

VERSHININ. You're different.

MASHA. I am?

VERSHININ. You know you are.

*They look at each other. Then—
He breaks away.*

MASHA. Are / you—?

VERSHININ. I haven't eaten much today. My daughter's been sick.
Well, not *sick*, exactly—just...

Tries not to cry.

It kills me to think of the fucking mother they have...!

Then—

I'm sorry.

MASHA. It's okay.

Smiles at him.

I like it when you curse.

He smiles back at her. Then—

VERSHININ. This... fucking morning she started screaming at me. I don't even know what she was fucking screaming about. It doesn't even matter—I slammed the door in her fucking face. And I don't even care if she screams at *me*. But my girls...

MASHA. Hey.

Masha picks up a bonbon from a nearby dish.

Eat something.

*She approaches him. Lifts the bonbon to his lips.
He eats it, eyes locked on hers.*

VERSHININ. I never talk about things. Like this. With anyone. But with you? / I—

MASHA. I know.

Feeds him more.

Do you feel better?

He nods. Takes her hand. Lifts it to his lips. Kisses it, slowly.

VERSHININ. Don't be mad at me.

MASHA. I'm not / mad.

VERSHININ. You're all I've got.

He kisses her hand again. Their eyes stay locked on each other's.

MASHA. Listen to that chimney...

VERSHININ. I don't hear anything...

A vague, soft whistling: a hollow, sad sound.

MASHA. That's the sound it made when—

He kisses her hand again.

As she becomes increasingly aroused:

—Daaaaaaddy was dying...

He kneels down and kisses her hand, passionately. Over and over. Every part of it. She lets him.

VERSHININ. You are the strangest woman I have ever met.

MASHA. *(Doesn't mean it.)* Stop.

VERSHININ. You are the most bewitching—

Kisses her hand.

—mysterious—

Kisses her hand.

magical—

He tries to kiss her hand again—but she breaks away and moves to a corner of the room.

MASHA. There's a little more light—over / here...

VERSHININ. Oh, my god. The way you move...

He follows her.

MASHA. "Beside the sea there stands a tree, and on that tree a golden chain..."

VERSHININ. What is that?

MASHA. It's a poem. I was reading—the day we / met.

VERSHININ. I dream about you. All the time. You... *haunt* me. Like a—spectacular succubus!

Stares at her, seriously.

I think I'm in love with you.