

sense of humor?

YVAN. Oh, I see!

SERGE. All right, that's enough, let's make a decision. Tell you the truth, I'm not even hungry.

YVAN. You're both really sinister this evening.

SERGE. You want my opinion about your women problems?

YVAN. Go on.

SERGE. In my view, the most hysterical of them all is Catherine. By far.

MARC. No question.

SERGE. And if you're already letting yourself be fucked over by her, you're in for a hideous future.

YVAN. What can I do?

MARC. Cancel it.

YVAN. Cancel the wedding?

SERGE. He's right.

YVAN. But I can't, are you crazy?

MARC. Why not?

YVAN. Well, because I can't, that's all! It's all arranged. I've only been working in the stationery business for a month ...

MARC. What's that got to do with it?

YVAN. It's her uncle's stationery business, he had absolutely no need to take on anyone, least of all someone who's only ever worked in textiles.

SERGE. Do whatever you want. I've told you what I think.

YVAN. I'm sorry, Serge, I don't mean to be rude, but you're not necessarily the person I'd come to for matrimonial advice. You can't claim to have been a great success in that field ...

SERGE. Precisely.

YVAN. I can't back out of the wedding. I know Catherine is hysterical but she has her good points. There are certain crucial qualities you need when you're marrying someone like me ... *(He indicates the Antrios.)* Where are you going to put it?

SERGE. I don't know yet.

YVAN. Why don't you put it there?

SERGE. Because there, it'd be wiped out by the sunlight.

YVAN. Oh, yes. I thought of you today at the store, we ran off five hundred posters by this guy who paints white flowers, totally

white, on a white background.

SERGE. The Antrios is not white.

YVAN. No, of course not. I was just saying.

MARC. You think this painting is not white, Yvan?

YVAN. Not entirely, no ...

MARC. Ah. Then what color is it?

YVAN. Various colors ... There's yellow, there's grey, some slightly ochrish lines.

MARC. And you're moved by these colors?

YVAN. Yes ... I'm moved by these colors.

MARC. You're spineless, Yvan. You have no substance, you're an amoeba.

SERGE. Why are you attacking Yvan like this?

MARC. Because he's a little ass-kisser, he's obsequious, dazzled by money, dazzled by what he believes to be culture, and as you know culture is something I absolutely piss on. (*Brief silence.*)

SERGE. ... What's gotten into you?

MARC. (*To Yvan.*) How could you, Yvan? ... And in front of me. In front of me, Yvan.

YVAN. What d'you mean, in front of you? ... What d'you mean, in front of you?

I find these colors touching. Yes. If it's all the same to you.

Stop wanting to control everything.

MARC. How could you say, in front of me, that you find these colors touching?

YVAN. Because it's the truth.

MARC. The truth? You find these colors touching?

YVAN. Yes, I find these colors touching.

MARC. You find these colors touching, Yvan!?

SERGE. He finds these colors touching! He's perfectly entitled to!

MARC. No, he's not entitled to.

SERGE. What do you mean, he's not entitled to?

MARC. He's not entitled to.

YVAN. I'm not entitled to? ...

MARC. No.

SERGE. Why is he not entitled to? I don't think you're very well. Maybe you should go and see somebody.

MARC. He's not entitled to say he finds these colors touching, because he doesn't.

YVAN. I don't find these colors touching?

MARC. There are no colors. You can't see them. And you don't find them touching.

YVAN. Speak for yourself!

MARC. This is really demeaning, Yvan! ...

SERGE. Who do you think you are, Marc? ...

Who are you to legislate? You don't like anything, you despise everyone. You take pride in not being a man of your time ...

MARC. What's that supposed to mean, a man of my time?

YVAN. Okay. I'm leaving.

SERGE. Where are you going?

YVAN. I'm leaving. I don't see why I have to put up with your tantrums.

SERGE. Don't go! You're not going to start taking offence, are you? ... If you go, you're giving in to him. (*Yvan stands there, hesitating, caught between two possibilities.*) A man of his time is a man who lives in his own time.

MARC. Bullshit. How can a man live in any other time but his own? Answer me that.

SERGE. A man of his time is someone of whom it can be said in twenty years or in a hundred years time, he was representative of his era.

MARC. Hm.

To what end?

SERGE. What do you mean, to what end?

MARC. What use is it to me if someday somebody says, I was representative of my era?

SERGE. Listen, sweetheart, we're not talking about you, if you can imagine such a thing! We don't give a fuck about you!

A man of his time, I'm trying to explain to you, like most people you admire, is someone who makes some kind of contribution to the human race ... A man of his time doesn't assume the history of art has come to an end with a pseudo Flemish view of Cavailon ...

MARC. Carcassonne.

SERGE. Same thing. A man of his time plays his part in the

fundamental dynamic of evolution ...

MARC. And that's a good thing in your view?

SERGE. It's not good or bad, why do you always have to moralize, it's just the way things are.

MARC. And you, for example, you play your part in the fundamental dynamic of evolution.

SERGE. I do.

MARC. What about Yvan? ...

YVAN. Surely not. What part can an amoeba play?

SERGE. In his way, Yvan is a man of his time.

MARC. How can you tell? Not from that motel painting he has hanging on his wall!

YVAN. That is not a motel painting!

SERGE. It is a motel painting.

YVAN. It is not!

SERGE. What's the difference? Yvan represents a certain way of life, a way of thinking which is completely modern. And so do you. I'm sorry, but you're a typical man of your time. And, in fact, the harder you try not to be, the more you are.

MARC. Well, okay. Fine. So what's the problem?

SERGE. There is no problem, except for you, because you take pride in your desire to shut yourself off from humanity. And you'll never manage to. It's like you're in quicksand, the more you struggle to get out of it, the deeper you sink. Now apologize to Yvan.

MARC. Yvan is a coward. *(At this point, Yvan makes his decision: and exits in a rush. Slight pause.)*

SERGE. Bravo. *(Silence.)*

MARC. It wasn't a good idea to see each other tonight ... was it? ... I ought to go, too ...

SERGE. Maybe ...

MARC. Right.

SERGE. You're the coward ... attacking someone who's incapable of defending himself ... as you well know.

MARC. You're right ... you're right and when you put it like that, it makes me feel even worse ... the thing is, all of a sudden, I can't understand, I have no idea what binds me to Yvan ... I have no idea what my relationship with him consists of.