

VERSATI

Triumph! My passion is now fully transcribed onto the page.
Set down in meter and rhyme.

(He reads.)

"Once in place, love never breaks, it is ever fix-ed to the fix-
ing place!" Now I am ready to take you upon my ...

COHEN

No. You are not ready and you will never be ready.

VERSATI

Who are you?

COHEN

I, sir, am your prophylactic.

VERSATI

Oh, really!

COHEN

And, you might as well know, she has no interest in you.

VERSATI

Tell it to Sappho, you nitwit.

COHEN

I'm a nitwit? You don't have a wit to nit with!

LOUISE

Cohen, you're mad!

COHEN

He's here under false pretenses.

VERSATI

How can a pretense be otherwise?

COHEN

Don't wordsmith me.

(To Louise.)

I've read his poetry. It creaks.

VERSATI

Like your knees.

COHEN

You dye your hair!

VERSATI

I do not!

COHEN

You do too!

VERSATI

Don't.

COHEN

I dyed it.

VERSATI

Well, so did Wagner!

COHEN

(Impressed.)

Wagner dyed your hair?

VERSATI

No, Wagner dyed his own hair.

COHEN

Never!

VERSATI

Absolutely.

COHEN

Wagner wore a wig! Oops!

(He wasn't supposed to reveal that. Cohen covers his mouth.)

LOUISE

Both of you. Stop it!

COHEN

But we are arguing over you!