

BLAME IT ON THE BOSSA NOVA

by David Foley

Excerpt

PETE: Looks like Uncle Bob's in trouble!

[He dashes up to the balcony and slides open the door.]

MARGOT: Oh, Jilly, poor Uncle Jim has—

PETE: I thought his name was Bob.

JILLY: Jim-Bob. He's American.

PETE: Looks like he's in trouble. Call an ambulance!

[He kneels over SENHOR PEREIRA and starts rubbing his temples and his wrists. JILLY doesn't move.]

Call an ambulance!

MARGOT: *[meaningfully]* Yes, Jilly, call an ambulance for Uncle Jim-Bob. So they can take him out of here. And help him.

JILLY: I can't call an ambulance.

PETE: Why not?

JILLY: Because, Pete, Uncle Jim-Bob is dead.

PETE: You don't know that. They can work wonders sometimes.

JILLY: Not, I'm afraid, on poor Uncle Jim-Bob.

MARGOT: *Jilly...*

JILLY: It's no good, Mother. They'll get here and realize he's been dead for hours.

PETE: Hours? But he just now—

JILLY: No, Pete, for the last twenty minutes my mother has been talking to a corpse.

PETE: *[to MARGOT]* Did you know?

MARGOT: Yes, I'm afraid so.

PETE: You were putting on a good show.

MARGOT: I've played against worse.

JILLY: Mother, there's nothing for it. We need to come clean. We need to tell Pete the truth and throw ourselves on his mercy. Pete... *[She draws a deep breath.]* I'm a nymphomaniac.

PETE: Cor!

JILLY: Yes, Pete, Uncle Jim-Bob expired in a moment of ecstatic pleasure.

PETE: Your own uncle!

JILLY: He's not my uncle. He's a Brazilian film producer.

PETE: I thought you said he was American.

JILLY: Pete, you're going to have to keep up. We don't have much time. What I'm trying to tell you, Pete, is that I have a problem. With sex. A man comes near me and I have to pounce.

MARGOT: Even as a girl. We had to put up warnings for the postman.

PETE: *[with new understanding]* She just pounced on *me!*

JILLY: Case in point.

PETE: And when I came to the door she kept going on and on about how she didn't have any clothes on.

MARGOT: *[shaking her head sorrowfully]* Oh, Jilly...

JILLY: It is my secret shame, Pete.

PETE: Does your husband know?

JILLY: No. Now you begin to see my problem. Senhor Pereira rang my bell last night looking for my next door neighbor. And I pounced. I like to think his last moments were highly agreeable, but my technique, as I'm sure you can appreciate, can be a ferocious. I was too much for him. And now my situation is desperate. If he's found here, I'm ruined. My husband will divorce me. My shame will be revealed to the world. I throw myself on your mercy.

PETE: Gosh, Jilly.

JILLY: And, I promise you, I've learnt my lesson. I will get help for my problem.

PETE: Not straight away, though?

JILLY: No, I expect I'll pose a danger to delivery boys and house cleaners for some little time to come.

PETE: That's the spirit!