

STRANGERS

By Edward Einhorn

(A waiting room. RICHARD is sitting.
SYLVIA enters, looks at RICHARD, then sits
down. Pause.)

SYLVIA

Hello.

RICHARD

Hiya.

(Pause.)

SYLVIA

How are you?

RICHARD

Pretty good. Pretty good.

SYLVIA

Are you?

RICHARD

Am I what?

SYLVIA

Pretty good.

RICHARD

Not bad. How about you?

SYLVIA

Okay.

RICHARD

Okay.

(Pause.)

So, how long have you been waiting?

SYLVIA

For what?

RICHARD

For the doctor.

SYLVIA

The doctor. Then you're waiting for the doctor, too?

RICHARD

Sure.

(Pause.)

RICHARD

So, how long have you been waiting?

SYLVIA

I just got here.

RICHARD

Me too.

SYLVIA

Weren't you here when I arrived?

RICHARD

Sure. I got here before you.

SYLVIA

But not much before me.

RICHARD

I guess not.

SYLVIA

Why are you seeing him?

RICHARD

Who?

SYLVIA

The doctor. Why are you seeing the doctor?

RICHARD

General check-up, I guess.

SYLVIA

Feeling okay otherwise, then?

RICHARD

I'm in the pink.

(Pause.)

My name's Richard.

SYLVIA

Sylvia.

RICHARD

Good to meet you.

SYLVIA

You too.

RICHARD

What do you do?

SYLVIA

I work in publishing.

RICHARD

Publishing, huh?

SYLVIA

Yes, publishing.

RICHARD

You know, I'm something of a writer, myself.

SYLVIA

I bet you're a very good writer.

RICHARD

Thank you. But how would you know?

SYLVIA

I have an instinct for these things. That's why I'm such a good editor.

RICHARD

So you're an editor?

SYLVIA

Yes, I'm an editor.

RICHARD

You ought to watch out who you tell that to. People are liable to try to sell you their books.

SYLVIA

I would love to see your books.

RICHARD

You hardly know me.

SYLVIA

I know you better than you suspect.

RICHARD

(laughing)

That's a very bold statement.

SYLVIA

What is?

RICHARD

What is what?

SYLVIA

What is a very bold statement?

RICHARD

A bold statement. Hmm. Do you want to hear a bold statement?

SYLVIA

Are you about to be bold?

RICHARD

Yes. I think I am.

SYVIA

Then go ahead. Be bold.

RICHARD

Well...I was thinking about dinner.

SYLVIA

Are you inviting me to dinner?

RICHARD

Would you accept, if I did?

SYLVIA

Maybe. If I could. I'd like to have dinner with you, Richard.

RICHARD

I'd like to have dinner with you, too.

SYLVIA

Thank you.

(Pause.)

RICHARD

I love that dress.

SYLVIA

I know you do.

RICHARD

You're pretty sure of yourself.

SYLVIA

No. No, I'm not. I'm just sure of my dress.

RICHARD

Well, it *is* a very nice dress.

SYLVIA

It's your favorite dress.

RICHARD

Don't you mean *your* favorite dress.

SYLVIA

No, it's not my favorite dress.

RICHARD

Well, it's very nice. The blue looks good against your skin.

SYLVIA

I think so too.

RICHARD

You know who you remind me of?

SYLVIA

Olivia Newton-John?

RICHARD

Yes! You must get that a lot.

SYLVIA

Not that often.

RICHARD

Listen, would you like to see a movie?

SYLVIA

I'm married.

RICHARD

Oh. Oh. I'm sorry.

SYLVIA

That's all right. My husband would understand.

RICHARD

Your husband.

SYLVIA

Yes, my husband.

RICHARD

What's he like?

SYLVIA

He's a writer. Or rather, he was a writer.

RICHARD

Isn't he a writer anymore?

SYLVIA

No, he doesn't write anymore.

RICHARD

That's a shame. I wouldn't feel like I was alive, if I didn't write.

SYLVIA

Do you feel like you're alive?

RICHARD

I'm in the pink.

SYLVIA

My husband was a very good writer.

RICHARD

Did he pass away?

SYLVIA

I'm not sure. He may have passed away.

RICHARD

He *may* have passed away. Don't you know?

SYLVIA

No. I don't know.

(A knock is heard.)

I'd better go.

RICHARD

Will the doctor see you now?

SYLVIA

Yes. He will.

RICHARD

Is he a good doctor?

SYLVIA

I can't tell. He seems like a good doctor, to me.

RICHARD

That's a relief. I'm a little afraid of doctors, to be honest.

SYLVIA

You don't like hospitals.

RICHARD

I hate them.

SYLVIA

So do I. I hate hospitals, too.

RICHARD

I wish I...

SYLVIA

What?

RICHARD

Huh?

SYLVIA

What do you wish?

RICHARD

What do I wish? I wish you would have dinner with me, that's what I wish.

SYLVIA

I'm married. Remember?

RICHARD

Oh, that's right. I had forgotten.

SYLVIA

It was good to meet you, Richard.

RICHARD

It was good to meet you, too.

SYLVIA

Maybe I'll see you again, soon.

RICHARD

I hope so.

SYLVIA

Good-bye.

(SYLVIA exits. Blackout. SYLVIA enters.)

Hello

RICHARD

Hiya.

(Pause.)

SYLVIA

How are you?

RICHARD

Pretty good. Pretty good.

SYLVIA

You look good.

RICHARD

Thanks.

SYLVIA