

Stephen Sondheim, You Must Meet My Wife

(Fredrik)
She lightens my sadness,
She livens my days,
She bursts with a kind of madness
My well-ordered ways.
My happiest mistake, the ache of my life:
You must meet my wife.
She bubbles with pleasure,
She glows with surprise,
Disrupts my accustomed leisure
And ruffles my ties.
I don't know even now quite how it began.
You must meet my wife, my Anne.
One thousand whims to which I give in,
Since her smallest tear turns me ashen.
I never dreamed that I could live in
So completely demented, contented a fashion.
So sunlike, so winning,
So unlike a wife.
I do think that I'm beginning
To show signs of life.
Don't ask me how at my age one still can grow--
If you met my wife, you'd know.

(Desiree (speaking):)

Dear Fredrik,
I'm just longing to meet her.
Sometime.

(Fredrik)

She sparkles...

(Desiree)

How pleasant.

(Fredrik)

She twinkles...

(Desiree)

How nice.

(Fredrik)

Her youth is a sort of present--

(Desiree)

Whatever the price.

(Fredrik)

The incandescent--what?--the--

(Desiree (offering a cigarette):)

Light?

(Fredrik)

--of my life.
You must meet my wife.

(Desiree)

Yes, I must. I really must.
Now--

(Fredrik)

She flutters.

(Desiree)

How charming.

(Fredrik)

She twitters.

(Desiree)

My word!

(Fredrik)

She floats.

(Desiree)

Isn't that alarming?
What is she, a bird?

(Fredrik)

She makes me feel I'm--what?--

(Desiree)

A very old man.

(Fredrik)

Yes--no!

(Desiree)

No?

(Fredrik)

But--

(Desiree)

I must meet your Gertrude.

(Fredrik)

My Anne.

(Desiree)

Sorry--Anne.

(Fredrik)

She loves my voice, my walk, my mustache,
The cigar, in fact, that I'm smoking.
She'll watch me puff until it's just ash,
Then she'll save the cigar butt.

(Desiree)

Bizarre, but
You're joking.

(Fredrik)

She dotes on--

(Desiree)

Your dimple.

(Fredrik)

My snoring.

(Desiree)

How dear.

(Fredrik)

The point is, she's really simple.

(Desiree)

Yes, that much seems clear.

(Fredrik)

She gives me funny names--

(Desiree)

Like?

(Fredrik)

"Old Dry-as-Dust."

(Desiree)

Wouldn't she just?

(Fredrik)

You must meet my wife.

(Desiree)

Yes, I must, yes, I must.

(Fredrik)

A sea of whims that I submerge in,
Yet so loveable in repentance.
Unfortunately still a virgin,

But you can't force a flower--

(Desiree)

Don't finish that sentence!
She's monstrous!

(Fredrik)

She's frightened.

(Desiree)

Unfeeling!

(Fredrik)

Unversed.
She'd strike you as unenlightened--

(Desiree)

No, I'd strike her first.

(Fredrik)

Her reticence, her apprehension--

(Desiree)

Her crust!

(Fredrik)

No!

(Desiree)

Yes!

(Fredrik)

No!

(Desiree)

Fredrik!

(Fredrik)

You must meet my wife.

(Desiree)

Let me get my hat and my knife!

(Fredrik)

What was that?

(Desiree)

I must meet your wife.

(Both)

Yes, you must.
Yes, I must.