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workshops

Phyllis

by Martin Bourne

It was the best of times it was the worst of times.

Well Filly dear you've had it good, now for the hard bit.

Ah Cassie dear so glad you could make it. Yes I know you said you would but it's an awfully long way from the sticks and there might have been a delay. What? you live in Norwood, well that's hardly London is it?

How am I. Well I'm fine. Just getting sorted.

What? I look like I've lost weight. You know me dear, I've always kept myself trim. Who was it that said you can never be too thin. Eddy's wife wasn't it? Anyway, lets have a look at the lunch menu. They do a wonderful choice here at the Dorky. Order what you like, nothing too much for my niece. Ah, Pierre. Can we both have the salmon mousse followed by the chef's salad please and a half bottle of that white burgundy that I like. Pierre, can you just stand there briefly. Cassie dear, I'm just going to bury my face in the menu, there's somebody over there I don't want to see. Good he's gone. Thank you Pierre. Who was he? O nobody very important, just my first husband. Of course we both know we are here. He knows I lunch here everyday, but if we don't make eye contact then he won't feel obliged to come over and ask how I am.

How am I? I'm fine dear. just getting sorted.

Nothing wrong with me, fit as a flea. What? How many times have I been married. Well six, never divorced any of them. Always did it overseas after the first one. No one asks questions and the men didn't mind, and if they did make a fuss, they all know I've got more on them than they have on me. Protection first Cassie, always get something on them. Hearts and flowers are all very well in a marriage, but really its tactical warfare.

Now then about this marriage of yours, I thought I'd give you a set of cutlery. I know you want the set from Harrods, but I don't buy from there. Bad memories. Anyway I've a lovely silver canteen that I pinched from some wealthy Italian in 1960 and I'd like you to have it.

Now, where was I. Yes my mother made me walk around Harrods in new shoes when I was sixteen. There she said, always remember pain follows getting something nice. Now what was the other thing. Oh, I remember, as an extra wedding present I thought you could have that old cottage of mine in Horsham. I live here now, it's closer to the facilities. Oh, and by the way, you know I won't be able to come to your wedding don't you. Now don't make a fuss dear. Fact is I'll be in Switzerland I expect, or flying. Yes flying, I like the sound of that.

How am I? I'm fine.