

SCENES FROM AN EXECUTION

Howard Baker

- GALACTIA: Dead men float with arses in the air. Hating the living, they turn their buttocks up. I have this on authority. Their faces meanwhile peer into the seabed where their bones will lie. After the battle the waves were clotted with men's bums, reproachful bums bobbing the breakers, shoals of matted buttocks, silent pathos in little bays at dawn. The thing we sit on has a character. Yours says to me KINDNESS WITHOUT INTEGRITY. I don't think you will ever leave your wife.
- CARPETA: I shall leave my wife, I have every intention of leaving my -
- GALACTIA: No, you never will. I believed you would until I started this drawing, and now see, your bum is eloquent on the subject, it is a bum that does not care to move . . .
- CARPETA: I resent it, Galactia -
- GALACTIA: You resent it -
- CARPETA: I resent it and I -
- GALACTIA: Resentment is such a miserable emotion. In fact it's not an emotion at all, it's a little twitch of self-esteem. Why resent when you can hate? DON'T MOVE!
- CARPETA: You are the most unsympathetic, selfish woman I have ever had the misfortune to become entangled with. You are arrogant and vain and you are not even good-looking, in fact the contrary is the case and yet -
- GALACTIA: You are moving -
- CARPETA: I couldn't care if I am moving, I have my -
- GALACTIA: You are spoiling the drawing -
- CARPETA: I have my pride as well as you, and I will not lie here and be attacked like this, you have robbed me of all my resources, I am exhausted by you and my work is going to the -
- GALACTIA: What work?
- CARPETA: i have done no work!
- GALACTIA: Carpeta, you know perfectly well you only stand to benefit from the loss of concentration you have suffered through loving me. You have painted Christ among the many flocks eight times now, you must allow the public some relief -
- CARPETA: You despise me!
- GALACTIA: Yes, I think I do. But kiss me, you have such a wonderful mouth.
- CARPETA: I won't kiss you.
- GALACTIA: Please, I have a passion for your lips.
- CARPETA: No, I will not. How can you love someone you despise?

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GALACTIA: I don't know, it's peculiar.
CARPETA: Where are my trousers?
GALACTIA: I adore you, Carpeta . . .
CARPETA: I AM A BETTER PAINTER THAN YOU.
GALACTIA: Yes -
CARPETA: FACT.
GALACTIA: I said yes, didn't I?
CARPETA: And I have painted Christ among the flocks eight times not because I cannot think of anything else to paint but because I have a passion for perfection, I long to be the finest Christ painter in Italy, I have a longing for it, and that is something an opportunist like you could never understand -
GALACTIA: No -
CARPETA: You are ambitious and ruthless -
GALACTIA: Yes -
CARPETA: And you will never make a decent job of anything because you are a sensualist, you are a woman and a sensualist and you only get these staggering commissions from the state because you -
GALACTIA: What?
CARPETA: You -
GALACTIA: What?
CARPETA: Thrust yourself!
GALACTIA: I what?
CARPETA: Oh, let's not insult each other.
GALACTIA: Thrust myself?
CARPETA: Descend to low abuse -
GALACTIA: IT'S YOU WHO -
CARPETA: I am tired and I refuse to argue with you -
GALACTIA: Get out of my studio, then, go on, get out -
CARPETA: Here we go, the old Galactia -
GALACTIA: You are such a hypocrite, such an exhausting, dispiriting hypocrite, just get out -
CARPETA: As soon as I've got my trousers -
GALACTIA: NO, JUST GET OUT.