

Some men want wealth. Some men want land.
And some men... many men... want love.

*Cuddy hastens to dispatch this train of
thought,*

CUDDY

There's this girl, Winnifred, we're basically a thing.
She works in my castle and
she's like... *drawn* to me
like an animal thing
so.

A beat. As sympathetically as possible:

SCRATCH

Huh.

CUDDY

What.

SCRATCH

Hmm.

CUDDY

What??

SCRATCH

Well
I hate to say this but
there's a slight problem with Winnifred.

CUDDY

There is?

SCRATCH

Winnifred is secretly married to Young Frank Thorney. So. Winnifred might be *drawn* to you. That's certainly possible. But she can't be your girlfriend... or your wife... which is a problem, considering the rumors. But maybe you don't care about the rumors.

CUDDY
(a little pale)

What rumors.

SCRATCH

They're stupid. Don't worry about them.
Your father is just a little concerned, that's all

about his heir
 getting married and *producing* an heir
 he's just a little anxious that your favorite flavor might not be "wife"
 if you get what I'm saying.

A beat. Cuddy is pale.

CUDDY

That's ridiculous.

SCRATCH

I'm sure it is! I'm sure it's ridiculous.
 I mean, Frank is certainly red-blooded
 but that doesn't mean...
 You're the son, after all!

A beat.

CUDDY

That doesn't mean what?

SCRATCH

No, nothing, it's just
adoption is a word that
 one hears floated, from time to time,
 in these circumstances.

CUDDY

Adoption?

SCRATCH

Frank as the
 "Adoptive Heir"... you know
 but:
 Rumor! Rumor.
 Probably untrue.

CUDDY

Frank Thorney??
 I *hate* Frank Thorney!

(this gets more intense as it goes)

My dad gave him a horse and now he goes everywhere by horseback! It's like, you have legs, can't you walk? It's like, you're going three feet, just fucking walk! But nope, there's Frank Thorney on his goddamn horse. And I'm like, Hi Frank, and he always just *looks* at me, he just *looks* at me, and then he keeps going. And I'm like, Bye Frank. I'm like, your dad is a farmer, Frank! I'm like, fuck you Frank! I'm like, someday I'm gonna

punch you in your perfectly-straight teeth, someday I'm gonna be like Hi Frank and then I'm gonna hit you so hard you fall off that stupid fucking horse and I'm gonna keep hitting you and keep hitting you and keep hitting you until all those straight square teeth are bashed into your stupid beautiful face and I'm gonna say BYE FRANK BYE FRANK BYEEEEEE FRAAAAANK!

(A beat. Cuddy is breathing really hard. He gets it together. He is ashamed, and also liberated. He looks at Scratch. Scratch's face is encouraging. A long beat.)

You can have my soul.
I want you to kill Frank.

SCRATCH

I think we can make that work.

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