

**JA'FAR:** Damn that girl. (*Ja'far rushes into the Princess's chambers.*) Princess, you've got some explaining to do... (*A flock of white birds fly past Ja'far.*) Oh no! The Indian Swallow-Tails! They've escaped! (*The PRINCESS enter, flanked by two SLAVES.*)

**PRINCESS:** No... I set them free!

**JA'FAR:** But, those birds were imported from a foreign land. They can't survive here! The hawks will have them within the hour!

**PRINCESS:** An hour free is better than a lifetime in a cage, being fed and pampered and cleaned up after. What kind of life is that?

**JA'FAR:** Princess, do you ever think about the consequences of your actions? That Prince you just sicked a tiger on has threatened our Kingdom with war?!

**PRINCESS:** Oh, it's not a big deal. He was such a joke. He's not coming back! Just like every other swaggering peacock I've met.

**JA'FAR:** Not all your suitors have deserved a tiger set upon them! What about that first prince? He was a charming fellow.

**PRINCESS:** I heard he once made out with a girl while she was blacked-out. That's not charming. That's being a sexual predator.

**JA'FAR:** What about Prince Eric? That sea-faring flutist?

**PRINCESS:** He fucked a fish.

**JA'FAR:** He did not fuck a fish.

**PRINCESS:** He *wanted* to fuck a fish.

**JA'FAR:** Predator. Fish-fucker. Will anyone ever live up to your impossible standards?! You know you're going to have to get married one of these days!

**PRINCESS:** Never. Marriage is a medieval construct that represents the ownership of women. That's like slavery! Grapes! (*A slave carries a tray of grapes to the Princess. She eats one.*) Besides, if I do marry, I want it to be for love.

**JA'FAR:** You know, one of these days you're going to learn that life isn't about dreams coming true. It's a series of compromises and disappointments. I was counting on Prince Achmed to fix our Kingdom's problems, but now we're worse off than ever! I've got to go find a way to clean up your mess! (*Ja'far exits.*)

**PRINCESS:** Ugh. Being a princess is so stifling. I'm suffocating in this palace! (*A slave starts fanning her.*)

**SLAVE:** Fan, Princess?

**PRINCESS:** Ooh, now I'm kinda chilly.

**SLAVE:** A shall of silk, my lady? (*The slave wraps her in a silk scarf.*)

**PRINCESS:** (*she pulls the scarf off*) I can't wear this. Did you know they make these things in sweatshops? Where have you been?

**SLAVE:** Spinning silk in your private sweatshop, mistress.

**PRINCESS:** You actually work in one of those?! That's just supporting a corrupt system! You're a part of the problem.

**SLAVE:** Yes, Princess. (*An Indian Swallow Tail flies back onstage.*)

**PRINCESS:** Why, hello little bird. (*It lands on the her hand.*)

**SWALLOW-TAIL:** Please let me back in the cage!

**PRINCESS:** No. You'll never be caged again. Today you learn to fly!

**SWALLOW-TAIL:** But it's safer in the cage! The hawks have already eaten my brothers and sisters!