

MARTA

The ski mask is particularly ominous.

FREDDIE

Is it. Mm. Yes but you, you understand, Marta, this is ski *country*. In the Good Old Days before you were born -- and by the way what made them the Good Old Days was that you *hadn't* been born --

(holding up ski mask)

-- these cozy knitted hoods were intended *only* for skiers, thus the origin of the name "ski mask." *(beat)*

Fix you a drink?

MARTA

What are you having?

He goes to a counter where a bottle of red wine is nestled in an ice bucket.

FREDDIE

Well this season's Beaujolais Nouveau should be appropriate for the both of us.

MARTA

Why's that?

FREDDIE

Well when seen in fashionable circles, a Beaujolais Nouveau is -- like you -- always presented with a distinct chill upon it.

(beat)

And like me ... it ought to be drunk as soon as possible.

He pulls the already uncorked-cork out of the bottle.

MARTA

But Freddie, where ever did you get that outfit?

FREDDIE

Oh this goes back to when we were married. I bought it for that costume party we went to, the one thrown by that literary agent, Leslie Olsen.

MARTA

Leslie Olsen. Was that a man or a woman?

FREDDIE

At the time, he hadn't decided. Surely you remember that party? We all went as the person we most admired.

MARTA

Who were you in that outfit, G.I. Joe?

FREDDIE

O. J. Simpson. (*He sets about pouring two glasses of red wine.*) Oh I don't admire his methods. But one man getting away with murdering his ex-wife? He raised the glass ceiling for us all.

Hands her glass.

MARTA

Freddie, this party where we were supposed to come as the person we most admired ... what did I wear?

FREDDIE

A black cocktail dress.

MARTA

Who was I supposed to be?

FREDDIE

Yourself.

They toast each other.

FREDDIE (Continued)

But tell me, why are you here? I assume it's not to hand-deliver my monthly allowance?

MARTA

No, as long as the court forces me to pay you alimony, I prefer you get your monthly handout from my attorney.

FREDDIE

So then why the surprise visit?

She looks at him slightly bewildered.

MARTA

Freddie, you invited me. "Implored" might be more accurate.

FREDDIE

What?

MARTA

Oh, please. The note.

FREDDIE

What note?

She gets a note from her flight bag, which she unfolds and reads to him.

MARTA

"Must see you in Barnstock this weekend. Life or death. Tell no one. I beg you not to call me or anyone else about this. Just come for the love of God." Signed "Freddie."

She hands him the note. As he looks at it:

MARTA (Continued)

You didn't send it.

(beat)

You *did* send it.

(beat)

Well?

He puts down the note, steps away, smiling mysteriously.

FREDDIE

More wine?

MARTA

So the note *is* from you.

FREDDIE

I'm curious. *Did* you follow the instructions? Did you tell anyone you were coming here?

MARTA

(lying)

Why um, yes. I mentioned it to my accountant. He was surprised since I usually only get to use the place at Christmas and Easter.

FREDDIE

Funny, I spoke to your accountant this morning. He didn't say a thing about you coming here.

MARTA

Did you or did you not send me that card?

Freddie walks the card back to her open flight bag, savoring the moment.