“CAUGHT IN THE ACT”  
A One Act Comedy  
For Two Trapped Characters  
By Bruce Kane

Copyright: Bruce Kane Productions 2010  
All Rights Reserved  
22448 Bessemer St.  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367  
PH: 818-999-5639  
E-mail: bkane1@socal.rr.com

"Caught In The Act" is protected by copyright law and may not be performed without written permission from Bruce Kane Productions.

To obtain permission go to http://www.kaneprod.com/royaltyrequest.htm and complete the Form.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS All producers of "Caught In The Act" must give credit to Bruce Kane as sole Author of the Play in all programs distributed in connection with performance of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for any purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or production thereof, including posters, souvenir books, flyers, books and playbills. Bruce Kane must also appear immediately following the title of the Play and must appear in size of type not less then fifty percent of the size of type used for the title. The Author’s name must be equal to or larger than the Director's, but never smaller than that of the Director. The above billing must appear as follows: "Caught In The Act" by Bruce Kane.

WARNING No one shall make any changes to this play for the purpose of production. Publication of these plays does not imply its availability for production.

“CAUGHT IN THE ACT”  
by Bruce Kane

(Lights Up on Annie and Don sitting up in bed, side by side, under the covers. Annie is attractive and in her late twenties. She is angry and insecure. Don is nice looking and in his early thirties He is sweet, gentle and most of all confused)

DON: So… Amy… How… uh… was it?

ANNIE: How was what?

DON: It… The sex.

ANNIE: Why? You want the judges score? Like in the Olympics. Technical merit four point five. Artistic achievement three point two.
DON: I was just inquiring to see if you found it... I don't know... pleasing... satisfying... The least bit entertaining.

ANNIE: No, I didn't find it pleasing or satisfying or the least bit entertaining.

DON: Oh. I'm sorry I asked.

ANNIE: I didn't find it pleasing or satisfying or the least bit entertaining for the simple reason, we didn't do it.

DON: We didn't?

ANNIE: No we didn't. We've never done it and the way things stand we're never going to do it. And one more thing.

DON: I can't wait.

ANNIE: My name isn't Amy.

DON: It isn't?

ANNIE: It's Annie.

DON: Annie?

ANNIE: Annie.

DON: I could've sworn it was Amy.

ANNIE: It was.

DON: (really confused) What do you mean, it was?

ANNIE: In draft numbers three, five and nine.

DON: Drafts? What drafts?

ANNIE: Play drafts. This is the fifteenth.

DON: What are you talking about?

ANNIE: You're a character.

DON: A character? Really? That mean you mean you find me charming... quirky... off beat.

ANNIE: Don't be ridiculous. Not that kind of character. You're a character... I'm a character. We're both characters.... In a play.

DON: A play.
ANNIE: Only right now it’s not exactly a play. It’s more a work in progress. Except the writer isn't making much… Progress that is.

DON: Wait… Wait… Wait… That doesn't make any sense. I'm here… You're here. I'm flesh and blood. You're definitely flesh and blood. I'm talking in complete sentences. And you're saying I'm some kind of fictional construct?

ANNIE: Look around. What do you see?

DON: You… Me… A bed.

ANNIE: Anything else?

DON: No.

ANNIE: Don’t you find that a little strange?

DON: I suppose.

ANNIE: It's called a limbo set. We could be anywhere.

DON: Or nowhere.

ANNIE: Exactly.

DON: There’s gotta be another explanation.

ANNIE: Okay… Let me ask you this… Where were you born?

DON: Where was I born?

ANNIE: A simple question. Where were your born?

DON: I was born…. uh… Let me think.

ANNIE: While you’re working on that, tell me your mother’s name.

DON: Well, that's easy… It was …uh… It was…

ANNIE: What did you have for breakfast?

DON: Breakfast… Breakfast…

ANNIE: Yes, breakfast. The most important meal of the day. Don't know, do you?

DON: Oh God, I have amnesia.

ANNIE: No you don't have amnesia. It would be an interesting twist, but he’s not that clever.

DON: He? Who he?
ANNIE: The writer.

DON: How come you know all this stuff and I don’t?

ANNIE: Probably because he’s re-written your dialogue so many times. It’s a wonder you know your own name.

DON: That I know. It’s Ted.

ANNIE: Don.

DON: Don?

ANNIE: Don.

DON: When did I become Don?

ANNIE: In the new stage directions.

DON: Stage directions?

ANNIE: You really have no idea what I’m talking about.

DON: Not a clue.

ANNIE: Stage directions are that stuff in a script that describes the set, the characters… emotions, action…That sort of thing.

DON: In that case, maybe I’m an actor just playing a part.

ANNIE: An actor? Oh God, I hope not

DON: I could be an actor just playing the part of a character who has amnesia.

ANNIE: You don’t have amnesia. Trust me. You’re a character. But someday you may be played by an actor. But I sincerely doubt it. Anyway, if it helps, before the last rewrite you actually were Ted. Before that Ken, Bob, and Tom.

DON: All three letter names.

ANNIE: Easier to type.

DON: What’s wrong with me that he, whoever the hell he is, has to keep changing my name and deleting everything I say?

ANNIE: He’s not sure what you want?

DON: I’m here… In bed… With you. What’s so hard to figure out?

ANNIE: Don’t look at me. It’s not my fault.
DON: You're saying... it's... me?

ANNIE: Yep. That's what I'm saying. It's you.

DON: Is there a problem...like with my plumbing or... something?

ANNIE: Not that I can tell.

DON: Then what's the deal?

ANNIE: You're the noble one in this piece. You want more than sex.

DON: There's more?

ANNIE: Apparently.

DON: Really? Like what?

ANNIE: Like a real, honest to God relationship.

DON: (surprised) I want a real relationship? Not you... Me. I must be a character in a play. And what do you want?

ANNIE: To get laid.

DON: I see. No, I don't see.

ANNIE: I want it for the wrong reason.

DON: There's a wrong reason for wanting to... uh?

ANNIE: Get laid. It's okay, you can say it. There's only the two of us here.

DON: I give up. What's the wrong reason?

ANNIE: I want it as a form of reassurance... A way of validating my attractiveness... My sexuality.

DON: You're kidding. Why would you need reassurance?

ANNIE: My husband... Ed... Phil... Roger... Arnie... left me for my best friend... or an aerobics instructor or a co-worker. I'm not too clear at this point. I'm feeling rejected and I'm using you to reassure me that I'm still desirable.

DON: Using me?

ANNIE: You're a reluctant participant.

DON: Reluctant? Because I want a real relationship? (Annie nods) Is this writer... (points upward)... gay?
ANNIE: I have no idea… But, this is a nice change.

DON: What change is that?

ANNIE: Your attitude.

DON: What about it?

ANNIE: For the first time in fourteen drafts you don’t seem so reluctant… You actually seem interested.

DON: I am.

ANNIE: Maybe he’s going in a new direction.

DON: I wouldn’t know. But I see no reason not to be interested. Very interested.

ANNIE: I don’t want to get my hopes up. That’s all this guy does… is go in new directions.

DON: So, what can you tell me about me, besides that I want a (mockingly) “real relationship”?

ANNIE: For one thing, you’re a dentist.

DON: A dentist? Have I always been a dentist?

ANNIE: That’s never changed. He thinks dentists are funny.

DON: What kind of warped mind are we dealing with here?

ANNIE: What can I tell ya?

DON: Then this is not a comedy, is it?

ANNIE: Not intentionally.

DON: You know, I vaguely remember saying something about dentists having the highest suicide rate of any profession.

ANNIE: He keeps going back to that. Usually when the conversation turns to sex. As it does a lot.

DON: Does he have some kind of obsession… with sex?

ANNIE: Mostly an oral fixation?

DON: He’s hung up on oral sex?

ANNIE: Only if you consider endless talking on the subject… oral sex.
DON: For a moment there I was almost encouraged. So why do I want a real relationship?

ANNIE: You’re tired of one night stands. You want something real. Something lasting.

DON: Well you gotta admit that does speak well for my character.

ANNIE: Everything he writes speaks well for your character.

DON: Why do you suppose that is?

ANNIE: It’s obvious, isn’t it?

DON: My dialogue has been deleted so many times, nothing is obvious to me.

ANNIE: You’re him. Or the way he sees himself or the way he’d like to see himself.

DON: You think so?

ANNIE: Of course… You’re sweet… You’re gentle… And most of all you’re confused.

DON: Really?

ANNIE: Check the stage directions.

DON: And that’s how he sees himself? Sweet? Gentle? Confused?

ANNIE: Especially confused, from the way this thing is going.

DON: If I’m him, who are you?

ANNIE: I haven’t figured that out yet. Mostly because he hasn’t figured it out yet.

DON: Maybe you’re somebody in his life.

ANNIE: Like I said, I don’t know. I know I’m angry and insecure. That’s also in the stage directions.

DON: What have you got to be insecure about? Just look at you.

ANNIE: Thanks… It’s reassuring to hear that.

DON: Aside from being a dentist with suicidal tendencies, do you know anything else about me?

ANNIE: You’re divorced. Her name was Carol, Mary, Dolores and in three drafts Marilyn. She left you because she thought you were boring.

DON: Wow… That’s it?

ANNIE: That’s it.
DON: I was boring?
ANNIE: Afraid so.
DON: I wasn’t fooling around?
ANNIE: No.
DON: And she wasn’t…?
ANNIE: No, she didn’t leave you for anybody else. She just left you.
DON: That must have been a crusher.
ANNIE: When she told you, you threw up in the fichus. Then you tried to kill yourself.
DON: What happened?
ANNIE: He (points upward) realized that in a two character play… if you kill off one of the characters…
DON: You don’t have a play… Anything else, you can tell me?
ANNIE: Your ex was a short blonde with big boobs?
DON: A blonde with big boobs. Maybe this guy’s got more imagination that we give him credit for.
ANNIE: Obviously, that’s your type or his type… Short blondes with big boobs.
DON: Then why am I interested in you?
ANNIE: Well, thanks a lot.
DON: I’m just trying to fill in the blanks.
ANNIE: It’s not exactly a boost to one’s self esteem to have the man lying naked in bed next to you ask why he’s interested.
DON: So you’re the lucky one.
ANNIE: How do you figure that?
DON: You have someone to blame.
ANNIE: For what?
DON: The end of your marriage.
ANNIE: You mean my best friend?
DON: Or the aerobics instructor or the co-worker…

ANNIE: I still blame myself.

DON: For what?

ANNIE: My husband’s affair… The failure of my marriage… The Bush Administration.

DON: (suddenly becomes very ardent) Joannie, I love you.

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) That's crazy… We just met.

DON: (overly dramatic) I know… I don’t understand it myself.

(They pause and look around quizzically)

DON: What was that all about? And why did I call you Joannie?

ANNIE: He’s writing again.

DON: Oh… Is that what happens?

ANNIE: Afraid so.

DON: So, I’m in love with you, now. Did you know that?

ANNIE: No. That’s a new wrinkle. Probably won’t last long. Nothing ever does.

DON: But, until the next re-write, I’m in love with you.

ANNIE: But you won’t have sex with me, so what good is it?

DON: Doesn’t make sense, does it? Hey, maybe I’m gay.

ANNIE: Gay?

DON: You think that could be it? I’m gay but I haven’t come to terms with it. After all, the stage directions say I’m sweet, gentle and confused.

ANNIE: It’s possible.

DON: It would explain why I won’t have sex with you. What other reason could there be?

ANNIE: Beats me.

DON: Or…

ANNIE: Or what?

DON: Or maybe he’s (points upward) a she.
ANNIE: You think so? I just assumed he was male.

DON: Why?

ANNIE: Because you’re the sympathetic one.

DON: But, what if he’s a she?

ANNIE: Then she’s more screwed up than I thought.

DON: Maybe she’s just working out some issues and using you as her surrogate.

ANNIE: You mean she can’t get laid either?

DON: I’m sure it’s more than that.

ANNIE: You’re so understanding.

DON: It’s in my character.

ANNIE: I feel very comfortable with you.

DON: Thank you. I feel very comfortable with you.

ANNIE: Usually I’m very self conscious. How I look… Am I wearing the right outfit for the occasion?

DON: *(peeking under the covers)* Trust me, you’re wearing the right outfit.

ANNIE: Well, that was out of character. *(mockingly)* I’m very self conscious. Am I wearing the right outfit? *(angrily)* Where the hell did that come from?

DON: I thought it was kind of sweet.

ANNIE: Give me a break.

DON: I kind of liked the “Trust me, you’re wearing the right outfit” line.

ANNIE: You just like peeking under the covers.

DON: It’s very nice under the covers.

ANNIE: Thank you… That’s reassuring.

DON: I’m definitely not gay.

ANNIE: Why couldn’t I be the creation of someone with a real imagination? Instead of this stick figure.

DON: I realize only had time for a quick glance, but even so, you’re definitely not a stick figure.
ANNIE: Thank you… That’s very reassuring. *(angrily)* Why do I keep saying that?

DON: It’s in your character, I suppose.

ANNIE: That’s what I mean. One dimensional. There’s got to be more to me than just seeking validation from a man.

DON: At least you know what you want. I don’t have a clue.

ANNIE: You know exactly what you want. You want love.

DON: From a woman I’ve just met?

ANNIE: Hell, I want sex from a man I’ve just met.

DON: Do we sound like a couple of losers, or what?

ANNIE: We are a couple of losers.

DON: Who wants to be character in a play about a couple of losers in love or not in love or in whatever we’re in?

ANNIE: It’s the basis for half the stuff that gets written these days.

DON: And people want to see this?

ANNIE: They identify.

DON: With losers?

ANNIE: Losers who overcome obstacles, including their own inadequacies, to eventually triumph.

DON: Is that where we’re headed? To a happy ending?

ANNIE: God, I’d settle for any kind of ending…happy or not.

DON: You mean we… you and I… could get together at the end of this?

ANNIE: Who knows? But I wouldn’t count on it.

DON: Why not? Why couldn’t we get together?

ANNIE: Up to now I’ve shown no real interest in you…

DON: But we’re in bed…

ANNIE: Except for that… And from what I can gather, this is as far as we’re ever gonna get.

DON: What if I didn’t love you?
ANNIE: I give up. What if you didn’t love me?

DON: Then I could have sex with you with a clear conscience.

ANNIE: Works for me.

DON: But then where’s the happy ending? We just have sex and go our merry ways? Hardly a satisfying curtain.

ANNIE: Right now I’m only interested in satisfying me. The curtain can take care of itself.

DON: What if you fall in love with me?

ANNIE: Why would I want to do that?

DON: Right… I’m boring. What the hell? Why don’t we just shut up and do it.

ANNIE: Do what?

DON: Throw the entire story arc to the wind and make mad, passionate, wall shaking love. What do you say?

ANNIE: We can’t.

DON: Why not?

ANNIE: It doesn’t work that way. We have to know where this is going… plot wise.

DON: So it leads to a dead end, plot wise? Where have all the other drafts led?

ANNIE: But you’re in love with me now. What happens if we do..?

DON: Make mad, passionate, wall shaking love?

ANNIE: Yes… And it’s really great?

DON: Then we’ll do it again.

ANNIE: I mean, can you handle it?

DON: I don’t know.

ANNIE: I may not love you, but I don’t want to see you get hurt.

DON: Let me worry about that.

ANNIE: And what if…?

DON: Can we put the “what ifs” on hold for a while?

ANNIE: What if it wasn’t good? What if it was lousy?
DON: That’s a helluva way to approach love making. What if it’s lousy?

ANNIE: It happens. Nervousness... Unfamiliarity... An overwhelming desire to please that impedes performances. You apologizing for being premature. Me apologizing for never reaching... uh... maturity.

DON: Isn't this what you're supposed to want?

ANNIE: Well, yeah... But, for all the wrong reasons.

DON: Maybe reassurance is just a cover for what you really want?

ANNIE: And what's that?

DON: Love.

ANNIE: My marriage ended two weeks ago. Love is the last thing I'm looking for.

DON: When did mine end, by the way?

ANNIE: Your what?

DON: My marriage.

ANNIE: Three years ago... Two years ago... eighteen months ago. And various permutations in between.

DON: How about this? We make love in act one and we fall in love in act two.

ANNIE: There is not going to be an act two... This is a one act play... Two characters... Simple set... Inexpensive to produce... We'll be lucky if we get to scene two.

DON: Okay... Let me ask you this. What would you do? If it was up to you, how would this play out?

ANNIE: I don’t know... I’d have multiple orgasms. Regain my self esteem. Divorce my husband... Get a rich settlement... Take a series of lovers... Build my career... Marry well and live happily ever after.

DON: Talk about no imagination.

ANNIE: How would you like it to end?

DON: I marry you. We have a slew of kids... And we live happily ever after.

ANNIE: Yuccch...

DON: I really am boring.

ANNIE: After what you've been through, why are you so anxious to get married again?
DON: Because I know how to be married. You get up. You go to work. You come home. You kiss your wife. You tell her about your day. She tells you about her day. She doesn’t listen to what you’re saying. You don’t listen to what she’s saying. You have dinner. You watch a little TV and every few nights you have a little slap and tickle. That’s married. But single is a whole other story.

ANNIE: I was hoping you were going to tell me how great it is.

DON: It’s the one thing I’m not optimistic about. Being single.

ANNIE: For the past couple of days I’ve had this recurring fantasy of meeting a handsome stranger who’d cross a crowded room just to tell me how beautiful I am. That I’m the woman he’s been waiting for all his life and that he must have dinner with me or die.

DON: And you’d buy that?

ANNIE: After all, a man’s life hangs in the balance.

DON: If nothing else, it’s a great line.

ANNIE: The night of our first date, we’d bathe… Separately, of course.

DON: I’m glad to see you’re not the kind of girl who showers on the first date.

ANNIE: I put on an irresistible perfume. He puts on a devastating cologne. I slip into my sexiest dress.

DON: That I’d like to see.

ANNIE: He puts on Armani. We dine at a very expensive restaurant.

DON: Golddigger.

ANNIE: I tell him lies about myself. He tells me lies about himself. He’s impressed. I’m impressed. By midnight we’re sipping champagne and looking at the view from his penthouse.

DON: Penthouse… Now, I’m impressed.

ANNIE: The music is Gershwin. We dance close… Very close. And then, at the stroke of twelve, we whirl out way into the… Well, anyway, that’s what I was hoping you were going to tell me being single is all about.

DON: Ever since I became a previously married person, I’ve developed a real empathy for used cars.

ANNIE: Used cars?

DON: While everyone is in the showroom checking out the latest model, I find myself sitting out in the lot trying to rev my engine, hide the dents and roll back my odometer.
ANNIE: It can’t be that bad.

DON: When they’re always passing you over for the luxury model with the big engine, it becomes a thrill just to get your tires kicked once in a while.

ANNIE: Well, that was an interesting new turn.

DON: What do you mean?

ANNIE: You’ve never said any of that before. It was good.

DON: You think so? I didn’t sound just a little pathetic?


DON: Really?

ANNIE: No… It’s just another cliché of the genre.

DON: Then I did sound wimpy.

ANNIE: Very wimpy.

DON: I’ve had enough of this. (turns to her)

ANNIE: What are you gonna do?

DON: What you’ve wanted me to do from the start.

ANNIE: This is a re-write, isn’t it? He’s re-writing.

DON: I don’t know what it is and I don’t care.

ANNIE: She’s giving you new lines… A new attitude… A new character. (calling out) Hey, where’s my new attitude? Where are my new lines?

DON: Forget him… her… whatever.

ANNIE: She’s making you the protagonist.

DON: What are you talking about?

ANNIE: She can’t do that. This play is about me… I…

DON: It’s about the both of us.

ANNIE: It has to be about me. Take that away and what am I left with?

DON: Can you stop talking for two minutes?
ANNIE: See... See... That's exactly what I'm saying... I was the one in charge... I was the central character... You just reacted to me. You were the obstacle I had to overcome. Now that's all changed... I'm the obstacle. I'm the reactor. *(on the verge of hysteria)*. She can't do this to me... *(looking up)* You can't do this... I won't let you...

*(Don takes Annie by the shoulders and kisses her passionately)*

BLACKOUT

END OF SCENE ONE:

SCENE TWO: MINUTES LATER

*(The lights come up on Annie and Don still in bed. They've just had sex. She's smoking a cigarette and looking pleased, satisfied and very entertained.)*

ANNIE: If you want to ask me how “it” was...

DON: How what was?

ANNIE: How “it” was.

DON: How “it” was?

ANNIE: Yes... It.

DON: You mean we ...?

ANNIE: Oh yeah.

DON: You and me?

ANNIE: Me and you.

DON: We had...?

ANNIE: Big time.

DON: When? Where?

ANNIE: During the scene break. It’s in the stage directions. Scene two... The lights come up on Annie and Don still in bed. They’ve just had sex. Annie is smoking a cigarette and feeling pleased, satisfied and very entertained.

DON: I really do have to pay more attention.

ANNIE: You were incredible by the way.

DON: Is that in the stage directions, too?

ANNIE: No, I just through that in.
DON: I’ll guess I’ll have to take your word for it.

ANNIE: I knew it.

DON: Knew what?

ANNIE: All I needed was a good roll in the sack and everything would be fine. *(suddenly back to her old self)* Oh shit…

DON: What?

ANNIE: I was right, alright.

DON: The sex did it for you?

ANNIE: No… The writer is definitely male. Only a man would write that line. *(mockingly)* All I needed was a good roll in the sack.

DON: So you’re not pleased, satisfied and very entertained.

ANNIE: Pleased…. Schmeezed. Who gives a crap?

DON: So, you’re not in love with me?

ANNIE: Give me a break.

DON: I’m still in love with you.

ANNIE: You don’t fall in love with a woman six hours after meeting her.

DON: Is that how long I’ve known you?

ANNIE: Give or take or couple of hours.

DON: I don’t know what to say. Unless he rewrites me again. I’m in love with you.

ANNIE: Will you stop saying that.

DON: If it bothers you.

ANNIE: It bothers me.

DON: Fine. You want me to go?

ANNIE: Up to you.

DON: If I go, what happens to you?

ANNIE: Don’t worry about me. I’ll be fine.
DON: I mean if I go, you’ll be here all alone.
ANNIE: I can handle alone.
DON: It’s only a two character play. If I leave…
ANNIE: Oh, I see your point.
DON: How long are we supposed to lie here naked?
ANNIE: Why, are you complaining?
DON: We have to do something about this.
ANNIE: Any suggestions?
DON: What do you say we get the hell out of here?
ANNIE: We can’t.
DON: We gotta do something. Anything is better than being stuck in re-write limbo.
ANNIE: It’s not our story… It’s… (she points upward)
DON: Then let’s make it our story.
ANNIE: It doesn’t work that way.
DON: Characters take over all the time… Isn’t that what writers are always saying?
ANNIE: How do you know what writers are always saying?
DON: I don’t know. Maybe…
ANNIE: What?
DON: No.
ANNIE: What?
DON: Maybe everything we’re saying…
ANNIE: Yes?
DON: Maybe it’s not random.
ANNIE: You mean he’s actually writing all of it.
DON: Sort of makes sense in an odd way, doesn’t it?
ANNIE: So even what we’re saying now… The questions… The complaints… The insults?

DON: Are being written as we say them.

ANNIE: If that’s true I feel so powerless… So used… So manipulated.

DON: Isn’t that the job of a character?

ANNIE: It’s a pretty shitty job if you ask me.

DON: Quit.

ANNIE: Quit?

DON: Walk out.

ANNIE: It doesn’t work that way.

DON: You won’t know unless you try. Get out of bed.

ANNIE: This bed is all I know.

DON: Just throw the covers back and get out of bed.

ANNIE: I don’t have any clothes on.

DON: I won’t look. Get out of bed.

ANNIE: I’m not doing a nude scene.

DON: Then I’ll do it.

(He gets out of bed. He’s wearing pants, shoes and socks.)

ANNIE: When did you put your pants on?

DON: I’m taking my charge of my own rewrite. Now you try it. (Reluctantly Annie throws back the covers. She’s fully dressed) Frankly, I liked the other outfit better.

ANNIE: (gets out of bed) Remember, this was your idea. What do we do now?

DON: What do you wanna do?

ANNIE: I don’t know. What do you want to do?

DON: Marry you.

ANNIE: You can’t marry me.

DON: Okay, then I’ll live with you.
ANNIE: You can’t live with me. For once in my life, I’ve got to stand up on my own two feet.

DON: That line may be as stale as yesterday’s bread, but, the fact is you are standing on your own two feet for the first time.

ANNIE: *(happily surprised)* I am.

DON: Good, now let’s get out of here.

ANNIE: Where are we going? I’ve never been out of this room, except for a couple of flashbacks in the fourth draft.

DON: My place… I only live upstairs… downstairs… across the hall.

ANNIE: I’m not moving in with you.

DON: I’m not asking you too. If you wanted to, I wouldn’t object.

ANNIE: I’m not moving in with you.

DON: Settled. Let’s go.

ANNIE: Wait…

DON: What?

ANNIE: After we get to your place? Then what?

DON: I cook you the best dinner you’ve ever had.

ANNIE: I’ve never had dinner.

DON: Then you will definitely love my cooking. I’m a sensational cook.

ANNIE: How do you know you’re a sensational cook?

DON: Because I just said so. See, you can be anything you want to be.

ANNIE: One more thing.

DON: What now?

ANNIE: After dinner?

DON: What about after dinner?

ANNIE: What happens to me after dinner?
DON: … You divorce your husband… Get a rich settlement… Take a series of lovers… Build your career… Marry well and live happily ever after. Annie, it’s your life. You can do whatever you want to do.

ANNIE: I can? Are you sure? What if he starts re-writing me?

DON: Don’t let him.

ANNIE: (nervously) I don’t know about this. Characters don’t walk out in the middle of a play.

DON: Why not? Audiences do it all the time. Now, come on. I can only hold this door open for so long.

ANNIE: What door?

DON: This door.

ANNIE: I don’t see a door.

DON: It’s called the willing suspense of disbelief.

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) You can’t go… I’ll do anything you say… Just stay here with me a little longer. Don’t leave me.

DON: That’s not you talking. That’s him. You gotta fight it, Annie. You gotta fight it.

ANNIE: I’m trying… I’m trying.

DON: Take my hand… (overly dramatic) I can’t live without you, Jenny… (back to the normal) Now, he’s rewriting me… (overly dramatic) Without you I can’t go on… (back to normal) Quick, Annie, take my hand.

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) I’m afraid, Larry

DON: He’s trying to keep us in the script, Annie. Fight back.

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) I can’t. I’m not strong like you.

DON: (overly dramatic) Did you know dentists have the highest suicide rate of any… (back to normal) My God, he’s starting to repeat himself. (takes Annie’s hand)

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) Don’t leave me, Charlie.

DON: (overly dramatic) I’ll never leave you, Nora… (back to normal) The dialogue is starting to deteriorate. (aside to audience) If that’s possible. (alarmed) C’mon Annie, we’ve got to get out of here..

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) I can’t Barney. I’m not strong like you.
DON: You are strong... You’re very strong. And you’ve got the best body of any woman I’ve ever known.

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) Thank you... I find that so reassuring.

(Wraps his arms around Annie and struggles to get her to the imaginary door)

DON: Don’t let him put words in your mouth.

ANNIE: (overly dramatic) I can’t go on... This is bigger than both us.

DON: Do you want to be stuck with that kind dialogue for the rest of your life? (he pulls her toward the door) C’mon... We’re almost there.

ANNIE: How can you tell?

DON: The ushers are moving into the aisles.

(Don pushes Annie through the imaginary door. They stand on the other side of the door trying to catch their breath.)

DON: We made it, Annie... We made it...

ANNIE: (still breathing heavy) You mean we’re free?

DON: No more exposition.

ANNIE: No more stage directions.

DON: No more contorted dialogue to get us from plot point to plot point. We’re really free, Annie.

ANNIE: (throws her arms around Don and kisses him) And I owe it all to you. (pulling herself together) Did I just say that? I owe it all to you?

DON: Bad dialogue is a hard habit to break. But, you’ll get over it... in time.

ANNIE: I feel so...

DON: Reassured?

ANNIE: I don’t know what I feel.

DON: That’s cause you’ve always had someone else deciding that for you.

ANNIE: I’m starved... I can’t remember the last time I ate. Literally, I can’t remember the last time I ate. Cook me something wonderful.

DON: And after that?

ANNIE: I don’t know and I don’t care.
DON: That’s my girl.

ANNIE: What was that you were saying about bad dialogue?

DON: We both have a lot of work ahead of us. Come on…. I make a great fettucine. (They start to exit. Don looks up to the lighting man in the back of the house) You can dim the lights now. I’ll take it from here.

(He puts his arm around Annie. The lights begin to dim)

ANNIE: Who are you talking to?

DON: Nobody. Just breaking the fourth wall.

(They exit as the lights go out)

THE END