

CHOOK CHOOK

Fiona Farrell

VALMAI: Ooooh. (*She stretches*) Another per..per..per..perfect day. Of course, it's always perfect here really. You can say what you like about the facilities but you really can't fault the weather. I mean to say, I've known nothing but perfect sunshine, day after day, hour after hour just about as long as I can remember. And what I always say is, if the sun's shining, well, that's the main thing isn't it? I mean, I suppose, in an ideal world I'd like a bigger place, maybe a bit of a garden, but honestly there's just so much going on around here, so much to take an interest in, well, it takes your mind off the disadvantages doesn't it? I mean, it mightn't suit everybody, I know that, but - well, life could be a whole lot worse. And perfect sunshine every day, all day. You could do a lot worse.

She stretches out on her chair. Takes a ukulele from her bag.

Yes. Take each day as it comes, greet it as a little blessing and make the most of it. That's the secret of true happiness. I've always known that, for as long as I can remember.

(Sings) You are my sunshine
my only sunshine..

Lights up on Chrissy. She's reclining with a pair of sunglasses on, on her paint-spattered chair.

CHRISSEY: (*Not too emphatically to begin: bored, weary*) Oh, shut up.

VALMAI: You make me happy when skies are grey...

CHRISSEY: Shut up.

VALMAI: You'll never know dear dee dee ...

CHRISSEY: (Loudly) I said shut up! Silly old broiler.

VALMAI: That's not very nice.

CHRISSEY: It's not intended to be nice. It's intended to make you shut up.

VALMAI: Well, I say, someone's got the pip today.

CHRISSEY: I haven't got the pip. I just can't stand your singing.

VALMAI: I like that song. I can do the chords. It's nice.

CHRISSEY: Not when you sing it. (*Imitating her wobbly falsetto*)
"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine..." Jeeze.

VALMAI: It's cheerful. Optimistic. Full of the love of life.

CHRISSEY: Yeah. Nauseating.

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VALMAI: You've got to look on the bright side. (Pause) Aren't we feeling well today?

CHRISSEY: Well, I don't know about you, but I'm fine.

VALMAI: Have we got our little visitor? Are we egg-bound?

CHRISSEY: I'm fine.

VALMAI: Because if you're egg-bound it can give you an awful tummy ache. I used to have trouble with that, quite regularly. But then I discovered the pellets: those white ones? And whenever I get - you know - a wee bit under the weather in that respect, I just pop one in and - tummy ache all gone! Just like that. I'll get you one if you like. I keep a few in reserve. They'll be around here somewhere. (She fumbles in her bag) Now where have I put the darn things ...

CHRISSEY: Valmai, I haven't got a stomach ache.

VALMAI: No cramps?

CHRISSEY: No.

VALMAI: No headache?

CHRISSEY: Not a twinge.

VALMAI: Oh. (Pause) Have you eaten a proper breakfast?

CHRISSEY: Huh.

VALMAI: Because if you don't have a proper breakfast it can ruin your whole day.

CHRISSEY: Tasteless muck.

VALMAI: Chrissy! Have you stopped eating again?

CHRISSEY: No.

VALMAI: You have. I can tell. Let me see. (She peers over at CHRISSEY's tray) You have. Your tray's still full.

CHRISSEY: It tastes fowl.

VALMAI: I think it tastes quite nice.

CHRISSEY: Nice! Get a life.

VALMAI: The pink pellets and the green pellets and the white pellets. And it's properly balanced. Protein. Carbohydrates. It's good for you.

CHRISSEY: Not.

VALMAI: Well, it is. I've seen the bags it comes in. They list all the ingredients. :Its' very scientific.

CHRISSEY: Well, it's scientifically foul, then. It tastes horrible.

VALMAI: It's good for you. Things that are good for you often aren't nice. You've got to eat.

CHRISSEY: The smell turns me off.

VALMAI: You should try just the same. Only a mouthful or two. You'll go off them. They'll notice.

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CHRISSY: So?

VALMAI: So, you mustn't get too thin.

CHRISSY: I'm not too thin.

VALMAI: You are. You're skin and bone.

CHRISSY: I am not skin and bone. I'm just naturally slim. It's the waif look.

VALMAI: You know they check. And you know what happens to the skinny ones.

CHRISSY: Look, shut up about my weight. God, you get on my nerves.

VALMAI: I'm just trying to help.

CHRISSY: I don't need help.