

Forget Me Not

Laura Pfizenmayer





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FORGET ME NOT

by Laura Pfizenmayer

CAST

VERLON: A 60-something overweight man who is slightly befuddled and forgetful.

MERLE: Verlon's 50-something loving wife, without whom he would be lost in every sense of the word.

MAEVELYN THIENPONT: A 60-something church lady, the spinster president of The Society for Better Reading. She's a throwback to the fifties.

Time

Present day, on a Saturday afternoon.

Location

A sunny, southern suburban home.

At Rise: MERLE and MAEVELYN sit at a small table set for tea/coffee with cookies. Under MAEVELYN's chair is her handbag. VERLON enters dressed in 'Saturday Casual,' a sweatshirt and sweatpants. VERLON has glasses pushed on top of his head.

VERLON: Merle, I'm going to run down to Lowe's. That commode in the downstairs bath is sticking again and I'm going to fix it this time.

MERLE: Verlon, aren't you going to say hello to our guest? Verlon, this is Miss Maevelyn Thienpont from the church.

VERLON: *(MAEVELYN extends her hand, which VERLON unconsciously ignores)* Nice to meet you, Miss Teapot. Honey do you know where my car keys are?

(MERLE looks terribly embarrassed as MAEVELYN pointedly drops her arm)

MAEVELYN: It's Thienpont, not teapot. It's French.

VERLON: I won't hold that against you.

MAEVELYN: *(having taken a visible dislike to VERLON)* Well, Verlon, aren't you the Francophobe.

VERLON: (*oblivious*) I'm not scared of franks. I like franks just fine, especially with beans. Merle, I can't find my car keys anywhere.

MERLE: (*obviously irritated*) On the keyboard by the door.

VERLON: Thanks hon! (*turns to leave*)

MERLE: Wait...wouldn't you like to sit down and visit with us for a minute...we're talking about the church book club. Miss Maevelyn is the President.

MAEVELYN: (*pretentiously*) We're thinking about expanding our membership. We're considering your wife (*as an afterthought*) and yourself of course. That is, if you're interested in spiritually uplifting fine literature.

VERLON: I'd rather get a root canal. No offense Miss Teapot. (*VERLON exits whistling*)

MERLE: Miss Maevelyn, you'll just have to excuse Verlon. You know how husbands are.

MAEVELYN: No, I don't know how husbands are. I never married.

MERLE: (*embarrassed again*) Oh, I'd forgotten. Well, take it from me, you didn't miss much.

MAEVELYN: If that rude man were my husband, I'd have to agree.

(*VERLON reenters*)

VERLON: Merle, do you know where my wrench is? You know it's a tool with an adjustable...

MERLE: (*interrupts*) I know what a wrench is. Did you look in the long drawer in your tool bench and if its not there, check by the water heater? That's where you used it last.

VERLON: That's right...by the water heater! Can I have a cookie? (*he starts to grab a cookie off the table and MAEVELYN slaps his hand*)

MERLE: He can have a cookie, Miss Maevelyn. (*VERLON grabs two cookies*)

MAEVELYN: I wouldn't have thought so. He seems to have already had a few cookies too many.

VERLON: (*through a mouth full of cookie, he pulls up his drooping sweat pants over his stomach*) I'm not fat, I'm fluffy.

MAEVELYN: Fluffy?

VERLON: That's what Merle says when she gives my belly a little rub. (*demonstrates by rubbing his stomach in circles*)

MERLE: Verlon! Hon, just take the cookies and go.

VERLON: I'm going, I'm going. Where did you say the wrench was?

MERLE: Water heater.

VERLON: That's right...water heater! (*Grabs more cookies off the plate and exits again. Sticks his tongue out at MAEVELYN*)

MAEVELYN: (*waiting until VERLON exits*) You're not doing him any favors you know. Condoning his overeating when he's obviously overweight.

MERLE: Maybe a smidge overweight.

MAEVELYN: He drinks beer doesn't he? I know a beer belly when I see one.

(*VERLON yells from offstage*)

VERLON: Baby doll, there's no more Bud in the fridge, could you pick up...oh never mind. I'll stop and get a six-pack on the way to Lowe's.

MAEVELYN: I knew it! You can confide in me Merle, is he an alcoholic?

MERLE: No! Just an occasional beer on a Saturday afternoon when (*pause, beat*) when he's hot and sweaty from doing projects around the house.

MAEVELYN: You don't have to sugarcoat it for me you poor, poor dear.

MERLE: Don't call me poor, poor dear.

MAEVELYN: You're in denial. (*VERLON pops back in, a wrench in one hand and pants wet up to the knees. Both women stop talking and stare for a minute.*)

MERLE: What?

VERLON: Mop.

MERLE: Laundry room. Wait, why do you need the mop?

VERLON: A little plumbing incident.

MERLE: What's flooded?

VERLON: I've got it covered. Is the big bucket in there too? And maybe some towels. Never mind, I'll find it. (*a little chastened, he starts to back out of the room*) And do you know where my cell phone is?

MERLE: No! Call the number on the house phone and listen for the ring.

VERLON: Good idea! (*VERLON exits*)

MAEVELYN: Alcoholics are often forgetful...and clumsy.

MERLE: He's definitely not an alcoholic.

MAEVELYN: I wouldn't have thought you were an enabler. The last book we tackled in book club was "The Enablers Among Us." Brilliant. (*a ring tone is heard off stage*)

VERLON: (*yelling off-stage*) I found it! I don't think I could function without you, Dollface!

MERLE: I'm not an enabler.

MAEVELYN: I'll get you a copy. (*leans over and meaningfully places her hand on hers*) Read it.

MERLE: (*snatching her hand away*) I don't need to read it.

MAEVELYN: Your husband seems to have issues with food and alcohol. What about drugs? (*VERLON comes in a little more hesitantly this time. He has a bloody handkerchief over his nose.*)

VERLON: Excuse me.

MERLE: (*without looking at him*) What can't you find now?

VERLON: I hurt myself.

MERLE: (*suddenly concerned; she gets up and goes to her husband*) Where?

VERLON: In the bathroom.

MERLE: I mean where on you? Your nose?

VERLON: The flapper hit me in the nose. It's bleeding.

MERLE: Let me see. (*she takes the cloth away and inspects the nose*) It's not bad. Go put some ice on it.

VERLON: Just a naked ice cube? No pain medicine? (*MAEVELYN nods knowingly*)

MERLE: Take a Tylenol and wrap the ice in a dishtowel. (*VERLON starts to speak but she stops him*) Drawer by the sink.

VERLON: Drawer by the sink. One or two cubes?

MERLE: Two. (*MERLE returns to her seat*)

VERLON: Thanks. Where's the Tylenol?

MERLE: Bathroom medicine chest. Second shelf. And before you ask, the medicine chest is over the sink...behind the mirror. (*VERLON gives the women a sheepish grin and heads offstage*)

MAEVELYN: Enabler. Today Tylenol, tomorrow rehab.

MERLE: Miss Maevelyn, I think you're getting the wrong idea about Verlon and me.

MAEVELYN: You think so? As I mentioned before we tackled this very subject extensively in book club. Dr. J.L. Willingham Ph.D. wrote it.

MERLE: Reading a book doesn't make you an expert.

MAEVELYN: You don't have to be an expert to see the classic signs of dysfunction.

MERLE: DYSFUNCTION? We're not dysfunctional!

MAEVELYN: He doesn't always go to Sunday services with you, does he? I've seen you alone in the pew.

MERLE: It's the only time he can get a tee time...and he fishes.

MAEVELYN: *(ticking the sins off on her fingers)* A golfing, fishing heathen. Alcohol, food, drugs. Disrespectful of the French. Does he fornicate?

(VERLON comes in with a dishtowel with ice cubes in it taped with duct tape to his nose. The women look at him incredulously)

VERLON: If I said it once I said it a thousand times, you can fix anything with duct tape.

MAEVELYN: I apologize. He doesn't fornicate with strange women. No strange woman would have him.

VERLON: *(puzzled by what he just heard)* Are you talking about a book?

MERLE: That's right we're talking about a book dear. *(MAEVELYN looks at her accusingly)* Verlon, what can't you find?

END OF FREEVIEW—
You'll want to read and perform this show!