

Blue-Green Reunion

A playlet inspired by Ann Lowe's Imagination Story Cards

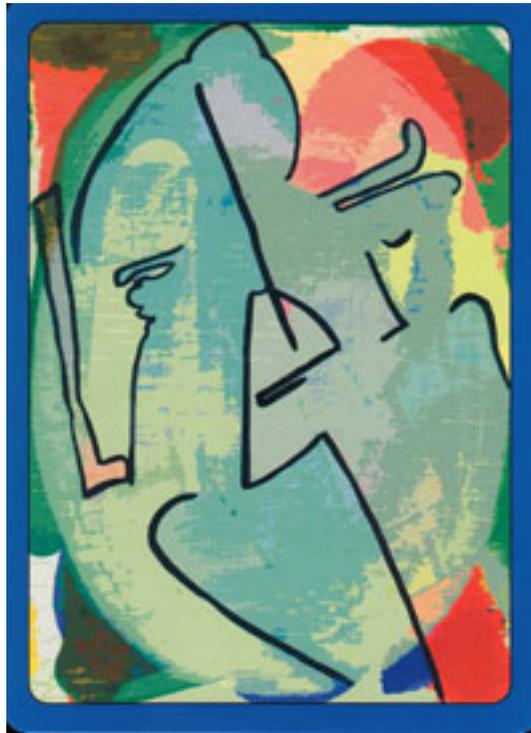
by

Manuel Macarrulla

"{*x...}" Represents information derived from Ann Lowe's Imagination Story Cards.

ACT I

Scene 1,
The Meeting



KEVIN

*The set is a New York City residential building hallway with elegant marble walls, mirrors, floral arrangements, and a tall counter with a doorman in a brown uniform behind it. Kevin enters the hallway from stage right. {*Kevin has blue-green skin, and carries a spade with a handle about a yard long. His mouth is fixed in a tense gesture that makes wrinkles appear about his chin. He holds his neck and torso rigidly, tipping*

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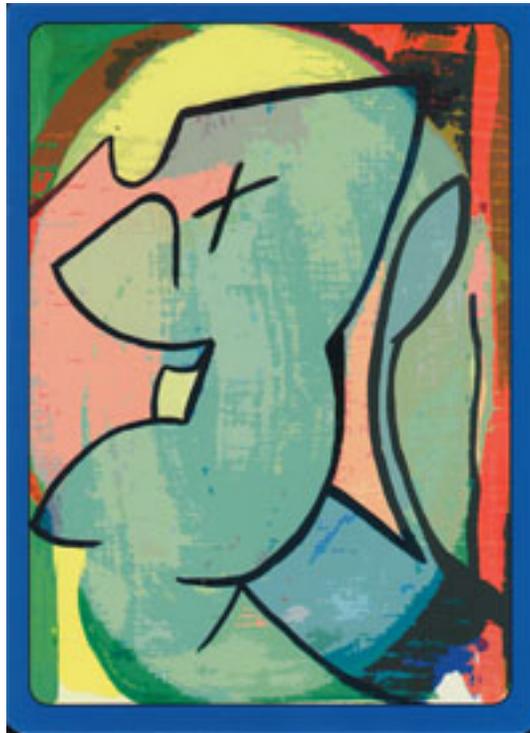
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back, slightly, as though withdrawing his face from some danger.}

Kevin [to porter]: "I'm waiting for someone to come down to meet me."

Porter [*nodding slightly and speaking softly*]: "Of course."



LISA

Kevin paces slowly. The porter follows him discretely with a wide eyed look. After a few moments, Lisa enters from stage left. {*Lisa has blue-green skin and yellow hair. Her movements are loose and rounded, and she tosses her head about freely. She smiles broadly. Her eyes have a ditzy, mirthful look. Lisa wears a bright blue scarf about her neck, tipped with a swath of deep blue. One arm behind her, she holds a long

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handled cooking spoon, the cupped part reaching her upper back. Both continue to ignore the porter's discreet looks.}

Lisa [*smiling broadly*]: "Hi, Kevin. So nice to see you."

Kevin [*leaning over to kiss her cheek*]: "Nice to see you. Have you had a good visit so far?"

Lisa: "Oh, Yes, I've had a great time. I really love to visit New York. My friend Loretta's been a great hostess. [*Looking bewildered*] What's the shovel for?"

Kevin: "We can do things with it."

Lisa: "What?"

Kevin: "We're not far from the park. Maybe we can go there and dig holes."

Lisa: "I see."

Lisa turns to face the porter. As she does so, the spoon behind her is visible to Kevin, who looks curiously at it.

Lisa [*to the porter*]: "Loretta said to tell you she got the package."

Porter: "Terrific. Thank you."

Lisa [*turning back to Kevin*]: "Well, I see that you look as blue-green as I remember you."

Kevin: "It's my color. No matter how much sun I get I will always look blue-green."

Lisa: "Me too. Even with all the sun there is in Prospect City."

Kevin: "I can't believe we haven't seen each other in seventeen years."

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Lisa: "Is that how long it's been?"

Kevin: "Yeah. By the way, Rob says to say hi."

Lisa: "Oh, wow!"

Kevin: "I spoke to him just before I came to meet you. He remembers when he and Eileen visited you in Prospect City and had a very nice time with you."

Lisa: "I remember that visit."

Kevin: "That's a nice blue scarf you're wearing."

Lisa: "Yeah. I think this weather is still a little bit too cool for me."

Kevin: "I know what you mean. By the way, why are you carrying that cooking spoon behind your back?"

Lisa [*Looking astonished, and suddenly pulling her arm out from behind her back, to view the spoon*]: "Oh, my god! I've been looking for that. [*Smiling broadly and laughing*] Wow! I'm so glad you saw that. That's what friends can do for each other." [*Both laugh.*]

Kevin: "And now we each have something to dig with in the park." [*Both laugh again.*]

Lisa: "That's right. We can dig some holes, then we can go to The Met. Would you like to have lunch before hand?"

Kevin: "Yeah. I *am* hungry."

Lisa: "Good. Loretta told me of a great place to have lunch. It's not far, and it's not too expensive."

Manuel: "Cheap is good. [*Holding up the spade*] I can dig it."

Both laugh.

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Lisa [*Holding up the spoon*] "And so can I."

Both laugh again. They talk as they walk. Both exit stage right. The curtain falls.

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Act I

Scene 2,
The Restaurant.

The setting is a crowded restaurant. There are waiters and waitresses with white shirts and black bottoms carrying trays with plates. A short row of customers waits at the register to pay. A hostess stands at a sign reading 'wait here to be seated,' holding menus. Lisa and Kevin enter, conversing. They still carry the spade and the cooking spoon. They approach the hostess.

Hostess [to Lisa and Kevin]: "Come this way please."

Lisa and Kevin follow the hostess to a table and take seats. The hostess leaves a menu before each.

Hostess: "Enjoy your meal."

Lisa and Kevin: "Thanks."

The hostess leaves them. They look at and discuss the menu. After a short time a tall waiter steps up to their table.

Waiter: "Are you ready to order?"

Kevin: "I think so."

Lisa: "What's the soup of the day?"

Waiter: "Today we have split pea, and squash."

Lisa: "Oh, the squash sounds nice. I think I'll have that."

Kevin [to the waiter]: "I would like one of those too." [Then to Lisa,} And if you'd like to split some salad...."

Lisa: "Sure. How about the mixed greens?"

Kevin: "Sure."

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Waiter: "And to drink?"

Kevin and Lisa: "Just water."

The waiter nods, finishes writing and walks away.

Lisa [*looking mildly relieved*]: "I'm so glad to be in New York, even though I love Prospect City."

Kevin: "What do you like about being in New York?"

Lisa: "Well, New York is full of all kinds of people and all kinds of strange things. So New Yorkers give me one or two looks, but, mostly, ignore the way I look. While in Prospect City, everyone stares at me all the time.

Kevin: "I know; it's so true. In New York I can even wear my Halloween costume on the street, or in the subway, on my way to the office Halloween party and hardly anybody looks. Of course, I don't need the costume to look special."

Lisa [*holding her forearm near Kevin's arm*]: "I know. Were both in the blue-green skin club."

Kevin: "Thank God we both live in...." [*He looks embarrassed.*]

Lisa [*laughing*]: "That's Okay."

The bus boy stops at the table and sets down the glasses of water.

Kevin: "So, how was it, going through your divorce?"

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JOE, LISA'S EX

Lisa: "Oh, it was horrendous, of course. I was increasingly bitter for a long time. I didn't know where to put my anger any more. Joe was a smooth operator. He had a real cool rap. {*He could talk fast at me with his big grin and his con man thin mustache, and, in the mean time, his eyes would dart way over till they practically popped out of his head.} Always looking around, if you know what I mean. I didn't realize it for a long time."

Kevin: "Boy, that must have been so rough."

Lisa: "Yeah. I used to keep journals, you know, with every gory detail of my hurts and my anger. But, when I allowed myself to acknowledge the love that I'd experienced in my marriage, at least for a time, I was finally able to let it go. I burnt all

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those journals. That was when I began to heal. I'm all about healing now."

Kevin: "Wow! I once had to do that with certain journals, too."

The waiter comes back with bread, and soup bowls. He sets them down and leaves. Lisa and Kevin start eating, remarking on the attractive and flavorful food.

Lisa: "How's your mother?"

Kevin: "Oh she's just fine. She lives here on 10th Avenue these days."

Lisa: "Does she still sing?"

Kevin: "Oh, yes, she still loves to sing and is doing some singing at her residence with some of the other folks there. I was there to visit her once when there was someone playing the piano for her as she practiced one of her Christian songs. It was very sweet."

Lisa: "Did she like your wife?"

Kevin [*laughing heartily*]: "Not one bit. Now that the woman and I are splits I'm sure she's feeling she was right all along. Families can be so difficult. I had a very hard time, myself with my divorce. It put me so through the mill...."

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WAITER/CUSTOMER

*Suddenly Lisa and Kevin become aware of the rising volume of tense voices in their vicinity. Other people are also looking on as {*their waiter stands, overbearingly, over a customer at the neighboring table.} The customer is elegantly dressed in a dark gray suit and tie.*

Customer: "I tell you I'm not finished with that soup!"

Waiter: "You look finished to me!"

Customer: "No! I've barely touched it! I want to savor it!"

Waiter: "Why?! It's not that good!"

Customer: "Excuse me?! I like it!"

Waiter [*reaching for the bowl*]: "I'll take that now."

Customer [*extending his hand protectively over the bowl*]: "I mean it; I'm still eating that!"

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Waiter [*grabbing the bowl firmly by the rim, his thumbs now well inside the bowl*]: "I say you've kept that bowl long enough!"

*{*The customer stands and grabs the bowl, as well, initiating a tug-o-war.} Green soup spills over the table.*

Customer: "Give me that!"

Waiter: "Not a chance!"

*The bowl slips from the customer's grasp, spilling green soup on the waiter's white shirt. {*The waiter then lands an upper cut on the customer's chin.} The man falls down. He then stands up, shaking his head, and straightening his tie knot and his clothes.*

Customer [*at the top of his lungs*]: "Where's the manager?! I've never been so humiliated in all my life! Where's the manager?! I have a serious complaint!"

The customer stomps away. All in the restaurant continue to look around in alarm. Some agitated muttering continues on for a time, but begins to die down. Meanwhile the waiter picks up the plates and utensils from the table just vacated by the irate customer, puts them brusquely on a tray and departs. Various customers follow his departure with frightened gazes.

Lisa: "Can you believe what a nut that waiter is?"

Kevin: "Yeah. I just hope he doesn't start some nonsense like that with us."

Lisa: "I mean it, I just can't believe that man started a fight over nothing."

Kevin: "New York has more crazy people working as waiters than Prospect City, I'll bet."

Lisa: "You're probably right." [*Pauses briefly, then shakes her head.*] I was really enjoying my food till that war broke out.

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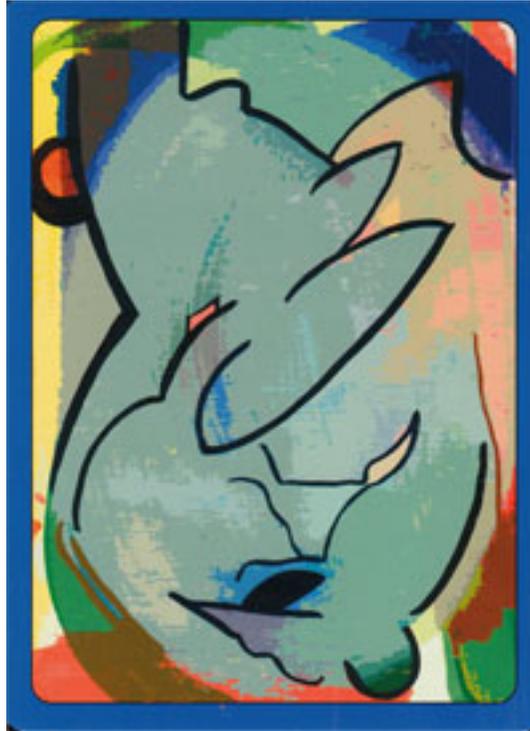
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Kevin: "Oh, well. I was pretty hungry when I sat down. I guess I'll just finish the salad."

Lisa: "You go ahead. That bizarre waiter is still off his leash. I still can't believe it; Loretta said this was such a nice place."

Kevin: "You should tell her. She shouldn't go recommending this place."

Lisa: "You're right. Anyway, what were we talking about?"



KEVIN'S EX-WIFE

Kevin [*nonchalantly*]: "My divorce. Yeah, it's strange how relationships can change. She and I started out so in love. It's hard to believe after a while she began to look just like {*a big, green gorilla with a face like a medicine ball with a

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flat front, and one lower tooth overlapping her upper lip.) A man came into our house to deliver pizza a while back and saw her sitting naked, on the floor, {*reaching down with a forearm as thick as an apple tree trunk, to pick her foot.}

Kevin looks at Lisa. Lisa frowns silently.

Kevin: "The man said, 'Hey, I don't think it's legal to keep a big, naked green gorilla, picking its feet on your dining room floor.'"

Kevin looks at Lisa again. Lisa frowns, still not speaking.

Kevin: "I'm kidding."

The waiter, with a large green stain still visible on his white shirt, approaches Lisa and Kevin's table.

Waiter [*calmly, to Lisa and Kevin*]: "Are you finished?"

Suddenly, Lisa and Kevin reach down and stand bolt upright. Lisa holds up her big spoon and Kevin holds up his spade menacingly. They stare intently at the waiter. The waiter backs away nervously. Lisa and Kevin promptly put some money down on the table, as they keep an eye on the waiter, then dash toward the exit. The curtain falls.

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Act II

Scene 1,
Tiepolo.



TIEPOLO GUARD

*The scene is the large room at the Metropolitan Museum where the very large paintings by Tiepolo hang. Museum visitors move about slowly, stopping at different paintings. A museum guard stands at attention in the middle of the room throughout the scene. {*He is tall, square shouldered, with angular features, and has a dark complexion.} Lisa and Kevin enter the room. They do not hold the spade and the cooking spoon. Lisa looks back at the door through which they have just entered.*

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Lisa [frowning]: "I can't believe they made us check the spoon and spade downstairs. If we hadn't had those things with us at the restaurant that waiter would have killed us."

Kevin: "Ah, I see you've adopted a posture of New York militancy."

Lisa: "If they don't want people to dig the art they should close the doors to this place permanently."

Kevin: "Yuk, yuk."

Lisa and Kevin start looking about at the Tiepolos. They stand before the middle-sized oval painting.

Lisa: "What are these paintings about?"

Kevin: "They were often done in praise of their wealthy and powerful patrons. They frequently incorporate mythological elements in order to ascribe phenomenal virtues to them, as well."

Lisa: "This man in the middle looks like he's kind of mean."

Kevin: "Yeah. He sure does. He looks like someone you don't question."

Kevin and Lisa move on to one of the largest paintings with horses and many soldiers engaged in battle.

Kevin: "Tiepolo made a picture like an action flick. Look at all these soldiers moving at once. You can follow the movement across the canvas through the rhythm of all those swords."

Lisa: "He makes it look easy."

Kevin: "Yes. That's always true of Tiepolo."

Lisa and Kevin move on to another canvas and keep talking and motioning toward parts of the pictures. Kevin takes an

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occasional look about. After a short time Kevin stops, looking about more intently.

Lisa: "What's the matter?"

Kevin: "I don't know. I'm getting the creeps. Sometimes I feel like the waiter could be following us."

Lisa: "In the words of The Kinks: 'Pa-ra-no-yer big des-tro-yer.'"

Kevin [*sarcastically*]: "Ha, ha."

Lisa: "Don't worry. We may not have our tools, but if we need to fight we can grab a couple of swords from Tiepolo's pictures."

Kevin: "Well, if you can get past the museum guard."

Kevin and Lisa look at the guard, who is not far from them.

Lisa [*under her breath*]: "Wow!"

Kevin [*under his breath*]: "Yeah, I know!"

Lisa [*under her breath*]: "He reminds me a lot of the centurion types in the Tiepolos."

Kevin and Lisa turn their attention back to the painting in front of them. They look at it a few more moments. They look back at the guard. They look again at the painting.

Lisa: "Well, would you like to go look at the Francis Bacon show?"

Kevin: "Sure."

Lisa: "How do we get there?"

Kevin: "I don't know, why don't you ask the guard?"

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Lisa takes a few steps toward the guard.

Lisa [*to the guard*]: "can you please tell me the way to the Francis Bacon show?"

Guard [*speaking in a commanding tone*]: "The Frankie Sausage paintings; [*pointing*] In that direction. Follow the signs."

Kevin: "Doesn't sound like you like his stuff."

Guard: "Is that so?!"

Lisa: "You don't sound respectful of Francis Bacon's work."

Guard: "Respectful?! We respect the glory of this institution and all the work shown within its walls, no matter how much vomit it depicts!"

Kevin [*chuckling briefly*]: "I'd rather look at Tiepolo than Bacon, myself. Bacon's not a favorite of mine. But I still like to look at everything, even Bacon, just to see what's going on there."

Guard: "What's going on is a lot of diarrhea."

Lisa: "I see. Thank you for the information."

Lisa takes Kevin by the arm and they move in the direction of the doorway. They take one brief look back at the guard and walk through the door. The curtain falls.

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Act II

Scene 2,
Francis Bacon.

The setting is a gallery with paintings by Francis Bacon. Museum goers move about slowly, stopping to look at paintings. A museum guard is also present. Kevin and Lisa enter the gallery slowly. Kevin looks back over his shoulder at the doorway through which they have just entered.

Lisa: "Are you still afraid that waiter is following you?"

Kevin: "I'm thinking about the guard...."

Lisa: "Still paranoid?"

Kevin: "I'm a well adjusted New Yorker. If you're not paranoid in New York you're not well adjusted."

Lisa: "So the myth goes. But living in New York has nothing to do with this."

Kevin: "Even paranoid people have real enemies. Didn't you think the guard was weird?"

Lisa: "Weird he was. Anyway, we left him in the dust. The next guard will be wholesome. I see nothing but well adjustedness ahead."

Kevin [*Looking around at the paintings on the wall*]: "Then you should be very happy in this gallery: Francis Bacon is one whopper of a well adjusted artist."

Lisa [*laughing*]: "Francis Bacon needed to express his anger and confusion and his paintings kept him saner than he would have been other wise."

Kevin: "Let's look at this evidence of the artist's therapeutic process."

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Kevin and Lisa start to look around at the paintings. They stop before different pictures for short periods.

Kevin [*shaking his head*]: "I'd hate to see the inside of this guy's tortured soul."

Lisa: "One of his issues was that his lover suffered from deep depression."

Kevin: "But I don't understand how his negativity can be so total. It makes for a very constricted range of expression. I actually think it works against expression."

Lisa: "Just think of his entire oeuvre as one big blue period."

Kevin: "Very cute. Only, this blue would best be described by a name a ceramics teacher of mine had for a blue glaze she really disliked, 'screech blue.'"

Lisa: "But, your own paintings aren't always rosy, are they?"

Kevin: "No. But I like to put my sadness over my family breaking up, and my anxiety from not having money on hold long enough to make beautiful forms. In fact, I think making forms natural and beautiful enhances your content, even it describes your pain."

Lisa: "Maybe we've seen enough."

Kevin [*in a mock horrific voice*]: "Maybe we've seen too much; time to end it all."

Lisa: "Which way do we go for the Greek and Roman art?"

Kevin: "I don't know. Go ask your wholesome guard."

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FRANCIS BACON GUARD

*Just at that moment, Ann sees a guard pacing slowly near them. {*The guard has bulging eyes, and keeps his hand covering the lower half of his face, as though afraid someone will smell his bad breath. His mouth seems permanently twisted behind his hand.}*

Lisa [to the guard]: "Excuse me, could you tell me the way to the Greek and Roman section?"

Guard [passionately, but habitually avoiding direct eye contact]: "Greek art was dead after 400 B. C. And Roman art has no imagination; it's dead."

Lisa [taken aback]: "I see. And where is Vermeer?"

Guard: "Long in the grave, Ma'am."

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Lisa [*with a hint of impatience*]: "I'd like to see his paintings, please."

Guard: "You know what I see in Vermeer's paintings? Death."

Kevin [*to the guard*]: "Do you feel you've been looking at this show too long?"

Guard: "There's nothing on these walls. There's nothing there. I'm tired of these very normal, boring paintings."

Kevin [*in a neutral tone*]: "Thank you for your opinion. It not every museum guard that's willing to share...."

Guard [*lowering his hand, and giving a direct look at Kevin*]: "Sarcasm has gotten people killed."

Kevin [*pleadingly*]: "No, no, I'm not being sarcastic...."

The guard returns his hand to his face and discontinues his direct look at Kevin.

Lisa [*to the guard*]: "I think I know what you're saying: art is about life.'"

Guard : "Egyptian art was about death!"

Lisa and Kevin stop talking and stare uncomfortably into the distance for a moment.

Kevin [*with an earnest tone, as he touches Lisa lightly on the elbow*]: "I see; thank you very much for the information."

Abruptly they both begin walking to the gallery exit. They whisper to each other with disturbed looks.

Kevin [*under his breath*]: "We'll ask someone else."

They look back toward the guard once and exit. The curtain falls.

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Act II
Scene 3,
Greek and Roman Art.



GREEK AND ROMAN GUARD

*The scene is one of the large rooms with many sculpture stands displaying Greek and Roman marble heads and busts, and other artifacts. Various museum visitors move about, sometimes observing the sculptures. {*In the rear of the space a museum guard stands. He is wiry and frail and always trembles slightly.} Lisa and Kevin enter the space walking side by side. They look in his direction, and give each other a look.*

Lisa [*in a slightly hushed tone*]: "He looks harmless enough."

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Kevin: "He looks like if you poked him with one finger he'd break into brittle little pieces."

Lisa: "I just can't believe the breaks we've had today with all these peculiar people. If I told them back at Prospect City how this day has gone they'd swear I was lying."

Kevin: "It would be hard to believe this story to anyone who's not seen all we've seen."

Lisa: "I'll always remember this trip by the waiter and the guards."

Kevin [*looking about the gallery, letting out a big sigh and rubbing his hands together*]: "Greek art, dead after 400 B. C., you look good to me today."

Lisa: "Yeah."

Kevin: "Ooh, ooh, ooh; come look at one of my favorite statues in the place. I made many sketches of her years ago. She's taken her lumps throughout time, but you can still make out so much. Her musculature is clear enough for Michaelangelo. And look at all the old lady wrinkles on her, and the tendons popping out, and the sagging old lady boobs. See the way her clothes reveal her form. And look: she's carrying chickens. Look at all their feathers. She's a living person. Our wholesome guard would like her, or not. Who knows? See how real her movement is. She's like a Bernini. I can never believe something this natural was done so long ago."

Lisa [*nodding*]: "She's a cutie, all right."

Kevin [*with a mock threatening voice*]: "Sarcasm has gotten people killed."

Lisa: "Ha! Curiosity has gotten cats killed."

Just at that moment the frail guard paces near Kevin and Lisa.

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Guard [*anxiously*]: "Cats killed? What cats? Where? I didn't do that! What do YOU know about it?"

Lisa [*terrified*]: "Nothing. I didn't mean it."

Lisa and Kevin try to move away from him. The guard continues to look nervously about.

Guard [*insistently*]: "I never killed those cats!"

Lisa and Kevin move to another part of the gallery, stealing occasional glances back at the guard, who still darts looks in their general direction and mutters.

Lisa [*incredulous*]: "It's happened again!"

Kevin: "Yes, it has. First that waiter; then the Roman guard in the Tiepolo Room; then the Guardian of the underworld in the Francis Bacon show; and now this wiry little cat killer."

Lisa [*despiritedly*]: "I'm not sure I can enjoy art anymore after all this, any more than I could eat after the waiter did his thing."

Kevin [*sighing*]: "Should we leave soon, or stay till closing time to get my dollar's worth?"

Lisa: "I think we already got your dollar's worth back at the Tiepolos."

Lisa and Kevin continue slowly making their way about the gallery, and glancing at the marbles, between looks at the guard. Up until this point the group of museum visitors has gradually thinned out in the gallery.

Lisa: "Hey, isn't it getting kind of empty in here?"

Kevin: "Yeah. That's weird because this is a main thoroughfare from the main hall to the South end of the building."

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They look about for a few moments, bewildered. Then, a second guard walks into the space. His steps are slightly arhythmic, and his gaze is slightly confused. He stands at a little distance from Kevin and Lisa, looking vaguely in their direction.

Second Guard [*moving his arms about in slightly spasmodic manner, in an audible volume, with slightly garbled pronunciation*]: "Conducted art through and making thirteen also performed have to call 911!"

Kevin and Lisa hold their breaths for a moment. They look at each other wide eyed. They step slightly back from the second guard and huddle together.

Kevin [*under his breath*]: "Did you understand that?"

Lisa: "I understand regular word salad, and a little bit of Roman word salad, but I can do nothing with Greek and Roman word salad."

Kevin looks at Lisa, mystified. Both look back to the space, where the first guard stands muttering, and the second guard still waves his arms unpredictably. Two more guards enter the space. They both walk in a swaying manner.

Kevin: "Are these people drunk?"

After another moment, four more guards appear. They also seem to sway and walk aimlessly. The security chief of the section, a woman in a suit carrying a walkie-talkie, enters surrounded by more guards.

Security Chief [*calling out loudly in a monotone*]: "Ladies-and-gentlemen-the-museum-is-now-closing-please-kindly-please-step-to-the-exit-thank-you-very-much-thank-you-please!"

Kevin is open mouthed. He looks at his watch.

Kevin: "What are they talking about?! It's only four O'clock."

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A much larger group of some thirty guards enters the gallery space, also looking disoriented. Kevin and Lisa look about at the throng of museum guards, which starts closing in on them.

Security Chief [*calling out loudly in a monotone*]: "Please-kindly-please-step-to-the-exit-ladies-and-gentlemen-thank-you-please-now-closing-thank-you-please-thank-you!"

Lisa and Kevin begin backing away from the guards. The Tiepolo "Roman" guard, the "Guardian of the Underworld" guard, with a hand in front of his face, are visible at the forefront of the throng. Suddenly, a lone, tall figure parts the ranks. He wears black pants and a white shirt with a large green stain on it. Kevin and Lisa open their eyes very wide. Lastly, parting the throng of swaying, stumbling museum guards a broadly grinning man with a thin mustache and darting eyes, followed by a large, green gorilla with a broad face and very thick arms step forward. Lisa and Kevin scream horribly and scramble for the exit, narrowly avoiding crashing the sculpture stands with busts and heads on them. The green gorilla, the man with the thin mustache, and the waiter go through the doorway after them first, followed by the swaying guards. The curtain falls.

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Act III

The scene takes place a year later. Lisa and Kevin sit side by side with four other friends, Loretta, Rob, Eileen, and Richard at a restaurant. They have food on their plates and wine glasses before them. They are there to celebrate Lisa's return visit to New York, and her Birthday. Other customers and waiters occupy the space, and mill about in the background.

Lisa [*disapprovingly*]: "Kevin, you're such a damned liar! That's not the way things happened at all!"

The friends around the table laugh liberally.

Kevin: "You're saying the guards didn't sweep us out of the museum like a mob of zombies from Night of the Living Dead?"

Lisa: "That's the way they clear the place at the end of every day."

Kevin: "But you're denying their zombie-hood."

Lisa: "Yeah, so."

Kevin: "So, it's incumbent on us to respect them, and affirm their value as members of a much misunderstood minority."

Lisa: "You nut!"

Kevin: "And you're saying we didn't get chased out of The Met by the violent waiter and the big, green gorilla."

Lisa stands up at her place at the table.

Lisa [*speaking majestically*]: "Kevin Watson: I accuse you and find you guilty of stretching the truth to the point of calumny. You've got the nerve...."

Kevin: "Yes, I'm the only one with the nerve and the backbone...."

Blue-Green Reunion

A playlet inspired by Ann Lowe's Imagination Story Cards

by

Manuel Macarrulla

Lisa: "Quite so: you have the nerve to stretch the truth to the point of 'vertebral calumny' most foul. I hereby sentence you! [To the friends, in a bloodthirsty yell] Tear him up."

The friends stand up, spontaneously, swaying uncoordinatedly, contorting their faces, and close in on him. Lisa joins in. They drape themselves over him, till Kevin cannot be seen under the heap of his friends' torsos.

Kevin: "Okay, okay, I give! Uncle."

The friends get off him.

Kevin: "From now on I'll only tell the boring truth."

The friends go back to their seats. They have a laugh on Kevin.

Kevin: "Can you believe that was a whole year ago?"

Lisa: "Yeah. Long enough for you to have forgotten one detail you should have told in your tall tale about our visit to The Met last year. It was consistent with the flavor of your story, but it was the truth."

Kevin: "What was it?"

Lisa: "It's what happened when you paid the museum admission with one penny."

Kevin [with mock indignation]: "I did not pay a penny to get into The Met."

Lisa: "So, now, you're also a lyin' cheap skate."

Eileen: "So, what happened when he paid admission with a penny?"

Lisa: "Well, he plunks down one penny on the counter and the wise guy behind the register rolls his eyes dramatically and says, 'ONE, sir?'"

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All about the table laugh uproariously.

Kevin: "Oh, yeah. I forgot about that. But, you have to understand, with all the embellishment there just wasn't enough room up there to retain every detail. What matters is I had a really nice time with you."

Lisa: "Huh! You thought our visit was so dull that you had to make up that load of malarkey about it."

Kevin: "No, forgive me! I was only having fun. I'm really glad we hung out."

Lisa: "Yeah. It was a very nice visit."

Kevin: "Now a year's gone by."

Lisa: "Yeah. And so much has happened."

Eileen: "What's happened since last year? Tell us about it."

Lisa: "Oh, so much. My brother got sick and went through big changes. Though some see it as a malfunctioning of his system, he's nicer now. It's easier for me to be with him. I feel closer to him."

Loretta: "That's so nice."

Rob: "I think it was a really busy year for me."

Richard: "Everybody I know was stretched thin, this year."

Lisa: "That does seem to be true."

Richard: "Down deep people are afraid to breathe. You want to keep a positive outlook, stay productive, and remain hopeful, but there's a limit to how much you dare hope."

Loretta: "Not me. I don't have time for that crap. Life's too short."

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Lisa: "Loretta's one person who's out to have fun."

Loretta: "Yeah! Because what's the point...?"

Kevin: "Yeah, but when the Austerity Militia finds you, and they will...."

Lisa: "Didn't we spare your life on condition of your silence?"

Kevin folds his hands on the table top and shrinks into his seat. He looks down at his plate with a worried look. The friends chuckle around the table.

The waiter comes to Kevin.

Waiter: "Can I take your plate?"

Kevin [distractedly]: "No, thanks, I'm still eating."

Waiter: "No, you're not. I'll take the plate now."

Kevin [open mouthed]: "You're kidding, right?!"

Waiter: "Yes, I am. I heard you telling the tall tale."

The friends all laugh. Kevin laughs and looks quite relieved. The friends continue eating, chatting and laughing. Richard takes a knife and taps his wine glass. He stands. All the friends stop talking and look in his direction.

Richard: "We celebrate our friend, Lisa. She was born to us 21 years ago today. We raised her from a pup. [Laughter.] No just kidding. I want to avoid being sentenced like Kevin. [Laughter.] Those of us who've recently gotten Lisa back in our lives are so glad that she's our friend. Thanks for your friendship, Lisa, and many happy returns."

All raise glasses to Lisa, and sip their wine. Kevin taps a knife on his wine glass and stands. All stop to look at him.

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Kevin: "It's not a fancy speech. I just want to echo what Richard said, and to add a personal note. Lisa has shown true friendship to us all. She means a lot to me, in particular, because of a special connection she and I have. [Kevin raises his glass.] To my fellow member in a club of two: the blue-green skin club; may we maintain the contact we've reestablished for a long time to come."

Kevin and Lisa place their blue-green forearms side by side. All the friends cheer, sip wine, talk and laugh. The waiter comes back and starts removing plates. In another moment a waitress comes up holding a chocolate cake with lit candles, followed by a few other waiters and waitresses. They approach Lisa. The wait staff and all the friends sing "Happy Birthday" through to the end.

All: "Make a wish."

Lisa closes her eyes for a moment then blows out the candles. The stage goes dark. All surrounding Lisa cheer. The curtain falls.

Manuel Macarrulla

July, 2009

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AUTHOR'S NOTE:

I used Ann Lowe's Imagination Story Cards as follows. Each time I needed a character I gave myself an assignment: pick a card at random, hold it vertically (except for "the waiter" card, which I held horizontally in the hope of also finding suggestion of the restaurant) and, no matter what comes up, struggle with it till I make out anything useful at all, no matter how abstract. That forced me to put myself at the mercy of the card. My chief rule was: don't turn the card to another orientation, and don't reach for another card (either choice meant "crying uncle.")

The cards, as you now know from my descriptions within *Blue-Green Reunion*, gave me the character's physical appearance, at a minimum, but also, in some cases, a sense of how the figure moves. One of the most interesting suggestions came from the waiter card. In it, I saw various things relating to the character that appeared at different points in the story line. So, for example, as the card had it, the waiter first appeared standing overbearingly above a customer. It's only a little time later, after a heated interchange, that he lands an uppercut on the customer, also suggested by the card. The tug-o-war between the two was suggested to me not by a bowl held between them, which didn't appear, but by the way the two leaned into each other. I felt them exerting force against each other. Those various elements were there, in a disorganized jumble in the middle of the card.