

The States Collection – New York
Water Lilies
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CAST:

SYLVIA (f) late 20's – 30's; any race; dreams about Giverny; someday

MILLER (m) late 20's - 30's; any race; Monet-wanna-be

PLACE:

Metropolitan Museum of Art, 5th Floor

TIME: Weekday morning

SYNOPSIS: SYLVIA makes her regular visit to Monet's Water Lilies at the Met. She puts herself in the garden. MILLER is painting a replica of Monet's masterpiece. He only sees the garden from afar.

THE STATES COLLECTION – NEW YORK
Water Lillies

LIGHTS UP on SYLVIA. She is seated in the middle staring intently at Monet's "Water Lillies." MILLER is setting up his canvas and paints. He is in the midst of trying to reproduce the painting.

MILLER

Excuse me. Miss? Ma'am? Ms.? (Beat.) *Excuse me!*

SYLVIA

You're excused.

MILLER

No. I mean – could you move?

SYLVIA

No.

MILLER

Just to the right.

SYLVIA

No.

MILLER

All right. To the left?

SYLVIA

No.

MILLER

Just six inches either way. I'm not fussy.

SYLVIA

Shh. I'm almost there.

MILLER

I'm at the point/

SYLVIA

/Giverny. It's breathtaking.

MILLER

... I'm in the middle of the painting/

SYLVIA
/that's where I am!

MILLER
Your head is in the way.

SYLVIA
My head is on a water lily.

MILLER
Which is my problem! Look!

(MILLER brings over his palette.)

I have carefully mixed the colors. I not only have Monet's Cadmium Yellow but I also use his more subtle Cadmium Yellow Light. His Cobalt Blue, Viridian Green. I use the fast brush strokes he is famous for. My teacher says I am well on my way to becoming one of the best reproducers of Monet's paintings in the country. I'll be able to make a living...

(SYLVIA gets up.)

MILLER
Thank-you.

(SYLVIA looks at his painting. She then returns to her seat – exactly where she was before. She resumes her fixed stare.)

MILLER
No, no! Why are you doing this to me?

SYLVIA
Sit. Next to me. (Beat.) Relax. I don't come to art museums to meet men.

(MILLER sits.)

SYLVIA
Just stare. Look at the movement. Wait for the light to dance on the water.

MILLER
I can't/

SYLVIA

Wait for it! There is no horizon. Just stare into the pond. Watch the lilies.

(Miller tries to adjust his stare. It's not working.)

Look! Put yourself there. Stop looking at what's beyond. You are there in the garden. It's summer so there's barely a breeze. All is quiet except for a few insects. Listen.

(MILLER does. There's a beat.)

MILLER

Oh wow.

SYLVIA

Exactly.

END OF PLAY