

A Room Of Her Own
Exerpt: Scene 8-10

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SCENE 8

Setting: The middle turntable is positioned to show the kitchen on the bottom. To the right is Ruth's study.

At Rise:

(Ruth and Thomas stand in the kitchen. Ruth wears business attire. She holds a large manila envelope.)

THOMAS

Are you sure you want to do this?

RUTH

It's what I've always wanted to do.

THOMAS

... Alright. See you at dinner.

RUTH

Actually, you might not want to wait up.

THOMAS

Huh? Then what about dinner?

RUTH

I don't know... Make it yourself?

(Ruth kisses him on the cheek and exits. Thomas exits after her, disgruntled. Lights out. Gray curtains close in front of the stage, hiding the whole set.)

SCENE 9

Setting: Closed gray curtains.

At Rise:

(Lights up, Old Ruth enters from out of the curtains and takes a seat in the front row with her large purse. She offers people around her hard candy. She stands back up as if she had forgotten to address the audience.)

OLD RUTH

This was my first time in the city alone and it wasn't clear exactly where I was supposed to go. I got lost. Big time.

(She sits and a ton of people in business suits flood the walk isles. They walk fast and have places to be. The house lights come on and then strobe lights. Ruth enters from the back and tries desperately to get around them and find her way. She occasionally asks for directions.)

RUTH

Um, excuse me! Oh—Sorry... Ow!

(She's shoved around mercilessly. Finally, she makes it to the stage. She looks up at the curtains.)

RUTH

Wow...

(The curtains open as she walks through them. What she sees is... Not incredibly impressive. It's a metal desk with a comfy looking chair and a handsome, cocky looking man sitting at it. He stands when he sees her.)

PUBLISHER

Ruth! Great to meet you!

RUTH

Hello! You, too. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

(Ruth tucks her envelope under her arm and shakes his hand. His handshake is a little painful.)

PUBLISHER

You're very welcome. Now, let's talk about your book, "Recipe for Disaster," what kind of recipes will be in it?

RUTH

Excuse me?

PUBLISHER

It's so novel to have a woman write a cookbook, I love it. What's your signature dish?

RUTH

Um- It's not a...

(Men line up behind him. They all look different.)

PUBLISHER

It's perfectly fine if you don't have a signature dish yet. We can workshop that. The most important thing is// the cover.

RUTH

It's not a cookbook.

PUBLISHER

Is it not? Oh! Huh... Well, that changes things. I'm sorry, but you're not who we're looking for.

RUTH

But if you// Would just read it!

PUBLISHER

It was nice to meet you, Ruth, but I'm going to have to pass.

(He grabs Ruth's hand and shakes it. After that he exits. Ruth stands there. The men behind him don't move. Old Ruth stands.)

OLD RUTH

This was my first rejection, but it wouldn't be my last.

(The men walk in a line. Each shakes Ruth's hand before they exit.)

OLD RUTH

Publisher after publisher... Man after man rejects my book. Some think it's a cookbook, some didn't notice I was a woman until we met, and some only invited me to make a pass at me. It was exhausting.

(The line ends with one last person dressed in a men's suit but is very much not a man. CLAIR, a woman with blonde hair and a beautiful smile shakes Ruth's hand.)

OLD RUTH

And then I met Clair.

CLAIR

I love it!

(OLD RUTH sits down.)

RUTH

It's not a cookbook.

CLAIR

I know! My assistant gave it to me, and I read it. It's exactly what I'm looking for; I'd love to have you.

RUTH

(Flustered)

I'd love to be had by you! I mean—The book. I—Publish me, please.

(Clair laughs.)

CLAIR

Then it's settled! I need you to make some changes and, obviously, finish it and we'll be golden.

(Lights out.)

SCENE 10

Setting: Turntable in the middle, Old Ruth's office to the right of it. The living room is visible. Ruth and Thomas are standing in the living room. The rooms in the turntable are a little messier than previously.

At Rise:

(Lights up, Old Ruth stands from the audience space.)

OLD RUTH

Oh, thank God my study is back. Is my water still there? I left my water.

(Old Ruth goes back to her seat in her study. She finds her water.)

THOMAS

Where were// You!

OLD RUTH

Don't worry, my water's still here! Oh—Sorry. Go on.

THOMAS

Where were you! I've been waiting for hours!

RUTH

I was in a meeting. I told you I'd be late.

THOMAS

You've been saying you'll be late a lot recently. When was the last time you cooked? Cleaned?

RUTH

You've been waiting so long, you could do all that.

THOMAS

I work!

RUTH

So do I! I have news, Thomas. *Good* news I was excited to share with you.

THOMAS

What is it?

RUTH

A publisher likes my work. I'm going to publish my book!

THOMAS

No. I'm putting my foot down.

RUTH

Putting your foot down?!

THOMAS

Yes! This isn't— it's not appropriate for a woman to be doing this.

RUTH

When we married, you said you would support me. You knew I wanted to be a writer.

THOMAS

That was then, and this is now. You've been coming home late, leaving early. I don't understand why you can't just do what you're supposed to!

RUTH

I think I should stay at my mother's tonight.

(Lights out except for Ruth's.)