



The Sound of Lilacs

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Citation Information

Morrison, Toni. 1931-

The Sound of Lilacs

1 folder

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Date Rendered: 2019-09-05 01:26:15 PM UTC

Available Online at: <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/2v23vz990>

① The Sound of Silence

It would be very difficult ^{not impossible} for you to tell my age. I'm not being smug, ^{at all} I mean it quite sincerely. Except for a little flabbiness under my arms and the fact that my teeth have grown old, you would never know that I am 52. (Even as I write that, 52, I want to cover the word with my hand because I guard my age carefully.) ~~Still~~, I am, in fact, a very lovely and remarkably preserved woman. It has been a habit of mine near to squint or frown - so I'm ~~not~~ even without those ~~little~~ ^{spiderweb} lines around the eyes. But I could wish for firmer breasts. Still, as I say, you would never know. ~~I~~

My loveliness & deceptive age I remark upon simply because it is important in order ^{for you} to understand me and what I did? Please, now, don't assume that I am asking for ~~your~~ ^{an early} verdict of "Not guilty" - or even a "recommendation for mercy in spite of guilt." I am beyond all that ~~to~~ now. I have felt shame ooze through these tired veins like oil. I have felt quiet ~~long~~ ~~heavy on~~

(2)

pressed ~~settle~~ like a cold key on my
bosom. And fear? I ~~have~~ ^{once} ~~awakened~~ ^{awakened} ~~in the night~~ ^{frantically} ~~and searched through the bed clothes~~
~~for my hands which I thought~~ ^{for} I had lost while I slept.

So, none of your pity please -
I want only that you should know and
understand.

My name is Faustine and I have had ^{wealthy} two husbands.
The first one ^{had a highly sensitive mind but otherwise no restraint} looked at the
world about him too carefully
one day and ^{began to go} ~~went~~ mad. ^{He began to slip} ~~His~~ ^{slipped}
^{principally in his habit of sticking into easily available positions} ~~his head under the faucet - to wash~~
^{away} "the pictures" in his brain, he
said. I could ^{have} endured his eccentricities
for - at 22 - that is what I believed
them to be - ^{But} then he began to
exude that awful odor that ^{is produced}
by certain kinds of mental disease. ~~produce~~
Soon, he lost his physical health too
and not long after ~~his~~ his treatment
began, died.

^{for the} My second ^{marriage} husband was ^{an} the ^{entire date}
^{for the first} result of ^{a mental} ~~the~~ ^{allergy} ^{to intellectualism of any kind} brought on by the
birth. ~~Born~~ ^{born} was ~~the~~ ^{the} healthy

(2)
Most while some most ^{and} uncomplex ^{man} ^{in diet and} ^{is someone} ^{could} ^{produce}
I have ever seen. ① He glowed with ^{exquisite} ^{face} ^{also}
cleanliness - his hair ^{tributed to soap} like glittered with ^{misadventure}
~~He was a~~
face He could run fast, leap high,
^{but} ~~and never~~ ^{had} a single thought in his
head. Six years of marriage with
him ^{was} ^{fascination} for me the fascination of a
pailed egg. I divorced ^{He was a fascinating as a} ^{badly} ^{egg.} ^{him} ^{out}
of boredom. ^{and our divorce} ^{lacked} ^{glamour} ^{trans -} ^{ever} ^{intense.}

The subsequent years were ~~the~~ the
~~fruitful ones~~ fruitful ones - spotted
with delicious affairs, ~~and~~ and
half-affairs and "situations". And
they brought me to 3 months ago when an
young man ^{asked permission to enter} ^{knocked on my door.}

At my request, a ~~China~~ ^{glass} ^{shop} had
sent ~~one of their salesmen~~ ^{to show me some} ^{pieces}
of crystal. ~~It was the~~ ^{crystal} ^{is} ^{appropriate} ^{here}. Somehow ^{like} ^{every}
thing that followed.

When he entered the room and
I saw that he was young and
good-looking, I decided - just as a
whim - quite excusable - to be
became ^{became} ^{fetching}. to be, charming, feminine and

(2) (4)

I do not flit There is no
desirable. Not to flit - ~~oh so~~ ^{disaster more} ~~absurd~~ ^{than}
that would be disastrous - a
"flirting older woman" is absurd.
~~But~~ ^{you see, was} I wanted, simply to have
this bright young man look at me.

~~He smiled and he returned~~
He smiled & I noticed that his
smile had something of ~~little~~ ^{glee} in it.
It was not ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~usual~~ ^{expression} professional smile
of a salesman. The crystal goblets
arranged on the coffee table
blinked at us & the man over
fore fingers over their rims and became
~~felt~~ ~~prognostic~~ ~~laughed~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~
highly amused at the sound.
His speech was halting and he ~~broke~~ ^{burst}
off his sentences ~~often~~ ^{on a} ~~to~~ ^{laughter}. Appar-
ently ~~he~~ ^{on} knew little ^{about} of his trade ^{work}
As he spoke his eyes look wistful
as tho' he were begging me to
look his faulty ^{presentation} sales pitch
and buy anyway.

I felt at that moment that
something fine ^{good} could be born
between us. I, an "older woman"

~~his~~ ~~present~~
As he spoke I
thought I detected
an adventurous
careless in the
corner of his mouth. I must have
A mouth that
could speak with
pleasure.

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could offer him a friendship unlike
any other he had known - no
requirements - therefore no jealousy
& no ~~burden~~ burden. A Haven
from judging eyes I could be to
this boy. Someone ^{with} for whom he
needed no pretense - no armour.
And as for me - He could give me
in return a ~~simple~~ lovely gift -
trust & ~~uncomplicated~~ affection uncomplicated
by sex, tiresome sexual ~~thoughts~~ ^{thoughts}.

Other No - forget all that I've just said.
I had no such innocent ~~intentions~~ ^{intentions}.
The truth is - ~~I~~ ^{he} ~~put~~ ^{put} the ~~piece~~ ^{piece} over
to pick up ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~purple~~ ^{purple} ~~cloth~~ ^{cloth} the crystal
~~came~~ ^{came} wrapped in ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~that~~ ^{that}
~~crystal~~ ^{crystal}

to wrap a piece of crystal in ~~the~~
its purple cloth & I ~~looked~~ ^{looked} at
~~his~~ ^{his} neck ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~felt~~ ^{felt} ~~an~~ ^{an} ~~almost~~ ^{almost} ~~uncontrollable~~ ^{uncontrollable} ~~urge~~ ^{urge} to
plant my mouth there. Nothing ~~time~~ ^{time} ~~had~~ ^{had}
enchanted me so ~~for~~ ⁱⁿ a long long
as did the back of that boy's neck.

that

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I could sing ^{unswayed} songs about
that neck about the ~~sculpture~~ ^{statues}
of its color. The obvious affection
~~with~~ ^{with} the hairs bent toward the nape
The long for the ~~sculpture~~
virgin path from jaw to shoulder blade

~~Here~~ that Had he ever modeled?

I spoke about Venus and Adonis.
He had not heard of...

adjust the heavy line becomes a thin
weightier one. and I can never catch up.

Never anticipate the ^{moment of} change. No
Sooner do I ~~think~~ grasp visually
and tactily the one it becomes the other.
I wake exhausted, ^{biting little bits of our} fearful and ~~lost~~
~~by a sense of loss.~~

It does not trouble me that you don't
understand this dream. I understand it
very well but ~~I don't know~~ none of
the languages I know is equipped
to tell you what I understand about it.

In any case I knew - because
of the dream - that I would see him
as soon as I could manage it. I had
been clear enough not to purchase any
of his wares so I could naturally
have record thoughts and visit the
store. I did.

Among all of that ~~fragile~~ fragile
glittering crystal, the smiling wine
glasses and ^{smug flower bowls} ~~there~~ there
was no sign of that lovely loving ^{insulted} ~~rep.~~

A discreet telephone call? Yes, A
Discreet telephone call.

Carlton Miscellany
Carlton College
Minnesota
Read what

Lest you think that our Laison was
 an idyllic one - some ~~hedonistic~~ dull
 hedonism from the dull 30's let
 me assure you that it was nothing
 of the sort. Except for his great
 beauty and the ~~the~~ ^{unfathomable} ~~unfathomable~~
 good ^{taste} ~~these~~ he displayed in worshipping
 me, he was on an abysmally ^{identical} ~~identical~~ day.
 I recall opening ^{the postcard} a charge account
 for him + discovering to my horror
 what a ~~consciously~~ ^{pleasure} ~~pleasure~~
 signature he had. ~~His~~ ^{his} ~~words~~ ^{never} ~~never~~ ^{agreed} ~~with~~ ^{him} ~~his~~
 subjects. There was so much
 to teach him. ~~To look at his toes~~
~~called for~~ ^{limitless} ~~patience, otherwise~~
~~a shriek would~~ ^{for} ~~while his selection~~
~~of~~ ^{was} ~~unexertful~~ ^{to look at his}
~~socks~~ ^{required} ~~limitless~~ ^{patience}.
 Then too he had a queer notion about
 putting on a musical extravaganza
 which would have as its theme
 some profound ^{if boring} message
 about the brotherhood of man. What
 irritated me most was ~~his~~ ^{an} ~~postscript~~ ^{Patience} ~~this~~
~~bestial~~ ^{devotion} ~~to God~~. It hadn't
 the charm of superstition or the
 excitement of fanaticism. & We

in some vague ~~shaped~~ ^{shape-like} way

was ^{simply} ~~merely~~ ^{he seemed quite evidence} ~~the~~ convinced that "God didn't
love us." And "Righteousness would prevail!"
These ideas - if they can be called such -
didn't seem to affect his behavior,
but often, at least expected moments,
~~these impressions~~ ^{he would utter these}
~~expressions~~ ^{expressions}. Once we happened

upon an evangelist - a bearded
screaming wretch - enthusiastically
"doing good" on the skirts of
Metropolitan Park. He was standing
on a park bench and, with a good
deal of zest, directing those of us
who stood near him toward the way.
He was not at all inarticulate and
remember ^{in part} particularly one passage
of his glowing prose!

"~~You are feeding~~" ~~he said~~ "on lies.
A lie is the scourge of God, ~~the~~
"Hold fast to the truth" he said "and
become one with God. Abhor the lie!!
Repel the lie!! What is your vanity
but a lie? ^{something or other like that} What is your pride but a
lie? What is your success but a lie!!

~~That~~ lie and you hit God when he
down - you hit him below the belt. ^{Does he actually}
Love Truth! - worship it. Truth is

and it shall
make you
free (of him, hopefully)

is not hard to find - It nestles in
 the blaze of a robin's breast (^{2nd than 1st} ^{that rather good})
 It lingers on the edge of an infant's
 cry. ~~tut-tut-tut~~ - ~~that~~ ^{both} ~~elusive?~~
 (^{and} ~~but~~ obvious -) It has the color
 of laughter - the sound of lilacs -
 the shape of a pleasant memory.

Later, driving home, he asked
 me what did I really think of
 Jesus Christ. It was that kind of
 thing, you see, that annoyed
 me. What can any one think of
 Jesus Christ? What on earth is there
 to think?

"Jesus Christ" I answered
 is something commuters say when they
~~stand that for a spell~~ ~~wait~~
~~on their laps, or~~ miss the 5:35
 to Bullsville."

My wit ^{completely} ~~blinded~~ ^{more} him. He
 looked sullen & mulish. Like a child
 who wishes he had been told about
Santa Claus. I dimmed the conversation

^{as if he had no possibility and}
^{dwelt instead upon the} ^{probability of the next}
^{fact} ^{more accurate} ^{miracles.}
 I know I sound like Casper - but
 I promised to be honest. Specially
honest. And I'd be dishonest.

if I told you that our affair
 was bliss without equal. or ~~that~~
~~that~~ ^{rather made my philosophical excursion too}
^{my effort on me or him} I deceive you of course. The incident
~~made a terribly~~ had a strange
 consequence which actually
 pricked me into this confession which
 is really no confession at all. I did
 what I could for him. There is no
 question about that. And he, in turn, ^{was}
~~distracted~~ ^{was able to divert} me from a frightening ^{+ increasing}
 awareness of my age. Still?...
 let me say it... I feel now that it is
 over-corrupt. Can you imagine it?

~~It was~~ I think this feeling stems from
 the ~~disgraceful~~ ^{sordid} way it all ended. In a
 quite foolish burst of bravado he
 broke his arm. ~~At~~ ^{After} it was
 properly splinted & set he grew impatient
 of its healing, and used the arm
 prematurely. This necessitated some
 further treatment part of which involved
 the taking of a drug. For no sound
 reason - (the doctors in their white ^{idiot} world ^{where the "incurable" is that for which there is no known cure})
 thought it quite reasonable (of course) his
~~developed~~ ^{body} reacted violently to ~~it~~ ^{the drug} and

~~was~~ a "Syndrome" or some such
~~odd or~~ ^{developed} become apparent. I haven't
 a clue to what a Syndrome is - ~~but~~
 probably one of those terms Doctors
 use ^{when} they discover themselves
 face to face with their blinding ^{unrequited}
 ignorance - like virus. Anyway,

My lovely boy grew thin and
 weary + his lips + the roof of his
 mouth were covered with sores.

I visited him often + ~~maintained~~ ^{tried to maintain}
 my usual gaiety. He found

speech difficult so I ~~did~~ ^{did} ~~do~~
 a good deal of the talking. ^{at first}

~~my wife and mother~~ came ~~too~~. But he
 would not look at ~~them~~ ^{her}, so ~~she~~ ^{she does}
~~reduced~~ ^{reduced} ~~to~~ ^{to} lingering in the halls ~~and~~ ^{or}
 looking sheepishly + enviously at
 me from the far corner of the room.

"Please," I chided him. "Don't let
 this destroy you." Illness is ~~too~~ ^{a disposition}
~~being~~.

"Am I ugly?" he asked.

"Quite!" I answered

"There is a preacher who comes in
 the afternoon. See if Bill comes in"

Opiate driven. I left because
he kept repeating that idiotic
phrase, "The Sound of lilacs".

He died the next afternoon.

Now I did not kill him - or contribute
in any way to his wretched Syndrome
but ^{it is far than} ~~I can't~~ wipe my ~~Sc~~ seem to
be ^{an inability to} ~~bathe~~ often enough. ~~I do~~ And ~~more~~ ^{that}
~~frequently~~ ^{exaggerating} ~~make~~ ^{this morning} I search for my ~~other than~~
hands in the bedclothes. My life
goes on, somewhat as before.
Perhaps, I am perhaps a bit - just a
tiny bit more eccentric. For example,
This morning I ~~walked into a~~ came
upon a flower vendor, and
quite without thinking put a
bunch of lilacs to my ear. ^{Properly}
And I was ^{my relief} ~~extremely~~ ^{relieved} to
discover that lilacs have to
Sound,