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Let Nothing You Dismay

MILFORD BUBBIE

Topher Payne

MILFORD

Sorry to hear about your toenail.

BUBBIE

Feh. I still have nine left.

MILFORD

You're keeping yourself busy, I suppose.

BUBBIE

Well. Some days I get a little piece of meat or something stuck in my teeth, I can while away a good hour on that. So yes, there's some excitement.

MILFORD

Seems as though you'd have time to reply to a letter once in a while.

BUBBIE

Milford. I cannot see to read. I try to write and my hands seize up like tree branches. I don't keep a very active correspondence.

(a sigh)

And I told you not to write. So whatever you're proposing, stop yourself. I am old. I am set in my ways, and I am quite content in my misery, thank you very much.

MILFORD

You're going to sit there and tell me-

BUBBIE

I've said my piece!

MILFORD

That there's nothing between us? That weekend was the happiest time I've had in decades, and I know it was for you too.

BUBBIE

I was on new blood pressure medication and I'd had champagne. It was the wedding of our grandchildren, Milford. The whole thing is just inappropriate. It would open a floodgate of tsouris, and for what? Feh, we'll be dead soon, let's just leave it be. I told you, we're practically related. It's against the law.

MILFORD

(producing his envelope)

No no no, I looked it up. There's nothing untoward about our courtship. I had the girl at the library mimeograph the documents to prove it.

BUBBIE

Oh, Milford, you shouldn't be wasting money on photocopies.

MILFORD

This was important.

BUBBIE

It's so extravagant.

(she peers at the papers)

Oh, the print's too small, it could say anything. Fine, I stand corrected.

MILFORD

Rachael, remember? Us cuddled up on the bed, the stories we told? I rubbed your feet?

BUBBIE

I remember, I'm not senile.

MILFORD

Oh, good, because I might be a little bit.

BUBBIE

We watched 60 Minutes and ate that bag of shrimp I stole from the buffet.

MILFORD

A whole Ziploc bag! So many shrimps!

BUBBIE

We're lucky we didn't get mercury poisoning.

MILFORD

Every day, I think of you. I think of the people you might be meeting that day, the terrible things you would say to them, and I wish I was there. We already waited six years. Rachel, what if we live? We could live another twenty years!



Don't talk like that!

BUBBIE

MILFORD

It's happening all the time now! I saw some broad on the Today Show who was a hundred and eight, and she could still eat dairy!

BUBBIE

Stop! I don't want to hear this!

MILFORD

And there we'd be, older than Egypt, wondering why we didn't grab the chance to make our families miserable *together*?

BUBBIE

Oh my dear god. I could just keep right on living. Gives me chills.