

THE IMAGINARY INVALID

RE (PAGES 283-289)

INT. VILLA VERSAILLES CHATEAU DE RETIREMENT- DAY

FRANCES PINO

What are you doing here? Did Judie call you?

MARCUS

She said you were having some issues, and I was concerned.

FRANCES PINO

Concerned? You don't look concerned.

MARCUS

How do I look?

FRANCES PINO

Like a woman that's getting fucked regular.

MARCUS

Ma! Why are you talking like this? You cannot do that. It is upsetting to the other tenants here.

FRANCES PINO

So, Judie told you that I'm 86'd from the card room.

MARCUS

No.

FRANCES PINO

Liar. She should talk. Miss Propriety, that one. But I didn't marry some asshole who pissed away a whole business to the Vitellis. A lot she got to talk about.

MARCUS

Which asshole did you marry?

FRANCES PINO

One that went to work every day and wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty. She really picked a real winner.

MARCUS

You pushed her into it, if I remember.

FRANCES PINO

Judie's no dummy. Don't you underestimate her.

MARCUS

I will leave that to you.

FRANCES PINO

You don't have to be a beauty. I wasn't and I coulda done very well for myself. But Judie don't have a flair. I had a flair so it was different for me because I had choices.

MARCUS

But *you* gave Gary the business, Ma.

FRANCES PINO

You're mad because I gave to that Swede she married? What was I supposed to do, give it to you?

MARCUS

Yes.

FRANCES PINO

A sissy trying to boss around a bunch of teamsters? Give me a fucking break, Marky.

MARCUS

What did you think they were going to do to me? Call me names?

FRANCES PINO

Call you names? For your information, they still haven't found Jimmy Hoffa.

MARCUS

He was gay?

FRANCES PINO

Why would you even say that? It used to be people kept things like that to themselves. Why does everybody now got to make a production outta their crap? Like anybody cares.

MARCUS

What ever happened to class?

FRANCES PINO

I know. Makes you sick. Listen, I want you to know something, Marky.

MARCUS

What?

FRANCES PINO

Sit down. I never told you this before and I don't know how long I left.

MARCUS

Probably longer than you can afford, according to Judie who knows what this place cost.

I fucked Frank Sinatra.

FRANCES PINO

Jesus Christ, Ma!

MARCUS

At Jilly's, in the storeroom.

FRANCES PINO

I am not listening to anything you say. You have turned into the weird sisters. This is not my mother.

MARCUS

I'm your mother. He's your father. And you're his kid. So get over it.

FRANCES PINO

What!

MARCUS

Only kidding. About you, not about Frank. I'm sorry to say, Marky, you're Victor's kid alright.

FRANCES PINO

You are in some fantasy, ma. You met Frank Sinatra when you were a little girl when Grandpa Nico had his band and somehow you have developed this fantasy about him.

MARCUS

You know how the gypsies used to come into the restaurants trying to sell you a rose? He bought out the whole cart and had the guy dump all the roses on the bar in front of me. It was such a pile, Marky, that you couldn't even see over it. So do you blame me?

FRANCES PINO

No, ma. I would have done him too.

MARCUS

He wasn't like that. He was all man.

FRANCES PINO

I do not care if you are a psychotic with Turrets, *that* was a nasty thing to say. You apologize or I am leaving.

MARCUS

You're too damn sensitive. That's what's wrong with you.

FRANCES PINO

You are what's wrong with me.

MARCUS

For Christ-sakes, take some responsibility for your shit. God knows I did.

FRANCES PINO

MARCUS

And how did you do that, Ma?

FRANCES PINO

I locked myself up in a split-level in Teaneck with a tow-truck driver and a couple of kids, you understand. Gave up every chance for something else. For what? A fucking mink coat made from tails, and a swim club?

MARCUS

Goodbye. I have got to go.

FRANCES PINO

Of course you do. It's unpleasant so you don't want to hear it.

MARCUS

What about the shrink? Judie said she set up an appointment for you. You need medication. You have got to go and see him.

FRANCES PINO

Her. And her feet don't touch the floor. They dangle in the air, she's so short. I fired that bitch. Imagine this, that dwarf was trying to live through me, Marky. Her life is so dull that she is getting off on mine. Sitting there, her feet dangling, asking me about everything. What the fuck business is it of hers?

MARCUS

Can you blame her? Not everybody fucks Frank Sinatra.

FRANCES PINO

You got that right.

He kisses her.

MARCUS

Goodbye.

FRANCES PINO

Already?

MARCUS

I am happy and I do not want you to mess with it.

FRANCES PINO

Goodbye, Marky. You know, I always liked your drawings. Do you still make them?

MARCUS

No.

He gets to the door, stops
and turns.

MARCUS

Ma, How come you never said so before this? You never even commented on anything I did.

FRANCES PINO

I had a lot of things on my mind.

MARCUS

What?

FRANCES PINO

I don't know. Stupid things.

MARCUS

So did he have a big dick? Ava Gardner said he was 120 pounds and 10 of that was his cock.

FRANCES PINO

She was wrong for him. When you can sing like that who gives a fuck?

MARCUS

Maybe you did have the wrong life.

FRANCES PINO

Why?

MARCUS

You should have been the truck driver.

FRANCES PINO

If I wasn't so weak-willed all my life, I could have been Lulu Mach. I had it in me.

MARCUS

And I could have been a contender, but I was a sissy. Them is the breaks, Franny. And for your information, I was stripping the cars that went to auction, dispatching the trucks over the CB radio and doing the invoices when I was fifteen. And nobody, not the drivers or the mechanics, called me names.

FRANCES PINO

They would have if you showed up in tights in that blue coat with tails and the gold buttons.

MARCUS

You told me to take the job as the tour guide at Washington's Headquarters.

FRANCES PINO

I didn't want you to end up like your father in some shack in a parking lot barking into the radio. Is there something wrong with that?

MARCUS

Yes. I thought you wanted me to have a chance to do something I really cared about. Now I see that it was not concern for me. It was so you could hold onto that blue tailcoat all your life and throw it back at me, like you are doing now. I know that you do not know what you are saying, that you are in some alternate universe, but that does not mean for one second that I am going to pretend that any of the shit coming out of your mouth is true.

FRANCES PINO

It's true. I just never said it before because I wasn't dying.

MARCUS

You are not dying. That is bullshit too.

FRANCES PINO

Nobody gets out of here alive, you understand.

MARCUS

You will see to that.

FRANCES PINO

Things happen. A chandelier could fall on my head.

MARCUS

They are plastic.

He smacks the "crystal"
chandelier with his fist
and goes to the door, but
turns before exiting.

MARCUS

If you really wanted the business to survive you would have given it to Judie. She's organized; she is relentless, and all she wants to do is talk into a microphone. But you would not do that because then you would have had to give up some of your flair.

Music Note: Ordinary mothers lead ordinary lives
Keep the house and sweep the parlor
Cook the meals and look exhausted
Ordinary mothers, like ordinary wives
Fry the eggs and dry the sheets
And try to deal with facts....