

DREAM LOVER

By Albi Gorn

CAST OF CHARACTERS

FLOYD

LUCY

DR. KNUDNICH (*can be either gender*)

(*A couple in bed. They have just finished*)

FLOYD: Five times! Five times in one night, I can't believe it.

LUCY: It is hard to believe.

FLOYD: Five times, Lucy. Even as a kid the most I ever did was twice.

LUCY: (*Beat*) With who?

FLOYD: Uh, Ronda Muhlbauer. You didn't know her. Five times. God, it's incredible.

LUCY: For me, too. I never was able to, you know, reach a climax that way before.

FLOYD: Really? Wow, this is...I mean think of it, Lucy. I'll be fifty in a week and I can do that.

LUCY: *We* can do that.

FLOYD: Sorry. Of course, we can do that. At our age, combined age I mean. I can't believe it. I must be dreaming.

LUCY: (*Beat, as they both look off*) Hmmmm.

FLOYD: Excuse me.

LUCY: I hmmm'd.

FLOYD: I heard you hmmm. Why did you hmmm?

LUCY: I'm just thinking about the rest of tonight.

FLOYD: Me too. God, incredible.

LUCY: A little too incredible, don't you think?

FLOYD: What do you mean?

LUCY: Well, we meet after work to see a film.

FLOYD: Right.

LUCY: It's a film in French by a Polish director who lives in Switzerland with no discernible plot and not one laugh in it.

FLOYD: And...

LUCY: Not only do we both understand it, we also both liked it. When is the last time we both liked the same movie?

FLOYD: (*Beat*) *The Horse Whisperer*?

LUCY: You didn't like *The Horse Whisperer*.

FLOYD: It grew on me.

LUCY: Then we go out to dinner even though you're always telling me you can't eat past six o'clock without getting that reflux heartburn thing you get.

FLOYD: I figured I'd take a chance. I ate a light lunch.

LUCY: We eat Ethiopian food —

FLOYD: You're only young once.

LUCY: — perfectly prepared and delicious.

FLOYD: We could even understand the waiter.

LUCY: It's a beautiful night. As we walk home there are no homeless, the only boombox we encounter is playing Joni Mitchell, the streets are clean, we smell the blossoming trees wafting Broadway way from Riverside Park, you notice my new haircut, the doorman actually opens the door for us, the elevator is waiting, there are no messages on the machine, and then we get into bed and whammo, five times. How could all this happen?

FLOYD: Because I'm turning fifty next week.

LUCY: First of all you're turning forty-nine, not fifty. Second of all that might be a reason for some of these things not to happen but it could scarcely explain why they would. And third of all, I mean, think of it, Floyd. Five times, each time simultaneous. Really, how could that be?

FLOYD: We're on a roll.

LUCY: It's a dream, Floyd. *(Beat)* This is a dream. It's not real. It couldn't happen. This is existence idealized, the unconscious speaking, the deepest desires experienced. This is a dream.

FLOYD: *(Looking around)* Sure doesn't feel like a dream. You know, there's none of those fuzzy corners.

LUCY: This is a dream in really good focus.

FLOYD: And I feel like I can control whatever I want to do. If I was having a dream, I couldn't do that.

LUCY: Who said it was your dream?

FLOYD: Whoa. What are you saying? You're telling I'm in your dream, that you're dreaming about me?

LUCY: As unlikely a concept as that is, yes, I am telling you that.

FLOYD: No way. I mean I—I'm me. I feel like I'm me. You can't be dreaming me so I feel like me.

LUCY: See, here's where I have a problem. I could easily be dreaming that you would say that.

FLOYD: Why would you dream that?

LUCY: So you could convince me I wasn't dreaming and that this is real because I want it to be real and not a dream. Oh yeah, this is feeling more and more like a dream.

FLOYD: No way. I mean, I don't think this is a dream, but if this is a dream, it's definitely mine. Doing it five times. You don't think that reflects my deepest desires?

LUCY: Three times I could see. I could see how your unconscious might dream of three times. But five? Please. You don't have that kind of imagination.

FLOYD: Of course I do.

LUCY: Whereas I have to tell you, in my unconscious five times is like a start.

FLOYD: And the movie and the dinner?

LUCY: All part of an idyllic evening.

FLOYD: You dream about eating Ethiopian? How come you never shared that with me?

LUCY: We all have our secrets, Floyd.

FLOYD: Oh, please.

LUCY: Like Ronda Muhlbauer.

FLOYD: Don't change the subject. This is not your dream. It's mine.

LUCY: Oh yeah. I can prove it's my dream.

FLOYD: Do it.

LUCY: What are we doing now?

FLOYD: We're talking.

LUCY: Talking?

FLOYD: All right. We're having a little fight.

LUCY: Be honest, Floyd, in the furthest depths of your unconscious would you ever want to be having a fight with me?

FLOYD: Well—

LUCY: You spend most of your waking hours devising all sorts of clever ways to avoid confrontation. Now you tell me you're dreaming about it. Please.

FLOYD: See, you're wrong. I do dream about having a fight with you, a fight that I win. I dream about that a lot.

LUCY: You mean the reason why you always avoid fighting with me is because you're afraid of losing?

FLOYD: Yeah, kinda.

LUCY: In therapy, Dr. Knudnich (*they pronounce it nudnik*) always tells us the important thing is —

TOGETHER: — to get your feelings out.

LUCY: Yeah. It's not important who wins, or even what the fight is about. The only thing that matters is that we both know what the other is feeling.

FLOYD: So winning isn't important to you?

LUCY: No.

FLOYD: So being right isn't important to you?

LUCY: Of course not.

FLOYD: Good. So you'd be willing to admit this is my dream.

LUCY: Floyd, you're being a child. You know this isn't your dream. Now just drop it.

FLOYD: I'll tell you how I know it is my dream and not yours. I didn't brush my teeth. How many romantic moments have you killed because you insisted that I get up and brush my teeth. You expect me to believe you have dreams about kissing me with unbrushed teeth after eating Ethiopian food?

LUCY: Yes. Well, no, I don't expect you to believe it because you're just something in my dream. But it makes all the sense in the world to me. Doing it that way makes it kinky. There's like a subtle hint of being taken against my will.

FLOYD: You really dream about stuff like that?

LUCY: Sometimes. Particularly after foreign films.

FLOYD: Why didn't you ever tell me that? Dr. Knudnich is always encouraging us to talk in bed.

LUCY: You want me to tell you to take me against my will? I mean really, Floyd, can you see the problem here?

FLOYD: I don't know. You tell me. It's your dream.

LUCY: Don't get petulant.

FLOYD: Five times. A perfect night. And this is where we end up.

LUCY: Right. A pity.

FLOYD: It is a pity. It's a pity that you're so angry at me that you have to have dreams like this, ruining a perfectly wonderful night with a stupid fight.

LUCY: You're the one ruining the night.

FLOYD: But according to you, you're dreaming me do it. You know what your trouble is? You need to take credit for everything. That's what your trouble is.

LUCY: Hmmmmm.

FLOYD: Again with the hmmm. Didn't you get us into enough trouble the last time you hmmm'd.

LUCY: Why *would* I spoil such a nice dream with such a sordid fight? That isn't something I would want. You know, Floyd, you just might be right. This may be your dream after all.

FLOYD: Well, I'm glad you're beginning to be reasonable.

LUCY: No, it's beginning to make sense. Obviously in your view every time you're really feeling good about yourself, I find some way to take it away from you.

FLOYD: That's ridiculous.

LUCY: But that's what you're saying, isn't it?

FLOYD: Well, sort of.

LUCY: And you must think I don't give you enough credit.

FLOYD: No, you do.

LUCY: But face it, Floyd, here you are dreaming that I don't, dreaming that I need to take all the credit myself.

FLOYD: But now I'm dreaming that you're admitting it's my dream. So obviously I think you're capable of admitting you're wrong.

LUCY: But only when the dream became a nightmare. God, you must resent me so much.

FLOYD: I don't resent you.

LUCY: But look at how you picture me in your dream. A wet blanket on your joy, a thunderstorm on your parade. On a night unlike any you've ever had before which you will certainly never have again —

FLOYD: Wait a minute.

LUCY: — I bring you tumbling down with my cynicism and neediness. (*She is near tears*)

FLOYD: Lucy, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to —

LUCY: That's what you really think of me, isn't it.

FLOYD: Of course not.

LUCY: Then why are you dreaming me like this.

FLOYD: I'm not.

LUCY: You're not? What are you saying? Are you saying this is my dream? You think this is how I think of myself?

FLOYD: Well, we have to accept that as a very real possibility at this point.

LUCY: Oh, Floyd, Floyd, Floyd, Floyd, Floyd. That you might, in your dream, reveal that you thought I was a controlling, castrating bitch is one thing. I can live with that. We can work through it. But that you might actually believe that *I* thought of myself that way is unbelievably demeaning and condescending. What am I supposed to do with that, Floyd? Tell me, what am I supposed to do with that?

FLOYD: Wake up.

LUCY: I can't wake up. This is your dream.

FLOYD: It's yours.

LUCY: It's yours.

FLOYD: It's yours.

LUCY: Wait. WaitWaitWaitWaitWaitWaitWaitWait. (*Trumphantly*) What about Ronda Muhlbauer?

FLOYD: What about her?

LUCY: How could this possibly be my dream when I never even heard of her? (*FLOYD makes a series of about-to-say something faces and gestures*) Well?

FLOYD: I'm getting there. Give me a second.

LUCY: Face it, Floyd, this is your nightmare. Yours and Ronda's.

FLOYD: Hmmmmmm.

LUCY: (*After a silence*) How come, by the way?

FLOYD: How come what?

LUCY: How come you were able to do it twice with her and we never did it twice?

FLOYD: Until tonight, you mean.

LUCY: Right. Until tonight, of course.

FLOYD: She was my first.

LUCY: Oh.

FLOYD: All my friends lost their virginity by the time they were fifteen. Here I was, twenty years old, still a virgin, and I had a lot of passion stored up.

LUCY: Sure.

FLOYD: And besides. She looked like Vivian Leigh in *Streetcar*.

LUCY: Oh. Your favorite.

FLOYD: Yeah. (*Beat*) Is that painful for you, to hear that?

LUCY: No, of course not. (*Beat*) A little, maybe.

FLOYD: I'm sorry. She was nothing, really.

LUCY: Right. Both times.

FLOYD: No, Lucy, please. Not that I had that many women in my life, but I never really felt satisfied until you.

LUCY: (*Softening*) Uh-huh.

FLOYD: You make love sexy. That's unique, it really is.

LUCY: Well, good, that's nicely said and very nice to know. *(Beat)* So I guess this is my dream after all.

FLOYD: What?

LUCY: Well, that kind of sensitivity to me, Floyd, I mean really, when have I ever seen that?

FLOYD: I can well understand why in your hostile haze you've never been able to see it, but I've expressed it.

LUCY: Hostile haze?

FLOYD: And even if I haven't, I am certainly capable of dreaming of doing it.

LUCY: Maybe. But even in your wildest dreams you could never be that articulate. No, this is definitely my dream.

FLOYD: It's not. Only I could dream you being so obstinate.

LUCY: And only I could dream you being so tiresome.

FLOYD: Ho, ho, ho. You're wrong there. I could easily dream myself being this tiresome.

LUCY: Well, you didn't this time, buster.

FLOYD: Well, I certainly did, lady.

LUCY: It's my dream.

FLOYD: It's my dream.

DR. KNUDNICH: *(Suddenly appearing)* Stop! Stop immediately.

TOGETHER: Dr. Knudnich.

DR. KNUDNICH: Knudnich *(He pronounces it K-nude-neeck)* Knudnich. How many times must I tell you?

TOGETHER: Sorry Dr. Knudnich *(they pronounce it as he does)*.

DR. KNUDNICH: This is not your dream Lucy. In your individual sessions you told me what your dream was. You told me how much you wanted Floyd to —

LUCY: Wait.

DR. KNUDNICH: — grow a pencil moustache —

LUCY: I told you this in private.

DR. KNUDNICH: — put on the string tie you bought him in Disneyworld —

LUCY: My health plan isn't going to cover this, I just know it.

DR. KNUDNICH: — and call her Scarlett.

(LUCY pulls the covers over her head)

FLOYD: *(Looking down at her)* You said that?

(LUCY nods her head under the covers)

FLOYD: I would do that.

LUCY: *(From under the covers)* You would?

DR. KNUDNICH: And it's not your dream, is it Floyd?

FLOYD: Uh-oh.

DR. KNUDNICH: Your dream is to have Lucy put on a blond wig —

FLOYD: I'm definitely not paying for this session.

DR. KNUDNICH: — sing *It's Only a Paper Moon* —

LUCY: *(Peeping out from the covers)* Really?

DR. KNUDNICH: And call you Stanley.

LUCY: I would do that.

FLOYD: You would?

LUCY: I'd love to.

FLOYD: *(Big smile)* Great. *(They smile at each other)*

LUCY: *(Breaking away)* HmMMM.

DR. KNUDNICH: What hmMMM?

LUCY: So this isn't a dream at all, that's what you're saying? This is something that has really, really happened to us. We've finally really connected to and liberated our

repressed thoughts, feelings and desires. That's what you're saying, isn't it doctor? This isn't a dream.

DR. KNUDNICH: Wrong. I said it wasn't your dream, Lucy, and I said it wasn't your dream, Floyd.

LUCY: Then whose dream is it?

DR. KNUDNICH: It's my dream. After three years of listening to the two of you whining and kvetching, I have the right to have a dream, don't you think?

LUCY: Sure.

FLOYD: Of course. (*Beat*) Ethiopian food?

DR. KNUDNICH: I love the sponge bread.

FLOYD: That *was* good.

LUCY: Joni Mitchell?

DR. KNUDNICH: Toss up between her and Cyndi Lauper.

LUCY: Well, that's a no-brainer.

FLOYD: Your dream. What do you think of that. (*Beat*) I'm just wondering — nah, forget it.

DR. KNUDNICH: Say it. Get it out, and we can examine it. That's what's important.

FLOYD: (*Beat*) Five times?

DR. KNUDNICH: Five? No, I would dream more like eight times.

LUCY: Eight times?

FLOYD: Wow. Eight times. That's a powerful libido you got working there, doc.

DR. KNUDNICH: It's a very vicarious profession.

FLOYD: Eight times, huh? (*Looks at clock and then at LUCY and then at DR.*

KNUDNICH) Well, we have to get up and go to work in an hour so if you'll excuse us.

DR. KNUDNICH: What?

LUCY: We have a few things to catch up on. (*LUCY and FLOYD start making love. LUCY stops*) Goodnight doc and sweet dreams.

DR. KNUDNICH: I can't stay? But this is my dream. I feel cheated.

FLOYD: And how long have you been having these feelings?

DR. KNUDNICH: But I — I —

LUCY: (*Looking at clock*) Sorry, doc. Our time is up for today. We'll have to deal with this next session. (*They resume making love*)

DR. KNUDNICH: Oh. (*He stays for a while a little uncomfortable and then as he begins to leave we hear:*)

LUCY: (*Peering up coquettishly into Floyd's eyes*) I have always depended upon the kindness of strangers.

FLOYD: Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn.

— end of play —