

Rebecca and The Other Girl  
By Jake Lane

*(REBECCA and THE OTHER GIRL are sitting on the porch balcony drinking their morning coffee. They seem to be roommates and great friends. It's 2020. The conversation starts very casually.)*

REBECCA.

So, did you take it?

THE OTHER GIRL.

What?

REBECCA.

Did you take it?

THE OTHER GIRL.

Sorry, I zoned out for a second.

REBECCA.

I was just asking a question, keeping the conversation going.

THE OTHER GIRL.

I'm ridiculously tired this morning.

REBECCA.

You should take melatonin, sleep peacefully.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Every time I get a full night's rest, I just feel more exhausted the next morning.

REBECCA.

Maybe you woke up in the middle of a REM cycle.

THE OTHER GIRL.

I wear my sleep like a skin throughout the day, and some mornings I feel I haven't shed it enough.

REBECCA.

If you want my advice, wake up each day, live your life as fast as you can, and then envelop yourself in sleep. Don't move slowly, don't procrastinate. Time can't catch you when you're sleeping.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Are you afraid of time catching up?

REBECCA. *(mocking)*

Oh yes, I'm so afraid.

THE OTHER GIRL.

I don't use fear. I don't want to waste my emotions. I save them up for, like, a more urgent time.

REBECCA.

They're just sitting around inside you, wasting away.

THE OTHER GIRL.

What are?

REBECCA.

Your emotions.

THE OTHER GIRL.

When people call you angry, do you take offense? I never do, but I almost feel guilty. Like I'm supposed to be sorry for being angry.

REBECCA.

You think I'm angry person.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Anger snakes through all of us.

REBECCA.

Me most of all.

THE OTHER GIRL.

My coffee's cold.

REBECCA.

Every feeling is like its own train that leaves the station without warning, carving new tracks in valleys and mountainsides. I'll never be a small person emotionally and I've accepted that.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Dance your feelings out.

REBECCA.

What?

THE OTHER GIRL.

All your emotions, just let 'em out.

*(THE OTHER GIRL gets up and starts dancing. We hear a hint of some indie music playing suddenly, but we're unsure of whether or not we really hear it.)*

THE OTHER GIRL (cont.)

Come on, get up and dance with me! This is the part in the movie where we dance and giggle and our bond as friends grows.

REBECCA.

This is so—

THE OTHER GIRL.

You would love this! Just get up and dance!

REBECCA.

What am I to you? Your own manic-pixie-dream-girl but, like, the friend version? The neighbor version?

THE OTHER GIRL.

I—

REBECCA.

Do you really think you live here?

THE OTHER GIRL.

It's not—

*(We definitely can't hear the music anymore.)*

REBECCA.

I'm seriously worried. I know I sound angry. I always sound angry. But I'm worried. You show up here every morning expecting coffee and, like, a therapist (a friend?...) but I don't even know your name. My questions whiz past you and just flop right over the balcony, unanswered, unaddressed. You stare at me, even now, right in this moment, like you don't hear a word I'm saying.

*(beat.)*

Do you?

*(beat.)*

"Exit, pursued by a bear."

THE OTHER GIRL.

What?

REBECCA.

I said "Exit, pursued by a bear". It's the famous Shakespearean—

THE OTHER GIRL.

This *is* my apartment.

REBECCA.

...

THE OTHER GIRL.

I let you in this morning. I watched you walk into my kitchen like it was your own and make coffee.

REBECCA.

That's not—

THE OTHER GIRL.

You've done it every morning for 5 months now. Since your friend, your roommate died, which you never talk about. You never even told me, actually. I heard about it from Margaret, across the hall.

You waited a week or so after it happened. I could hear you wailing through the walls. These walls, so thin a wayward breath might cave them in. You cried every night. And then one morning I heard someone trying to open my front door. I approached slowly with a, yanno, with a vase in my hand, like I was gonna hit the intruder with that, but it was you, and your eyes were so hollow, like maybe you'd cried the color and the weight out of them, and I honestly thought you were sleepwalking. You walked right into the kitchen (I guess our apartments have the same layout), poured yourself a cup of the coffee I'd just made, and lead me, like you'd absorbed me into your dream-like trance, out to the balcony.

And I just sat and listened to you. And talked sometimes.

And, Rebecca, it's been months.

REBECCA.

You're tired.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Yes.

*(Beat. Time slows down a bit.)*

REBECCA.

So, we're friends

Now?

You and me?

THE OTHER GIRL.

Sure. Maybe.

REBECCA.  
But I feel so alone.

THE OTHER GIRL.  
You're talking to me, though. You're sitting here talking to me.

REBECCA.  
But it's like you're not even there.

THE OTHER GIRL.  
You know what, Rebecca? I used to pity you. I used to feel so bad because I thought your grief had turned you inside out and left a, uh, a shell, a—

REBECCA.  
Something you could fix?

THE OTHER GIRL.  
I think you're a cancer, Rebecca.  
And I don't know how I can / survive you.

REBECCA.  
I KNOW YOU!

*(A small beat.)*

REBECCA.  
Yeah, I—

REBECCA.  
I know you.

*Quickly, suddenly, we're in the living room. REBECCA and THE OTHER GIRL sit on a couch. It's 1806. There is a long beat before they start talking. They are rigid.)*

REBECCA.  
It's stuffy in here.

THE OTHER GIRL.  
No more than usual.

REBECCA.  
You've dined here before?

THE OTHER GIRL.

Indeed. And each time I spent the better part of the evening in the parlor.

REBECCA.

And now we wait for tea.

THE OTHER GIRL.

And if I wait much longer, you might refer to me as another statue in the garden.

REBECCA.

That garden.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Garish, if you ask me.

REBECCA.

Clearly someone believes wealth is not wealth if it isn't shown.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Yet has no qualms about leaving us suspended in time waiting for tea.

REBECCA.

Clearly no fortune was spent on finding a suitable staff.

*(They are cracking each other up. The rigidity begins to fade.)*

THE OTHER GIRL.

If only we could find a suitable host, perhaps a lady who found dignity in other ladies.

REBECCA.

Oh, did you think our invitation was for a visit? We might as well be parlor furnishings.

THE OTHER GIRL.

Or perhaps I'm a book on a shelf.

REBECCA.

They may not have noticed me as I'm merely a rug they traipse over.

THE OTHER GIRL.

And I'm the flame that lights their merry way.

*(They laugh.)*

REBECCA.

You are divine. What may I call you?

THE OTHER GIRL. (*a slight pause.*)  
Rebecca. And you?

REBECCA.  
Why I answer to Rebecca as well.

THE OTHER GIRL.  
I do believe I'll know you for quite some time.