

Do you believe in love at first sight?

BONDO

No.

ELLEN

Neither do I.

And yet there it is: I'd like to kiss you.

ELLEN

I think for me it took so long to be able to love another person

such a long time to grow up

get rid of all my self-involvement

all my worrying whether or not I messed up

BONDO

Right.

ELLEN

Or I thought

I need to postpone gratification

and so I did

and I got so good at it

I forgot how to seize the moment

BONDO

you know damn well you're not going to find the perfect mate

someone you always agree with or even like

ELLEN

you should be able to get along with someone who's in the same ball park

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 5/24/19

BONDO

a human being

ELLEN

another human being

BONDO

because we are lonely people

ELLEN

we like a little companionship

BONDO

just a cup of tea with another person
what's the big deal

ELLEN

you don't need a lot

BONDO

you'd settle for very little

ELLEN

very very little when it comes down to it

BONDO

very little
and that would feel good

ELLEN

a little hello, good morning, how are you today

BONDO

I'm going to the park
OK , have a nice time
I'll see you there for lunch

ELLEN

can I being you anything

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 5/24/19

BONDO

a sandwich in a bag?

ELLEN

no problem

I'll have lunch with you in the park

BONDO

we'll have a picnic

and afterwards

I tell you a few lines of poetry I remember from when I was a kid in school

ELLEN

and after that nap or godknows whatall

BONDO

and to bed

ELLEN

you don't even have to touch each other

BONDO

you don't have to be Don Juan

have some perfect technique

ELLEN

just a touch, simple as that

BONDO

an intimate touch?

ELLEN

fine. Nice. So much the better.

BONDO

that's all: just a touch

that feels good

ELLEN

OK, goodnight, that's all

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Updated: 5/24/19

BONDO

I'd go for that.

ELLEN

I'd like that.

BONDO

I'd like that just fine

ELLEN

I'd call that a happy life

BONDO

as happy as it needs to get for me

10. Leon and Akiko

LEON

I look at you and I think
if it wouldn't be wrong
I'd like to make love with you on a pool table.

AKIKO

It wouldn't be wrong if you'd let me handcuff you to the pockets.

LEON

You could do that.

AKIKO

What I think about is
I'd like to have sex with you in the parking lot
behind the Exxon station
near that diner on the Malibu highway
you know the one?

LEON

Near that road up into the canyon.

AKIKO

That's the one.

LEON

That would be pretty public.

AKIKO

I'd like to have the whole world see
you want me so much
you can't wait.
I'd like to have the whole world see
you're not ashamed of me.

LEON

Why would I be ashamed of you?

AKIKO

I feel ashamed myself.

LEON

For what reason?

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AKIKO

Who knows?

Every fifteen minutes I feel ashamed of myself at least once.

And humiliated.

For no reason.

It just comes back to me over and over again.

Do you ever feel that way?

LEON

Every fifteen minutes I feel worried.

AKIKO

Do you feel you want to hurt someone?

LEON

No.

AKIKO

Do you feel you want to get even?

LEON

No.

AKIKO

That's good.

Do you feel you want to bite something?

LEON

I don't think so.

Maybe I feel that.

AKIKO

Do you feel you want to take off all your clothes?

LEON

No.

I usually don't feel that.

AKIKO

Do you feel you want more money?

LEON

Oh, sure. Everybody feels that.

11. Stephen and Barney

STEPHEN

Times have changed.

[Everyone else resumes what they were doing.]

BARNEY

Since when?

STEPHEN

Since, oh, I don't know.

BARNEY

I don't think they have.

STEPHEN

Of course they have.

BARNEY

Well, of course they have

in the sense that now you have electric lights and so forth
the internet

whatnot,

but otherwise I don't think times have changed.

STEPHEN

I think they have.

BARNEY

Compared to what?

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Updated: 5/24/19

STEPHEN

My grandmother.

BARNEY

You wouldn't know.

STEPHEN

That's true.

I wouldn't know.

Maybe that's what changed.

But in Russia you know
they didn't have love affairs for years
all during the communists.

BARNEY

How do you know?

STEPHEN

There was a study.

They didn't even have sex with their husbands and wives
not much.

BARNEY

Why not?

STEPHEN

They didn't feel like it.

BARNEY

Are they having sex now?

STEPHEN

Now! Well, sure. I suppose they are.

You know, things have changed in Russia.

12. Stephen and Ellen

STEPHEN

Who's on first?

ELLEN

How do you mean?

STEPHEN

You know: who's on first?

ELLEN

In what sense?

STEPHEN

In the sense that you, you know

I'm trying to start a conversation with you.

Like:

Who's on first?

ELLEN

What the fuck do you mean?

STEPHEN

What the fuck do you mean's on second?

ELLEN

I beg your pardon

STEPHEN

I beg your pardon's on third.

ELLEN

What?

STEPHEN

No, what's on first.

ELLEN

This is what you call a conversation?

Because this is the kind of conversations people these days?

Because of

What?

Because of the internet and texting and shit

This is how people communicate with each other/

STEPHEN

I'm sorry.

I thought you'd get my classical reference.

FALL

13. Ellen

there are people who still want to love each other
and be together
and not just halfway,
not just keeping one foot out on the river bank
ready to say at any moment
ok, forget it,
I guess we grew apart
save yourself, I'm out of here
but they want to say
no, I'm going all the way with you
I'm here with you forever
I want to make this commitment to you
people still want to do this
because
no matter what we've seen in our lifetimes
this is still a universal human desire
the desire for love forever
and people still want to give themselves to that
and notice it
and mark it with a special occasion
so that when they die
it doesn't seem like the most important thing in their lives
was—what?—having their appendix out?
because everyone made such a big deal about that?
and love IS an important thing
it may be a necessary thing even
for the world to go on
and so, the wedding guests are there
because when people make this promise to one another
it's a happy occasion
and the most important one
and people like to share it.
And leave town before the misery begins.

14. Barney and Fabio

So
it turns out
you come to me
to be with me
and then
as soon as you feel reassured that I love you
you go back to your husband
and then if you talk to me on the phone
and I seem to be slipping away from you
if I seem anxious or uncertain
then you come back to me and make love with me
and stay with me
until you know you have me again
I can't help myself loving you
and then you go back to your husband again
so it turns out
the only way I can keep you is by making you feel anxious
keeping you on edge
making you feel I'm about to drop you
so the way to have you
is to reject you
and if I don't reject you
then I don't have you
we are in a relationship that is sick
where you show love by showing aversion
you show aversion by showing love
so that you live a backwards life
and the one person you want to love and cherish
and show how much you care
is the one person you will drive away by doing any of those things
how can we go on like this?
this is insane
this will make us both insane
this is how people go insane!

15. Trio: Ellen, Akiko, Stephen

AKIKO

How can things happen so suddenly in life?

ELLEN

Things happen in life

STEPHEN

No one knows.

AKIKO

You think there is always time

STEPHEN

You think your life will go on and on
just the way it is today
and then

AKIKO

and then

ELLEN

but then

AKIKO

poof
it's all gone

ELLEN

they happen so quickly
and then they're gone

AKIKO

the whole world
the universe
it's all gone

STEPHEN

it could be you forgot to say goodnight
you might have had some difference of opinion at the dinner table
or you might even have had an argument

AKIKO

and you don't have another moment of it

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/10/19

STEPHEN

and then your grandmother falls into a coma
in the middle of the night
you wait by her hospital bed
hoping she will wake up again
just so you can say you are sorry
and then she dies

ELLEN

before they've ever quite landed
they're gone
and you think

STEPHEN

you think
it could be that she had a stroke
because of the argument that you had
and you can never speak to her again

AKIKO

and you can't say
oh but wait just another moment

STEPHEN

the times you had together
the stories she told you

AKIKO

you can't talk your way out of it
everything is changed all at once

STEPHEN

the advice she gave you
the walks around the block

ELLEN

all of it
it's over
it's evanescent

STEPHEN

all gone forever

AKIKO

and forever

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 5/24/19

ELLEN

like a breath of life

17. Stephen

There is a kind of wolf
which is also a part of nature
whose brains grow larger and smaller with the moon
and whose neck is on a bone that is very straight
and won't bend.

So that when it wants to turn and look at something,
it has to turn its whole upper body.

And sometimes
it will eat a kind of earth
to make its body heavy,
so that when it attacks a horse
or an ox
or an elk
or some such strong animal
it will take the big animal by the throat
and hang there,
and it will be heavy enough
finally
to bring the big animal down.

6. Akiko & Luciany

AKIKO

Sometimes in life
you just get one chance.
Romeo and Juliet

LUCIANY

They meet, they fall in love, they die.
That's the truth of life
you have one great love

AKIKO

You're born, you die
in between, if you're lucky
you have one great love
not two, not three,
just one.

LUCIANY

It can last for years or for a moment
and then
it can be years later or a moment later
you die
and that's how it is to be human

AKIKO

that's what the great poets and dramatists have known
you see Romeo and Juliet
you think: how young they were
they didn't know
there's more than one pebble on the beach

AKIKO/LUCIANY

but no.
There's only one pebble on the beach.
Sometimes not even one.

18. Barney and Fabio

BARNEY

How could you just suddenly: disappear?

FABIO

I didn't.

BARNEY

I thought you did.

And I thought you loved me.

FABIO

Well, I do love you.

[The other characters exit.]

BARNEY

Oh, yes, you love me,
but you don't love me in that way.

FABIO

I never pretended to love you in that way.

BARNEY

I can't go on in life
without being loved in that way.

FABIO

A lot of people are never loved in that way.

BARNEY

How can you tell
if you are really alive
if you're never loved in that way?

FABIO

What do you mean: in that way?

BARNEY

Unless I thought you were crazy for me
so crazy for me you couldn't stand it
you just had to kiss me
you just had to knock me down and kiss me
because you couldn't stand it
that you laughed at my jokes

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/5/19

or thought I was so cool
or like said really intelligent things that made you think
maybe not all of those things
but even just any one of them
just one of them

[Silence.]

You see what I mean, not even one.

FABIO

I'm sorry.

BARNEY

Why did you live with me, then?

FABIO

I thought I loved you
but I guess I didn't know what love was.
I liked you in a way
not much
but in some ways
or at least in the ways I thought guys could be likeable
and the rest of it I thought maybe that's just
how guys are
and as time went on maybe it wouldn't matter so much
but then I find it does matter
I can't help myself
some stuff you do
I just can't get over it
and the stuff I liked:
that I thought you were a responsible person
and mature
solid and dependable
all those turned out not to be true at all
so what am I left with?

BARNEY

It's not your fault.

FABIO

No, it's not.

BARNEY

Or maybe it is
that you weren't thinking very clearly

FALLING & LOVING

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or being very focused when you made your choice
and a lot of people were depending on that choice being really clear
or at least I was

FABIO

I know.

I'm sorry.

BARNEY

Being sorry doesn't cut it somehow.
I know people always say they're sorry
and probably they are
and I don't think it means nothing
I'm sure it means something
and it's essential for people to feel it
and to say it
in order for life to go on at all
and yet
the truth is
it doesn't cut it.
I'm sorry: but it doesn't.

FABIO

I'm sorry.

BARNEY

Is that somehow now
supposed to cut it?

22. Ellen and Bondo

ELLEN

How can you talk like this?

BONDO

I hope we're not going to argue
and then you're going to try to cajole me,
you don't let me leave, you don't leave,
I begin to feel cornered.

ELLEN

This is crazy talk.

BONDO

Next thing you know you think
there's no reason I shouldn't spend the night....

ELLEN

Well, sure, just sleep together,
just sleep in the same bed, that's all, nothing more

BONDO

And then [yelling] when you fall asleep
I'll look at you
and I'll see how ugly you are when you're relaxed.

ELLEN

What?

BONDO

Probably that's when you're at your ugliest,
when you're asleep so that I can't stand it.

ELLEN

When I'm asleep I'm ugly, that's what you're saying?
How can you say such a thing?

BONDO

Or really anytime after twelve o' clock: old and ugly

ELLEN

Every night? Are you saying every night?

BONDO

Almost every night probably.

Ugly and repulsive.
Like another person altogether.
So that I would hardly recognize you
except I would say to myself:
right, yes,
there you are again
the way you really are.
I would wake up with palpitations
and a pain in my head and I would think:
right, there you are again,
attacking me in the middle of the night
when I'm defenceless.

ELLEN
Attacking you!

BONDO
Trying to hypnotize me while I was asleep,
setting my nerves on edge
so I would have to hit you in the face
to get you to stop,
and then you would make some remark probably
like how you are being eaten alive by worms.

ELLEN
Worms! Worms?
You crazy sonofabitch!

BONDO
What are you saying?
What are you saying to me?

ELLEN
What does it matter? You never hear a word I say.

BONDO
I hang on every stupid word you ever say!

ELLEN
Every stupid word I say!
You are stupid.
Stupider than ever.
And black and venomous.
Poisonous poisonous,
more poisonous now than ever.

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/5/19

BONDO

Ever before when?

Before you gave me that filth at dinner

--on purpose, on purpose--

so that it made me shiver?

Before that?

Before you would seek some intimacy with me,

force yourself on me,

demanding I make love to you....

BREAK

ELLEN

Excuse me, would this be after you turned your back on me?

BONDO

Excuse me, I think it was you who turned your back on me.

ELLEN

No. No, I don't think so.

If I remember correctly

it is you you who turned your back on me,

as probably you always would,

always.

So that I am supposed to pursue you I suppose,

put my arms around you

so that I am always in the position of the suitor,

and you can be always cool,

no, cold,

and I would be the beggar the suppliant

and then, if I *had* to turn over

because my arm had gone to sleep

and my shoulder felt broken

and I had a pain in my head,

and I turned over because

I couldn't bear the pain of holding you in my arms,

then would you ever, ever, ever once,

would you ever a single fucking time

turn over and hold me the way I held you?

No.

Would you ever pursue me the way I pursued you?

No.

BONDO

I have pursued you.

I have pursued you.

It's you who have never pursued me.

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/11/19

ELLEN

When did you?

When did you ever?

[silence]

BONDO

I don't remember.

But it seems to me I did.

BREAK

LEON

I knew a fellow

who used to go to a bar in Oregon

where he knew a couple of women

who were willing

to go up to his hotel room with him

watch him strip naked,

get into a tub of bath water,

and walk back and forth.

His only request was that the women

would throw oranges at his buttocks

as he walked back and forth.

Then he would get out,

pick up the oranges,

put them in a paper bag,

get dressed,

and leave.

That's simply how it was for him

how he was able to connect to another human being

in an affectionate way.

This went on for some years

this relationship among the three of them.

In a sense, you might say,

this is the way in which they were able to constitute a human society

in which they felt comfortable.

Freud never explained that.

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/10/19

BONDO

Just fucking leave me alone!

ELLEN

Right! Right! Leave you alone!

I am leaving you alone, you nutcake!

No wonder your family won't speak to you
and every woman you've ever been with has gone crazy
probably or killed herself.

Did you ever think about that?

It's not them, it's you!

You're like a baby with a switch blade.

So fucking needy

and when you get everything just the way you want it
you attack who ever gives in to you
for being weak and pathetic and worthless.

[she exits]

BONDO

Who told you this?

You don't know this about me.

[she enters]

ELLEN

Nobody needs to tell me.

It's written all over you, you crazy fucker!

You make me crazy.

You drive me down into the pit of my own craziness
till I'm begging for mercy

you hunt me down

you throw me down the stairs

you rip off all my hinges

till my ears are flying in every direction

I can't understand a thought I'm having

my mind is a million bits of shattered glass on the kitchen floor

and you stand there calmly yelling at me

go ahead and die, go ahead and die

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/5/19

you don't think I have inside me a capacity for misery?

[she exits;
she enters]

I'm off the edge of the world here!
I'm into the abyss
where is your helping hand?
are you a human being?
You are making me crazy!
I'm begging you!
Who could live with you?
Who needs you?
Now that a person sees how you are,
who would want you?

[she exits;

he half follows her to the edge of the stage,
yelling after her]

BONDO

Who would want you?
You crazy needy person
grabbing grabbing whatever you see
a bottomless pit of wishes and longings
a man could work and work and give you all he has
and you would be asking what's next what's more
and all the while telling him he is clumsy and ignorant
withdrawn graceless brutal insensitive confused
This is why men drive naked women into a pit with bayonets

[she enters]

ELLEN

And this is why women want to shoot men on sight
This is why they flush boy babies down the toilet at birth

New Spring

31. Stephen

People forget,
but
about a thousand years ago
they thought the world was coming to an end
so people sold their worldly goods
and gave away their money
and went to the top of a mountain
wherever they happened to be
to wait for the end of the world.
And they waited and waited.
Some of them may still be there.
The millenarians.
That's what they were called.

What they saw, finally,
was that
after the world comes to an end
life goes on.
That's how it was for the Greeks and the Romans.
That's how it was for the Millenarians.
Then, later on, a couple hundred years later,
people in 1200
they didn't even realize the world had come to an end.
They just grazed their sheep amid the ruins
and got on with stealing and fornicating.
When you go to Arizona
you see the levels of sediment in the rock
in the mesas that come up out of the desert
all dried out for thousands of years
hundreds of thousands of years
and that horizontal stripe of red in the rock
that was where the sea came up to
where you're standing now
it was nothing but underwater animals
and then the water levels fell
the fish all vanished
and here you are
sitting at a picnic table
thinking
how beautiful this is
like heaven.

FINAL- Leon and Julia

JULIA

You know

I've been thinking about it

and it turns out

I do love you

LEON

You do?

JULIA

Yes.

LEON

How could that be?

JULIA

I look at you

and I think you're sweet.

LEON

Oh, sweet.

JULIA

and good-natured.

LEON

Good-natured.

JULIA

Yes.

LEON

You do?

JULIA

Yes, I really do.

And I think

if you think a person's agreeable and warmhearted

then I think there's something there you can't explain

that gives you real

delight.

LEON

Oh.

FALLING & LOVING

Updated: 9/12/19

JULIA

I find

you give delight to me.

LEON

Oh. Well.

That's what I'd hope for more than anything.

JULIA

So would I.

LEON

And you're not sorry about it?

JULIA

How do you mean?

LEON

That you find delight in someone

who doesn't seem to you in any other way
desirable

who doesn't perhaps have those qualities
that you can count on

for, you know, the solid, long-term kind of thing.

JULIA

I would just take delight long-term.

LEON

Oh.

So would I.