

DUST TO DUST

Written by

Amanda Webster

Email: leanwaters@yahoo.co.uk

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

SYLVIA (60's) smartly dressed in from head to toe in black opens the door to the living room. She takes the hat off her head and tosses it onto the couch.

She hesitates and looks around. The house is unnaturally quiet, save for the ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece.

Sympathy cards vie for space with photos of herself and her husband, George.

Sylvia walks over and picks up one of the photos. It's got a light covering of dust on it. She automatically wipes the photo clean with her hand.

She puts the photo back on the mantelpiece and runs her finger along it, looking at the accumulation of dust on the end of her finger.

SYLVIA

Dust. They say it's nothing more than skin - apart from the rest of the stuff that gets in there.

(BEAT)

You know we shed layer upon layer every year from the cradle to the grave. A painless process of exfoliation that's been going on since the day we were born. And for what? So we can make a never-ending round of work for more mothers to clean up more and more of this bloody dust!

Sylvia looks at herself in the mirror above the mantelpiece. She rubs her hand over her face, frowning at the wrinkles.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Except mine's not as young as it used to be - not as smooth. I used to have lovely skin. Used to say it was just like a peach, didn't you, George?

She stops - aware of what she's doing - and looks back at the photo of herself and George.

She flicks some more of the dust off the shelf.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

And you loved the way I kept the place so clean. Always said how proud you were that I kept it spotless. Even made your mother jealous of my housekeeping.

(BEAT)

Well, sometimes.

(MORE)

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

And look at it now! What must you think of me?

She looks closely at the dust on her fingers.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

But there's one thing you didn't notice.

(BEAT)

You see, there's memory in dust. Oh, not obvious, I know - but it's there. All those layers we've lived through, year on year - every time you held me, caressed me. All that contact between us left its trace here. Where we sat, where we walked. We talked. All here. For now, of course.

She sighs.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

And what happens when all that dust has gone? Once I've gone to work with Mr Sheen and Mr J-Cloth, what happens to poor old Mr Richards? Flicked away with the rest of my memories? No, I don't think so.

The clock chimes four times. Sylvia snaps out of her daydream.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

I know we're nothing but dust at the end of the day. But there's a lot to be said for those small infinitesimal specks of memory. Because no matter how hard I try, no matter how much I try to catch each and every one of those specks there will always be one that I will miss. And I know then that you'll always be with me.

She picks up the photo of her and George and looks at it.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

How can anything ever be so final?

(BEAT)

Dust? That's all we ever were, darling, and all we'll ever be! Night, night, sweetheart.

She kisses the photo and puts it back on the mantelpiece.

FADE OUT.