

ARRHYTHMIA

by

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DIALOGUE SAMPLE

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WOMAN

So, you go with me to the hospital. You tell them I'm your neighbor, and you found me on my front porch as you just happened to be walking by—

MAN

I'd see to it that you received the best possible care.

WOMAN

And would you tell your wife? About your E.R. adventure with this mysterious neighbor?

MAN

I don't want to think about it.

WOMAN

Why? You lie to her all the time.

MAN

I don't lie to her all the time! There's hardly any need to lie to her. She simply isn't here when you are.

WOMAN

And she never asks questions.

MAN

There are no questions to ask.

WOMAN

What about, "What did you do all weekend while I was in Houston?"

MAN

I would tell her exactly what I did. Omitting a few details.

WOMAN

It's that easy for you.

MAN

What would you rather? That she were suspicious?

WOMAN

At least.... Never mind.

What would you tell your wife if I died?

MAN

You're not going to die!

WOMAN

I might. My heart may suddenly stop beating.

(HE sighs, exasperated.)

What would you tell her?

MAN

Nothing.

WOMAN

You wouldn't tell her.

MAN

No.

WOMAN

You wouldn't tell her that you had just witnessed a death.

MAN

There's nothing unusual about that in my profession.

WOMAN

And how would you explain why you were upset?

MAN

Upset about what?

WOMAN

Your emotional reaction to my death! How would you explain it?

MAN

(impatiently) Indigestion!

WOMAN

(coldly) No wonder you stay with her. I'm glad you two have such a close relationship. I'm glad that my death will not come between you!

MAN

You are far from dead. Stop this morbid line of conversation.

Pause. HE tries to read again. SHE stares angrily into space. HE tries to ignore her. Fails.

If you're bothered by my lying to my wife, then you shouldn't be here. What do you want, do you want me to tell her all about you? Arouse her suspicions on purpose? Don't you realize that would be counterproductive? Really, there isn't a shred of logic in you. Not a shred.

Long pause.

WOMAN

Do you ever feel that you don't quite exist?

MAN

One does not exist in fractions.

WOMAN

I don't see why not. I'm here, and you're...reading. You can't hear my heart beating, yet I can feel it about to fall right out of my chest. It's all very strange.

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END OF DIALOGUE SAMPLE