

"LOVE AND OTHER DISASTERS"

Written by

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*(LIGHTS UP on an empty stage. A STAGEHAND carries in a stool, places it center stage, admires his work and exits. He passes BARBARA as she enters wearing a black slinky dress and heels. The Stagehand gives her an appreciative once over. She makes a point of ignoring him. The Stagehand exits. Barbara sits and strikes a seductive and dramatic pose. TED enters wearing a black shirt and blacks pants. He strides down to the edge of the stage smiling, winking and flirting with the women in the audience. He suddenly notices Barbara, comes up behind her and puts his hands on her upper arms. What follows is a form of tango... in its pacing and over the top dramatic and passionate delivery. As the action proceeds the two characters should, if possible, adopt tango dance spins and holds to underscore the dialogue as well as the humor.)*

TED  
(dramatically)

I love you.

BARBARA

Excuse me?

TED

I love you.

BARBARA

Are you talking to me?

TED

I love you.

BARBARA  
You don't even know me.

TED  
That's why I love you.

BARBARA  
Buzz off.

TED  
I've been looking for you all my life.

BARBARA  
How many times have I heard that one?

TED  
You're perfect. Your nose is perfect. Your hair is perfect.  
Your lips are perfect. Your legs are perfect. And your...

BARBARA  
I'm going to order another drink.

TED  
I need you.

BARBARA  
I have no need to be needed.

TED  
Perfect. I need a woman who has no need to be needed.

BARBARA  
Well, I don't need a man who needs a woman who has no need  
to be needed.

TED  
I want you.

BARBARA  
I'm... unobtainable.

TED  
I know. That's why I want you. I only want women I can't  
have. That way they never disappointment me.

BARBARA  
(sarcastically)  
That must make for long lasting relationships.

TED  
Sarcasm from a woman. It really turns me on.

BARBARA  
We'd never get along.

TED  
Are you emotionally involved?

BARBARA  
I never get emotionally involved.

TED  
Marry me.

BARBARA  
I could never marry a man who actually wanted me. A man who wanted me would also need me.

TED  
I need you.

BARBARA  
(enjoying torturing  
Ted)  
I know.

TED  
Have you ever been in love?

BARBARA  
Dozens of times.

TED  
What happened?

BARBARA  
They didn't know I was alive.

TED  
Thrilling, isn't it? If I told you I didn't need you, didn't want you and didn't love, what would you do?

BARBARA  
Throw myself at your knees.

TED  
I don't need you. I don't want you. And, I don't love you.

BARBARA  
If only I could believe that.

TED  
You hold no appeal for me at all.

BARBARA  
Please stop.

TED  
There are thousands of women I'd rather be with.

BARBARA  
(turns away)  
I won't listen to your honeyed words.

TED  
Kiss off, baby.

*(She turns back and throws herself at his knees. He pulls her to feet. They kiss. During the kiss he looks over her shoulder into the audience.)*

TED  
Do you know that woman?

BARBARA  
(looking around)  
What woman?

TED  
The blonde with the perfect nose, the perfect hair, the perfect legs and the perfect...

BARBARA  
Forget her. She has a husband and a lover?

TED  
I want her.

BARBARA  
You can't have her.

TED  
I know.

*(He starts to cross in the direction of the unseen woman)*

BARBARA  
What about me?

TED  
I've lost interest.

BARBARA  
I need you.

TED  
Can't you see you're stifling my growth?

BARBARA  
She won't give you the time of day.

TED  
I know.

BARBARA  
I want you.

TED  
My heart belongs to another.

BARBARA  
How can you walk out on me like this? After all we meant to each other? Can you forget the times I ignored you? Resisted you? Treated you like dirt?

TED  
It was great while it lasted, baby, but it's over.

BARBARA  
Nobody ignored you like I did.

TED  
Until she came along.

BARBARA  
You're breaking my heart.

TED  
It's the least I can do.

BARBARA  
What does she have that I don't have?

TED  
She's... unobtainable.

BARBARA  
Then go. See if I care.

*(He exits. Barbara returns to the stool and resumes her seductive pose. Ted returns and crosses to her)*

TED  
Hi, baby.

BARBARA  
You're back.

TED  
She told me to take a hike. It was thrilling.

BARBARA  
I'm the only one for you.

TED  
I'll never forget the way she looked right through like I was a windshield.

BARBARA  
You don't throw away what we had so quickly.

TED  
Baby... I'm yours.

BARBARA  
Get lost.

TED  
Not a chance.

BARBARA  
Take a hike.

TED  
Admit it. I'm in your blood.

BARBARA  
Hit the bricks.

TED  
You're turning me on.

BARBARA  
I know.

TED  
I need you.

BARBARA  
Suffer.

TED  
I want you.

BARBARA  
Sorry pal, you don't satisfy me needs.

TED

Just tell me what you want and I'll withhold it.

BARBARA

I need to know where I stand with a man. That my wants and desires will always come second, if at all. That he expects everything from me and will give me nothing in return. That way I can feel confident that there is no hope for the relationship. That I'll always be free. It's only with a man who doesn't give a damn about me that I can be truly liberated.

TED

There's someone else, isn't there?

BARBARA

Yes, there's someone else.

TED

I'm hurt.

BARBARA

Of course.

TED

Thank you.

BARBARA

It's the least I can do.

TED

Who is it? Who's this two timer you haven't been seeing behind my back.

*(Barbara points)*

BARBARA

Him.

TED

Him?

BARBARA

Him. The one with the cruel eyes.

TED

He treats women like dirt.

BARBARA

I know.

TED

He'll break your heart.



I'm counting on it.

BARBARA

Then this is it?

TED

This is it.

BARBARA

Well, I gotta say one thing for you, baby. You didn't disappoint me.

TED

*(They start to exit in opposite directions. Barbara turns back)*

Goodbyes are so liberating.

BARBARA

*(They exit. ALAN, mid to late thirties, enters looking forlorn and troubled. A SECOND STAGEHAND returns and places a second stool next to the first. Alan sits on one of the stools and buries his head in his hands. The Second Stagehand exits as LAURA, also in her mid to late thirties, enters and crosses to Alan. There are two things you should know about Laura. One, she is Alan's ex-wife and, more importantly, she is a figment of his imagination.)*

You?

ALAN  
(to Laura, surprised)

Me.

LAURA

What are you doing here?

ALAN

You tell me.

LAURA

I have no idea.

ALAN

LAURA

Really? You're the one that conjured me up from the dark recesses of that cluttered attic you call a mind. Just like you do every time you have a problem with what laughably passes as your love life. So, what is it this time?

ALAN

(defensively)

It's nothing, really. It's nothing.

LAURA

Well, that was easy.

*(Laura starts to leave)*

ALAN

No. No. Stay.

*(Laura returns. They sit without saying a word)*

LAURA

Are you going to tell me what's wrong or do I have to torture it out of you? Which, may I remind you, I am very good at.

ALAN

(hesitantly)

Okay... Yes... There was a problem.

LAURA

With Susan?

ALAN

No. Susan's fine.

LAURA

Who then?

ALAN

Not who.

(very reluctant)

What.

LAURA

What?

ALAN

What.

LAURA

What?

ALAN  
(with emphasis)  
What.

LAURA  
(the light goes on)  
Ohhhhh, that what.

ALAN  
(embarrassed)  
Yeah. That what.

LAURA  
The big one.

ALAN  
The big one.

LAURA  
You never had that problem with me.

ALAN  
I didn't dare.

LAURA  
Alan, you know as well as I do, that in most cases of, let's just call it... I don't know... failure to launch? It's a symptom of something much deeper.

ALAN  
Well, I have been under some stress lately. A little rest and I should...

*(searches for the right words)*

LAURA  
Be up and around?

ALAN  
You don't sound convinced.

LAURA  
If I don't sound convinced...it means that you're not convinced.

ALAN  
And what the hell does that mean?

LAURA  
I'm just a figment of your warped imagination. I have no opinion one way or the other.

ALAN  
My imagination is not warped.

LAURA  
Does a normal man conjure up his ex wife to talk about his..?

ALAN  
(cutting her off)  
Okay... Okay... As long as you're here.

LAURA  
As long as I'm here... what?

ALAN  
Can I ask you something?

LAURA  
Do I have a choice?

ALAN  
Why did you divorce me?

LAURA  
Now, after all this time? Now, you're asking why I divorced you?

ALAN  
Why did you divorce me? You never really said

LAURA  
I left you three type written pages... single spaced.

ALAN  
I don't remember that.

LAURA  
You only remember what you want to remember.

ALAN  
That's not true.

LAURA  
Who won super bowl forty five?

ALAN  
The Packers over the Steelers, thirty one to twenty five.  
Aaron Rodgers threw for three touchdowns.

LAURA  
What's my birthday?  
(Alan can't remember)  
Your honor, the defense rests.

ALAN

I remember the day I asked you to marry me. It was a Tuesday.

LAURA

You never asked me to marry you and it was a Wednesday.

ALAN

If I didn't ask you to marry me, why do I still have alimony payments?

LAURA

Because I divorced you.

ALAN

Okay, then.

LAURA

Okay then, what?

ALAN

My point.

LAURA

What point?

ALAN

That for you to ask for a divorce, ipso facto, we had to be married.

LAURA

You never asked me to marry you, Alan. You left out a ring where I would find it. And when I asked you if you were asking me to marry you...

ALAN

Yeah?

LAURA

You asked me what I would say if you were asking me to marry you. Ipso facto, you never asked, you just tested the waters.

ALAN

I suppose "whatshisname" did the whole candles and music and one knee bit.

LAURA

Is that what you think?

ALAN

I was simply asking.

LAURA  
You're asking a delusion how her second husband proposed to her?

ALAN  
I'm not delusional.

LAURA  
Have you thought about seeing a doctor?

ALAN  
I am a doctor.

LAURA  
No, you're not. You're a dentist.

ALAN  
(defensively)  
We have medical training.

LAURA  
Then why are you asking me about your emotional problems?  
Make an appointment with your dentist.

ALAN  
I hate my dentist.

LAURA  
Who doesn't?

ALAN  
And I'm not having emotional problems.

LAURA  
What do you call them?

ALAN  
Doubts. I'm having doubts.

LAURA  
About marrying Susan?

ALAN  
(reluctantly)  
Yes... About marrying Susan.

LAURA  
Why?

ALAN  
Because I don't want to screw it up a second time.

LAURA

At least you know what not to do.

ALAN

It's not the same thing as knowing what to do. That's a whole different ballgame.

LAURA

It's a start.

ALAN

But is it enough?

LAURA

What do you think?

ALAN

What do you think?

LAURA

I think what you think.

ALAN

You really think that?

LAURA

(frustrated)

I'm a reflection Alan. That's all I am. A reflection. This is all some kind of weird inner dialogue you're having with yourself. And why you conjured up the the woman you were once married to is one of the great mysteries of the twenty first century. Psychologists are going to be writing books about you.

ALAN

I recognize I have a few shortcomings.

LAURA

A few? A few?? You're an almanac of shortcomings. A catalogue. You come with an index. Are we having fun yet? Do you really enjoy beating yourself up like like this?

ALAN

No... No... Of course not. I may be many things, but I'm not a masochist.

LAURA

Are you sure?

ALAN

Why are you so resistant to help me?

LAURA

I'm not. You are.

ALAN

I'm just trying to figure things out.

ALAN

Then figure them out. Stop playing one man ping pong.

LAURA

I was depending on you to help.

ALAN

I'm not your shrink. At best I'm an echo. I tell you what you want to hear. If you wanted me to tell you the moon and stars rose over your shoulder I would.

ALAN

Did you ever think that maybe we'd get back together?

LAURA

Is that what you're thinking now?

ALAN

I was just raising the question.

LAURA

The answer is no.

ALAN

No? Just like that... no?

LAURA

Yes. Just like that, no. You knew the answer before you asked. You're so self contained you can only hold arguments with yourself.

ALAN

Maybe I'm not cut out for marriage.

LAURA

You want an iron clad guarantee?

ALAN

That's exactly what I want.

LAURA

It's not gonna happen.

ALAN

I know. I know.



LAURA  
So what are you going to do?

ALAN  
If you were me, what would you do?

LAURA  
I am you and I don't have a clue.

ALAN  
I guess I could broach the subject with Susan.

LAURA  
You mean leave a ring out where she could find it and then ask you if you were asking her to marry you and you could ask her what she would say if you were asking her to marry you.

ALAN  
Bad idea, huh?

LAURA  
Do you love her?

ALAN  
Yes. Yes I do. But I loved you.

LAURA  
Then marry the girl.

ALAN  
I'm worried I'll disappoint her.

LAURA  
Then don't marry the girl.

ALAN  
I can't see living without her.

LAURA  
Then marry the girl.

ALAN  
I don't want to hurt her?

LAURA  
Then don't marry marry the girl.

ALAN  
I suppose I could tell her what I'm feeling?

LAURA  
Wow, the new Alan. Emotionally available. I'm impressed.

You are? ALAN

If I am you must be. LAURA

Think that could work? ALAN

You could take that chance. LAURA

I guess I could. ALAN

Alright, then. LAURA

Alright. ALAN

Looks like my work here is done. LAURA

What if she says no? ALAN

What if she says yes? LAURA

That's what frightens me. ALAN

There's only one way to find out. LAURA

Call her? ALAN

Call her. We both know that's what you want to do,  
*(Alan nods. He takes out his phone and stares at it for a few moments.)*

Alan. LAURA

*(Alan looks up)*

Yes? ALAN

LAURA  
Good luck.

ALAN  
Thanks.

LAURA  
Oh... And one more thing. Next time you have one of these...  
uh... situations?

ALAN  
Yes?

LAURA  
Call your dentist.

*(Alan dials and exits. Laura exits in the opposite direction. The First Stagehand returns with a third stool and places it next to the first two and exits. BETTY ENTERS wearing an apron. She crosses to one of the end stools and sits. She speaks directly to the audience.)*

BETTY  
Hi... My name is Betty Corbin. I'm thirty eight years old.  
I'm trying to lose eight pounds.

*(DAVE ENTERS. In his late thirties, he wears a conservative suit and tie. He sits on the middle stool and speaks to the audience)*

DAVE  
I'm Dave Corbin. I'm thirty nine. Today my top spin forehand was devastating. I won six three, six four.

*(SHELLY, young and sexy, enters and takes the remaining stool. She, also, speaks directly the the audience)*

SHELLEY  
My name is Michelle, but everyone call me Shelley. I'll be  
twenty eight next month.  
(proudly)  
I still wear a size six.

BETTY

I have a lovely home. Five bedrooms, three and a half baths.  
(proudly)  
I decorated it myself.

DAVE

I have a suite of offices downtown.

SHELLEY

I own my own condo.

BETTY

I'm what you might call a housewife.

SHELLEY

I'm a lawyer.

SHELLEY

I have my own interior design business.

BETTY

I have two kids and a dog named Millie. Millie is a cocker spaniel.

SHELLEY

I've never been married.

DAVE

I drive an 89 BMW. Stick shift. It's my pride and joy.

BETTY

I've been married to the same man for fifteen years.

SHELLEY

I've been sleeping with the same man for eight months.

DAVE

I play tennis twice a week.

BETTY

My husband is a very good father.

SHELLEY

My lover and I see each other whenever we can.

BETTY

It's not the same as it was when Dave and I first got married. Y'know, before kids. Back then he'd call me up in the middle of day... right out of the blue... and tell me to wait for him in bed. God, I loved sex in the afternoon.

SHELLEY

I sometimes think the only attraction I hold for Dave is the proximity of my apartment to his office.

DAVE

Last week I took this really hot interior designer to Vegas for a so called lawyers convention. Just two of us alone for three whole days. It was fantastic.

SHELLEY

He did take me to Las Vegas last week. He said we'd have all kinds of time to be alone. We were alone alright. He didn't want any of his pals to see us together.

BETTY

Dave works very hard. And we try to get away when we can. He really wanted to take me to Las Vegas last week. He had this lawyers convention. He said we could turn the whole thing into a second honeymoon and the whole thing would be deductible. I was really looking forward to it. Then the kids got the flu and Dave had to go by himself.

DAVE

I was originally gonna take Betty. Make it a second honeymoon. But the kids got sick. I saw no reason why I should go alone.

SHELLEY

I hope it doesn't sound like I'm complaining. Dave and I have a very good relationship. We like each other. The sex is good and I'm not limited to just one man.

BETTY

Don't think I'm not grateful for my life. It's hectic and we don't get as much time away from the kids as we'd like... but it's a good life.

SHELLEY

I have my independence.

BETTY

I have security.

SHELLEY

I love my job.

BETTY

I have a wonderful home.

SHELLEY

I drive a red convertible.

BETTY

We paid off the station wagon last month.

SHELLEY

My apartment has a built in sauna.

BETTY

We have our own pool.

SHELLEY

Dave says I'm the fulfillment of every erotic fantasy he's every had and he dresses me in garters, black seamed stockings and stiletto heels to prove it. I don't mind... Really.

BETTY

Dave never fails to compliment me on my cooking. He says eating my lasagna is the closest thing to sex he's ever encountered.

DAVE

What can I say. I've got it all. A successful law practice. A beautiful home. Two terrific kids. A wife who never complains... And a girlfriend with legs like a chorus girl. And... A classic 89 BMW.

SHELLEY

Who would have ever believed it? Here I am at age twenty eight with everything I ever wanted... And I don't know where the hell I'm going.

BETTY

I'm right where I belong... Why do I feel like I haven't been anywhere?

SHELLEY

The business, the bills, the clients, the suppliers, the phone... What does it all mean?

BETTY

The kids, the house, the car pool, the gardener, the PTA. My life isn't my own.

SHELLEY

I want a little security... Is that too much to ask?

BETTY

I want to be independent... Have a life of my own.

SHELLEY

I'm lonely.

I'm bored. BETTY

I want a home. SHELLEY

I want adventure. BETTY

I want children. SHELLEY

I want freedom. BETTY

I want to be loved. SHELLEY

I want to thrill to the touch of new hands on my body. BETTY

I want to wake up with the same man every morning. SHELLEY

I want a red convertible. BETTY

I want a serve like Roger Federer. DAVE

I want to get married. SHELLEY  
(to Dave)

I want a divorce. BETTY  
(to Dave)

*(Betty and Shelley change stools. Betty hands her apron to Shelley who puts it on)*

My name is Shelley Corbin. SHELLEY

I thought about going to my maiden name for a while. But Betty Selman doesn't exist anymore. BETTY

Everyone seems to have adjusted to the new arrangement. DAVE

SHELLEY

I'm thirty years old now.

BETTY

I just experienced the big four oh.

SHELLEY

Dave and I live in small house on a cul de sac with his two kids.

BETTY

I'm single. I have a one bedroom apartment.

DAVE

I still practice law.

SHELLEY

I do some interior design work from time to time. Y'know, just to keep my hand in. I'd like to do it full time, but with the kids around and the house...

BETTY

I got a job. I'm a receptionist for a small insurance firm. I'm thinking about going back to college.

DAVE

I had to sell the BMW. Broke my heart.

BETTY

Did I mention, I bought a convertible. It's old and a little beat up. It's in the shop now. I'm having it painted red.

SHELLEY

I drive car pool three days a week.

BETTY

I have a lover. We've been sleeping together for eight months now. Nothing serious.

DAVE

I still play tennis twice a week.

SHELLEY

I'm trying to lose nine pounds.

BETTY

I miss my kids.

DAVE

We had to move out of our offices in downtown.



SHELLEY

I found these shoes Dave gave me back before we were married. The ones right out of an S and M manual? One of the heels was broken. I didn't get it fixed.

BETTY

My lover just called.

SHELLEY

Look at the time... I'd better get home... The kids must be getting hungry.

BETTY

He's on his way.

SHELLEY

Dave just phoned.

BETTY

He asked me to meet him in bed.

SHELLEY

He said he'd be a little late

BETTY

He doesn't have much time. He has to get home.

*(She hurries off excitedly)*

SHELLEY

He asked me to hold dinner for him.

*(She slowly gets off the stool and exits.)*

DAVE

Did I mention I sold the BMW?

*(gets off the stool,  
starts to exit,  
turns back)*

I really miss that car.

*(Dave exits. Both Stagehands return pushing a portable bar. They place a stool behind the bar and the other two in front of the bar. The Stagehands exit as the SERPENT ENTERS and takes his place behind the bar. Everything about him is reptilian. Slicked back hair, snakeskin jacket, the darting tongue and the way he hisses*

*his "s" sounds. ADAM enters looking around, wide eyed, like a hick on his first visit to the big city.)*

SERPENT

Welcome. Come right in. I'll be your bartender tonight. You can just call me... Serpent.

ADAM

Serpent?

SERPENT

Just Serpent. It has a nicer ring than Snake, don't you think?

ADAM

I suppose.

SERPENT

Haven't see you in here before. You must be new in the Garden.

ADAM

Garden?

SERPENT

Garden of Eden. This is it. The Garden of Eden Bar and Grill. What'll it be?

ADAM

What'll what be?

SERPENT

Drink. What would you like to drink?

ADAM

I don't know. No one's ever asked me that before.

SERPENT

You are new. What's your name?

ADAM

Name?

SERPENT

Name. What do people call you?

ADAM

People?

SERPENT

(to himself)

This is gonna be a long night.

(to Adam)

People. You heard of people? People... Like you.

ADAM

I don't know. I've never met anybody like me.

SERPENT

You can say that again.

*(EVE enters, hesitantly,  
looking around, like another  
newcomer to the bright lights  
of the big city)*

SERPENT

God, another one.

(to Eve)

Hello.

(Eve nods)

Welcome to the Garden of Eden Bar and Grill. What can I get you?

EVE

Get me?

ADAM

Something to drink.

EVE

I don't know.

SERPENT

Can I tempt you with the house specialty? An apple margarita?

EVE

I suppose... Sure... Okay... I guess.

*(The Serpent pours her an  
apple margarita. She takes a  
sip)*

EVE

That is is good.

SERPENT

I knew you'd like it.

EVE

Wow!!!

SERPENT  
Goes down smooth, doesn't it

EVE  
Very smooth.

SERPENT  
Just wait until it kicks in.

EVE  
Kicks in?

SERPENT  
Whole new worlds will open to you.

EVE  
What do you mean, whole new..?

*(Suddenly Eve sits straight up. The little girl lost is gone, replaced by a knowing, confident woman. The new Eve speaks directly to the Serpent.)*

EVE  
You left out the salt.

SERPENT  
The what?

EVE  
The salt. You salt the rim of the glass when you serve a proper margarita. Also, you used too much liqueur. Overwhelms the kick of the vodka. But, otherwise not bad.

SERPENT  
Wait minute. How do you know so much about the salt and liqueur thing?

EVE  
Simple. I have knowledge.

SERPENT  
Yeah, well, you know what they say about knowledge.

EVE  
That's it's a dangerous thing.

SERPENT  
(surprised)  
Yeah. That's what they say alright.

SERPENT

Hold on a sec.

(crosses back to  
Adam. Nods in Eve's  
direction)

So? Whaddya think?

ADAM

Think?

SERPENT

Yeah, think. About the female human at the end of the bar.

ADAM

Female human?

SERPENT

She's alone. She's lovin' the margaritas. And she's available. If you get my drift?

ADAM

Drift?

SERPENT

I think you got a real shot my friend.

ADAM

Shot?

SERPENT

Y'know.. You and her...

ADAM

Why... uh... why don't you give it a shot, whatever that means.

SERPENT

Normally, I would. But, I don't think she's into inter-species dating. You do want to... y'know... propagate the species, don't you?

ADAM

Propa...? Propa...?

SERPENT

Propagate. Y'know... Get it on... Do the wild thing.

ADAM

You talk funny.

SERPENT

Never mind how I talk. It's how the female human talks that's important. And trust me, they love to talk.

ADAM  
What's a female human?

SERPENT  
(looks to heaven)  
I realize he's just a prototype, but just how dumb did you have to make him?

(to Adam)  
Let me explain, so that even you will understand it. You are a human male. She is a human female. What you might call the new and improved model. Come with me.

(they cross to Eve)  
This is my friend... Let's just call him... I don't know... Adam...

EVE  
Adam?

SERPENT  
Adam.

EVE  
Why?

SERPENT  
For absolutely no reason at all. Adam this is...uh...  
(She doesn't have a clue)

Eve.

EVE  
Eve?

SERPENT  
Eve.

EVE  
Why Eve?

SERPENT  
Why not? Adam say hello to Eve.

ADAM  
Hello.

EVE  
Hello.

ADAM  
Wanna propagate the species?

EVE  
Back off pal.

ADAM  
I'm the first human being. We are both human beings.

EVE  
I seriously doubt that.

ADAM  
You're the new and improved version.

EVE  
That goes without saying.

*(The Serpent pulls Adam aside)*

SERPENT  
I'd get off the whole human being kick. It's not going anywhere. Tell her something about yourself. Female humans dig that.

ADAM  
What should I tell her?

SERPENT  
Something that will impress her... Turn her on... Get her all hot and bothered.

ADAM  
Hot and bothered? Won't that make her uncomfortable?

SERPENT  
(to himself)  
This is going to be the shortest lived species in history.  
(to Adam)  
Is there anything you know how to do?

ADAM  
I can lift heavy rocks.

SERPENT  
It's not much but it's a start. Go with that.

*(Adam crosses back to Eve)*

ADAM  
I can lift heavy rocks. Can you?

EVE  
With a pivot point and long enough lever... Yeah, I could lift heavy rocks. You're not too bright are you?

ADAM  
(proudly)  
I'm a human male. You want to propagate the species?

EVE  
 Propagate?

SERPENT  
 Propagate.

EVE  
 What's he talking about? This propagating.

SERPENT  
 Well, usually, it begins with a bottle of wine... Then  
 some...  
 (whispers in her ear.  
 Eve smiles)

EVE  
 Really?

SERPENT  
 That's just for openers.  
 (He whispers in her ear again)

EVE  
 (squirming)  
 Ohhhhh....  
 (The Serpent continues to  
 whisper in her ear.)

EVE  
 (more excited)  
 Ohhhhh...  
 (more whispering)  
 Ohhhhhhhh.....

SERPENT  
 And then right about there you call out the Lord's name  
 (Eve takes some time to catch  
 her breath)

EVE  
 And that's it?

SERPENT  
 No. There's more. Then after a certain period of time, still  
 to be determined, there's something called a birth.

EVE  
 Birth?



SERPENT

Birth. Creation of a new human being.

EVE

You mean someone gets a hand full of clay and molds...

SERPENT

No. That was only the first time.

*(He whispers in her ear)*

EVE

*(stunned)*

You've got to be kidding.

SERPENT

That's how it works.

EVE

That sounds painful.

SERPENT

It sorta is.

EVE

And whose big idea was that?

SERPENT

Don't look at me. I'm a serpent we lay eggs.

EVE

At least that sounds reasonable. But, something that big...  
*(points at Adam)*  
is going to come out of...

SERPENT

It won't be that big at the time.

EVE

I'm down with the first part... The wine... The calling the Lord's name. But the second part... Not a chance.

SERPENT

It's your choice. If you want mankind to end right here, right now.

ADAM

Why doesn't he do the birth thing?

SERPENT

Yeah, right. The male human? Do the birth thing? Then, definitely, mankind is over before its begun.

EVE

The things a female human has to do. Isn't there someone else?

SERPENT

No, unfortunately, he's the only human male on earth.

EVE

You've got to be kidding.

SERPENT

Believe me, I wish I was.

EVE

He's it?

SERPENT

A small flaw in the master plan.

EVE

No other males human beings?

SERPENT

No. None.

EVE

But he's a...

SERPENT

Moron? He's not bad to look at.

EVE

Well, yeah... But looks aren't everything.

SERPENT

That seals it. You're definitely not the male of the species. It's up to you. It's either him or the human race ends right here.

EVE

Easy, there. I don't need the pressure.

SERPENT

When you think about it, maybe the human race ending here isn't such a bad idea.

EVE

Isn't there someone else we could find for him?

SERPENT

He may be the only male human, but, as things stand right now, you are the only female human.

EVE

Talk about drawing the short straw.

SERPENT

Maybe if you gave him another chance.

EVE

Well... maybe I was being a tad judgmental.

SERPENT

If mankind is going to have a future...

EVE

(to Adam)

I'm afraid we got off to a bad start... Why don't we talk... I'll tell you a little something about me... You tell me a little something about you. Probably, very little. I'll start.

ADAM

And then can we propagate?

EVE

(to Serpent)

One track mind, this one.

SERPENT

The human male.

EVE

What can I tell you about myself? I'm smart... I know that can be a little off putting, but, it's the truth... I am a fountain of knowledge... For instance I know that one plus one equals two.

SERPENT

And, under the right circumstances, one plus one can equal three.

EVE

(to Serpent)

Stay out of this.

(to Adam)

Where was I?

ADAM

You were being smart.

EVE

Yes. Smart. I know that the sun is the center of our solar system and that the sky is filled with billions of stars, planets, pulsars, nova and super novas.

ADAM

I can lift heavy rocks.

EVE

I'm sure that will come in very handy when the time comes I need some heavy rocks lifted.

ADAM

It must be good to know all the things that you know.

EVE

Well, knowledge is power.

ADAM

I don't understand.

EVE

It's nothing to worry your pretty little head about.

*(The Serpent brings Adam an apple margarita.)*

SERPENT

Try this. I think you'll like it.

*(Adam downs the whole drink in one gulp.)*

ADAM

Wow... That is good.

SERPENT

I told ya'.

*(Suddenly Adam goes through an obvious Jekyll and Hyde transformation. He stands up, shoulders back exuding toxic masculinity and speaks with new authority.)*

ADAM

One plus two equals three. E equals M... C... squared. The square root of eighty one is nine.

EVE

*(to Serpent)*

What the hell just happened?

SERPENT

The human male has acquired knowledge.

EVE  
Oh, sh...

ADAM  
(cutting her off)  
This knowledge stuff is great.  
*(Starts to exit)*

EVE  
Where are you going?

ADAM  
Out.

EVE  
Where?

ADAM  
To kick some ass and gain dominion over all the creatures of the earth.

EVE  
When will you be back?

ADAM  
I'll be back when I'm back. And when I get here I expect to see dinner on the table. And for God's sakes do something with your hair.  
*(Adam strides off)*

EVE  
We're doomed!!!  
*(The Serpent steps forward, rubbing his hands together, very pleased with himself.)*

SERPENT  
And to think... this is just the beginning.  
*(Eve and the Serpent exit.)*  
*(The Two Stagehands return. One of them places a radio on the bar. They move the stools and the bar off to the side. They exit and then return, each pushing a door on wheels. The doors are identical. But the Stagehands don't just push in the doors. Oh no. They*

*dance around the stage with them like would be Fred Astaires dancing with a hat rack. They are dancing and whirling flamboyantly, making the most of their time on stage.*

*They "dose doe" around one another and finally put the two doors in place. They dance off and return with two more identical doors which they swirl around the room humming and singing the rock song "Light My Fire". They should be having a helluva good time showing off.*

*Finally, when they are done and the four doors are in place upstage, they turn to the audience and announce.)*

STAGEHANDS

Ladies and gentlemen... The Doors.

*(As the Stagehands exit, one of them turns on the radio. We hear a Gershwin ballad. After a moment, a casually dressed WOMAN her mid to late thirties enters. She stands and looks around almost wistfully. As she does we hear a MAN'S VOICE fading in and out, like distant memory.)*

MAN'S VOICE

You seem like a nice girl.

*(The Woman switches off the radio, opens the bedroom door, peeks in and exits through one of the doors. A moment later a MAN in his late thirties enters and surveys the room. As he stands there looking around we hear a WOMAN'S VOICE fading in and out, also like a distant memory.)*

WOMAN'S VOICE

A week ago I was a woman with a semi successful career.

*(The Man crosses to a second door and exits through it. A moment later the Woman returns.)*

MAN'S VOICE

She doesn't listen to you. You don't listen to her.

*(She exits through a third door. The Man returns and looks around.)*

WOMAN'S VOICE

And who's got a better right to be crazy?

*(He exits through the first door. The Woman returns)*

MAN'S VOICE

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

*(The Woman exits through the fourth door. The Man returns.)*

WOMAN'S VOICE

Well, anyway, that's my fantasy.

*(He exits through the third door. The Stagehands enter carrying a couch which they put down without concern on where they are putting it.*

*(The Stagehands continue to move in and out carrying a chair with a broken arm, a coffee table, a small dining table and chairs and a variety of packing boxes... which they randomly place with no particular plan. CARLY ENTERS. She is pretty, mid twenties, dressed in tight jeans, lugging a heavy packing box. She is brimming with anger and doesn't hide it. She lugs the box to middle of the room and proceeds to drop it right on her foot.)*

CARLY  
 Son a bitch. Bastard. Oh, God.  
 (sits down and rubs  
 her foot)

STAGEHAND #2  
 (to audience)  
 Just so you know, we just moved nine years back in time.

STAGEHAND #1  
 Ten years.

STAGEHAND #2  
 (to audience)  
 Ten years.

*(The Stagehands exit)*

CARLY  
 Okay... Okay... What's the first thing a newly independent woman does on the first day in her new apartment? Right. She calls her mother. Wrong. She prepares herself for a life on loneliness and despair. It's important to have goals.

*(A telephone, somewhere in the room, begins to ring. Carly hops around the room trying to find it. JIM, nice looking in his late twenties, appears in the open doorway leading to the hall. He watches Carly with amusement. She doesn't see him.)*

CARLY  
 I hear ya. I hear ya... Just where the fu...  
 (bumps into the couch)

Dammitt???

(find the phone;  
 answers it)

Hello... Hey! Hey! If I want to hear that kind of language I'll ride public transportation.

(slams the phone down)

Asshole!

JIM  
 Obscene call?

CARLY  
 Either that or he was from the National Whipped Cream Council with some exciting new suggestions.



JIM  
I don't think that call was for you.

CARLY  
No shit, Sherlock.

JIM  
I mean it was probably for the previous tenant. The women who used to live here. Rhonda Fleming.

CARLY  
The old movie star.

JIM  
No. The old hooker.

CARLY  
Oh great. Terrific. I've got a hooker's address. I've got a hooker's phone number. I'm going to be sleeping in a room where God knows who did God knows what with whipped cream.

JIM  
Kinda looks that way, doesn't it.

CARLY  
So? You hear to check out the new talent?

JIM  
What? Oh no... No!

CARLY  
Just out of curiosity, how much were you going to offer me for my body?

JIM  
Nothing.

CARLY  
Nothing?

JIM  
Yes... Nothing.

CARLY  
I don't know whether to be relieved or insulted.

JIM  
I live on top of you.

CARLY  
Excuse me?

JIM  
I mean upstairs. 4G...  
(points up)  
I just came by to say hello.

CARLY  
That's what Helen Charles said. Can I help?

JIM  
Who?

CARLY  
Helen Charles.

JIM  
I don't think I know a Helen Charles. Is she a friend or something.

CARLY  
No, she's not a friend or something. But she and my husband are very close.

JIM  
You're married.

CARLY  
Separated.

JIM  
I'm sorry to hear that.

CARLY  
Not as sorry as I am.

JIM  
Well...Anyway... Welcome to the building. If you need anything... I'm Jim. Like I said. I'm up in 4G.

(They both point up.  
He starts to  
leave...)

By the way, I'm sorry if I gave you the impression that I thought you were... well, y'know...

CARLY  
A hooker.

JIM  
Well, yeah.

CARLY  
Forget it.

JIM  
You seem like a very nice girl.

CARLY  
What a rotten thing to say.

JIM  
I said you seem like a very nice girl.

CARLY  
Of course I'm a nice girl.

JIM  
I'm glad to hear that.

CARLY  
It's just not something you go around bragging about.

JIM  
If you'd rather go back to being a hooker.

CARLY  
I'm not a hooker.

JIM  
Of course, you're not.

CARLY  
I'm a singer.

JIM  
A singer? Really?

CARLY  
Really.

JIM  
And a nice girl.

CARLY  
Will you stop saying that? I hate being a nice girl. Nice girls finish last.

JIM  
I don't mean to sound judgemental here. And, I really don't know you. But, isn't that just a little bit crazy?

CARLY  
Of course it is. Would a normal person move into a brothel?

JIM  
It's not exactly a...

CARLY  
 And whose got a better right to be crazy? Ten days ago I  
 caught my husband on top of...

JIM  
 Helen Charles?

CARLY  
 My God, it's all over town.

*(Jim and Carly freeze for a  
 moment. She exits. The  
 STAGEHANDS return, sort of  
 rearrange the furniture and  
 place a few books on a  
 bookshelf. Jim begins removing  
 books from one of the boxes.)*

STAGEHAND #1  
 (to audience)  
 It's about five minutes later.

STAGEHAND #2  
 More like ten minutes.

STAGEHAND #1  
 Really?  
 (Stagehands #2 nods;  
 to audience)  
 More like ten minutes.

*(The STAGEHANDS exit. Carly  
 enters from the kitchen.)*

CARLY  
 What are you doing?

JIM  
 What do you mean?

CARLY  
 You're putting my books away.

JIM  
 I'm sorry. Force of habit. I've helped so many people move  
 in... and then move out.

CARLY  
 Move out?

JIM  
 People don't usually stay here very long.

CARLY  
Is there something I should know?

JIM  
They didn't tell you?

CARLY  
Tell me what?

JIM  
Well... Most of the people who move in here... like you  
and... me, like to think of it as a temporary stopover  
"between relationships."

CARLY  
In other words... losers.

JIM  
It's why they affectionately call this place Heartbreak  
Hotel.

CARLY  
Perfect.

JIM  
You didn't know any of this.

CARLY  
I needed a place to stay. The realtor said the price was  
right. I was desperate. I grabbed it and can you stop doing  
that, please.

JIM  
Sorry.  
(looks at the book he  
is holding)  
"Savage Love" by Mary Ann McCormick. "Secret Desire" by Mary  
Ann McCormick. "A Passionate Woman" by Mary Ann McCormick.  
You read this stuff?

CARLY  
Those are my husband's.

JIM  
He reads this stuff.

CARLY  
No, he writes it.

JIM  
Wait a minute. You're married to Mary Ann McCormick?

CARLY

Would you buy a romance novel written by Roger Gluck?

JIM

Not that I'd ever buy a romance novel in the first place, but definitely not one by Roger Gluck.

CARLY

That's what the publisher figured, so they came up with Mary Ann McCormick. As it turned out, nobody wants to buy books written by her either.

*(Jim turns to book over to look at the photo on the back cover.)*

JIM

I'll say one thing for your husband.

CARLY

What's that?

JIM

He's got a great set of knockers.

CARLY

That's a model. Anyway, I'm perfectly capable of putting away my own books.

JIM

Of course... Sorry... I'll just get out of your way.

*(Jim starts to leave)*

CARLY

However.

JIM

*(quickly)*

Yes?

CARLY

As long as you're here and determined to be helpful.

JIM

Helpful is my middle name.

CARLY

I could use some help with the furniture, Helpful.

JIM

I already did a little moving around. I thought...

CARLY

Oh... I hadn't noticed.

JIM

I thought if we started small. Maybe if you moved the coffee table over here.

(Carly slides the coffee table into place)

Mmmm... Why don't you move it back... just a little.

(Carly slides it back)

A little to the left.

(Carly slides it left)

CARLY

Aren't you supposed to be helping me do this?

JIM

I am. Now if we put the couch right about... here.

CARLY

When did you become my interior decorator?

JIM

Who do you think picked out the wallpaper?

CARLY

What wallpaper?

JIM

Oh boy. You haven't taken a close look at the wallpaper, have you?

CARLY

What about the...?

(walks downstage and peers at the fourth wall)

Oh... My... God.

JIM

Yeah.

CARLY

What's happening to me? A week ago I was a reasonably happily married woman with a semi-successful career and now I'm living in a room surrounded by people having sex in a repeating pattern.

JIM

A coat of pain and no one will know it's there.

CARLY

I'll know it's there. Where do you find something like this?

JIM

It's amazing what they have at Costco these days.

*(Jim leans down to pick up the end of the couch to move it)*

CARLY

It won't dent your precious masculine sensibilities if I grab an end, will it?

JIM

I'm a completely liberated male. I believe a woman should be able to grab whatever she chooses. There are even times when I encourage it.

*(Carly grabs the other end of the couch. As they lift Jim cries out in pain. He remains bent over.)*

CARLY

What is it?

JIM

My back.

CARLY

Are you alright?

JIM

How do I look?

CARLY

Like a question mark.

*(She helps Jim to the couch)*

Does that happen a lot?

JIM

Only when I try to act macho.

CARLY

Oh... Is that you were doing?

JIM

Were you impressed?

CARLY

Like you wouldn't believe. Is there anything I can do?



JIM  
Would you mind rubbing my lower back.

*(Carly rubs his back.)*

CARLY  
Feeling any better?

JIM  
No, but I am getting aroused.

*(The actors freeze for a moment then exit. The Stagehands return, put all the furniture in its proper place and set the small dining table with two place settings.)*

STAGEHAND #1  
Well done.

STAGEHAND #2  
Thank you.

STAGEHAND #1  
But, the knife goes on the left.

STAGEHAND #2  
Well, ain't you the one.

STAGEHAND #1  
*(to audience)*  
By the way, it's one week later.

STAGEHAND #2  
Six days to be exact.

STAGEHAND #1  
Six days. One week. What difference does it make?

STAGEHAND #2  
I just want to be accurate.

*(The Stagehands exit bickering. After a moment or two, the doorbell rings. Carly enters from the kitchen. She's wearing a skirt and blouse. She opens the door to Jim holding a bottle of wine. Before she can say hello, the phone rings.)*

CARLY

(into phone)

Hello. Rhonda doesn't live here anymore. Harry? Do you know what you sent me out on yesterday? Yes, they wanted me to go on the road with them. Would you tour ten cities with five guys who call themselves "The Sadists."

*(Jim takes the bottle of wine from Carly and mimes using a corkscrew. Carly points to where it's kept. Jim finds it and opens the bottle.)*

CARLY

Harry, check these things out next time. No more bands whose idea of a costume is rose pinned to my nipple.

*(Hangs up.)*

JIM

Really? A rose pinned to your... uh...?

CARLY

They thought it would lend a touch of class to the act. Make yourself at home.

*(She exits into the kitchen.)*

JIM

Have I ever heard of you?

CARLY (O.S)

Excuse me?

JIM

You're a singer. Have I ever heard of you?

CARLY

I doubt it.

JIM

You're not famous?

CARLY

At this point, I'd settle for obscure.

*(He pours two glasses of wine. Carly returns. He hands her a glass.)*

JIM

I think you'll like it. Impudent without being snotty.

CARLY  
You rehearsed that, didn't you?

JIM  
How was it?

CARLY  
Needs work. I don't know if I mentioned this earlier...

JIM  
Yes?

CARLY  
This.

JIM  
This?

CARLY  
This. It's just for dinner.

JIM  
Just for dinner.

CARLY  
Nothing else.

JIM  
Nothing else.

CARLY  
Just dinner.

JIM  
Well, in that case, you'd better be a damn good cook.

*(The Stagehands enter as the actors exit. The Stagehands place dishes with food on the table. As they finish and prepare to leave, Carly and Jim return and sit at the table finishing dinner.)*

STAGEHAND #1  
What would you say? Ten, fifteen minutes have passed.

STAGEHAND #2  
Maybe twenty.

STAGEHAND #1

I'll go with that.  
 (to audience)  
 About twenty minutes have past.

STAGEHAND #2

Give or take five minutes.

STAGEHAND #1

(to audience)  
 Give or take five minutes.

*(The phone rings as the  
 Stagehands exit. Carly answers  
 the phone.)*

CARLY

Hello. No, this is not Rhonda. Rhonda doesn't live here  
 anymore. I don't care what's written on the wall.  
 (hangs up and return  
 to the table)  
 I don't know how Rhonda did it. Judging from the calls I've  
 been getting, she must have had the stamina of a linebacker.

JIM

I guess when you work lying down.

CARLY

Speaking of lying down...

JIM

Yes?

CARLY

How's your back.

JIM

My chiropractor says I shouldn't do anything more strenuous  
 than exuding charm.

CARLY

You never told me what happened to Rhonda.

JIM

She fell in love.

CARLY

The downfall of many a good woman.

JIM

I was the maid of honor at her wedding.

CARLY

How enlightened of you.

JIM

Rhonda didn't have many friends. At least none that wanted to turn up at her wedding.

CARLY

I think I'm beginning to like Rhonda.

JIM

She married a shopping center tycoon from Connecticut.

CARLY

That sucks.

JIM

You got something against Connecticut.

CARLY

I live a nice, respectable life and end up in this place while a woman who spent most of her life with her feet firmly planted in the air marries money.

*(The Stagehands enter as Carly and Jim exit. The Stagehands clear the table.)*

STAGEHAND #1

(to audience)

Five minutes later.

*(The Stagehands exit. Jim returns holding a glass of wine.)*

JIM

Sex? Who's talking about sex?

CARLY (O.S.)

You were.

JIM

No, no... I wasn't talking about sex. I was talking about the basic driving force that compels humans to do what they do.

CARLY

(entering)

Which is sex. The continuation of the species.

JIM

No. You got it all wrong. That's not the basic driving force.

CARLY

Have you mentioned any of this to Freud?

JIM

Freud had it all wrong. The basic drive in life is not sex. It is not food. It is not even money.

CARLY

Then what is it?

JIM

Getting even with high school.  
(holds up the wine  
bottle)

More wine?

CARLY

No thanks. I get morose when I drink.

JIM

(refilling his glass)  
I get irresistible. Think about it.

CARLY

Think about what?

JIM

What was the worst period of your life. The time when you were most insecure about everything.

CARLY

Early this morning, when I woke up alone.

JIM

It's when you were back in high school. Ever since I got out of college, I've wanted to find Didi Duzinski, to show her what she missed. Every time I accomplished anything, the first person I thought of was Didi Does.

CARLY

Didi Does?

JIM

That's what all the guys called her.

CARLY

Why?

JIM

Because Didi did. She was the first girl in school to wear a bra. Also, the first girl not to wear a bra.

CARLY

You ever..?

JIM

Do Didi? She didn't like guys who were smart.

CARLY

And you were smart.

JIM

Straight A's.

CARLY

How icky.

JIM

Women can be so shallow.

CARLY

You're right about high school. I hated it. Especially gym. I hated getting undressed in front of strangers. I bet Rhonda was good at gym.

*(Jim and Carly exit. Stagehand #1 enters and clears away the wine bottle and glasses. Jim enters from the kitchen.)*

JIM

*(to Carly who is still in the kitchen)*

I hate being single.

STAGEHAND #1

*(whispers to audience)*

It's ten minutes later.

CARLY (O.S.)

What did you say?

*(The Stagehand exits)*

JIM

I said I hate being single. Mostly because I don't know how. Married I know. 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 your saying. You don't listen to what she's saying.

(MORE)

JIM (cont'd)

(Carly returns)

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 thing.

CARLY

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

JIM

I was hoping you were going to tell me the coffee was ready.

CARLY

In a minute. All my life. I've had this fantasy of meeting a handsome man who would cross a crowded room just to tell me how beautiful I was. That he's been waiting for me all his life. That he must have dinner with me or die.

JIM

And you'd buy that?

CARLY

Of course. A man's life hangs in the balance.

JIM

But you'd make it clear it was for dinner and nothing else.

CARLY

We'd bathe. Separately, of course

JIM

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

CARLY

I'd put on my most irresistible perfume. He'd put on a devastating cologne. I'd slip into my sexiest dress.

JIM

This isn't your sexiest dress? I have so much to live for.

CARLY

He puts on his best Armani.

JIM

You mean there's actually a crappy Armani.

CARLY

You're interrupting. I'm in the middle of a fantasy.

JIM

Sorry. Please continue. This is so educational.



CARLY  
We'd dine at a very expensive restaurant.

JIM  
Gold digger.

CARLY  
I'd tell him lies about myself. He'd tell me lies about himself.

JIM  
Sounds like a first date.

CARLY  
He'd be impressed. I'd be impressed.

JIM  
Those must be some lies.

CARLY  
By midnight we'd be sipping champagne and admiring the view from his penthouse balcony.

JIM  
Penthouse balcony? Now, I'm impressed.

CARLY  
Gershwin is playing on the stereo

JIM  
Always is.

CARLY  
He takes me in his arms and we begin to dance. Close.

JIM  
How close?

CARLY  
Very close. And then...

JIM  
Yes? And then?

CARLY  
At the stroke of twelve...

JIM  
Yes? At the stroke of twelve?

CARLY  
He whirls me into his...

JIM  
Yes? Into his?

CARLY  
Well, anyway.

JIM  
What you mean "well anyway?" You can't stop there. We're just getting to the good part. He'd whirl you into his...  
(gestures for her to continue)

And?

CARLY  
You'll just have to use your imagination.

*(Jim peers off into the distance. After a moment or two a wide smile creeps across his face)*

CARLY  
Okay, that's enough imagining.

*(Carly and Jim move to opposite sides of the stage and face the audience. Stagehand #2 pops in.)*

STAGEHAND #2  
Fifteen minutes later.

*(Pops out)*

JIM  
(to audience)  
So there we were.

CARLY  
(to audience)  
There they were.

JIM  
In bed.

CARLY  
On the sofa.

JIM  
Going at it.

CARLY  
Banging away.

JIM

When she says I have something to tell you.

CARLY

All I could think of was I just paid a hundred and twenty dollars to get that sofa cleaned.

JIM

I thought she was going to tell me she was pregnant. Instead she says "I want a divorce."

CARLY

Then it hits me.

JIM

I got sick to my stomach.

CARLY

This wave of nausea like you wouldn't believe.

JIM

I rolled over and threw up in the ficus.

CARLY

I made it all the way to the bathroom.

JIM

I always said women were made of sturdier stuff..

CARLY

Where I barfed my brains out.

*(Carly and Jim cross back to each other.)*

CARLY

Did she ever say why?

JIM

The romance was gone. The excitement was gone. The adventure was gone. We'd grown apart. She needed to find herself. I pointed out she was lying right there. For some reason, she wasn't amused. How about Mary Ann McCormick?

CARLY

Roger?

JIM

Roger.

CARLY

He said it was all meaningless. Him and... her. When I asked him why, he just shrugged and said "Have you seen the body on that woman?" He had a point.

*(Carly exits to the kitchen.  
Stagehand #1 enters.)*

STAGEHAND #1

(to audience)

Fifteen minutes later.

*(He exits)*

JIM

I wanted to. Believe me, I wanted to.

*(Carly returns with two mugs  
of coffee. She hands one to  
Jim.)*

CARLY

What stopped you?

JIM

Every time I got close... I don't know... I began to feel guilty.

CARLY

For what?

JIM

For cheating on Kathy.

CARLY

You cheated on her?

JIM

No... Never... It was afterwards. After she left.

CARLY

But she was gone. How could that be cheating?

JIM

I know it sounds crazy, but I'd be out with someone. It would get to that point. I'd begin to feel uncomfortable. Like I shouldn't be there. Like I should be home with my wife.

CARLY

But you were divorced.

JIM  
Kathy was divorced.

CARLY  
Do you still love her?

JIM  
Now I just resent her. For making it all seem like a terrible waste of time.

CARLY  
It's nice to know there's still some men who believe in fidelity.

JIM  
Even when it's misplaced.

CARLY  
Especially when it's misplaced.

*(Jim and Carly stand and for several moments just face each other. Stagehand #2 enters)*

STAGEHAND #2  
Fifteen minutes later. My, how times flies when you're having fun.

*(Exits)*

CARLY  
Kiss me?

JIM  
Kiss you.

CARLY  
You want to kiss me.

JIM  
Only as an experiment.

CARLY  
What kind of experiment are we talking about, Dr. Frankenstein?

JIM  
Nothing personal.

CARLY  
You want to kiss me, but it's nothing personal.

JIM

Just to see if I'm over all this guilt stuff.

CARLY

Gee, and here I thought I'd heard them all.

JIM

Just one kiss. No strings attached.

*(Phone rings)*

CARLY

Hold that thought.

*(answers phone)*

Rhonda doesn't... Oh... It's you. Really? Not on your life.

*(Slams phone down, returns to Jim)*

JIM

Another heavy breather?

CARLY

You could say that. It was Mary Ann. Now, where were we?

JIM

A kiss. No strings attached. Listen, it's okay. Forget about it.

CARLY

One kiss.

JIM

One kiss.

CARLY

No strings attached.

JIM

No strings attached.

*(They lean in towards each other. Jim kisses her.)*

Interesting.

CARLY

Interesting. My kiss was interesting.

JIM

From the point of view that I'm not feeling any aftershocks of guilt.

CARLY

That's what we at the clinic are here for.

JIM

That was my first completely guilt free kiss.

CARLY

Let's not take all the fun out of it.

JIM

I can't wait to tell Doctor Evans.

CARLY

Who the hell is Doctor Evans and you'd better not use my name.

JIM

Doctor Evans is my shrink. Lovely woman. You'd like her. For a while I even had a thing for her.

CARLY

That's sick.

JIM

Patients go through that all the time. Especially with Doctor Evans. She looks like Angelina Jolie. Do you think we could do that again?

CARLY

I though we agreed, just one.

JIM

I'd like to confirm my findings.

CARLY

This isn't going to show up in Psychology Today, is it?

JIM

Just one more and we cut right to dessert.

CARLY

As long as there's the promise of food to follow.

*(Jim leans down to kiss her. The kiss lingers a little longer than expected. Then Carly responds big time. As Jim and Carly cross to the bedroom door, Stagehand#2 enters and gives Jim a big thumbs up. Jim and Carly exit. Stagehand #2 rearranges a few pillows, wipes down the dining*

*table and generally makes himself busy until Carly enters from the kitchen, wearing a pajama top and holding a cup of coffee. STAGEHAND#2 watches her admiringly then catches himself)*

STAGEHAND #2  
(to audience)

Next morning.

*(He hurries off bumping into Jim entering from the bedroom, bare foot, tucking in his shirt. Stagehand #2 exits. Jim drops down on the couch next to Carly. She hands him her coffee. He takes a sip and passes it back.)*

CARLY  
You realize, of course, we never made it to dessert.

JIM  
If you women knew how incredible you are, you'd all be lesbians.

CARLY  
Well, aren't we all chipper and guilt free

JIM  
No, really, you were incredible.

CARLY  
It must have been the wallpaper.

JIM  
Do you believe in love at first sight?

CARLY  
No.

JIM  
Neither did I.

CARLY  
I don't think I'm comfortable with the direction this conversation is going.



JIM

I think I happened the moment I looked out my window and saw you yelling at the Movers.

CARLY

And that endeared me to you?

JIM

That and the skin tight jeans.

CARLY

I think they call that lust.

JIM

Something happened here last night.

CARLY

It's called a roll in the sack.

JIM

That wasn't a roll. That was a tornado. A hurricane. An earthquake.

CARLY

You realize, of course, you just named three natural disasters.

*(The Stagehands enter and roll out the couch with Jim and Carly still on it. The Stagehands return and carry out everything they carried in at the beginning. The set now looks as it did as the beginning of the scene. On his way out, Stagehand#1 turns on the radio. Gershwin is playing once more.)*

STAGEHAND #1

(to audience)

Ten years later.

*(The Stagehands exit. The Man from the beginning of the scene steps through one of the doors. The Woman steps through another door)*

MAN

I'm sorry. I didn't realize any one else was here.

I was just... Jim? WOMAN

Yes. MAN

It's me. Carly. WOMAN

Ohymgod. Carly. It is you. MAN

How long has it been and don't answer that. WOMAN

What are you doing here? MAN

I heard they were tearing the old place down. WOMAN

Tomorrow from what they tell me. MAN

I thought I'd give it once last look. WOMAN

Me, too. MAN

A lot of memories. WOMAN

Some better than others. MAN

Uh.. Yeah... So... How are you? WOMAN

Good...Good.. You? MAN

Good. WOMAN

You still sing? MAN

Once in a while I put on the fishnets and climb up on a piano. Mostly, I teach. WOMAN

I'd like to see that. MAN

Me teach? WOMAN

No the fishnets. MAN

I'll let you know. WOMAN

Funny, I never did get to hear you sing. MAN

Things happened so quickly. WOMAN

I guess they did. So...uh... you and... uh... MAN

Mary Ann. WOMAN

Mary Ann. Did you work it out? I assumed that's where you went. MAN

Third dumbest thing I ever did. WOMAN

Third. MAN

Number two was marrying him. WOMAN

And the first? Never mind. Bad question. MAN

Did you ever...? WOMAN

Marry? MAN

I'm prying. You don't have to answer. WOMAN

Actually, I did. MAN

WOMAN  
Congratulations.

MAN  
It didn't last.

WOMAN  
I'm sorry.

MAN  
Second dumbest thing I ever did. Nice woman. She deserved better.

*(Neither seems to know what to say, but neither seems to want to end the conversation.)*

MAN  
I can't believe they're tearing the old place down.

WOMAN  
Progress.

MAN  
I guess.

WOMAN  
Think they'll call the new place "Heartbreak Hotel?"

MAN  
I forgot about that.

WOMAN  
We were a bunch, weren't we?

MAN  
You could cut the anger with a knife.

WOMAN  
Not to mention the despair.

WOMAN  
Not to mention the desperation.

MAN  
Can't forget the desperation.

*(Carly enters from the kitchen carrying a small packing box. She gives the empty room one last look and exits through the front door.)*

I'm sorry. WOMAN

For what? MAN

For leaving the way I did? WOMAN

*(Jim enters and stands in the open doorway holding a bouquet of flowers. He starts to knock, notices the room is empty and steps in.)*

Carly...Carly... JIM

*(He goes from door to door looking for her. Realizing she's gone, he angrily throws the flowers down and hurries out.)*

I should have called. Left a note. WOMAN

Water under the bridge. MAN

You scared the hell out of me. WOMAN

How? What did I do? MAN

You said you loved me. WOMAN

Did I? MAN

I was still coming to terms with my husband cheating on me and then some man I hardly knew announces he's in love with me. What was I supposed to do with that? WOMAN

It was a long time ago. MAN

WOMAN  
(after an  
uncomfortable pause)  
Well... It was great seeing you.

MAN  
You too.

WOMAN  
I'd better get going.

MAN  
I don't think we want to be here when the wrecking ball  
comes through the wall.

*(The Woman starts for the  
door. The Man turns on the old  
radio. The Gershwin song  
begins to play.)*

MAN  
Excuse me.

WOMAN  
(turning back)  
Yes?

MAN  
I've been staring at you across this room all night.

WOMAN  
(playing along)  
Really? I had noticed.

MAN  
I have to say that is the sexiest dress I've ever seen.

WOMAN  
That suit you're wearing looks...

MAN  
Expensive.

WOMAN  
Good on you.

MAN  
Armani.

WOMAN  
(sweeps her arm out  
across the audience)  
Lovely view, wouldn't you say?

MAN  
You should see the one from my penthouse balcony.

WOMAN  
Oh... You have a penthouse?

MAN  
With a balcony.

WOMAN  
Sounds... uh... very...

MAN  
High?

WOMAN  
Expensive.

MAN  
You're the woman I've been waiting for all my life.

WOMAN  
Really? All your life?

MAN  
(picks up the flowers  
Jim dropped and  
hands them to her)  
Will you have dinner with me tonight?

WOMAN  
This is all rather sudden, don't you think?

MAN  
You have to say yes.

WOMAN  
And if I don't.

MAN  
I'll die.

WOMAN  
(takes the flowers)  
If it's a matter of life and death.

MAN  
It is.

WOMAN  
Then I have no choice.  
(MORE)

WOMAN (cont'd)  
(He takes her in his  
arms)

But under one condition.

*(She moves closer)*

MAN

One condition?

WOMAN

One condition. That it's for dinner. Nothing else.

*(They dance. The lights fade.  
The Stagehands enter.)*

BOTH STAGEHANDS  
(to audience)

The end.

*(They take a big, theatrical  
bow and exit)*

THE END