

PLAY

STILL LIFE WITH NEWSPAPER AND PIPE

BY

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CHARACTERS

RAMON artist 30

ANIS singer 25

PHILLIPE writer 32

/ overlapped speech

A Café-Tabac in Montmartre, Paris circa 1910. Square wooden table, with 3 cane chairs, a newspaper, a bottle of red wine, 3 wine glasses, a pipe, tobacco-pouch, box of matches. Still life. Two men and a woman in period costume sit at the table in a window with a view out to the street. ANIS is reading the newspaper.

PHILLIPE Words. A sea of words!

RAMON Where?

PHILLIPE Everywhere, all about us!

RAMON Written or spoken?

PHILLIPE Both, the café chatter. Newspapers, journals, books, signs, posters, leaflets, tickets... menus...

RAMON Visual, they're all visual!

PHILLIPE Until you read them aloud.

RAMON The trick then is how to capture the sound in our art.

PHILLIPE Impossible.

RAMON No. We just have to find a new language in paint!

PHILLIPE We have a perfectly good one, if only you learnt how to use it!

RAMON My dear friend, how can we possibly hope to change the world if you are satisfied with the way it is?

PHILLIPE Art is the better medium for revolution! Words have to be too carefully ordered...

ANIS Printed words give me indigestion! (*Putting down the paper*)

RAMON You should stop eating them.

PHILLIPE Words are for writing

RAMON Words are for reading.

ANIS Words are for singing! You have to taste a word in your mouth and shape your vocal chords around it.

PHILLIPE You bring words more alive... when you sing their notes out loud...

ANIS (*Sings*) It's true, I do, I do, I do...

RAMON You read a /painting...

PHILLIPE Read a person, an angle, a view

RAMON Who asked you?

ANIS Wine?

RAMON Yes, please.

PHILLIPE Let him pour his own.

ANIS I don't mind.

PHILLIPE I'm sure he doesn't either.

RAMON Just because he has to pour his own.

ANIS LAUGHS

ANIS He can reach.

PHILLIPE As can he.

RAMON Let me propose a toast to us three...

ANIS To music!

PHILLIPE To literature!

RAMON To art!

ANIS Enough. Drink!

RAMON But here's to us and each our strong held view!

PHILLIPE It's how you see the world.

RAMON It's how we communicate it.

ANIS Our interpretation.

PHILLIPE Everything is the same. Everything is different.

RAMON We will change the way people see the world!

ANIS Let them see it through our eyes and voice.

PHILLIPE It starts right here around this table, it starts now.

RAMON Look here, we have a ready-made still life in front of us.

ANIS So we do. But such humdrum objects. Where are the flowers?
The fruit?

RAMON No. This is new.

PHILLIPE But an arrangement in a café?

ANIS They are lacking in any sense of colour...

RAMON What have need have we for colour when browns and greys
predominate?

PHILLIPE So a newspaper, a pipe, a bottle and glasses.

ANIS Not very promising. How do we make it sing?

RAMON Look, we each have a unique view point. What you see is the
opposite of me. And if I stand (*he stands*) and look down from
above I get a different view to both of you.

ANIS Let me see! (*She stands*)

PHILLIPE What's all the fuss about? It's a tabletop for God's sake!
(*Stands*)

RAMON Ah, yes but that's just it. A table top with a three-way point of
view. If we can show it from all our sides and at once, we are
speaking a whole new language.

ANIS Oh, I love it. Yes. A multi- fractured viewpoint.

PHILLIPE I could try and write that.

RAMON So we sketch it from this side, then move around and sketch it
on top from the other, then do it from above. So we have a
three-way point of view still life with newspaper and pipe!

ANIS We need to start...

RAMON To break it...

PHILLIPE Break it into start

ANIS Look here, and here,

RAMON The pictorial plane shat-ters...

PHILLIPE Fractures,

ANIS Collapses into a heap.

RAMON But still we recognise.

ANIS	Bottle, glasses,
PHILLIPE	Pipe!
RAMON	Newspaper, torn collage/ stuck on.
PHILLIPE	Wood grain of table...
ANIS	Glass bottle prism.
RAMON	Overlapped /goblet glass...
PHILLIPE	Box of matches.
ANIS	Tumbling blocks /of shaded voids...
RAMON	Vortex, caves, / lozenges,
PHILLIPE	Ice-like see through blocks.
ANIS	Shock of lines. Not knowing/ where to look.
RAMON	A moving cacophony of /shapes, reinventing.
ANIS	A concerto of sound crashing /through solid matter.
PHILLIPE	Drum roll, saxophone, /cymbal clash.
RAMON	Doors and windows /opening, closing.
ANIS	The pure unaccompanied wail of a solo voice.
PHILLIPE	The calm contemplative nature /of repeated motifs.
RAMON	Low key monotone browns, /greys and greens.
ANIS	Music notations and collage/ of torn scores.
PHILLIPE	Painting texture.
RAMON	The nicotine stained tables of /café tabacs.
ANIS	The all night music clubs playing/ live till 2am.
PHILLIPE	Clash of glass as /cheers is said.
RAMON	Another bottle emptied.
ANIS	Cigarette rolled and lit.
PHILLIPE	A struck match /burning sulphur.
RAMON	Hiss of gas lamps flaming/ from the walls.

ANIS The shrieks of prostitutes /from the Bordellos.

PHILLIPE A glass is dropped.

RAMON The green fairy glow of Absinthe!

ANIS The stringing of a fiddle.

PHILLIPE The singing of the regulars.

RAMON Air fills with smoke and laughter.

ANIS We kiss and you have a fumble.

PHILLIPE Bits of paper ephemera torn and stuck on.

RAMON Thick textured paint applied with relish.

ANIS A song at closing time on the table.

PHILLIPE So much to drink I forget who I am.

RAMON I look and look again and can't stop.

ANIS Going dizzy with the busy /overlapping lines!

PHILLIPE I get to let my head have a little /table sleep.

RAMON Time to leave when we've squeezed /as much as we dare.

ANIS I sing till my voice is hoarse or I forget the words/ whichever comes first.

RAMON I fall to sleep on the floor. But am woken/ once more.

ANIS We make our merry way home and crash en masse our three viewpoints suddenly becoming one.

RAMON Goodnight.

ANIS Turn out the light! Can't a lady undress in peace!

RAMON I should certainly hope so!

BLACKOUT

