

ESSENTIALLY AMERICAN

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A Play in Two Acts

by

Brad Staggs

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**ESSENTIALLY AMERICAN** was first presented by the Civic Players of Logansport at McHale Auditorium in Logansport, Indiana, on March 12-14, 1999. It was directed by Noelle Strantz, the set was designed by Rian Anderson, the stage manager was Kenneth W. Frazza, and the lighting was designed by Jeff Davis. The cast, in order of appearance, was as follows:

Wallace Martin.....	Mark Racop
Connie Martin.....	Rosemary Weaver
Aspen Martin.....	Allyson Corn
Thomas Smythe.....	Brad Staggs
Adam DuMock.....	Sam Piercy
Gary Pell.....	Doug Schlabach
Bubba.....	Barry Taylor
Tony.....	Richard Ray
Sammy Swanson.....	Cindy Collins
Bobby, the Delivery Boy.....	Rian Anderson
Sheriff Donald O'Hurley.....	Peter Noakes

Cast of Characters

<u>WALLACE MARTIN:</u>	Mid-forties, Husband to Connie.
<u>CONNIE MARTIN:</u>	Mid-forties, self-absorbed wife of Wallace.
<u>ASPEN MARTIN:</u>	16 to mid-20's, The daughter of Wallace and Connie.
<u>THOMAS SMYTHE:</u>	The Wallace's Butler and all-around servant.
<u>ADAM DUMOCK:</u>	Wallace's new handyman.
<u>GARY PELL:</u>	Owner of Pell's Furniture Stores.
<u>TONY and BUBBA:</u>	Adam's white trash Brother and Brother-in-Law.
<u>SAMMY SWANSON:</u>	The garage door repairperson.
<u>BOBBY:</u>	Delivery man for Pell's Furniture Store.
<u>SHERIFF O'HURLEY:</u>	Sheriff of Wilson County.

Scene

The very nicely furnished living room of the home of Wallace and Connie Martin. The set must have a front door, picture window, kitchen door, den door, and staircase leading behind the set to the "bedrooms".

Time

Now.

ACT I

LIGHTS UP

AT OPEN: *WALLACE MARTIN enters through the front door carrying a full load of suitcases and overnight bags.*

WALLACE: God, it feels good to finally be able to stop. *(He drops the bags)*  
Two weeks of non-stop shopping in the Bahamas is not what I call a vacation.

*CONNIE MARTIN enters carrying only her small purse.  
ASPEN MARTIN is close on her heels.*

CONNIE: Well, we thought that it was perfect. All except that little bazaar in St. Thomas which had the rudest little man.

WALLACE: Darling, that little man was a policeman. He was simply trying to tell you that you had dropped your purse.

CONNIE: That would explain the quaint little uniform. But he did not have to yell at me.

WALLACE: You pepper sprayed him! It cost me 2,500 dollars to keep him from throwing you in jail.

CONNIE: You could have argued him down to 1,500. Would you be a dear and bring the other bags upstairs? Aspen and I want to try on our new outfits.

*She and Aspen exit up the stairs.*

WALLACE: Yes, dear. Right away, dear.

*Sound of two doors opening and closing upstairs.*

WALLACE: *(Yells)* Thomas!

*THOMAS SMYTHE enters from the kitchen carrying a serving tray with a large can of beer.*

THOMAS: Welcome back, sir. Did you get the opportunity to see the islands or were you too busy playing shopping excursion pack boy? *(Wallace sinks to the couch)* I understand. Here is your beer, sir. *(Wallace takes the beer)* Any problems this time, sir? *(Wallace holds up four fingers)* She pepper sprayed four people, sir?

WALLACE: A cop on St. Thomas, a judge on Barbados, and the museum curator on St. Croix.

THOMAS: But what of the fourth, sir?

WALLACE: The Captain of the cruise ship.

THOMAS: The Captain, sir?

WALLACE: Something about the Titanic and Prozac... I don't know. She was mumbling and incoherent. I just went to bed.

THOMAS: Sir, far be it from me to criticize, but have you attempted to dissuade Mrs. Martin from using pepper spray?

WALLACE: She has the spray because I talked her out of buying a gun. Anyway, have Larry bring in the rest of the luggage and all of her shopping bags.

THOMAS: Lawrence is no longer in your employ, sir.

*Wallace sets the beer on a coffee table or end table.*

WALLACE: Oh, no, not another one. What was it this time? Did Connie tell him to de-thorn the rose bushes while we were gone?

THOMAS: No, sir, nothing quite like that. It seems that our Lawrence had a bad experience with the highway patrol. He was stopped for speeding on a motorcycle.

WALLACE: Well, that's no reason to fire him, Thomas.

THOMAS: He was stealing it at the time, sir.

WALLACE: Oh.

THOMAS: But do not worry, sir. I have placed an advertisement in the classifieds, and I am hoping for a speedy response.

WALLACE: Then in the meantime, could you take these things upstairs while I go out and get the other bags out of the car?

THOMAS: It would be the highlight of my day, sir.

WALLACE: Good, I'll be right back.

*Wallace exits out the front door. Thomas picks up all of the bags which are in the living room and exits with them upstairs.*

*Sound of door opening upstairs.*

CONNIE (O.S.): Aaaaaaagh!

*Sound of door closing upstairs.*

THOMAS (O.S.): I apologize, Madam!

*Thomas enters from the stairs.*

THOMAS: (*Shouting back up*) I thought you were in Miss Aspen's bedroom. I left your things in front of your door.

*Sound of door opening upstairs.*

ASPEN (O.S.): Thomas, is something wrong with Mother?

THOMAS: Nothing out of the ordinary, Miss Aspen. Your Mother was merely nude.

ASPEN (O.S.): Oh.

*Sound of door closing upstairs.*

THOMAS: Nice Tattoo.

*Sound of doorbell ringing.*

*Thomas walks to the door and opens it. There stands ADAM DUMOCK.*

THOMAS: May I help you?

ADAM: You know there's a guy out here yelling at a whole bunch of suitcases in your driveway?

THOMAS: Yes, we hire people for that purpose. May I help you in some odd way?

ADAM: (*Enters*) Yeah, Jeeves, I'm here about your ad for a handyman.

THOMAS: If you had passed your third-grade reading proficiency test, you would have noticed that the advertisement called for a qualified maintenance specialist to post a resume... not simply show up as if attending a hog roast.

ADAM: Yeah, well, that sounds like a fancy way of saying handyman to me. Besides, I happened to be in the neighborhood and decided to go ahead and drop by.

*Adam is looking around. Thomas walks directly into Adam's path.*

THOMAS: We are the only home within two miles of where we now stand. Exactly what neighborhood is it that you were referring to? The Midwestern portion of the United States?

ADAM: All right, you got me. I just need a job. *(Adam slumps down on the couch)* I haven't had a decent job since I got out of the military. I guess I just don't fit in anywhere since they made me into... *(pretend sobbing)* ...a killer!

THOMAS: *For the Love of Life*, fourth season, episode 12. Mickey returns home from the war a changed man.

ADAM: You saw it?

THOMAS: Of course. However, I would suggest less sobbing next time. The ending was a wee bit muddled.

*Sound of pounding at the front door.*

*Thomas walks over and opens it. Wallace stumbles in with several more bags.*

WALLACE: Just once, I would like to see that woman carry in her own luggage.

THOMAS: *(Closing the door)* Yes, Sir.

*Adam jumps up to help Wallace set the luggage on the floor.*

ADAM: Here, sir, let me help.

WALLACE: Thank you... who are you? Thomas, who is this?

ADAM: *(Putting his hand out to shake)* Adam DuMock, sir.

THOMAS: *(Putting one of the bags in Adam's outstretched hand)* Mr. DuMock, it seems, is a former Marine here to apply for the "handyman" position, sir.

WALLACE: Are you any good with your hands?

ADAM: 500 sorority sisters can't all be wrong.

WALLACE: *(To Thomas)* What did he say?

THOMAS: I believe he means yes, sir.

WALLACE: Good, you're hired.

ADAM: It will be a pleasure taking orders from a man such as yourself, sir.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

WALLACE: Oh, there's no reason to suck up to me. You get your orders from Thomas.

*Connie enters from the stairs.*

CONNIE: Wallace! Do you know what Thomas did? He walked in on me while I was doing my thigh workout.

THOMAS: Oh, that's what that was.

CONNIE: *(Seeing Adam)* Who's he?

THOMAS: Mrs. Martin, may I present Mr. Adam DuMock, our new handyman.

CONNIE: What happened to what's-his-name? Uh... Lennie?

THOMAS: Lawrence, Madam. He's doing five to ten for grand theft auto.

CONNIE: Oh. *(Angrily)* Wallace!

WALLACE: Yes, Boopsie?

CONNIE: What are you going to do about Thomas?

WALLACE: Well, what harm was done?

CONNIE: I was all... undone.

WALLACE: What?

THOMAS: She was nude, sir.

WALLACE: Oh. Why?

CONNIE: I like to see the results of my workout.

WALLACE: *(Aside)* Too bad I can't see the results of your workout.

CONNIE: Wallace! I have been quite upset by this incident. My therapist is going to have a field day with this.

THOMAS: I can assure you that it was no picnic for me, either, Madam.

WALLACE: Thomas, do you absolutely promise never to walk in on Mrs. Martin when she's working on her eyes again?

CONNIE: *Thighs, puppy.*

WALLACE: Thighs, right. Well, do you promise?

THOMAS: On the grave of my dearly departed mother, I do so promise. And my most humble apologies to you, Madam.

CONNIE: *(To Wallace)* Thank you, Sweetums. *(To Adam)* Alan, I want to talk to you later about the rose bushes.

ADAM: That's Adam, Ma'am.

CONNIE: Whatever.

*She exits to the stairs.*

ADAM: Yes, Ma'am.

*Sound of upstairs door opening and closing.*

*Wallace motions for Thomas to come to him. Thomas goes to Wallace.*

WALLACE: A former Marine? Just like Mickey in *For the Love of Life*?

THOMAS: Yes, sir, just like Mickey. Exciting, isn't it?

WALLACE: That's neat!

*Wallace exits to the kitchen.*

THOMAS: Yes, sir... neat. *(Turning to Adam)* Now, as for you, my young soap-star, these bags must go up to Mrs. Martin's bedroom, followed by the fixing of the garage door. After that has been accomplished, we will discuss any future employment for you in this household.

ADAM: But Mr. Martin just hired me.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

THOMAS: Yes, but he leaves all termination of services to me. Am I making myself abundantly clear?

*Sound of a cell phone buzzing or ringing.*

*Thomas pulls his cell phone from a pocket.*

THOMAS: (*Reading*) It seems that Mrs. Martin will be going from her bedroom...

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Pause.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

THOMAS: ...to Miss Aspen's bedroom in order to sort through her new clothes. (*Places the phone back in his pocket*) We are free to place the remaining luggage in Mrs. Martin's bedroom.

ADAM: She texted you from upstairs?

THOMAS: A most observant lad you are.

*Thomas begins handing Adam suitcases.*

ADAM: And there's somebody named Aspen up there?

THOMAS: Indeed.

ADAM: I'm confused.

THOMAS: A feeling I'm sure that you are quite familiar with, Mr. DuMock. Aspen is the Martin's daughter.

ADAM: They named their daughter Aspen?

THOMAS: Of course. Actually, Mrs. Martin wanted to name their daughter after her favorite crystal but could not spell Swarovski. So instead, the Martin's named her after the place she was conceived.

ADAM: They named her after the city? That's kinda cool.

THOMAS: Well, "Back Seat of a 3 a.m. Taxi" Martin would have been damned silly now, wouldn't it?

ADAM: Wow! Mrs. Martin's a freak!

THOMAS: At one time, my friend, in the past. Now, the Wallace women consider pushing buttons on a phone exercise. Miss Aspen rarely comes out of her room other than to shop and date. (*To himself*) And if she sees her shadow, we'll have 6 more weeks of winter.

ADAM: What?

THOMAS: Never mind. Just follow me and try not to break anything.

*Thomas exits up the stairs with some luggage. As Adam picks up a bag, it falls open and everything spills out.*

*Sound of door opening upstairs.*

*Adam quickly tries to stuff everything back in the bag before Thomas returns.*

*Sound of door closing upstairs.*

*It doesn't work as Thomas enters.*

THOMAS: I see that the years of classical ballet paid off well.

*Thomas watches as Adam continues picking up the clothing, trying to stuff it back in the bag. As he picks up one piece, Adam notices an envelope in the clothes. Thomas takes interest in what Adam is looking at.*

THOMAS: What is that, Mr. DuMock?

ADAM: *(Reading the envelope)* It says, "To my Sweet-Buns".

THOMAS: *(Calling into the kitchen)* Mr. Martin!

*Wallace enters from the kitchen.*

WALLACE: Yes?

THOMAS: *(Taking the envelope from Adam)* A letter for you, Mr. Sweet-Buns. *(He hands the letter to Wallace, picks up a bundle of the clothing, and heads to the kitchen with Adam in tow.)* Follow me, Mr. DuMock. We need to get these into the washer before Mrs. Martin sees dust particles on her clothing and makes us wash everything. Besides, I need to show you to the garage. That's the place where we put autos in a vain attempt to keep them from rusting... a concept completely foreign to you, I'm sure.

*Thomas and Adam exit through the kitchen. Wallace opens the envelope. He then reads the letter out loud.*

WALLACE: "My dearest Love--How I ache for your lips on mine again." (*Wallace smiles*) "How I yearn for your tender touch. How I can't wait for the day when..." (*His smile begins to fade*) "...your husband is out of the way? I plan on being at your house by 4 p.m. on the day you return from your trip. Please leave with me then. Your husband need not know about our love until it's too late!" (*Wallace throws the letter down and jumps on it*) Of all the dirty... Wait a minute... (*He then picks it up and unfolds it, trying to straighten it out enough to read*) Who wrote it? Let's see... (*Reading again*) "Arms... beautiful heaving"... there it is... "Forever, your Sex-Monkey." *Sex-monkey?* But I thought that I was her only Sex-Monkey! Who could it be? Thomas? (*Pause*) Yeah, right. Wait a minute... Adam! The new "handyman"! Just dropped by for a job, eh? Right, he's here for my wife. They had this planned all along. "Oh, Adam, my bathroom pipes are plugged... could you please come up and plumb them?" Aaaagh! I should have known. I've been played for such a FOOL. But I *will not* let this happen! But what shall I do? Where shall I turn? Hold on... Gary! Gary will know what to do. (*Pulls out his cell phone*) Why isn't his number in this phone? Maybe it's in the study...

*Wallace exits quickly into the study, leaving the letter in the living room. Adam enters carrying a broken chain.*

ADAM: Jeeves? Mr. Martin? I found the problem. Hello? (*Notices the can of beer*) Now, what's a nice, full can of beer like you doing in a place like this? Thanks, don't mind if I do.

*He opens the can and takes a drink. Wallace enters while on the cell phone. Adam dives behind the couch to keep from being seen drinking beer.*

WALLACE: Yes, I'm sure she's having an affair. (*Picks up the letter*) This letter proves it and more importantly, I know who he is. He's here in the house now! (*Adam peeks above the couch*) And I'm going to kill them tonight. (*Adam goes wide-eyed and ducks down before Wallace sees him*) Why not? I've taken as much crap off of her as I should have to and I'm not going to sit back and watch my wife have fun when I'm not looking! (*Pause*) No, I won't do anything until you get here, Gary. I promise.

*Wallace exits to the study with the letter. Adam gets up from behind the couch, leaving the chain.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ADAM: I didn't sign on for this. I just needed the money. I *always* need the money. (*Connie and Aspen enter from the stairs and watch Adam*) I'm just good with my hands, that's all. Now, I'm in the middle of a bad news report. "He was a nice boy, but I always thought he carried too many guns."

ASPEN: Who is this person, Mother?

ADAM: *(Startled)* Aaaaagh!

CONNIE: This is the obviously jumpy Arthur Murdock...

ADAM: That's Adam DuMock, Ma'am...

*Wallace enters from the den.*

CONNIE: Pardon me, faux paus. *Adam Dumbcock*. He's our new household assistant.

WALLACE: Yes, Adam, and this is our daughter, Aspen. Of course, you've already met my wife, haven't you?

ADAM: *(Staring at Aspen)* Yes, sir.

ASPEN: He is rather cute, Mother... in a Paleolithic sort of way.

*Wallace exits angrily up the stairs.*

CONNIE: Yes, but remember these two words, my dear... working class.

*The women exit into the kitchen, giggling. As they exit, Thomas is coming in from the kitchen and holds the swinging door open for them.*

THOMAS: *(Calling after them)* It is so nice to see the two of you laughing. After all, laughter is the medicine of the soul. *(To Adam)* Oh, there you are. I was beginning to think that you had decided to begin your semi-annual sabbatical a bit early. *(Adam is staring toward the kitchen)* Are you quite sick? Are you coming down with a virus? *(No response)* Are you contagious?

ADAM: I just met an angel.

THOMAS: Oh, I see that Miss Aspen has worked her charms on you. Be careful, my young protégé, I have seen her tear apart more hearts than Marilyn Monroe singing happy birthday.

ADAM: Who?

THOMAS: Never mind.

ADAM: *(Grabs Thomas)* Jeeves, listen, we've got a big problem!

THOMAS: *(Breaking Adam's grip)* Unhand me, cretin!

ADAM: I just heard Mr. Martin talking on the phone--

THOMAS: You were eavesdropping on a private conversation involving Mr. Martin?

ADAM: Yeah, but--

THOMAS: Your current employer?

ADAM: Yeah, but--

THOMAS: The man who will tell me to behead you as soon as he hears of this, to which I will gladly comply?

ADAM: Yeah, but... I mean no... Listen, Mr. Martin was talking to some guy named Larry--

THOMAS: Gary.

ADAM: Yeah, Gary, and--

THOMAS: Larry is in jail, which is where you will be if this is not a very good explanation.

ADAM: Just listen! He told this Gary guy that he's going to kill Mrs. Martin!

THOMAS: That's preposterous.

ADAM: He also said that Mrs. Martin is having an affair...

THOMAS: That's not so preposterous.

ADAM: ...with you.

THOMAS: Absolutely preposterous! Did he say those exact words?

ADAM: He said that the guy she's having an affair with is in the house right now.

THOMAS: I must speak with Mr. Martin immediately and straighten out this entire debacle.

*Thomas begins to walk toward the stairs, but Adam catches him by the arm.*

ADAM: I don't think that's such a good idea, Jeeves.

THOMAS: And, pray tell, why not?

ADAM: Well, my ex brother-in-law, Tony, found out one time that my sister was cheating on him and he went out and bought this great double-barreled shotgun that he was gonna use on my sister and this other dude. When my father found out what he was going to do, he went over to beat some sense into Tony.

THOMAS: And did your father succeed in "beating some sense" into your ex brother-in-law?

ADAM: Naw. Tony got busted trying to rob a liquor store that day.

THOMAS: That was a fascinating parable. Your family brings the term "family values" to new and glorious lows.

ADAM: What?

THOMAS: Never mind. So, what do you propose we do?

ADAM: That's simple. We call the cops.

THOMAS: And tell them what?

ADAM: Well...

THOMAS: You see, my pre-simian friend, evidence is usually mandated in any police investigation. So, when the police arrive and you tell them that you might have overheard a possible death threat by a man who is known to be a high taxpayer, what do you think their reaction will be?

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ADAM: They'll laugh at me?

THOMAS: Another graduate of Sir Thomas' School of Sudden Logic!

*Wallace enters from the stairs with a double-barreled shotgun.*

WALLACE: Where are my shells for this, Thomas?

THOMAS: I do believe they are in your study, sir, behind the can of Armadillo meat that you brought back from Texas.

WALLACE: Thank you, Thomas. *(Angrily)* Adam.

*Wallace exits to the den.*

ADAM: M...M...Mr. Martin. *(He watches for Wallace to leave)* How the hell could you tell him that? You've signed your own death warrant!

THOMAS: Mr. DuMock, Mr. Martin would not notice if I exchanged his morning coffee for spring water and 10-W-30 lubricant. He trusts me implicitly.

ADAM: Looks like maybe he trusted you with a little too much, huh, Jeeves?

THOMAS: If you are referring to the inane assumption that I am having an affair with Mrs. Martin, I would sooner become personal servant to Lady GaGa! No, Mr. DuMock, I am not now, nor have I ever had any deviant sexual relations with Mrs. Martin.

ADAM: Define deviant.

THOMAS: That is enough! I have knocked down better than you in the school boxing arena, and I--

*Connie and Aspen enter from the kitchen.*

CONNIE: Thomas?

THOMAS: Yes, Madam?

CONNIE: Could you please come into the kitchen and help me? Aspen and I seem to have set the microwave ablaze.

THOMAS: Did we forget to take the soup out of the can first again?

CONNIE: *(To Aspen)* I told you that there was a step missing from the label instructions.

*Connie and Thomas exit to the kitchen. Aspen begins to follow, but is stopped by Adam.*

ADAM: Aspen?

ASPEN: Yes?

ADAM: *(Nervously)* Hi. I'm Adam.

ASPEN: Haven't we already covered this ground?

ADAM: Yeah, you're right. Good. So... how 'bout them Cubbies?

ASPEN: Well, they've never played better, but I worry whether they can keep their momentum.

ADAM: You actually follow the Cubs?

ASPEN: Oh, I'm sorry, were you just trying to make small talk? Shall we talk about the weather next?

ADAM: How do you know so much about the Cubs? Is your Dad a fan?

ASPEN: Daddy? A baseball fan? Heavens no, Mother would not allow it. Hobbies would cut into her shopping time. No, I have to keep up with them for my fantasy league.

ADAM: You play fantasy baseball?

ASPEN: Of course. I find it's the best way to relax with facts, figures, and statistical analysis.

ADAM: Let me ask you this... are you doing anything tonight?

ASPEN: Is this some kind of pathetic attempt at asking me out on a date?

ADAM: Well, yes?

ASPEN: With you?

ADAM: Of course, with me.

ASPEN: Let *me* ask *you* this... How much money do you make, say, weekly?

ADAM: Your father and I haven't talked about my pay yet.

ASPEN: Do you have any employment other than here?

ADAM: Technically, no.

ASPEN: T-Bills, retirement funds, long-lost rich uncles who are about to die?

ADAM: No.

ASPEN: So, what you're saying is that you want to ask me out on a date even though you make only 400 dollars a week and have no real way of paying for it?

ADAM: I only make 400 bucks? Damn it. We could go Dutch?

ASPEN: Whatever gave you the idea that I would want to go anywhere with you? I'm used to men taking me to the best dance clubs, full-dress balls and jetting to the finest restaurants.

ADAM: Have you ever had a boyfriend with a motorcycle?

ASPEN: Of course. I've had boyfriends with Ducati's, Hellcats, BMWs--

ADAM: Yeah, but have you ever been on a Harley?

ASPEN: (*Suddenly interested*) A Harley? As in Harley-Davidson?

ADAM: That's the one.

ASPEN: What exactly did you have in mind for this... date?

ADAM: Well, we could take the hog downtown to catch a movie.

ASPEN: What movie?

ADAM: The Exterminator from Beyond's playing at the Hollywood.

ASPEN: Eeeew! I don't like science-fiction. They get everything wrong.

ADAM: The hero rides a Harley.

ASPEN: Okay.

ADAM: Then I thought we'd head over to Bob's Big Oinker and grab a couple of Rib Racks.

ASPEN: We don't have to get off of the motorcycle, do we?

ADAM: No, it's a drive-up.

ASPEN: Okay.

ADAM: And then we could go watch the moon come up at the ridge.

ASPEN: *The ridge?* Even I've heard of the ridge!

ADAM: Yeah? So, what do you say?

ASPEN: (*Aside*) Well, if I save all of the receipts, I could take it off on my taxes as a gift to the poor. And father is always telling me that I should get out and see how the other 99 percent lives. (*To Adam*) What should I wear?

ADAM: Nothing that will get caught in the chain or the spokes, and nothing that will get burned on the tailpipe.

ASPEN: Has anybody ever told you that your eyes glow when you talk about motorcycles?

ADAM: Just Harleys.

*Aspen melts on the word "Harleys."*

ASPEN: I'm going to my bedroom to see if I can't find a proper outfit.

*Aspen quickly exits to the stairs.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Adam immediately takes out his cell phone and dials.*

ADAM: Hello? Joey? Let me talk to Tony. This is Adam. Adam DuMock. Your brother. Thank you. *(Pause)* Tony, it's me. Yeah, I'm in. Listen, I know I was supposed to call as soon as they're gone, but... what? Yeah, the house is full of great stuff. Me? I've been fixing the garage door. Listen, I don't know about this. Well, there's this girl... don't be making those noises at me! It's not like that. I just don't think... I know you don't pay me to think, Tony... no, just don't... *(Thomas enters from the kitchen)* Oh no, Mom, don't worry, I've got a job now so we can get you that bypass you've always wanted. Yeah, Mom. Great. Listen, I've got to get back to work now. Love you, too. Bye. *(Hangs up the phone and puts it back in his pocket)* That was my mother.

THOMAS: I gathered from the use of the word "Mom".

ADAM: Oh, yeah.

THOMAS: Tell me, are you going to leave that chain lying on the floor or will you be replacing it on the garage door?

ADAM: *(Retrieving the chain)* I left it here just in case I have to smack somebody upside the head with it when he comes after you, know what I mean?

THOMAS: Mr. DuMock, I can assure you that even if what you overheard on the telephone was indeed true, I am perfectly capable of defending myself and have no need to employ your services to smack Mr. Martin upside the head with an unusable garage door chain. While that may hold a certain appeal with your crowd, we are a bit more civilized here.

ADAM: Oh really, Jeeves? And what exactly are you going to do? Dust him to death?

THOMAS: I will have you know that I was Captain of my University boxing squad.

ADAM: I've seen boxers get cut in half by a chain like this.

*Thomas assumes a boxer's stance.*

THOMAS: Then let's see exactly how tough you are, Mr. DuMock. First knockdown wins.

ADAM: Come on, Jeeves, you can't be serious?

THOMAS: I am perfectly serious, young man.

*Thomas shoves Adam's shoulder.*

ADAM: Don't be doing that, Jeeves. I've got a chain.

THOMAS: Yes? Then a good old pork and beans eating yank like you should be able to take an old stuffy Brit like me any day, right, big man?

*Again, Thomas pushes Adam's shoulder.*

ADAM: All right, but remember, you asked for it!

*Adam swings the chain down at Thomas. Thomas catches Adam's arm and twists it, causing Adam to flip and drop the chain.*

THOMAS: I also teach Aikido in my offtime.

ADAM: *(In obvious pain)* Uh-huh.

THOMAS: *(Helping Adam to his feet)* Hurts a bit, doesn't it?

ADAM: Uh-huh.

THOMAS: Here, stand still.

*Thomas takes hold of Adam's arm and rotates it in the socket. When he gets it to the height of its arc, he pulls it straight down.*

ADAM: Aaaaagh!

*The pain melts away to a look of surprise and relief. Slowly, Adam begins moving his arm around.*

THOMAS: There, is that better?

ADAM: Wow! Where did you learn that? Medical school?

THOMAS: Medical show reruns.

ADAM: Can you teach me how to do the flip thing?

THOMAS: First, you fix the garage door, then we will discuss any future training.

ADAM: Yes, sir, Mr. Smythe.

*Adam exits to the kitchen. Thomas smiles as he goes into a Karate pose.*

THOMAS: Have at ye, lads!

*Wallace enters and Thomas straightens up quickly.*

WALLACE: Thomas, I can't find my shotgun shells anywhere.

THOMAS: Did you look behind the Chaucer, sir?

WALLACE: Yes, I looked there.

THOMAS: And behind your collection of dried pomegranates?

WALLACE: I looked there, too.

THOMAS: You must have used the box during your last hunting expedition, sir.

WALLACE: Well, you know how hard it is to bag an elk these days, Thomas.

THOMAS: Yes, sir, especially when you were hunting for squirrel.

WALLACE: I could have bagged an elk...

THOMAS: In New Jersey, sir? Where were you hunting? The city zoo?

WALLACE: Oh yeah? How do you explain my trophy bear in the den?

THOMAS: 673 dollars and 95 cents at Big Jake's Custom Upholstery and Taxidermy of Newark. I do take care of your finances, you know.

WALLACE: *(Taking money out of his pocket)* Go down to Guns-is-Fun and pick up a box of shotgun slugs for me.

THOMAS: May I inquire as to the purpose of more deadly ammunition than you should be allowed to play with?

*Wallace brings Thomas downstage and looks around to see if anybody is listening. Thomas looks around also.*

WALLACE: Where are my wife and daughter?

THOMAS: In the kitch--

WALLACE: Keep your voice down...

THOMAS: Of course, sir. Mrs. Martin is currently in the kitchen attempting to destroy all of the utensils, while Miss Aspen is upstairs.

WALLACE: Good, they'll both be occupied for hours. Do you know anything about this Adam character?

THOMAS: Well, sir, the only thing that I know--

WALLACE: Keep your voice down!

THOMAS: Yes, sir. The only thing that I know--

WALLACE: *(Leaning in closer to hear)* What?

THOMAS: *(A little louder)* The only thing that I know--

WALLACE: What?

THOMAS: *(Original volume)* The only thing that I know, sir, is that he will not be on the guest list for this year's charity ball. His version of formal is a pair of jeans without grease stains and a t-shirt without profanity.

WALLACE: I don't trust him, Thomas.

THOMAS: Surely you jest, sir? If you don't trust him, why did you hire him?

WALLACE: It's Connie! You know how she gets on my nerves with her constant bickering and complaining.

THOMAS: I hadn't noticed, sir.

WALLACE: No, really! She drives me insane with her "Wallace do this, Wallace, do that". Sometimes, I just want to take this and shove it--

THOMAS: *(Grabbing the shotgun out of Wallace's hands)* Whoa there, Tex. Didn't your marriage counselor help at all, sir?

WALLACE: Oh yeah, he helped. He helped her get over her pain and suffering while he told me that I'm an inconsiderate husband who doesn't pay enough attention to his wife!

THOMAS: He said all of that, sir? Perish the thought.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

WALLACE: Yeah, you should have seen it, Thomas. She would just sit there and flash her very expensive... smile and wink at him and, all of a sudden, I no longer existed as a human being. He wouldn't even listen to me! Can you believe that?

*Aspen enters from the stairs, dressed in a gown.*

THOMAS: *(Distracted)* I'm sorry, sir, what's that?

ASPEN: Oh, hello Father!

WALLACE: Hello, my little Petunia. Why are you so dressed up?

ASPEN: Adam asked me out on a date, Father. *(Wallace is visibly shaken)* We're going to ride his hog downtown to a movie and then to a little greasy spoon for our evening repast. Thomas, where is Adam now?

THOMAS: He is in the garage fixing the overhead door chain, Miss Aspen. And may I say that you look absolutely lovely this evening?

ASPEN: Why, thank you, Thomas. Ta, father!

*She exits through the kitchen.*

WALLACE: Did you hear that, Thomas?

THOMAS: Yes, sir, I did. Isn't young romance a beautiful thing?

WALLACE: What? No! First, he has my wife, now my own daughter is going downtown with this poor nobody on some farm animal! Do you know what happens downtown? There are shootings and outdoor singing and people begging you for money right on the street corner! What is this world coming to, Thomas?

THOMAS: I believe it's known as poverty, sir.

WALLACE: I must do something about this, or he'll turn my entire family into his personal harem! *(He starts to exit into the study but then turns)* Thomas, my friend Gary will be here any time. Bring him straight to the study.

*Wallace exits to the den.*

THOMAS: Yes, sir.

*Connie enters from the kitchen reading a magazine.*

CONNIE: Thomas, what was Wallace all up in arms about?

THOMAS: I'm not really sure, Madam. Something about stock futures, I believe. You know how utterly stupid I am about such things.

CONNIE: *(Sitting on the sofa)* Yes, Thomas, I know.

*Wallace bursts through his study door. He is carrying a large letter opener.*

WALLACE: Thomas, do you think that this has enough weight to penetrate the human skull?

CONNIE: Eeeew!

*Wallace finally sees Connie on the couch and quickly hides the letter opener behind his back.*

WALLACE: Why, hello, Honey-Lamb, I didn't see you there.

CONNIE: Why would you possibly want to know such a thing, Wallace?

*Wallace and Thomas look at each other, Wallace is mute.*

THOMAS: Well, Mrs. Martin, your husband has been chosen to give the opening remarks at this year's forensics convention which is being held at your father's hotel. The theme for the convention is "The Human Skull; Nature's Safety Helmet". Mr. Martin is merely attempting to establish exactly what the limits of the human skull are.

CONNIE: *(Without looking up)* Oh, your hobbies. How quaint. Sometimes, all I have to do is think of your silly hobbies, Wallace, and I fall right to sleep.

*Wallace raises the letter opener above his head with both hands, intent on planting it in Connie's skull. As he is bringing the letter opener down, Thomas snatches it out of his hands, causing Wallace to barely miss Connie. Wallace is silently trying to get the letter opener back from Thomas, but Thomas keeps it just out of his reach.*

CONNIE: Could you check the windows, Thomas? There seems to be a slight breeze in here and you know how susceptible I am to colds.

*Wallace lunges at Connie but Thomas catches him. Aspen enters from the kitchen with grease on her hands and Wallace and Thomas stop wrestling with each other and freeze. They stand up straight as if nothing were happening.*

ASPEN: Hello, father? Thomas? Hello, Mother.

CONNIE: Hello, Aspen dear-- *(Noticing her hands)* Oh my, what do you have on your hands? It looks like... *dirt!*

ASPEN: It's chain grease, Mother! I was helping Adam yank his chain.

WALLACE: *What?*

ASPEN: The chain for the garage door, father. Adam is such a gentleman. He even held the ladder for me while I was applying the grease.

*Wallace starts to launch into a fit of rage, but Thomas grabs him by the back of the jacket and covers his mouth.*

CONNIE: Aaaaagh! Let's get you upstairs and disinfect you immediately! I just hope we're not too late. We'll have to burn this outfit. *(Her demeanor changes)* Of course, that means that we will have to go shopping for some new clothes and accessories.

*They exit to the stairs.*

*Sound of a door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Thomas releases Wallace.*

WALLACE: What did you stop me for, Thomas? I had her right in my hands!

THOMAS: Sir, do the phrases "Voluntary Manslaughter" and "Electric Chair" mean anything whatsoever to you?

WALLACE: No one had to know. You and I could have dumped the body and then told everyone that she had a bad facial accident. They'd believe us!

THOMAS: And what of your daughter, Mr. Martin?

WALLACE: I could just give her another gold card. That would keep her quiet.

THOMAS: Come now, sir. You know that nothing below platinum would do.

*Wallace slumps down onto the sofa.*

WALLACE: I know, Thomas. Where did I go wrong?

THOMAS: Well, sir, I would say it was when you did not make sure that the Mrs. wasn't sitting on the davenport before you began talking about driving a letter opener through her cranium.

WALLACE: No, Thomas, I mean when did I start losing her?

THOMAS: I would say August 12 those many years ago, sir.

WALLACE: August 12? Why do I know that date?

THOMAS: That is your wedding anniversary, sir.

WALLACE: Oh yes, now I remember.

THOMAS: *(Aside)* And they say that hearing is the first thing to go.

WALLACE: What do you think it is that Adam has that I don't?

THOMAS: Large biceps, a broad back, a smile that women find only on the motion picture screen, and a certain manliness that you seem to be lacking after years in the upper-income peer grouping.

WALLACE: Then what do I have that Adam doesn't?

THOMAS: More money than God, sir.

WALLACE: But it all belongs to Connie.

THOMAS: Then you, sir, are screwed.

*Wallace jumps up from the couch.*

WALLACE: No, I'm not! I will not let my life be taken away from me so easily! Thomas, old friend, I'm going to fight fire with fire!

THOMAS: Good for you, sir. *(Wallace exits into the study)* Putz.

*Adam enters from the kitchen.*

THOMAS: And here is our little harem maker now.

ADAM: Hey, Mr. Smythe, have you seen Aspen?

THOMAS: No, but I definitely would not ask her father for permission to marry her if I were you.

ADAM: What?

THOMAS: It seems that you, my stallion-like associate, are on the top of Mr. Martin's list of adulteress suspects.

ADAM: What?

THOMAS: Mr. Martin thinks that you are banging his wife.

ADAM: Me? Why me? I thought he was after you! Hey, wait a minute, you're not trying to make me look bad, are you?

THOMAS: Nice try, Young Sherlock, but the last thing that you need is help from me in order for you to look bad. No, somehow Mr. Martin came to these conclusions all on his own.

ADAM: (*Slumping to the couch*) But I don't even look at the old battle-ax... I mean Mrs. Martin, unless I have to.

THOMAS: (*Aside*) That old davenport's seen more action tonight than a war correspondent. (*To Adam*) Whether or not you and the old battle-ax are dancing the horizontal mambo is none of my business, but you had better stay away from the YOUNG battle-ax until this entire matter is cleared up.

ADAM: You mean Aspen?

THOMAS: Right.

ADAM: But how can I stay away from her?

THOMAS: I don't know, how about a restraining order?

ADAM: Every time I look into those eyes--

THOMAS: Are you going to break into song?

ADAM: Every time I see those lips--

THOMAS: Too late. He's all ready departed from the station.

ADAM: That face--

THOMAS: That very large shotgun...

ADAM: What am I supposed to do, Mr. Smythe?

THOMAS: Haven't I been here before?

ADAM: I mean, what do I have to offer Aspen?

THOMAS: Am I suddenly "Advice to the lovelorn and criminally psychotic"?

*Wallace begins to exit the study but hears Adam and closes the door just enough to eavesdrop and react.*

ADAM: I think I'm in love with her, Mr. Smythe.

*Wallace reacts angrily.*

THOMAS: Mr. DuMock, you must put such thoughts as far away from you as you possibly can. You need somebody much older to be with. Somebody not so immature and childish.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs. Adam hears it.*

ADAM: *(Stage whisper to Thomas)* I know, Mr. Smythe, but I just want to run upstairs right now and love her until I can't love anymore.

*Wallace is getting ready to come through the study door when Aspen enters from the stairs.*

ASPEN: Thomas, Mother needs more--

*She sees Adam and stops. Wallace quickly goes back into the study and closes the door, unnoticed.*

ASPEN: Oh, Adam...

ADAM: Hello, Aspen.

THOMAS: Miss Aspen, what about your mother?

ASPEN: Oh yes, that's what she wanted me to ask you. Do we have any more lighter fluid? She's trying to burn my dress in the tub.

THOMAS: Dear God, she'll burn the entire house to the ground!

*Thomas exits quickly up the stairs.*

*Sound of door opening upstairs.*

THOMAS (OFFSTAGE): No, Mrs. Martin, not the kerosene!

*Sound of door closing upstairs.*

ADAM: I take it your Mother wasn't too happy about our date?

ASPEN: Mother? Oh, she'll get over it. She'll just lose herself in the land of Valium.

ADAM: I'm sorry I'm causing problems for you.

ASPEN: Don't worry. One major shopping trip and she'll be good as new.

ADAM: Why does your family shop so much?

ASPEN: Because we can, silly. It's like mother always says; what's the use in having tons of money if you can't spend it selfishly?

ADAM: Words to live by... if you're rich.

ASPEN: I am rich.

ADAM: I know.

ASPEN: And you have a Harley.

ADAM: Uh-huh.

ASPEN: So why are we just standing here?

ADAM: Because you still need to get dressed for the ride.

*Aspen takes a step back and looks at the dress that she has on.*

ASPEN: But this is one of my best lower price summer line dresses! I got this one on our trip to Paris last winter. The designer took a liking to me and sold me this dress right off of the model's back.

ADAM: You took that off of a model?

ASPEN: They tried to call her a "super" model, but I didn't see it. Too much forehead.

ADAM: You took this dress right off of a super model's body?

ASPEN: Yes! They made her take it off as soon as she was off the runway. It was so much fun! All of the reporters were a little much though. It only ended up costing Daddy about one thousand dollars.

ADAM: You paid a thousand dollars for that?

ASPEN: I know, I couldn't believe it either. Designer originals normally list at two thousand dollars to start.

ADAM: For a dress?

ASPEN: Of course. It always costs more to accessorize.

ADAM: Do you have any idea what I could do with a thousand dollars?

ASPEN: What do you mean?

ADAM: A thousand dollars is my clothing budget for the next four years!

ASPEN: Where do you buy your clothes?

ADAM: *(Pointing to each item)* There's a really good thrift store near my ex brother-in-law's chop sh... I mean, garage. This shirt was expensive, but that's only because I bought it at a concert.

ASPEN: You're wearing thrift store clothing?

ADAM: Yeah, what's wrong with that?

ASPEN: Those places have poor people clothes like blue jeans.

ADAM: Don't you own any blue jeans?

ASPEN: Where would I get blue jeans?

ADAM: I don't know, Sears or Penney's?

ASPEN: Eeeew, you actually go into those places?

ADAM: Some people do.

ASPEN: But why?

ADAM: Sometimes they have good sales... like right now on Harley T-Shirts.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ASPEN: *(Melting at the word Harley)* I think I might have a pair that Calvin gave me stuffed somewhere in the back of my East closet. I'll go check.

*Aspen starts to the stairs.*

ADAM: Who's Calvin?

ASPEN: Klein, silly.

*Thomas enters from the stairs as Aspen turns.*

THOMAS: *(Aside)* Now I must find out if burn marks can be taken out of the porcelain.  
*(Thomas sees Aspen)* Oh, hello Miss Aspen. It certainly is nice to see you smiling.

ASPEN: Thomas, do you remember where my Calvin Kleins are?

THOMAS: Blue jeans, Miss Aspen?

ASPEN: That's right, Thomas.

THOMAS: Look in the back section of your southwesterly walk-in closet underneath the pile of hats from your hat phase. They will be in the bottom of a box marked hazardous waste.

ASPEN: Thank you, Thomas.

*Aspen exits up the stairs.*

THOMAS: She's wearing blue jeans for you?

ADAM: What can I say? I have a way with women.

THOMAS: It wouldn't have anything to do with your having a "Hog", now would it?

*The study door opens, but when Wallace hears Adam and Thomas talking, he stops to eavesdrop.*

ADAM: You know, she does go weird whenever I mention my bike.

THOMAS: It's what is known as sexual attraction to inanimate objects. You get used to it rather quickly from this family.

ADAM: You mean she's been this way before?

THOMAS: Oh yes. There was the gentleman with the Mustang Convertible, the gentleman with the Lear Jet, the gentleman with the Dachshund--

ADAM: Don't you mean Datsun?

THOMAS: No, I mean Dachshund. She loves dogs.

ADAM: But what about Mr. Martin? Did he approve of all of this?

*Wallace leans in closer to hear better.*

THOMAS: Oh, goodness no. He was always gone when they would show up. She definitely did not want Mr. Martin to know about these men. One of them wasn't even wealthy. But don't you worry. As long as your motorbike is in proper working order, I'm sure you will have no worries.

*Wallace exits back into his study and closes the door behind him.*

ADAM: Aspen wouldn't date me without my bike?

THOMAS: I am quite sure of it, Mr. DuMock. But for now, I need you, in your role as resident handy man, to go into the kitchen and clean up the mess that was made by Mrs. Martin in her attempt to cook.

ADAM: Wait a minute, nobody said anything to me about having to clean up the kitchen when I took this job.

THOMAS: As I recall, there was never any discussion as to what your employment would entail. You simply let it be known that you needed employment quickly. Therefore, if you do not wish to clean the kitchen until I can see my mirrored reflection in each and every counter top, then I see no reason to continue your employment or pay you more than one hour's worth of journeyman's wages for fixing the garage door. Now, do you still wish to pursue the matter?

ADAM: You drive a hard bargain, Jee... Mr. Smythe. I'll be in the kitchen.

*Adam exits to the kitchen. Thomas begins to head up the stairs. Wallace enters from the study looking around to make sure that Adam is nowhere in sight.*

WALLACE: *(Stage whisper)* Thomas!

THOMAS: Mr. Martin, I thought that you had gotten lost in your skull fragmentation studies.

WALLACE: Keep your voice down...

THOMAS: Oh no, not again.

WALLACE: What are you doing right now?

THOMAS: Is this a trick question, sir?

WALLACE: No, I mean what are you getting ready to do?

THOMAS: Well, sir, if you must know, I was preparing for a marvelous afternoon of scrubbing burn marks out of Aspen's porcelain bathtub, followed by hours of fun in the laundry room. After all, steam pressing is one of *my* hobbies.

WALLACE: Oh. (*Pause*) I need you to do something for me first.

THOMAS: The shock will wear off with time, sir.

WALLACE: Listen carefully; I need you to go to the workshop--

THOMAS: All right...

WALLACE: Get whatever tools you need--

THOMAS: Yes, sir...

WALLACE: And fix the brakes on Adam's motorcycle so that they only work for the first two tries.

THOMAS: Mr. Martin, where on Earth did you get an idea like that?

WALLACE: I saw it on an old Perry Mason rerun. The crooks were trying to get away with a diamond that was worth--

THOMAS: No, sir, I mean why would you want to do that?

WALLACE: Because I don't have enough liquid assets to buy Harley Davidson and recall his motorcycle at this point.

THOMAS: Sir, the next time the brakes are used on that motorbike, your daughter could be on it.

WALLACE: Oh, I hadn't thought of that.

THOMAS: Really? I would never have guessed.

WALLACE: Would it make any difference if she wore a helmet?

THOMAS: Sir, if you insist on living in this sociopathic fantasy of yours, please do not take me to prison with you. Now, if you will excuse me, I have laundry which has been neglected for far too long.

*Thomas exits through the kitchen.*

WALLACE: He's right. Aspen would never put a helmet on over her hair. But maybe if she sprayed her hair to its normal hardness...

*Wallace exits to the study.*

*Sound of doorbell ringing 3 times.*

*Adam sticks his head out of the kitchen door.*

ADAM: Hey, Mr. Smythe, someone's at the door. *(Adam enters the living room)* Is this another part of my job I wasn't told about? All right, I'll get it. *(Adam goes to the door and opens it. GARY PELL stands in the doorway)* Yeah?

GARY: I'm here to see Mr. Martin.

ADAM: Well, come on in. I don't think that he's gonna come out there to see you.

GARY: *(Entering)* Mr. Wallace Martin does still live here, doesn't he?

ADAM: Yeah, why, was he thinking of selling the place? I've got a cousin who's a realtor and I know he'd kill to list this place.

GARY: No, could you please just announce that Mr. Gary Pell is here?

ADAM: Okay. *(Yelling)* Hey, Mr. Martin! Gary... *(to Gary)* What was that?

GARY: Pell.

ADAM: *(Yelling again)* ...Pell is here to see ya! *(to Gary)* Is that like in Pell's Furniture Stores?

GARY: Yes, I own them!

ADAM: You know, my brother bought a coffee table from you once. Well, it was from the scratched and dented section because your prices are just way too high, but anyway, he set his beer down on the table and it left a ring. Now, how do you explain that on something from your store that's supposed to be so good?

GARY: Well, I... uh...

*Wallace enters quickly from his study, walks over to Gary and starts shaking his hand. He is putting on a fake happy front.*

WALLACE: Gary, it's good to see you my friend. How are the wife and kids?

GARY: (*Confused*) I'm not married, Wally.

WALLACE: Good, good... (*to Adam*) You can go back to doing whatever it is you were doing, Adam.

ADAM: Okay, Mr. Martin. But don't let him sucker you into buying any furniture.

WALLACE: All of our furniture comes from his store.

ADAM: Wow, this is a lot nicer than my Brother's stuff.

*Adam exits into the kitchen.*

GARY: Finding your help at the bowling alleys now, Wally?

WALLACE: (*Stage whisper*) That's him...

GARY: That's who, Wally?

WALLACE: Keep your voice down!

GARY: Why?

WALLACE: That's the guy I told you about on the phone.

GARY: Oh, the guy you think is shtuping your wife?

WALLACE: Yeah!

GARY: Him?

WALLACE: Shhh...

GARY: But how can you be so sure it's him?

WALLACE: Look at the evidence... The letter said that he would be here at 4 p.m., Adam was here by 3:30.

GARY: That's a half hour early, Wally.

WALLACE: So his hormones couldn't wait! I'll bet he even set Larry up to get arrested so he could take over his job.

GARY: Larry? Your handyman?

WALLACE: Yeah, he was charged with grand theft auto.

GARY: Was Larry in the car at the time?

WALLACE: It was a motorcycle and he was doing 90 on Main Street. Hey, that's it! Maybe they're part of the same motorcycle gang and Larry had to do this as part of a gang initiation. I saw some gang members on Dr. Phil once, you know.

GARY: I think that you, my friend, have gone one-way on the train to paranoia.

WALLACE: The motorcycle is the key. I heard Thomas tell Adam that without his Harley, Adam might lose the affections of Connie.

GARY: Look, Wally, I know your wife is materialistic, but really... a Harley? That's hardly her style. How do you know she didn't accidentally pick up a letter belonging to someone else?

WALLACE: You wouldn't understand, Gary. You're not a married man. Once you get married, your entire life changes and you begin to notice little things that you never noticed before. Like how it is actually irritating when somebody squeezes the toothpaste tube from the middle. Or how hard it is to look at somebody when they have those little sesame seeds from the salad bar stuck in their teeth, but you can't say anything because that would be insensitive--

GARY: Wally, you've snapped! Why don't you just sit down and talk to Connie about this?

WALLACE: Would you do it for me?

GARY: Come on, Wally, you know she hates my guts because I work for a living.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

WALLACE: Then there's only one alternative left. Thank you for showing me the path I must take!

*Wallace exits through the front door.*

GARY: *(Yelling after Wallace)* What path, Wally?

*Gary begins to follow, but Connie enters from the stairs.*

CONNIE: Thomas, I'm afraid that the cleaner I tried on Aspen's bathtub ate through the first layer of porcelain and-- *(Connie sees Gary and stops)* What foul wind blew you into my home?

GARY: I don't want any trouble. I'm here because of your husband.

*Thomas enters from the kitchen.*

THOMAS: Mr. Pell, what a pleasant surprise. What brings you to this remote stretch of the wilderness?

GARY: Did you know that your boss has gone insane?

THOMAS: Alas, we had all feared that would happen someday. Shall I notify the asylum?

CONNIE: Thomas, I have a problem.

THOMAS: I'll write up the press release, Madam.

CONNIE: Do you remember the burn marks in Aspen's bathtub?

THOMAS: I seem to recall something of that nature. Why? You did not attempt to do anything, did you?

CONNIE: Well, I didn't like the way they looked--

THOMAS: Oh my...

CONNIE: And I remembered watching the pool cleaners cleaning the pool last Spring--

THOMAS: Oh no...

CONNIE: So, I thought that whatever they used to clean the pool would be sufficient to clean a little burn mark. I retrieved the canister that I had seen the cleaners using on the pool and when I poured it on the stain, the bathtub began smoking.

THOMAS: My God, Madam! The cleaners were using straight Boric Acid to peel the old paint from the pool walls! It produces toxic fumes!

*Thomas runs upstairs.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

CONNIE: *(To Gary)* Well, how was I supposed to know?

GARY: Didn't they teach you how to read at finishing school?

CONNIE: I don't have to read, that's what I have servants for.

*Gary and Connie embrace in a passionate kiss.*

GARY: I love it when you're snobby.

CONNIE: Of course, you do, it's what endears me to you.

GARY: Did you know that Wally found the letter?

CONNIE: No! Does he know?

GARY: That's the beautiful part, he thinks that you're having an affair with Adam.

CONNIE: Who's Adam?

GARY: Your new handyman.

CONNIE: Eeeew! A boy with no money? You must be joking. Even Wallace isn't that dense.

GARY: It's true, he wants to kill Adam just to get you back.

CONNIE: Aw, Wallace always did have a romantic streak. Doesn't that sound romantic?

GARY: It sounds psychopathic to me.

CONNIE: It's beautiful.

GARY: It's sick and twisted, Connie.

CONNIE: No, don't you see? Wallace will be too pre-occupied with what's-his-name to pay any attention to us.

GARY: You're right! And then after he's bumped off Adam, he'll go to jail for manslaughter and you, as the grieving wife of a raging psychopath, can file for divorce within the year. It's perfect.

CONNIE: Speaking of perfect, where do you think would be perfect right now?

GARY: *(Looking around, points to the study)* In there...

CONNIE: But there's no furniture in there except his desk. That can't hold both of us.

GARY: It's from our Wonderful World of Oak Collection. Of COURSE it can hold both of us!

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Thomas enters from the stairs wearing yellow rubber gloves and gasping for air. Connie and Gary immediately split up.*

THOMAS: I got there... just in time. The acid... was eating through... the chrome piping.

CONNIE: Um... good work, Thomas. There will be a little something extra for you this week.

THOMAS: Oh, goody, seconds at dinner.

CONNIE: I must show Mr. Pell a small... furniture problem that Wallace is having with his desk.

THOMAS: Yes, Madam, I understand that oak is extremely susceptible to breakage.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

CONNIE: Yes, well, carry on and we'll be in here.

*Connie and Gary exit into the study. Aspen enters from the stairs in yet another outfit.*

ASPEN: Thomas, I still cannot find my Calvins.

THOMAS: Miss Aspen, were you in your bedroom this entire time?

ASPEN: Yes, why?

THOMAS: Your Mother just succeeded in melting your bathtub and there were toxic fumes everywhere!

ASPEN: Oh, that. I just went into my walk-in cedar chest and closed the door. It was quite effective in dispersing the fumes.

THOMAS: Obviously.

ASPEN: Could you please help me find my Calvins, Thomas?

THOMAS: Nothing would give me greater pleasure, Miss Aspen.

*Aspen exits to the stairs. Thomas starts to follow but Adam enters from the kitchen with a tool belt on.*

ADAM: Hey, Mr. Smythe.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

THOMAS: *(Stopping)* Yes, Mr. DuMock?

ADAM: I was trying to fix that microwave that Mrs. Martin broke--

THOMAS: You mean the one that she burned the wiring out of?

ADAM: That's the one. Anyway, I took the wiring out of that old radio that sounded real bad--

THOMAS: You mean the antique Philco?

ADAM: Yeah, that's the one. Anyway, needless to say, that wiring wasn't exactly spec, so when I plugged the microwave back in... fire.

THOMAS: What do you mean "fire"?

ADAM: Well, it's the weirdest thing I ever saw. Did you know that a microwave can shoot flame over 4 feet high? Anyway, where's a fire extinguisher?

THOMAS: *(Running into the kitchen)* Oh God!

*Adam follows.*

*Sound of a large piece of furniture breaking from the study.*

CONNIE (OFFSTAGE): Ow!

*Connie enters from the study straightening her dress. Gary follows her out, attempting to quickly put his jacket back on.*

CONNIE: *(Mocking Gary)* "Of course it can hold both of us, it's from our oak collection." You idiot!

GARY: How was I supposed to know that they used short screws to put the legs on with?

CONNIE: What are we going to do now? Wallace is sure to see that.

GARY: I could tell him that I was performing a stress test on his desk and I need to recall it now?

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

CONNIE: Stress test is right.

GARY: Are you sure you haven't put on any weight?

CONNIE: *(Swinging at Gary)* Why, you son of a... *(Aspen enters from the stairs)* ...Oh, hi, Honey.

ASPEN: Mother, have you seen Thomas? He promised that he would help me.

CONNIE: No, honey, I haven't seen him.

*Thomas and Adam enter from the kitchen. Thomas is holding his left hand in pain.*

THOMAS: Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!

ADAM: Honest, Mr. Smythe, I didn't know that you weren't supposed to use water on electrical fires before I handed you the wrong extinguisher!

CONNIE: Thomas? What happened?

THOMAS: It seems our new handyman is illiterate as well as destructive.

ADAM: Well, I've never been in a house that has two extinguishers in the same room.

THOMAS: That is because there are different kinds of fires, you moron!

ADAM: I'm really sorry, Mr. Smythe.

THOMAS: I am about to say something I have so wanted to say ever since that fateful moment in which I opened that front door and you came bounding in... GET OUT! You are dismissed... fired... let go! Do not let the door hit you in the--

CONNIE: *(Quickly)* No, you're not!

THOMAS: Pardon me?

CONNIE: Adam is NOT fired. I believe that his apology was real and heartfelt, and I believe that he deserves a second chance.

THOMAS: This from the woman who just melted a porcelain bathtub!

CONNIE: Hush, Thomas. Everybody deserves a second chance.

THOMAS: He has had a second chance!

CONNIE: Then we will give him a third.

THOMAS: And a third!

CONNIE: (*Sternly*) Then we shall give him another. Please go help Aspen with... whatever, Thomas.

THOMAS: As you wish, oh Lord and Master.

*Thomas exits with Aspen to the stairs.*

CONNIE: And Alan...

ADAM: (*Giving up*) Yes, Ma'am?

CONNIE: Could you please go fix some fresh brewed coffee for us?

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ADAM: Sure, Ma'am. And thank you.

*Adam exits into the kitchen.*

CONNIE: (*to Gary*) That was just too close for comfort, Lamb. We cannot allow Thomas to do anything to Adam before Wallace does.

GARY: Why don't you just fire Thomas? That would take care of it.

CONNIE: We can't fire Thomas. He came with the house. Sometimes I think that he is the only one who knows what really goes on around here. He certainly keeps our affairs in order.

GARY: Well, this is one affair that doesn't need his help.

*Gary starts to snuggle up to Connie.*

CONNIE: Oh, Gary...

*Wallace bursts in through the front door.*

WALLACE: Darn it!

CONNIE: Wallace, such language.

WALLACE: Well, I'm sorry, Honeykins, but I've been searching in the car, the garage, and my jacket for the keys for the past 15 minutes and I just remembered that I left them in the study.

*Wallace starts for the study, but Connie throws herself in front of the door.*

CONNIE: No!

WALLACE: What do you mean no?

CONNIE: I mean I thought I saw your keys in the kitchen on the countertop. You know how you misplace things.

GARY: That's true, you do misplace things a lot.

WALLACE: Maybe so, but I know for a fact that my keys are on the desk in the study.

CONNIE: *(To herself as she rubs her butt)* So that's what that was.

WALLACE: What?

CONNIE: I said, I'll get them for you, Honeycakes.

*Connie exits into the den, only opening the door enough for her to barely squeeze through.*

WALLACE: *(Aside)* She's acting very peculiar. *(To Gary)* Do you think that she's acting peculiar?

GARY: What? I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary.

*Wallace moves Gary away from the study by the arm.*

WALLACE: Has she been making overtures to Adam since you've been here?

GARY: Has she been what?

WALLACE: Shhh! Keep your voice down.

GARY: What are you talking about?

WALLACE: Has Connie been... you know... hitting on our handyman since you've been here?

GARY: How the he... *(Finally starting to think)* ...how do you think I've been able to be around her this long?

WALLACE: You mean you've seen them together?

GARY: My friend, you called me over here to help you get to the bottom of this, and that is exactly what I intend to do.

WALLACE: But you've seen them?

GARY: I was hiding in your study, which is a great place to hide, by the way, and I saw Connie and Adam come to each other. It was an innocent enough meeting at first, but then their passion took over and they were like wildcats! They attacked each other with a jungle ferocity the likes I have never--

WALLACE: Enough! I will kill that woman! I'll rip her apart with my bare hands! I'll do things--

GARY: *(Stopping him)* No, my friend, you must listen to me. As much as I hate being in the same room with that loathsome, evil, scarlet woman, it is not her fault.

WALLACE: It isn't?

GARY: No. It's Adam! When he uses his youth to attract your wife for nothing more than her money, she's caught in the web of lust that he spins through her untrained mind! It's really quite fascinating to watch.

WALLACE: But what should I do?

GARY: Adam is the key. You must destroy something that means the most to Adam if you ever want your wife back.

WALLACE: You're right! I must make an example of him. I must destroy him... But he's so much younger than I am. He could probably knock me down without moving.

GARY: Then you have to use your brains. *(Pause)* Don't fight him on his terms, fight him on your terms!

WALLACE: Yes, that's right! MY terms! *(Pause)* What are my terms again?

GARY: You have to get back at him through the things that he loves most in this world. Do you know what that might be?

WALLACE: Probably that motorcycle of his.

GARY: There you go, it's perfect.

*Connie enters from the den with Wallace's keys.*

CONNIE: I found them, Sweetheart. Under the bacteria culture.

WALLACE: You mean BESIDE the bacteria culture, don't you?

CONNIE: Uh, yes, BESIDE the bacteria culture. That's what I meant. Honey, the bacteria culture is not harmful, is it?

WALLACE: Of course not! *(They both laugh and Connie and Gary look relieved)*  
Unless, of course, you touch it with your bare skin.

CONNIE: *(Looking mortified)* Excuse me, would you?

*Connie exits to the kitchen quickly.*

WALLACE: You see? The mere talk of my hobbies sends her running into his arms.

GARY: *(Itching his hip)* Somehow, I have a feeling that's not the case here.

*Gary runs into the kitchen.*

WALLACE: Now that's a true friend. He follows her into the nest of vipers just to make sure that nothing happens.

*Wallace begins to exit out the front door when Adam enters from the kitchen.  
Adam is looking back into the kitchen as he walks out.*

ADAM: You should really see this, Mr. Martin. This is funny. Mrs. Martin has her entire face in the sink washing it off and Mr. Pell is scrubbing away at his pants! Funniest thing I've ever seen.

*Wallace walks up to Adam, smiles an evil smile and exits through the front door.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ADAM: Why is it I get cold chills up and down my spine when he smiles at me like that?

*Aspen exits from the stairs in her Calvin Klein outfit. Thomas follows her.*

ASPEN: Hello, Adam.

THOMAS: Can you see your reflection in those countertops?

ADAM: You could.

THOMAS: What do you mean "you could"?

ADAM: Well, Mrs. Martin and Mr. Pell must have gotten into some poison ivy or something because they're in the kitchen scrubbing themselves down with that soap by the sink.

THOMAS: But we don't have any poison ivy on the grounds and the only soap by the sink is lye soap I use for dissolving grease...

ADAM: That's what I thought.

THOMAS: *(Running into the kitchen)* Oh my God!

*Sound of Thomas slipping.*

*Sound of pots and pans crashing.*

THOMAS (OFFSTAGE): Ouch!

ADAM: *(Yelling)* Be careful, Mr. Smythe, they've gotten the floor a little wet.

ASPEN: Poor Thomas, always rushing in headfirst.

ADAM: You look... great!

ASPEN: Just great?

ADAM: You look... keen.

ASPEN: Wow, nobody's ever called me keen before! Is that better than "beautiful as the morning sun"?

ADAM: Yeah, sure it is.

ASPEN: Then, thank you.

ADAM: I mean, those jeans look really good on you. And I don't say that to every girl that I go out with.

ASPEN: Do you really think so? I thought they made me look very 80's.

ADAM: I loved the 80's.

ASPEN: You did?

ADAM: Yeah, the 80's was my favorite year. But I could learn to like you a whole lot more.

ADAM: So, where do we go from here?

ASPEN: *(Leading him to the study door)* In here.

ADAM: In there? But that's your Dad's... *(As they look into the room, they both stop and stare)* Geez!

ASPEN: Wow!

ADAM: What do you think happened in there?

ASPEN: It looks like a tornado hit in the middle of the room.

ADAM: Looks like my brother sat on the desk.

*They both look down at the floor.*

ASPEN: What do you think that green stuff is?

ADAM: I don't know, but I think it's moving this way...

*Thomas enters through the kitchen door, limping. Connie and Gary follow closely behind. Connie is sponging her face off with a towel and Gary is wet down the front of his pants.*

CONNIE: I'm sorry, Thomas, but when that soap started burning my face, I panicked.

GARY: Yeah, and it's real hard to get the lower half of your body in the sink without spilling a little water on the floor.

THOMAS: Did it ever occur to either one of you that lye soap may dry your skin out to the point of extreme irritation if you are not used to having harsh chemicals on your person?

CONNIE: *(Sees Aspen and Adam standing by the open door to the study)* Aaaagh!  
*(Runs over and shuts the door)* What did you want in there?

ASPEN: Well, we were just wanting to find a--

CONNIE: *(Noticing Aspen's jeans)* WHAT are you wearing?

ASPEN: They're jeans, Mother.

CONNIE: Why are you wearing... those?

ASPEN: Because I want to, Mother.

CONNIE: Well, you just march yourself right up to your room and change into something more presentable, young lady!

ASPEN: But, Mother, you always said that I should dress according to personal taste.

CONNIE: Yes, as long as it is MY personal taste. Now get going.

*Aspen exits quickly to the stairs.*

CONNIE: *(Turning to Adam)* You did this, didn't you? You put these thoughts of independence in her head!

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Connie exits to the stairs after Aspen.*

GARY: You are in some very hot water, young man.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Gary exits to the stairs after Connie and Aspen.*

ADAM: Well, I guess I'll go clean up the kitchen.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Adam exits.*

THOMAS: *(To himself)* And people think that the rich are a boring lot.

*Thomas hobbles toward the couch. Just as he is about ready to sit down, Wallace enters quickly through the front door.*

WALLACE: Thomas... *(Thomas painfully stands up)* Where is Adam?

THOMAS: I believe that he is in the kitchen, sir.

WALLACE: That stupid garage door won't open since he messed with the chain...  
*(Grabbing Thomas by the jacket)* I need my car, Thomas!

THOMAS: SIR! Maybe Mr. DuMock would open the door for you manually.

WALLACE: He can do that?

THOMAS: It has been known to happen on occasion, sir.

WALLACE: He doesn't need that button thing-a-ma-bob?

THOMAS: No, sir, there is a back-up system. Isn't science marvelous?

WALLACE: (*Noticing Thomas' limp*) What happened to you?

THOMAS: Oh, nothing, sir, just a simple bone bruise...

WALLACE: Oh, good. Come here for a minute.

*Wallace drags Thomas away from the couch by the arm.*

WALLACE: What's going on with my wife?

THOMAS: I am not your spy, sir.

WALLACE: Shhh! Keep your voice down.

THOMAS: Sir, did it ever occur to you that you may be wrong about Mrs. Martin?  
Maybe she is not having an affair with anyone and that you could very well be mistaken?

*Pause.*

WALLACE: No.

THOMAS: Well then, sir, why don't you simply hit ME with your car and put me out of my misery?

WALLACE: Because we're not insured for that. Now, where did you say Adam is?

THOMAS: As I told you while you were in your berserker rage, Mr. DuMock is in the kitchen at this time.

WALLACE: Thank you, Thomas.

*Wallace exits to the kitchen.*

THOMAS: Oh, be careful of the--

*Sound of Wallace slipping and falling.*

WALLACE: Aaaagh!

THOMAS: ...kitchen floor.

*Thomas smiles to himself. He begins to walk back over to the couch when Wallace comes out of the kitchen, soaked down one side.*

WALLACE: Thomas, I need your help!

THOMAS: Why am I the only one who does not get to sit on the davenport?

WALLACE: Look at this, I'm soaked! That fool doesn't have the kitchen floor cleaned yet and I slipped on the water. I could have actually hurt myself! Can you believe it?

*Thomas stares at Wallace for a moment.*

THOMAS: I am astounded, sir.

WALLACE: Well, I would think so!

*Adam enters from the kitchen carrying a mop.*

ADAM: I'm sorry about the floor, Mr. Martin. I was right in the middle of putting a new head on the mop when you walked in.

WALLACE: *(To Adam)* You, my dear boy, will pay for what you have done. *(To Thomas)* I will be in my bedroom changing.

*Wallace exits to the stairs.*

ADAM: *(Shivers)* Wow, there it is again.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

Adam grabs Thomas as Thomas is getting ready to sit down and moves him away from the stairs.

ADAM: Mr. Smythe, do you think that Mr. Martin still thinks that Mrs. Martin and I are... you know?

THOMAS: Dancing the dirty hula? Mr. DuMock, even if he no longer suspects you of his wife's infidelity, you have managed to give him more than adequate reason to want your head on a pike for all the world to see.

ADAM: Shhh! Keep your voice down.

THOMAS: If I hear that one more time--

ADAM: What should I do?

THOMAS: Mr. DuMock, I would highly suggest that you follow Mr. Martin's instructions and get his car out of the garage.

ADAM: His car?

THOMAS: Yes, It seems the garage door does not work again. Therefore, Mr. Martin's car is stuck inside of the garage.

ADAM: So, you think I should get it out, huh?

THOMAS: Mr. DuMock, fix the garage door and remove Mr. Martin's auto... NOW!

ADAM: All right, there's no need to overload your pacemaker.

*Adam exits to the kitchen. We hear him slide but he does not fall.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ADAM (OFFSTAGE): Whooo!

*Thomas begins to sit down. Connie and Gary enter from the stairs.*

CONNIE: Thomas...

*Thomas jumps up from his half-sit.*

THOMAS: Yes, Madam?

CONNIE: Has Mr. Martin been in his study?

THOMAS: No, Madam, I do not believe he has.

CONNIE: *(Looking at Gary as they let out a sigh)* Mr. Pell has phoned his furniture store and, as a surprise for Mr. Martin's birthday, we are getting him a new desk. It will be delivered today.

THOMAS: Mr. Martin's birthday is still five months off.

CONNIE: Oh, yes, well, we wanted to beat the rush.

THOMAS: And what "rush" would that be, Madam? The "rush" to buy up the last of the Old Spice and gaudy ties?

CONNIE: No, silly, the rush to keep the love of my husband, who I... uh... love.

GARY: One of my delivery trucks will have it here within the hour.

THOMAS: I am incredibly thrilled. And what kind of desk are we getting for Mr. Martin?  
Early American Art Deco?

CONNIE: Well, no, we've decided to get him a desk which looks exactly like his old  
one... only newer.

THOMAS: You are getting Mr. Martin a new desk -- which looks exactly like his old one  
-- and it will be delivered within the hour?

CONNIE: That's right.

THOMAS: Why?

GARY: Well, it's very simple, you see. Last year's model of the Austrian from our  
Wonderful World of Oak Collection has been recalled because of faulty... uh...  
oak. They have a tendency to fall apart under undue pressure. So I am giving  
him a new and improved Austrian model to make up for it. Why I wouldn't be  
surprised if his old desk has already fallen apart under the weight of... papers?

THOMAS: Faulty oak? I'm fascinated. What have they done to correct the problem?  
Given steroids to the trees?

GARY: *(Trying to be serious)* You're not far off there, Thomas. They had to... uh...  
regulate the flow of nutritional supplements and air to the new Austrian Oak.

THOMAS: I see. So, if Mr. Martin's old desk would collapse under the weight of paper,  
then it would possibly disintegrate under the weight of, say, two people's sweaty  
bodies?

*Gary and Connie are shocked but attempt to keep their composure.*

GARY: Well, you might say--

CONNIE: Thomas, could you please just go in and prepare Mr. Martin's study for the  
new desk?

THOMAS: I feel that I need to finish mopping the kitchen floor first. After all, we  
wouldn't want a nasty lawsuit now, would we?

CONNIE: Oh, yes, very good, Thomas. Carry on.

THOMAS: Oh, thank you for your kind permission, Madam.

*Thomas exits into the kitchen.*

CONNIE: I never thought that we would be alone.

GARY: That's because you're still married.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

CONNIE: *(Stage whisper)* But as soon as Wallace goes over the edge, we'll be free to do what we want, where we want!

*Aspen enters from the stairs. She is wearing a hideous dress.*

ASPEN: Mother, must you follow me to my room and make me wear this department-store dress?

CONNIE: You know what happens when you disobey your Mother. Although, that dress does nothing for you so I think you've had it on long enough, Aspen.

GARY: If it's any consolation, Aspen, I think that you look lovely in that dress.

*Connie gives Gary a stern look.*

ASPEN: Thank you, Mr. Pell, but I think you're a little old for me.

*Aspen exits to the stairs.*

GARY: Now wait a minute, I didn't mean--

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

CONNIE: She's gone, Gary.

GARY: I'm not that old, you know.

CONNIE: Of course, you aren't. What was that crack about Aspen looking lovely?

GARY: My love, it was simply a tactic to keep her off-guard. I HAVE to disagree with you. Remember, we are supposed to hate each other.

CONNIE: Oh yes, I forgot. I just can't wait until we don't have to hide anymore.

GARY: Speaking of hiding, look at how long the curtains are.

CONNIE: Oh, Gary, you Devil!

*They hide together behind the long curtains that hang on each side of the window. Connie and Gary giggle as the curtains move with their movements.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*The movement and noise quickly stop behind the curtain.*

CONNIE (BEHIND CURTAIN): *(Stage whisper)* Shhhh! Who's that?

*Wallace enters from the stairs, changed into dry clothes. He stops and looks at the curtain, which OBVIOUSLY has two people behind it.*

WALLACE: Hello?

GARY (BEHIND CURTAIN): *(Stage whisper)* Shit!

WALLACE: Who's that behind the curtain?

*Movement commences behind the curtain and we hear Connie and Gary's muffled voices.*

CONNIE (BEHIND CURTAIN): *(Stage whisper)* Hurry up and put it back on!

GARY (BEHIND CURTAIN): *(Stage whisper)* I'm trying! I'm trying!

CONNIE (BEHIND CURTAIN): *(Stage whisper)* Aaaagh! I'm caught!

GARY (BEHIND CURTAIN): *(Stage whisper)* Sorry.

*Connie and Gary come out from behind the curtain looking slightly embarrassed.*

CONNIE: Darling, I can explain--

WALLACE: *(Sternly)* There's no need for an explanation from you. Gary, could I speak with you a minute?

*Gary complies, shrugging to Connie.*

GARY: Uh... sure.

WALLACE: *(Putting his arm around Gary's shoulder to pull him close)* Listen, Gary, I appreciate you helping me keep an eye on Connie, but if, for some reason, she wants to wash the windows, you don't have to stay with her. I know how much you hate her and I wouldn't ask that kind of sacrifice from you. Besides, I'm afraid that she may get suspicious. Okay?

GARY: *(Happily surprised)* Okay, Wally. But just remember, I'm doing this for you.

*Wallace hugs Gary.*

WALLACE: Thank you, my friend.

*Adam enters from the kitchen.*

ADAM: *(To kitchen)* Watch it, Mr. Smythe. You shouldn't be mopping with that bad leg. *(Sees Wallace)* Hey, Mr. Martin, I got your car out of the garage. It's sitting out in the driveway.

WALLACE: You did?

ADAM: Yeah, but you'll have to buy a new garage door. The last one didn't want to come off of the tracks willingly.

*Wallace begins to visibly shake and runs out of the front door.*

ADAM: *(To Connie)* Did you notice that he does that a lot?

CONNIE: Archie--

ADAM: Adam.

CONNIE: Whatever. Mr. Pell and I have to look at my bedroom to decide what bedroom suite we -- I mean I -- would like to put in there. We will be upstairs for quite a while.

ADAM: You know, my sister bought a bedroom suite from you once.

GARY: Really?

ADAM: Yeah, it fell apart. The salesman said something about bad oak and that it wasn't covered under the warranty.

GARY: I'd love to stay and talk business, but I'm very busy with Mrs. Martin.

*Gary and Connie exit to the stairs.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

ADAM: Why is it I can never get a straight answer from him?

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Aspen enters.*

ASPEN: Mother, I-- *(Seeing Adam)* Oh, it's you.

ADAM: Hi, I've been waiting to see you again.

ASPEN: I've been needing to talk to you. My mother says that I can have nothing to do with you.

ADAM: *(Pause)* Aspen, there will always be people who try to keep us apart. Non-believers. People who can't love the way we can. *(Aspen melts at his words)* But we can't let them stop us. We were meant to be together, kid. We were meant for one another.

ASPEN: You sound just like Mickey from For the Love of Life.

ADAM: I... uh... I do?

ASPEN: Yes, and you made me see life in a brand-new light. You've made me feel like I can... feel! This is great! I'm going upstairs to put my jeans back on.

ADAM: I love you, Aspen.

ASPEN: I love you, too, Adam. God, wait till I tell my sorority sisters about this!

*Aspen exits to the stairs. Adam raises his fist in the air and dances around the room.*

*Sound of doorbell ring.*

ADAM: I've got it, Mr. Smythe.

*Adam opens the door and JOEY and TONY enter.*

TONY: How's it hangin', Adam?

ADAM: Joey? Tony? What are you guys doing here?

TONY: You know the rules. Your call means the coast is clear and we come clean out the house.

*Joey and Tony begin looking around, picking things up, as Adam tries to plead with them.*

ADAM: Listen guys, something has come up. When I called--

TONY: That's right, you called. You never call unless you know you should. Right Joey?

JOEY: Uh-huh.

TONY: Well put, Joey. Family always takes care of each other, right Adam?

ADAM: Joey's my brother. You were only my brother-in-law for three months and most of that was jail time.

TONY: Are you forgetting who you owe, little brother?

ADAM: No, Tony, I don't forget.

TONY: Good. Besides, we were getting sick of sitting around the house on that old, ratty furniture. So, where's the good stuff?

*Joey and Tony look at Adam waiting for an answer. Adam walks over to the study and opens the door.*

ADAM: The good stuff's in here, guys. Just go in. Quick!

TONY: Hey, don't worry. We'll be gone by the time they even knew we were here. Hey, watch out, Joey, I think the green stuff's moving!

*Joey and Tony exit into the study and Adam closes the door just as Thomas enters from the kitchen.*

ADAM: (*Surprised*) What are you doing here?

THOMAS: Well, you see, when my Father ventured into the field of indentured servitude, he brought me into the family business. Now, it seems I am stuck caring for a house full of lunatics and employees with only one-eighth the intelligence of the average household cockroach. That, my dear Mr. DuMock, is what I am doing here.

ADAM: No, I mean, shouldn't you be mopping the kitchen or something?

THOMAS: Unlike the people that Mr. Martin hires out of pity, I tend to get my work done very quickly. And now, I am going to sit on this davenport and pop my knee into its proper alignment.

ADAM: No, you can't!

THOMAS: This had better be good.

ADAM: Mrs. Martin wanted me to tell you that... uh... she needs you to help Aspen upstairs.

THOMAS: You must be joking.

ADAM: That's what she said.

THOMAS: Oh God.

*Thomas exits to the stairs.*

*Sound of knocking on an upstairs door.*

THOMAS (OFFSTAGE): Miss Aspen, your Mother seems to think that you cannot tie your shoestrings and, once again, has sent me to tutor you.

ASPEN (OFFSTAGE): Come in.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Joey and Tony enter from the study.*

TONY: *(Holding a desk leg)* What the hell is this? The only thing in here was a pretty fresh can of Armadillo meat. Where's the good stuff?

ADAM: It's in there, you just have to look for it.

TONY: You better be right. *(Starts to exit into the study)* By the way, did you know that some maniac is outside in a Mercedes running over your bike?

*Tony and Joey exit into the study as Adam freaks and runs out the front door.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

THOMAS (OFFSTAGE): Fine. I have no problem whatsoever with being thrown out of a bedroom when I am merely attempting to be a good employee.

*Thomas enters from the stairs.*

THOMAS: I can finally sit down and rest my knee.

*Thomas walks to the couch and starts to sit down. Wallace enters through the kitchen quietly.*

WALLACE: Thomas?

THOMAS: *(Jumping back up)* Now stop that!

WALLACE: Where's Adam?

THOMAS: The last time I saw him, he was protecting the study door from foreign invaders, sir.

*Wallace runs over to the window and motions for Thomas to join him.*

WALLACE: Come here and look at what I did.

*Thomas limps over and looks out.*

THOMAS: Is that idiot picking up pop cans for extra money now?

WALLACE: No, that's his motorcycle!

*Wallace laughs.*

THOMAS: Oh my God... That pile of debris--

WALLACE: Has Harley-Davidson stamped on the side!

THOMAS: Is that the tailpipe or the gas-tank that he is hugging?

WALLACE: It was beautiful! Forward... reverse... forward... reverse...

THOMAS: Sir, I think it is time that you sought professional help.

*Adam enters through the front door with an indistinguishable chrome piece from his motorcycle.*

ADAM: You killed my bike!

*Adam starts after Wallace as Thomas watches. Wallace keeps the couch between them.*

WALLACE: That's what you get for having an affair with my wife!

ADAM: I never touched your wife!

WALLACE: Oh yeah? Well, tell that to your Harley!

*Adam lunges at Wallace across the couch, but Wallace runs upstairs with Adam hot on his heels.*

*Sound of door opening upstairs.*

CONNIE (OFFSTAGE): Aaaaaagh!

GARY (OFFSTAGE): Oh, shit!

*Sound of door closing upstairs.*

*Wallace and Adam enter from the stairs with shocked looks.*

WALLACE: I didn't see that... I didn't just see my best friend...

CONNIE (OFFSTAGE): Wallace!

WALLACE: I didn't see them... up there... together... trapeze...

GARY (OFFSTAGE): Wally!

WALLACE: I can't unsee that!

ADAM: See, Mr. Martin, I told you it wasn't me!

THOMAS: That is true, sir, that is what he said.

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

*Connie and Gary exit from the stairs quickly. Connie looks disheveled and Gary looks as though he threw on his shirt.*

CONNIE: Wallace? Honey? I can explain.

THOMAS: *(Aside)* This should be most fascinating.

WALLACE: *(Putting his hands over his ears)* I don't want to hear this!

CONNIE: You see, I wanted to pick out a new bedroom suite--

GARY: You know, the one with the four-poster bed and matching chest-- *(Connie backhands him in the chest)* I mean, dresser?

CONNIE: Yes, that's the one. I love that one. Anyway, Gary was kind enough to help me see where the pieces would fit--

GARY: My furniture is awfully big--

CONNIE: And one thing led to another--

GARY: You know how these things happen, Wally--

CONNIE: And well... whoops?

WALLACE: I DO NOT want to hear this!

*Wallace runs into the study and closes the door. He immediately comes back out and closes the door behind himself.*

WALLACE: Who are the two gentlemen tearing my study apart?

*Joey and Tony enter from the study.*

TONY: Hey, Adam, who the hell are these people? I thought you said everyone was gone?

THOMAS: *(Aside)* Oh, this should be even better.

ADAM: *(Embarrassed)* By the way, I forgot to tell you... I'm a front man for a home-theft ring.

*Connie faints into Gary's arms but he stands her up and she recovers immediately.*

WALLACE: You mean to tell me that you were just scoping us out this whole time?

ADAM: Well, that's technically what I was supposed to be doing, but I actually like you guys. I tried to call it off, but Tony here runs the show.

WALLACE: Why you--

*Wallace starts to come after Adam, but Joey gets in the way. Wallace quickly backs off. Thomas limps over to the couch.*

*Sound of door opening and closing upstairs.*

THOMAS: At least we've all had our surprises for the evening.

*Aspen enters from the stairs dressed in blue jeans and a t-shirt. She walks right up to Connie.*

ASPEN: Mother, I've decided that I am in love with Adam and I'm going away with him to be his biker-babe.

*Connie faints behind the couch, only this time, nobody catches her because everybody except Thomas is too flabbergasted. Thomas simply sits down on the couch... finally.*

CURTAIN

## ACT 2

*As the curtain rises, Connie is sitting on the couch being consoled by Gary, Aspen is sitting beside her moping, Wallace is pacing behind the couch, Thomas is sitting on the piano bench with a heating pad on his knee. Adam and Tony are in Wallace and Connie's bedroom and Joey is standing by the front door.*

WALLACE: *(to Connie)* I can't believe that I once thought of you as my "better half". We had plans of great things that we would accomplish before your first liposuction! What happened to us? Where did we go wrong?

CONNIE: Oh, do shut up, Wallace. You're being melodramatic again. *(To Gary)* I knew he should not have been spending all of his time with that theater group. Bunch of hippies.

THOMAS: Begging your pardon, Madam, but Mr. Martin's theater group is not a bunch of hippies, they are thespians.

CONNIE: Well, what's the difference?

THOMAS: True thespians are admirable people. Hippies used to drive around in VW Micro buses and follow the Grateful Dead from city to city without bathing.

ASPEN: Eeeew! I despise horror movies.

THOMAS: No, Miss Aspen, the Grateful Dead was a band. *(Nobody is comprehending)* Jerry Garcia? Deadheads? Sugar Magnolia? *(Everybody is staring at Thomas)* Well, I'm sorry if I lead a much more diverse lifestyle than all of you.

ASPEN: Jerry Garcia? I love that Ice Cream!

CONNIE: Anyway, we have something much more important to worry about at this present time.

WALLACE: What could possibly be more important than our marriage?

CONNIE: I can think of many things. But right now, I'm just worried about this mistake that my little girl is making with her life.

WALLACE: You mean OUR little girl, right?

CONNIE: Whatever.

ASPEN: Mother! Father! I'm not making a mistake! I'm finally being my own person. I'm taking charge of my own life.

CONNIE: But, honey, you're not old or wise enough to take charge of your own life yet. Why, just last week, you tried to eat your salad with a shrimp fork. We're not through with your breeding yet!

ASPEN: But Mother, if you could only see just how caring and thoughtful Adam really is, you would understand.

*Tony enters from the stairs.*

TONY: Hey, Joey, you ain't gonna believe this, but they've got two toilet bowls in their bathroom! And their idiot plumber hooked one up so that the water shoots straight up in the bowl like a drinking fountain!

THOMAS: Have you gentlemen ever considered having your gene pool cleaned by a professional?

TONY: We just got a wading pool. We clean our own.

THOMAS: My point exactly.

CONNIE: It's called a bidet, you idiot!

TONY: Hey, lady, I'm not the one with the toilet that squirts the wrong way!

CONNIE: Yes, well, I don't mix checks and plaids.

*Adam enters. He is holding one of Connie's teddy nighties.*

ADAM: Tony, I don't understand why you want me to go through all their drawers. There's nothing in there but socks and frilly unmentionables!

TONY: Mrs. Martin, this is very nice! Did Mr. Martin get this for you? *(Connie shrinks into the couch while Gary clears his throat)* Oh, maybe Mr. Martin didn't get this for you.

WALLACE: Yes, Connie, answer Mr. DuMock. Where did you get that nightie?

CONNIE: That's simple, at the boutique in the fashion mall.

ASPEN: The one beside Diddle's Shop for Men?

CONNIE: Yes, that's the one!

ASPEN: Oh, I found the most beautiful bracelet in there.

CONNIE: The one with the gold and--

WALLACE: No! I mean who bought it for you?

GARY: Alright, I did! I bought it for her! Are you happy now?

WALLACE: You wife-stealing, home wrecker!

GARY: Yeah? Well, if you'd pay more attention to her needs, I wouldn't be stealing her, you yuppie tightwad!

*Everyone looks back and forth between the two like a tennis match as Wallace and Gary yell at each other from across the room.*

WALLACE: You subscribe to the Weekly World News!

GARY: You made all your money from junk bonds!

*Everybody grimaces.*

WALLACE: Your home is decorated in vinyl with black light posters of Elvis!

GARY: Closet Democrat!

ALL: Ooooooh!

*Wallace and Gary get into really bad boxing poses, not really wanting to get hit or do the hitting. They circle each other a few times, throwing bad jabs in each other's general direction. Gary finally, accidentally, bops Wallace in the nose. Wallace grabs his face and yells.*

WALLACE: Aaaagh!

GARY: Wally! I'm sorry, are you okay?

*Wallace kicks Gary in the shin and Gary limps back a few feet. They look at each other for a second and then resume their boxing poses.*

TONY: Alright, I'm bored.

*Tony motions Joey over to break up the "fight". Joey walks over, takes the back of each man's jacket in each one of his hands and holds them apart. They continue to slap at each other.*

WALLACE: He started it!

GARY: Says you!

JOEY: Gentlemen, Nietzsche says that if one leads a violent life, then a violent death will surely be one's destiny. You would do well to remember that.

WALLACE: He's quiet all this time and now I get a philosophy lesson from him on the dangers of violence?

TONY: Yea, well, Joey's funny that way. He reads a lot. I don't know where he got it, but what the hell. Sometimes, he'll change the course of a man's life right before he breaks his legs. Of course, he does have a little trouble with that fine line between reality and fantasy. Hey, Joey, who's your favorite political figure?

JOEY: Jane Fonda. She's a major babe!

TONY: See?

CONNIE: Oh my! Have you gotten that poor man any help?

TONY: He's in a support group. But that doesn't mean that he wouldn't break you in half just like...

*Tony attempts to snap his fingers but can't.*

JOEY: Sun Tzu wrote in the Art of War that one must not feel for his enemies, else they become actual living beings.

TONY: See there? *(Turning to Wallace and Gary)* Now, as for you two, nobody likes a good fight over a woman more than me. Unfortunately, you guys can't fight good. So, you will stay away from each other for the duration of our visit. After that, you can stab each other with your little butter knives all day long for all I care. Just don't bore me, okay?

GARY: So, what's going to keep us from ganging up on you guys and then calling the police? *(Tony opens the left side of his jacket to them, but not to the audience, to show them his gun.)* Okay, that's a good reason! What do you shoot with that? Elephants?

TONY: Anything I damn well please.

CONNIE: *(To Aspen)* I just love a man who can take charge of a situation! *(Everybody looks at Connie)* Well, I do!

TONY: Okay, Joey, I think you can let them go now. They'll behave themselves, won't you boys?

*Wallace and Gary shake their heads yes.*

JOEY: *(To Wallace and Gary)* If you guys do that again, I'll have to break your arms and sit you in the corner for a "time out"!

WALLACE: Oh, don't worry, we understand! *(Nudging Gary)* Don't we?

*Gary just shakes his head yes.*

TONY: Good. Adam and I still have quite a bit of looking around to do upstairs. You know, Mrs. Martin, we wouldn't have to go through everything if you would just tell us where you keep your valuables.

CONNIE: I already told you, they are in an unnumbered private lock box in the Swiss National Bank. Whenever I need something, I merely jet over and get it.

TONY: *(pulls a large, expensive looking diamond necklace out of his pocket)* Nice try, Mrs. Martin, but I already found this very large diamond necklace in your jewelry case.

CONNIE: Oh, that old thing. I thought you wanted the valuables.

TONY: You mean there's more than this?

CONNIE: Certainly, we're not paupers, you know. That's only worth 20 or 30 thousand, at the most.

*Tony thinks on this for a moment and then shoves Adam back up the stairs with renewed enthusiasm.*

TONY: Come on! Hurry up!

*They exit.*

WALLACE: Oh, fine, not only are you sneaking around on me, but now you've all but shown those two idiots up there where we keep everything!

ASPEN: Only one of them is a idiot, Father! The other is my boyfriend.

WALLACE: You stay out of this, Aspen!

CONNIE: Now, there's no reason to yell at her, Wallace. Besides, I'm not sneaking around on you, everything is completely out in the open now. If you hadn't been paying so much attention to your molds and fungus, maybe you would have noticed that I had needs, too.

GARY: *(Consoling her)* There, there, dear.

CONNIE: Would you get me a drink, Gary?

*Gary goes to the bar to fix Connie a drink.*

THOMAS: If you will pardon me for taking a moment out of your enrapturing lives to remind you, but we must do something about the fact that at this time, your very possessions are being forcibly removed from your house!

CONNIE: Thomas, can't you see that we are in the middle of a family crisis here?

THOMAS: Of course, how silly of me. I shall ring Oprah right away, Madam.

WALLACE: No, Connie, Thomas is right.

THOMAS: Thank you, sir.

GARY: Yeah, we can't just let them waltz out of here with everything. This was our best display model furniture!

THOMAS: Whatever gets you to rally around a cause, sir.

WALLACE: *(to Gary)* The bed certainly held up well under stress, didn't it?

ASPEN: *(to Connie)* Wait until he sees his desk.

WALLACE: What about my desk?

CONNIE: Oh, nothing Dear.

WALLACE: She called me dear! Something happened to my desk! *(Wallace runs to the study door and opens it)* Oh my God! *(He looks down)* You let the experiment loose?

CONNIE: It's not harmful, is it?

WALLACE: Oh, no... *(Gary and Connie breathe a sigh of relief)* ...as long as it doesn't come into contact with human skin. *(Gary and Connie look worried and shocked)* You didn't touch it, did you?

*Connie and Gary still look worried and shocked. Wallace takes one step backwards. Everybody else, including Aspen, runs to get behind Wallace, figuring that it's the safest place to be.*

GARY: But we washed it off!

WALLACE: *(Beat, then Wallace laughs)* You two should see your faces!

THOMAS: You mean they're fine, Sir?

WALLACE: They always were. That's Jell-O. I just thought it would be fun to watch them both fear for their lives out of ignorance.

*Joey gives out a small chuckle.*

CONNIE: That wasn't funny, Wallace!

ALL EXCEPT GARY AND CONNIE: Yes, it was!

THOMAS: Now, could we please get back to the matter at hand?

JOEY: Stress has killed more American males in the past ten years than heart-attacks and gunfire combined. One would do good to minimize stress in one's life.

*Connie gets up and walks over to Joey.*

CONNIE: You know, I heard that, too. That's why I shop. I have found that there is nothing more relaxing than finding that designer outfit before Mrs. Schubert from down at the club. What do you find to be relaxing, um, Joey?

JOEY: Rare roast beef and Pro Wrestling.

CONNIE: I see. Well, we could work with that.

WALLACE: Connie! Could you come here, please? *(Connie walks over to Wallace)*  
While we all appreciate your warming up to Neanderthal Nietzsche, we do need to find a way to get these guys out of our house without killing or possibly even harming any of us!

CONNIE: But he's just so cute and cuddly, in his own monosyllabic way.

THOMAS: Hello? Earth to Mrs. Martin! He's big, poor, and none too bright. You're small, rich, and... uh... Besides, whether you like to admit it or not, your husband is standing right here!

CONNIE: My husband? Oh, him. Yes, well, have you come up with any revolutionary new ideas on how to get us out of this predicament which you got us into?

WALLACE: What do you mean "That I got us into"?

CONNIE: Well, you hired Alan--

ASPEN: Adam!

CONNIE: Whatever, and so I think that you should be held responsible for whatever actions these imbeciles take in my home.

WALLACE: I only brought him into our home because I didn't want to do all of the dirty work that you want done.

CONNIE: I want done? What about all of your little models of old things--

WALLACE: Civil War Replicas!

CONNIE: Whatever, that you have to polish everyday with a diaper.

GARY: A diaper?

WALLACE: Of course. You see, the oil in human skin--

*Thomas whistles loudly.*

THOMAS: Everybody sit down! *(Connie and Aspen sit on the couch while Wallace sits on the piano bench and Gary sits on the arm of the sofa)* Mr. Pell, as much as I have witnessed the furniture from your store today, I would not sit on the arm if I were you. *(Gary quickly moves to the seat of the sofa)* Thank you. Now, as much as the world would absolutely love to hear of alternate uses for diapers, I think that we should concentrate on the matter at hand. That being; what in the bloody hell to do now!

GARY: First of all, I think we should keep our voices down. Joey can hear everything we're saying over there.

*Everybody looks at Joey, who happens to be intensely interested in picking his teeth at the.*

THOMAS: I do believe that hearing and being actually aware of one's surroundings are two different things altogether.

WALLACE: Alright, then, what are we going to do?

THOMAS: Mrs. Martin seemed to get along fabulously with Joey when last they spoke, correct? *(Everybody nods their head in agreement)* Then I propose that we use Mrs. Martin to distract Joey whilst one of us runs upstairs to Miss Aspen's bedroom, calls the police and shinnies down the rose trellis on the east side of the house to get more help.

WALLACE: But that trellis isn't strong enough to hold a human's weight.

ASPEN: Yes, it is, Father. You just have to remember to keep your feet in the anchor holes or else you could slip.

*Everybody looks at Aspen. Aspen realizes that she should not have said anything.*

WALLACE AND CONNIE: How do you know?

THOMAS: It doesn't matter, we know it works.

ASPEN: *(Agreeing quickly)* That's right!

THOMAS: Now all we must do is figure out which of us will go. I suggest that we use a method of paper, rock, scissors or possibly pulling for the short straw...

*Everybody in the group backs up one step and looks at Thomas.*

THOMAS: Why are you looking at me like a pack of Hyenas? Oh, no, my knee will not take the pressure!

WALLACE: You know my back will not allow me to go.

GARY: And this old football injury--

THOMAS: Come, now, gentlemen, you will have to do better than that.

CONNIE: Thomas, try to picture a life with no employment, no place to live and deportation in your future.

*Thomas thinks for a moment.*

THOMAS: You're bluffing.

CONNIE: I don't bluff.

THOMAS: I see. Ready any time you are, Madam.

*Gary turns to Connie, holding her hands.*

GARY: This may be dangerous. You be careful over there. And remember, I'm here in case anything goes wrong. I'm proud of you!

*Gary gives Connie a big hug.*

THOMAS: Oh, brother!

*Wallace grabs Connie and spins her around to face him.*

WALLACE: Look, I know I haven't paid enough attention to you lately... maybe ever... but I want you to know that no matter what happens, I still love you.

CONNIE: Oh, Wallace, I love you, too!

*They embrace as Gary looks perplexed.*

GARY: *(to Thomas)* That's all it takes? I love you? I need to remember that line.

THOMAS: This is all very touching, but speaking as the man who is about to put his life on the line for freedom's sake, may we please get on with this?

*Wallace and Connie separate but look at each other longingly.*

WALLACE: Be careful, my Love.

*Connie walks over to Joey and talks to him seductively.*

CONNIE: You know, Joey, a big, strong hunk of a man like you must have different tastes in women. What do you like in your women?

JOEY: Cook.

*Connie looks at the group with a "what do I do?" look. They egg her on.*

CONNIE: A cook? How nice. I can cook, you know? Well, a cup of coffee and bagels. But I could make lots of bagels for you.

JOEY: Can you make roast beef?

*Once again, Connie looks to the group and they egg her on.*

CONNIE: Uh, sure. Roast beef is a specialty of mine.

JOEY: You make me some roast beef now?

*This time, as she looks at the group, they look the other way. As Connie speaks, Thomas begins moving toward the stairs.*

CONNIE: Wouldn't you rather get to know the philosophical side of me first?

JOEY: *(Taking total interest in Connie for the first time)* And what particular philosophical thinking do you follow?

CONNIE: Um, what one do you follow?

JOEY: I try not to limit myself to just one approach. When I am not in discussion, I meditate on the Buddhist way of life and I fill my waking hours with the teachings of the great minds from Aristotle to Rush Limbaugh.

*Thomas is just going up the stairs when Tony and Adam enter. Adam is carrying a bag of loot.*

TONY: Just where the hell do you think you're going?

*Everybody stares at Thomas for a moment.*

THOMAS: What? Me? Well, if you must know... that is... um...

*Adam sees that Thomas is in trouble and steps in.*

ADAM: It's okay, Tony. I told him he could go into Aspen's room.

ALL: You did?

ADAM: Yeah! Mrs. Martin poured acid in the bathtub in Aspen's room earlier and if Jeeves here doesn't flush it out every hour or so, the whole house will fill up with toxic fumes.

*Everybody looks to Tony for a reply.*

TONY: Okay, go on.

*Thomas gives Adam a thankful look as he goes by.*

THOMAS: Thank you for sparing us all from toxic poisoning. You will be remembered for this grand and glorious deed.

*Thomas exits up the stairs, making a show out of holding his breath.*

TONY: And people say that we're strange.

ADAM: You have no idea, Tony.

TONY: All right, Family Martin, I have finally found the big stuff.

WALLACE: I sincerely doubt that.

TONY: Does this sound familiar; wall safe behind the really bad Picasso reproduction above the second toilet in the bathroom?

WALLACE: (*Shocked*) How did you know to look there?

TONY: A word of advice, my friend; next time that you have a wall safe installed, make sure it is recessed into the wall. That painting was sticking out a good 3 inches.

*Gary tries to hold in his laughter.*

TONY: What are you laughing about, polyester king?

GARY: I'm sorry, I just can't believe that Wally would be that stupid! Whoops, did I say that? Yes, I did!

TONY: Well, Mr. Perfect, let me take a crack at you; in your office at the furniture store, your safe is in the floor under your desk where you think that your feet will always be on top of your cash. Am I right?

GARY: How did you know that?

TONY: Two years ago, we bought a table from your scratched and dented section and a little beer can left a ring on it.

GARY: I've heard the story.

TONY: Good. Now, since your Salesman would not give us a refund, we broke in that night and took back our money plus a little for damages and pain suffered by faulty furniture.

GARY: That was you?

TONY: Damn straight!

GARY: Well, let me ask you this, Mr. Big Man, what's to keep us from ganging up on you and taking control here?

*Wallace's hand goes up.*

WALLACE: I think that I can safely say that would be because of his very large gun, Gary.

GARY: But he's not going to shoot us when they just came here to rob the place!

*Tony grabs Gary by the nose and drags him over to the couch.*

TONY: Come here, big mouth.

GARY: Ow, ow, ow...

TONY: *(Sitting Gary down on the couch)* Sit down. Now, all of you listen to me. You're right, I don't want to shoot you. I like you people. So, what I would do is have Joey here break your kneecaps instead.

*Connie gets up and goes over to Joey.*

CONNIE: Now you have made your mistake, my man. For you see, while you were playing around upstairs, Joey and I started a kind of relationship and mutual trust.

TONY: *(Walking over to Joey)* Is that right, Joey? You got some kind of relationship going with this tart?

JOEY: *(to Connie)* I would break your knees as painlessly as possible.

*Connie, dejected, goes back to the couch.*

TONY: Now then, back to business. Although I have found your wall safe, Mr. Martin, I lack the combination in order to open it. So, I see two choices: number one, you give me the combination willingly...

WALLACE: And what is number two?

TONY: I have Joey open it using your head and two sticks of dynamite.

WALLACE: I see. Well, that certainly narrows it down then. All right, then, the combination is... uh...

TONY: I ain't heard no numbers yet.

WALLACE: Would you believe that I don't remember the combination?

TONY: Would you believe I have an entire case of dynamite in my truck, just in case the first two options don't get the job done?

WALLACE: I believe it. Oh, please, don't kill me! I have a wife and a child to think about and they would never make it in this cold, cruel world without me! Don't do that to my family!

CONNIE AND ASPEN: Oh puh-lease.

TONY: For the Love of Life, third season, episode 6, Mickey is kidnapped by Lithuanian rebels.

ASPEN: Wow, everybody watches that show!

TONY: Get away from me, you spineless wimp. How did you ever breed?

CONNIE: Lots of liquor.

ASPEN: Mom!

CONNIE: Oh, stop worrying dear, it was only Schnapps. It seems somebody has absolutely no tolerance for alcohol.

WALLACE: Why you--

TONY: All right, that's enough! Who knows the combination?

*Everybody looks at each other questioningly.*

GARY: Hey, don't look at me. This isn't my house.

WALLACE: Thomas! Thomas knows the combination! I'll bet that's where he put my shotgun shells.

TONY: What are you talking about?

WALLACE: *(Leaning in closer to Tony)* Could I speak with you? *(Motioning downstage with his head)* In private for a moment? *(Tony hesitates)* Please?

*Tony and Wallace go downstage.*

WALLACE: *(to Tony)* I have a business proposition for you.

TONY: A what?

WALLACE: Shhh! Keep your voice down! *(Tony stares at Wallace)* Please?

TONY: *(Half Whispering)* What kind of proposition?

WALLACE: I have been wanting to get rid of my cheating, scheming, ice-queen of a wife over there and I just thought that if you were in the mood to make a little extra money--

TONY: You must be kidding!

WALLACE: Keep your voice down! *(Tony looks at him again)* Sir?

TONY: How much money?

WALLACE: Let's say... \$100,000?

TONY: A hundred G's?

WALLACE: Shhh! Keep your voi--

TONY: Say that to me again and I'll rip out your tongue.

WALLACE: I understand.

*Tony crosses to Connie.*

TONY: Did you know that your husband wants you bumped off?

CONNIE: *(Not surprised)* I'm shocked. How much did he offer you?

TONY: A hundred G's.

CONNIE: *(shocked)* \$100,000? That's all I'm worth to you?

*Connie crosses to Wallace.*

WALLACE: Now, Bumpkin, I just--

*Connie slaps him across the face, which knocks Wallace off his feet.*

CONNIE: He never could take a hit. *(to Tony)* What were his chief complaints?

TONY: He said you were a cheating, scheming ice-queen.

CONNIE: I do not scheme!

TONY: All right, enough of this crap! Adam, go up and get Jeeves so that he can open the safe.

*Everybody except Tony and Joey look at each other, panicked. Finally, Wallace comes up with an idea.*

WALLACE: But you can't go get Jeev... I mean, Thomas!

TONY: Why not?

WALLACE: Well, because... uh... that is... the toxic fumes! Aspen's room is full of toxic fumes from the acid which was eating through the porcelain on the bathtub.

TONY: How is it your Butler can breathe in there then?

WALLACE: Thomas? He... uh... that is he...

ADAM: He's a former Marine! He told me that when he was, uh, showing me how to box.

TONY: A former Marine? You mean just like--

ALL: Mickey on For the Love of Life.

ADAM: Yeah! And he was trained to breathe in all kinds of atmosphere, including poisonous gas! Therefore, he's up there risking his life to save ours.

TONY: *(Pulling Adam to his side)* Are you sure of this information?

ADAM: Hey! Am I your brother or what?

TONY: Okay, you got me there. Well, there's only one thing left to do.

WALLACE: Please don't use my head! Use Connie's! It's thick and the hair spray will protect you from the blast!

CONNIE: I don't have that much hair spray on today!

TONY: Shut up, both of you! I have a much better idea. One of you is going to go into that room and get Jeeves for us.

GARY: I think that you should send Wally. After all, it's his house.

WALLACE: Oh, so when it's something that could get me killed, it's MY house, but when it's something that could be yours due to an affair, it's Connie's house?

GARY: That's only fair, after all, Connie worked hard for this house.

WALLACE: Her Father bought it for her as a graduation present. Connie has never worked for anything in her life.

GARY: Yes, but she had to get through four arduous years of school.

WALLACE: She went to a private university and majored in shopping! The school cafeteria served caviar for lunch every day.

CONNIE: But it wasn't even imported.

TONY: All of you shut up! I don't care about what you had at your ritzy little school! I just want the combination, do you understand? *(Everybody shakes their heads yes. Tony points at Gary)* And you're going to help me get it.

GARY: Why me? Why do I have to do it? Why can't it be the ice queen? Or the spineless wimp? I bet Aspen would do it if you promised her a new outfit!

ASPEN: What kind of outfit?

*Tony snaps his fingers and Joey walks over to stand behind Gary. Joey places his hand on Gary's shoulder and presses down, forcing Gary down in pain.*

GARY: Okay, okay! I understand! Ow, ow, ow, ow!

*Joey releases the pressure.*

TONY: Good. Now that we understand each other, get up there.

GARY: Could I have a moment to say goodbye to my friends? After all, if I die of toxic fumes, I want to die knowing that I left no hard feelings behind.

TONY: What the hell. After all, I am a humanitarian.

*Gary motions everybody downstage. Wallace and Aspen come but Connie remains behind.*

GARY: Honey, could you come here for a second?

CONNIE: You called me a name.

GARY: I apologize. Now, please come and say goodbye to me.

*Connie walks over and slaps Gary across the face, knocking him to the floor.*

CONNIE: That's for trying to feed me to the wolves.

GARY: *(Picking himself up)* All right, what am I going to do? There are no toxic fumes, Thomas should be long gone by now and none of us knows the combination.

WALLACE: Let's guess at the combination, that way, they never have to know that Thomas isn't here.

GARY: Do you have any idea how many possible combinations there are, Wally?

WALLACE: No, do you?

GARY: No, but I have to have some answer for them when I come back down.

WALLACE: Well, I don't see you coming up with any bright ideas, Mr. Thong! There are just some things that a man your age just shouldn't wear.

GARY: What do you mean "my age"?

WALLACE: Well, let's face it, your dentures aren't getting any younger.

GARY: Why I ought to--

ASPEN: Daddy! Uncle Gary! Why don't you just tell them that the combination is one to the right, two to the left and three to the right?

WALLACE: Nobody would ever believe that I would be stupid enough to make that my combination, Sweetheart.

*They all look at Wallace for a moment, then Gary turns to Joey and Tony.*

GARY: Okay, I'm ready.

CONNIE: Yes, he is.

TONY: All right then, get up there!

*We hear a loud cracking sound from off-stage. Everybody freezes as we hear Thomas' voice scream "OW" from off-stage.*

TONY: What was that?

ADAM: *(Trying to cover)* What was what?

*A large piece of the rose trellis crashes to the ground just outside of the picture window and we hear Thomas scream "OW" again.*

TONY: *(Pointing out the window)* That! What was that?

WALLACE: That? That was probably... um... a pigeon.

*Everybody quickly agrees.*

TONY: A pigeon? *(Everybody shakes their heads yes)* A pigeon so big that he broke off part of your house?

CONNIE: Yes, they grow very big around here!

WALLACE: And besides, that wood was rotten and old--

*Again, we hear Thomas scream off-stage.*

TONY: And do these pigeons always sound like that when they sing?

WALLACE: Yes, well, there you have us! *(Mock laughter)* I guess the cat's out of the bag, so to speak. That was the... uh... hawk that I just bought as a surprise birthday present for my good friend, Gary Pell. *(to Gary)* Surprise!

TONY: A hawk?

WALLACE: Yes. You see, Gary is very into birds and he needed one to complete his collection.

TONY: You bought a bird for the guy who was shtoothing your old lady?

CONNIE: Hey!

WALLACE: Well, this was before I knew about that.

*Thomas' legs appear in the picture window. He is attempting to climb off of the balcony, but he happens to be in plain sight of everyone. He hangs there for a moment, unable to go up or down. When he finally does go down, he goes down hard. We can hear him moaning.*

TONY: Well, it looks like your hawk just had a bad landing.

*Thomas moans. Everybody moves up to get a better look out the window and they move away one by one with horrified looks on their faces.*

TONY: Anyone care to explain that?

GARY: Obviously, Thomas was overcome by the fumes and stumbled out onto Aspen's balcony trying to get some air, but in his confusion, he walked right over the edge!

ASPEN: Poor Thomas.

*Thomas moans in pain again.*

TONY: You are definitely going to have to do better than that. Come on, Joey, let's go get him. Watch them, Adam.

*Joey and Tony exit through the front door. During the conversation going on inside, Joey and Tony should become very animated as if trying to decide how best to carry Thomas back in.*

GARY: Now is our chance! While they're out there messing around with Thomas, we can get out through the kitchen!

WALLACE: He's right! They'll never know we're gone until it's too late.

CONNIE: Then let's go!

*Connie, Wallace and Gary quietly but quickly move toward the kitchen but Aspen stays behind, she and Adam staring at each other longingly. They just barely get through the door.*

ASPEN: I'm staying.

*They all come back through the kitchen door looking at Aspen as if she has lost her mind.*

CONNIE: What do you mean you're staying? Honey, this is not a soap opera, this is real life... kind of. These people are killers!

ASPEN: Adam is not a killer! He loves me and I love him. *(To Adam)* Isn't that right, Darling?

ADAM: That's right, she loves me.

CONNIE: Aspen, Honey, let me explain something to you. Not only is Arnold--

ALL: Adam.

CONNIE: Whatever. Not only does he have bad hair and no money, he is also now a felon!

ASPEN: He has not been convicted yet, Mother.

WALLACE: You are one of the hostages, Aspen!

ASPEN: It's all... uh... circumstantial evidence.

*Connie walks over and hits her on the forehead.*

CONNIE: Wake up, Aspen! No more talk shows for you.

ASPEN: Ow!

GARY: And don't forget, he no longer has his Harley.

ASPEN: That's right!

*Aspen begins to back away from Adam.*

ADAM: Aspen, with the dough I'll get from this job, I'll be able to buy another Harley!

ASPEN: That's true!

*Aspen runs to his arms. Tony and Joey pick up Thomas by his arms and legs.*

CONNIE: Do you mean to tell me that you would be with a man simply because of some material possession? I thought I raised you better than that. *(Everybody looks at her and then backs up a step)* What's wrong with all of you?

GARY: We don't want to get caught in the lightning.

CONNIE: Well I never!

*Connie walks toward the stairs.*

GARY: Ha! I have videotape that says otherwise.

*Connie runs up the stairs crying.*

WALLACE: Well, that takes care of escaping.

*He sits down on the piano bench as Connie enters from the stairs.*

CONNIE: There, I'm better now.

*Tony and Joey enter carrying Thomas. They carry him over to the couch and drop him on it. Tony is clearly unhappy as Joey takes his post by the front door again.*

TONY: I should just shoot everybody!

*Connie finds her courage and speaks up.*

CONNIE: Oh really? Well, I have had enough of your threats!

WALLACE: Connie, what are you doing?

CONNIE: Oh, grow a backbone, Wallace. I'm walking out that door because, while you may be common criminals, I don't think that you would shoot anyone.

*Connie heads toward the front door. Tony looks around and grabs Wallace by the arm.*

TONY: You leave and I'll break every bone in your husband's body!

CONNIE: Be my guest.

*Tony pushes Wallace away and grabs Gary.*

TONY: Then I'll break every bone in his body!

CONNIE: Enjoy.

*Tony looks around quickly and finds an expensive looking vase. He holds it up using two fingers.*

TONY: I didn't want to do this, but if you walk out, I'll drop the vase.

CONNIE: NO!

*Connie throws herself onto the floor under the vase being held by Tony as if to catch it, but Tony never drops it. Laughing, he cradles it under one arm.*

TONY: Now that we understand each other, Mrs. Martin, why don't you relax. Have a drink.

*Tony helps her to her feet. Connie doesn't take her eyes off of the vase.*

CONNIE: You can put it down now. I'll cooperate, I promise!

TONY: You mean this?

*He juggles the vase in his hands.*

CONNIE: Aaaaagh! You heartless beast!

*Tony studies the vase for a moment.*

TONY: How much is this thing worth, anyway?

*Thomas sits up, shaky but all right.*

THOMAS: Four thousand one hundred and thirty-seven dollars.

TONY: Well, the dead arises. *(Tony sits the vase down and moves toward Thomas. Connie quickly picks it up and holds it like a baby. She then sets it in its' proper place and makes sure that it is sitting perfectly)* I should have Joey break your kneecaps for that stunt. Keep you from trying to run again.

THOMAS: Yes, sir, I can see how it would help immensely to have the hired help screaming in pain after you have gone to such extremes to be so quiet up to this point.

TONY: What do I care? We're in the middle of nowhere.

THOMAS: I scream rather loudly. It's very annoying I'm told.

TONY: Yeah, I can see what you mean. Maybe I should just whack you with the phone and knock you out instead.

*Tony grabs the phone from the end table as Thomas scoots backward to the other end of the couch. Aspen gives Adam a "Help us" look and Adam looks around for something to distract Tony with. Finally, he looks out of the window. Tony has raised the phone up and is about to hit Thomas with it.*

ADAM: Tony, there's somebody here!

TONY: What? Where?

*Tony moves to the window as Thomas collapses and breathes a sigh of relief. Gary and Wallace go to the window, just behind Tony.*

TONY: Who is it?

*Wallace and Gary begin to wave frantically to get the attention of whoever is outside.*

ADAM: I don't know. There's no writing on the side of the van.

*Adam turns and sees Wallace and Gary waving. He motions for them to stop and they do.*

TONY: All right, all of you, get in the den!

*Tony herds everybody to the door to the den, except Thomas, who remains on the couch watching. Tony opens the den door.*

TONY: All right, get in there!

*Everybody starts to take one step into the den, but stops short, including Tony. They all look to the same place on the floor and then up.*

ASPEN: Wow, it grew! Does it always pulsate like that?

*Tony closes the door quickly.*

TONY: Nope, couldn't do that to my worst enemy. Now where do I stash you?

THOMAS: You could make us go to the kitchen...

TONY: I've got it, the kitchen! But then you could get out through the garage...

THOMAS: You could tie us up...

TONY: I know, I'll tie you up!

THOMAS: And gag us...

TONY: ...and gag you...

THOMAS: These are not the droids you're looking for.

TONY

These are not the droids.... hey, wait a minute! You're pulling something, aren't you?

THOMAS: May I interject one small piece of advice?

TONY: What?

THOMAS: Won't it look funny to have several vehicles in the driveway but nobody in the house? Wouldn't one get rather suspicious?

ADAM: Mr. Smythe is right, Tony.

TONY: (*Mocking Adam*) "Mr. Smythe is right, Tony." Whose side are you on?

*Joey goes to the window.*

ADAM: Hey, man, I'm just trying to protect us, you know. We don't even know who this guy is yet!

JOEY: It's a woman.

TONY: What?

JOEY: The guy in the van... he's a woman.

*Tony, Adam, Wallace and Gary rush to the window to get a good look.*

CONNIE: *(to Aspen)* And they say male hormones slow down as they get older.

THOMAS: No, Madam, they simply sink to a more southerly location.

*Tony pushes everybody back from the window.*

TONY: All right, maybe Jeeves has something.

THOMAS: Yes, a real bloody name! Now I am sure that they are related.

TONY: We're all going to sit down and act like we're having a nice, pleasant conversation.

JOEY: She's getting something out of her van...

GARY: What should we have a conversation about?

JOEY: It looks like a toolbox...

TONY: There has to be something we can talk about until we get rid of this chick.

THOMAS: The simple fact that you freely use the word "chick" answers any questions I have about my ability to carry on a conversation with you.

JOEY: She's coming up the sidewalk with a toolbox.

TONY: Come on, think! Do you all like big-bore handguns? *(Everybody shakes their heads no)* How about cars? *(No again)* Beer?

WALLACE: Imported or domestic?

TONY: Falls City.

WALLACE: Not even close.

ASPEN: Oh, I love their Clydesdales!

TONY: Well, what do you like to talk about?

CONNIE: Shopping.

GARY: Wood grains.

THOMAS: Classical literature.

WALLACE: Forensics.

ASPEN: Metaphysics and the study of the human condition. *(Everybody stares at her)*  
I mean shopping!

TONY: Come on, we need something by the time she gets to the door!

*SFX Doorbell*

JOEY: Too late.

*Thomas carefully stands and faces Tony, straightening himself.*

THOMAS: This is it, Mr. DuMock. There is no reason to carry on this ridiculous charade. You should give yourselves up and turn us loose this instant.

TONY: I think you should sit down and shut up!

*Tony opens his jacket only to the cast again. Thomas' eyes get big and he sits.*

CONNIE: But you told me that you wouldn't shoot the women!

TONY: That's right, but that vase is within firing range.

*Connie sits back, pouting. SFX Doorbell. Nobody moves. SFX Doorbell, third time.*

TONY: All right, Jeeves. Get up and answer it.

THOMAS: Pardon me, sir, but your specific instructions were to sit down and shut up.

TONY: Well, now I'm telling you to answer the door! Or would you like me to tell them about the magazines I found in your room?

THOMAS: You are a bastard, sir.

GARY: What kind of magazines, Thomas?

THOMAS: Cooking periodicals, Mr. Pell.

BUBBA: Oh yeah, they cooked all right!

GARY: You dog!

CONNIE: Thomas? You?

THOMAS: *(to Tony)* You shall pay dearly for this.

*Thomas goes to the door even though he is visibly in pain. Tony sits down to look as though he has been visiting with everyone. He motions for Thomas to open the door. Thomas opens the door and we see SAMMY SWANSON holding her toolbox and a mangled piece of motorcycle.*

THOMAS: May I help you?

SAMMY: *(enters)* Yeah, Jeeves. *(Thomas groans and closes the door)* I'm here to fix your garage door. By the way, I found this pipe from a '76 Harley laying out in your driveway. Looks like somebody had a little accident. It's a damn shame, the '76 was a cherry bike.

*Adam walks toward Sammy, completely mesmerized.*

ADAM: You know Harleys?

SAMMY: Are you kidding? My Father owns the Harley dealership on Sixth and Main. He's been looking for someone to take it over for the past year, but so far, nobody knows enough about the bikes to suit him.

ADAM: Somebody to... to... take it over?

SAMMY: Yeah. I'd do it, but I've got my own business installing and repairing overhead garage doors and in-ground bomb shelters, an unappreciated art form.

ASPEN: *(Jealous)* You know, I once had to figure out which remote in my BMW controlled the garage door, and would you believe, it was the last one I tried?

CONNIE: *(to Wallace)* She gets it from your Mother's side, you know.

*Adam turns back to Sammy.*

ADAM: Um, do you have a boyfriend?

SAMMY: No, why?

ADAM: Why don't I show you where the garage is?

*Aspen comes over and stands next to Adam.*

ASPEN: Are you sure that's such a good idea, Honey?

ADAM: Why not?

ASPEN: You would have to go through the kitchen. Remember, the floor is still wet. We wouldn't want Miss... uh...

SAMMY: Just call me Sammy.

ASPEN: Sammy to fall and break her toolbox!

SAMMY: *(proudly patting the toolbox)* Not this baby! Craftsman solid steel! This toolbox survived a fourteen story fall last year at the Newman Construction site on Meridian. We were all so amazed that we went up and dropped it again just to watch!

ASPEN: That's nice. Besides, Adam and I fixed the garage door earlier... together... just the two of us. Didn't we, Honey?

ADAM: It broke again.

ASPEN: Oh. But you can't leave now, Adam!

ADAM: Why not?

ASPEN: Because your brother was engaging us in fascinating conversation.

THOMAS: About what?

ASPEN: You know, that thing.

TONY: What thing?

ASPEN: *(becoming exasperated)* The illegal use of firearms by beer guzzling auto maniacs in a supposedly Utopian societal structure!

TONY: I think we've covered... that... enough. Go on out to the garage.

ASPEN: But your conversation--

TONY: Can wait until they get done.

ADAM: Thanks, Tony. *(Leading Sammy toward the kitchen)* So how well do you know Harleys?

SAMMY: I could fix that bike outside in less than an hour.

ADAM: Do you believe in love at first sight?

*They exit through the kitchen. Aspen goes to Connie and cries on her shoulder.*

ASPEN: But I wore blue jeans for you!

WALLACE: *(to Tony)* There, you see what your brother just did? He tries to create a harem out of the women in my family, but the second that something better comes along, it's sayonara!

ASPEN: She's not better than me, Daddy!

WALLACE: I'm sorry, precious, wrong word choice.

TONY: What do you mean "harem"?

WALLACE: He wasn't simply happy to take my wife away from me, he had to take my daughter and break her heart, too.

CONNIE: You are such an idiot, Wallace.

WALLACE: I'm an idiot? *(Wallace takes the letter out of his pocket)* You're the one who kept his love letter around!

GARY: That letter was from me, you moron!

WALLACE: You? You mean the two of you were together before tonight?

GARY: Yes! We've been seeing each other for over two years now, you blundering fool! You were too wrapped up in yourself to see what poor Connie was going through. She needed me!

WALLACE: "Poor Connie"? Ha!

GARY: What's the matter, Wally? Having a little trouble making Connie feel like a woman?

*Gary and Connie both laugh.*

WALLACE: No! I have never had any problem with my... manhood.

CONNIE: Maybe you haven't, but I have.

WALLACE: Well, it doesn't help when my wife just lies there and says "not tonight, I had a bad shopping accident".

TONY: A shopping accident?

CONNIE: Yes! A horrible, wicked woman jumped me in the perfume department at Nordstrom's and sprayed me with Elizabeth Taylor's Passion perfume. I had to burn my best shopping outfit! I was distraught for a week.

*Tony is laughing out loud. Gary joins in the laughter until Tony stares at him.*

TONY: If I wanted you to laugh, I would tell you to laugh.

GARY: Yes, sir.

TONY: *(to Thomas)* Now, as for you, I want the combination to the safe in the upstairs bathroom.

THOMAS: It must have taken you gentlemen hours to find something that well-hidden.

*Tony goes to Thomas.*

TONY: Enough with the big mouth! Give me the combination!

THOMAS: Over my dead body.

WALLACE: Thomas, just give him the combination! It's not worth your life!

THOMAS: We must take a stand somewhere, Mr. Martin. Common criminals must not be allowed to have their way. We are the front line between this common riffraff and our cherished way of life. Though I may be taking the biggest risk of my life, I will not give you that combination.

CONNIE: Then could you please give me the number to the Swiss bank account before you die? You are the only one who knows it.

THOMAS: Your concern is underwhelming, Madam.

TONY: Joey, please break several of Jeeves' bones, starting with the smallest and working your way up until he gives us that combination.

*Joey starts toward Thomas who doesn't move.*

THOMAS: Do your worst, I am past the point of caring now.

TONY: Oh really? We'll see if you still feel that way after 12 straight hours of Barry Manilow.

GARY: You inhuman bastard!

*Joey grabs Thomas' wrist and begins bending it backwards.*

TONY: Please watch, Ladies and Gentlemen, as my partner is careful to break only the smallest bones of the wrist. Very simple but extremely painful.

WALLACE: But don't you find the carpal bones to be extremely small and difficult to break?

CONNIE: Wallace!

WALLACE: Sorry, Honey. I got caught up in the moment. Professional curiosity, you know.

TONY: But also a very good question. We have found that it depends upon the angle in which you bend the wrist. Allow us to demonstrate. Do you want to tell us the combination, Jeeves?

THOMAS: Please make it a clean break.

TONY: We always do.

THOMAS: You have no idea how relieved I am to be dealing with professionals.

TONY: We take pride in our work. Do it, Joey.

*As Joey flexes, readying himself to break Thomas' wrist, everybody cringes because they cannot look. Suddenly, we hear a delivery truck backing up to the door. Everybody looks to the door.*

TONY: What the hell is that?

*Everybody except Aspen and Thomas goes to the window.*

GARY: It's my delivery truck!

TONY: *(seeing everybody at the window)* Get back!

WALLACE: *(to Gary)* And why is your delivery truck here?

GARY: Well, if you must know, I was having a new desk delivered here for you to replace your old one.

WALLACE: And how did the last one break? Gary? Connie?

GARY: We were performing stress tests on it, Wally.

THOMAS: Don't you mean you were performing acrobatic feats on it?

*Doorbell. Everybody looks at Tony.*

TONY: *(to Gary)* How long will this guy take?

GARY: He shouldn't be here more than fifteen minutes.

TONY: Then why did your store bill me for an hour and a half when you delivered my couch?

GARY: Uh... I'm sure it was a simple bookkeeping mistake and I can refund the difference at my office.

TONY: *(Getting right in Gary's face)* I already took the difference... plus damages.

GARY: Well, what's a few dollars among friends?

*Doorbell.*

TONY: Alright, this guy comes in, does his job, and gets out. Understand? *(Everybody quickly agrees)* Get the door, Jeeves.

*Thomas gives Tony the look of death as he goes to the door and opens it. BOBBY, the Pell's Furniture Delivery Boy, enters.*

BOBBY: Hi, I have a delivery for a Mr... *(Looking at his clipboard)* ...Tartan? Would that be you, Sir?

THOMAS: No, I am Mr. Smythe, the butler. That... *(He points at Wallace)* ...is Mr. Tartan.

WALLACE: That's Martin. Me. I'm Wallace Martin.

BOBBY: *(walking over to Wallace quickly)* Well, it's nice to meet you, Mr. Martin! A fine desk you picked out for yourself, although I feel that it is my duty to advise you of the maximum weight limitation to be placed on this particular piece of furniture. That would be about 300 pounds or two bodies placed side by side or atop each other. Although, why you would want to get on the desk with--

GARY: Who are you?!

TONY: You don't know your own delivery man?

BOBBY: Why Mr. Pell, I'm surprised at you! I'm Bobby! You hired me one month and thirteen days ago. Why, just last week you asked me how my collection of stamps from countries whose name begins with a consonant was coming along. I'll never forget your kindness over that little drunk-driving, under-age girl misunderstanding.

GARY: Oh yes, Bobby. How are the wife and kids?

BOBBY: I live at home with my Mother.

ASPEN: Hey, what a coincidence, so do I!

BOBBY: *(going to her)* Don't you find that it is much easier to make the transition into a normalized lifestyle if you have remained near the family unit much longer?

ASPEN: No, my Mother's just rich.

TONY: All right, Delivery Boy, you have something to drop off, let's get to it!

BOBBY: *(happily)* Why sure! I just find that it brightens everybody's day when you spread a little happiness and give a little of yourself everywhere you go. In the words of--- *(Bobby is cut off by Tony, who starts a backhand swing at Bobby. Bobby ducks just in time and, without missing a step, walks over to Wallace)* Yes, Sir, the customer is always right, Sir. *(Bobby shows his clipboard to Wallace and begins shuffling through papers)* Alright then, sir, I just need your signature here... *(Wallace takes the pen and signs. Bobby flips the page)* ...and here... *(Wallace signs. Bobby flips the page)* ...need your initials here... *(Wallace signs. Bobby flips the page.)* ...and here... *(Wallace signs)* And Mr. Pell, I need you to sign here showing that the above initials are those of one Wallace Martin and not a forgery. *(Gary signs. Bobby flips the page and turns back to Wallace)* And finally, I need you to sign this line, initial this box and put your social security number and birth date here.

*Wallace starts filling out the page.*

CONNIE: Who made up such a stupid form for delivery?

BOBBY: Why, Mr. Pell did! Having the most accurate, up-to-date consumer information speeds up the paperwork turnover at the store level.

GARY: It also adds about another fifteen minutes to the billable delivery time.

TONY: All right! Enough with the paperwork! You've got it signed, now get the desk off the truck!

BOBBY: You know, sir, I could refer you to a very nice man who specializes in acupuncture. It would help relieve some of this pent-up stress which seems to be exuding from you. I know, you're saying "acupuncture? But I hate needles"! Well, so did I until--

*Tony covers Bobby's mouth with his hand.*

TONY: Make the delivery before I make you into a rug.

*He uncovers Bobby's mouth.*

BOBBY: *(still happy)* Yes, sir! Right away, sir! Now, where does the new desk go?

WALLACE: *(pointing to the den)* Right in there.

BOBBY: Alrighty! Just let me see where I need to put it and-- *(Bobby opens the door to the den and stops in his tracks. He points to O.S. to whatever is on the floor)* Hey! Calibrus Calindora! In the green stage! Wow, I thought that I was the only one who had one of those! Has it gotten to the flesh-eating stage yet?

*Gary and Connie look at Wallace with horrified looks.*

BOBBY: Ha, ha! I'm just joshing! It probably won't start mutating for another four months. Sure is a big sucker, though.

*Gary starts toward Bobby to kill him but is held back by Wallace.*

GARY: Why you little--

*Bobby starts to go out the door and hands a sheet of paper from the clipboard to Tony.*

BOBBY: Alrighty, I'll go out and start bringing in the pieces for the desk.

WALLACE: My desk comes in pieces?

BOBBY: Yes, sir. But don't worry, I brought along some long screws for the legs. Now, if you, Mr... uh...

TONY: Tony.

BOBBY: Okay, if you say so. If you, Mr. Tony, could just make sure that all of the pieces are here by checking what I bring in against the invoice, then everything will be hunky-dory!

*Bobby exits as Tony crumples the invoice and closes the door. He then walks over to Thomas.*

TONY: Now, where were we? Oh yea, now I remember. *(he grabs Thomas' wrist)* Are you gonna tell me that combination or are we gonna have to continue where we left off?

*Thomas quickly performs a wrist lock reversal on Tony and, in one swift move, drops Tony to one knee while holding onto his wrist.*

THOMAS: Allow me to make one thing perfectly clear, sir, if I wish to tell you that combination, I will do so. Until that time, however, you would be better advised to plan on using your explosives.

TONY: *(clearly in pain)* Joey! You wanna do something here?

*As Joey starts to move, Thomas shifts his hold and causes Tony more pain.*

THOMAS: Would you like to hear your wrist break?

TONY: Back off! Back off!

*Joey backs off and Thomas releases Tony, who rubs his wrist to get the blood circulating again. Tony is watching Thomas with extreme caution.*

TONY: Joey, go get the dynamite out of the van.

WALLACE: Thomas, what have you done? They're going to blow up the house!

THOMAS: I sincerely doubt that, Sir. Have faith in your trusted man servant.

*Joey exits as Bobby squeezes past him carrying two desk legs.*

BOBBY: Look out there, big guy! Coming through! All right, we have two legs, code number 3, 7-- *(He looks around to see that Tony is not there with the clipboard)* Hey, where's my little helper?

TONY: I am not your little helper, Delivery Boy. Now, sit down over there and shut up!

BOBBY: I am sorry, sir, but I do not have time to make small talk with you and your obviously captivated guests. I have a job to do and will not rest until it is done. "Let nothing stand in the way of perfect service"! Isn't that right, Mr. Pell?

GARY: I swear I don't know him and he does not speak for my company.

TONY: *(to Gary)* Don't worry, wimp, you're safe.

GARY: Oh, thank God.

TONY: *(to Bobby)* But I told you to sit down.

BOBBY: I'm sorry, but I have work which must--

TONY: *(opens his vest to Bobby, showing him the gun)* Sit down, Delivery Boy!

*Bobby feints. Aspen rushes to his side.*

ASPEN: Oh my!

TONY: That's the best reaction all night!

*Everybody watches as Aspen cradles Bobby's head and lightly slaps him.*

ASPEN: Hello? Are you all right? Can you hear me?

*Bobby starts to come around as Joey enters carrying two sticks of dynamite.*

BOBBY: Don't shoot me! Hide the women and children! What happened?

TONY: Hey, Joey, watch this!

*Tony opens his vest to Bobby who, again, feints. Tony laughs.*

ASPEN: You monster!

JOEY: Laughter at the expense of others is empty humor at best.

*Aspen attempts to revive Bobby as Tony walks to Joey and takes the dynamite.*

TONY: Stop reading so much! *(to Thomas)* You sure you wouldn't rather just tell me the combination, Jeeves?

THOMAS: Are you sure you wouldn't like to try to get it out of me again?

TONY: Yeah, well, we'll see who's smiling after I get through with this! Watch them, Joey.

*Tony exits up the stairs. Wallace and Connie both walk over to Thomas and hit him in different arms.*

THOMAS: Ow!

CONNIE: What do you think you're doing?

THOMAS: I promise you, Madam--

WALLACE: That maniac is upstairs getting ready to blow up our bathroom and take everything in the safe!

THOMAS: Sir, I am trying to--

CONNIE: He will damage the bidet and blow up the--

*Thomas puts his hand over Connie's mouth. Wallace starts to object, but Thomas stops him by holding his hand up.*

THOMAS: My dear employers, have either of you been in that safe within the past, say, year? *(both shake their heads no)* Then trust me, for I have. I know from whence I speak.

*Thomas takes his hand off of Connie's mouth.*

BOBBY: I just don't understand. Why would that gentleman be going upstairs with dynamite?

GARY: He's going to blow the safe, you idiot! How could I have hired anybody so clueless?

WALLACE: Maybe you wanted employees that you could feel superior to.

GARY: Well, at least I don't have to live off of my wife's money.

WALLACE: That's right, you want to live off of MY wife's money!

GARY: That's not true! I could find somebody much prettier if all I wanted was money.

CONNIE: WHAT?

*Gary realizes his mistake and everybody scoots away from him. Connie casually strolls over to him, looks at him for a second and then knees him in the crotch. Gary slides slowly to the ground as the others applaud.*

CONNIE: Prettier, my ass.

ASPEN: Mother!

CONNIE: Oh, lighten up, Aspen. *(crosses to Joey)* Joey, why don't you just let us walk out that front door? We're your friends.

JOEY: Tony said to watch you. That's what I do.

CONNIE: Do you always do what Tony tells you to?

JOEY: Yes.

CONNIE: Why?

JOEY: Because... well... that's just the way it's always been.

THOMAS: But that could change. You could be your own man.

JOEY: What do you mean?

THOMAS: *(walks around the room and looks at everybody as he talks)* Well, I think it's safe to say that just blindly following orders is not a smart thing to do. Especially if following those orders could get you into trouble of some kind. I think that working together for a common cause, such as marriage, for instance, is crucial. You could do the right thing, Joseph. Let us go.

*Tony comes running from the stairs. He ducks with his fingers in his ears and yells at them.*

TONY: I would suggest hitting the floor!

*Everybody except Joey and Thomas hit the floor and cover their heads. Joey and Thomas simply stand and watch. SFX large explosion. After the explosion dies out, Tony runs back up the stairs. Connie is nearly crying.*

CONNIE: My bathroom!

*Adam and Sammy run in from the kitchen.*

ADAM: What was that?

JOEY: Tony. Boom.

*Thomas is smiling as Tony enters slowly from the stairs looking puzzled. Everybody gets up.*

ADAM: What's wrong?

TONY: Not even a scratch. The damn safe still looks brand new!

WALLACE: You must be joking!

TONY: No! (*pointing at Thomas*) And he knows why!

*Tony heads toward Thomas.*

THOMAS: Now, I assure you, sir--

TONY: Save it for the undertaker!

*Tony begins to pull his gun as Bobby feints and Aspen, Connie, Wallace and Gary hit the deck again. Just as Tony is about to pull the gun out, we see police lights through the window. Everybody, except Thomas, is stunned and Tony stops.*

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): This is Sheriff O'Hurley of Greater Wilson County. Lay down any weapons you have and come out with your hands up!

THOMAS: (*looking at his watch*) Took their bloody time.

*Tony and the others go to the window to look out. Bobby wakes up.*

SAMMY: There must be a dozen cars out there!

CONNIE: We're saved!

*Wallace, Connie, Gary, Aspen and Bobby cheer and Tony stands in front of the door.*

GARY: We are so out of here!

*All head for the door but stop when they see Tony blocking their way.*

TONY: Where do you all think you're going?

CONNIE: Are you blind? The Police are here! It's over! Goodbye!

TONY: Are you stupid? I still have this! (*pats the bulge in his vest*) And now we need you as hostages.

SAMMY: What's going on Adam?

ADAM: Well, you see, that's my Brother-in-law and that's my Brother and we were kind of... robbing this place.

SAMMY: You're kidding!

ADAM: No, I'm just sorry that you got caught up in this, Sammy. I know this will destroy any chance of a meaningful relationship with you.

SAMMY: Actually, this is giving me sensations I'm not familiar with. And I think I like it!

ADAM: Really?

ASPEN: Oh puh-lease. It's called nausea.

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): I said come out now!

*Tony goes to the window.*

TONY: Listen, Sheriff, we have hostages! You better start dealing with us... or else!

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): Or else what?

TONY: What do you think, or else?

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): All right, just wanted to make sure. I'll come in personally and talk to you.

TONY: Okay, but I don't want to see any weapons!

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): All right.

TONY: Or tape recorders!

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): No problem.

TONY: Or tear gas, mace, or pepper spray.

SHERIFF (OFF): You got it.

TONY: As a matter of fact, strip to your shorts so that I can be sure!

*Silence for a moment.*

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): You guys ain't... preverts, are you?

TONY: No! Just do it!

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): All right.

TONY: And could you get us three large supreme pizzas? We're getting hungry in here!

SHERIFF (OFFSTAGE): Don't push your luck! I'm on my way in.

*Tony stands where he can see everybody and the front door. He points to a spot in front of the window.*

TONY: Okay, all of you get over there. *(everybody except Adam, Tony and Joey go to the spot, fighting over who will stand in front, next to each other and in back)* Knock it off!

*Everybody stops.*

ADAM: Tony, we don't need to do this! These are good people. They won't press charges against us. *(looking to them)* Will you?

ALL: No! Not me! No way! Uh-uh!

TONY: We can't take that chance, Adam. What, are you getting wussy on me?

*Before Adam can answer, the doorbell rings. Nobody moves. There is a knock at the door.*

TONY: Okay, Jeeves, do your job.

THOMAS: My name is Thomas Smythe!

GARY: REAL bad timing on the name lesson, Jeeves.

THOMAS: All right, I'll get the bloody door! *(Thomas walks over and throws the door open. The SHERIFF enters wearing boxers, a sleeveless undershirt, black shoes, black socks, sock suspenders, a cowboy hat and his badge)* Please come in. May I take your hat? No? All right then, introductions... *(pointing to Joey, Tony and Adam)* These are the psychotic thieves... *(pointing to the others)* ...and these are the helpless victims. Enjoy.

*Having done his duty, Thomas walks over to stand with the others. Sheriff O'Hurley starts to walk over to Tony, ready to shake hands while everybody attempts to not snicker at his attire.*

SHERIFF: Hi there, I'm Sheriff O'Hurley and I-- *(Tony opens his vest and shows the Sheriff his gun. The Sheriff stops and his eyes go wide while Bobby feints in the background. Aspen bends down to take care of him.)* Wow, that's big!

TONY: And I intend to use it if I don't get exactly what I want.

SHERIFF: All right, I'm here to listen. What do you want?

TONY: Well, for starters... uh... that is... hang on a minute. *(motions for Adam)* Come here. *(Adam crosses to him. They turn downstage to talk in private)* What do we want?

ADAM: Sammy, the garage door girl.

*Tony slaps him on top of the head.*

ADAM: Ow!

TONY: Go back to your own little world. *(Adam goes back to where he was, rubbing his head. Tony points at Thomas)* Hey, Jeeves, come here.

THOMAS: What? Why me?

TONY: Because you're the only one around here who can understand big words without looking them up.

THOMAS: Can't argue with logic.

*Thomas comes to Tony and they turn away from the Sheriff.*

TONY: What do we want?

THOMAS: Why do you believe that I would give advice to you on hostage negotiations when I am one of the hostages?

TONY: Because if you don't, I'll show everybody what was in that box you have stashed in your room.

THOMAS: That would be quite simple to explain. It's a CPR mannequin.

TONY: An inflatable one?

THOMAS: First, you want a large sum of money.

TONY: *(to Sheriff)* Okay, first we want... *(to Thomas)* How much?

THOMAS: Oh, I would say at least 500,000 dollars.

TONY: Why not a million?

THOMAS: Would you pay a million dollars for these people?

TONY: *(to Sheriff)* Okay, we want 500,000 dollars.

THOMAS: In small, unmarked bills.

TONY: *(to Thomas)* Aren't they all the same size?

THOMAS: Oh no, didn't you hear? The new ones are even different colors now!

TONY: Wow! *(to Sheriff)* In small, unmarked bills.

THOMAS: Now you need a get-away automobile.

TONY: *(to Thomas)* Why? Our truck's right outside.

THOMAS: But, sir, your truck is not fast enough! You need a fast auto! Like Burt Reynolds in that black Trans-Am.

TONY: Yeah! *(to Sheriff)* Get us one of those cars. *(to Thomas)* What next?

THOMAS: Tell him that you wish for all of your persecuted brethren who are jailed around the world to be freed within the hour.

TONY: Why?

THOMAS: Don't you go to the movies? All hostage takers say that. It's in the union rules.

TONY: Oh. *(to Sheriff)* What he said.

SHERIFF: And which persecuted brethren would you be referring to?

TONY: Uh... all of them?

SHERIFF: Is that it then?

TONY: How about those pizzas?

SHERIFF: No can do, they don't deliver this far out.

TONY: Damn! Okay, that's it.

SHERIFF: You know, I'm going to need more time to get this all together.

TONY: Why? I'm giving you a whole hour!

SHERIFF: You're new to this whole hostage thing, aren't you?

TONY: How could you tell?

SHERIFF: Just a hunch. I will need more time, though.

*Tony goes over to where everybody is standing and pulls Connie out of the pack. He puts her out front by herself and puts his hand inside his vest.*

TONY: If you don't get us what we want, she's dead!

*Tony finally pulls his gun and Bobby feints... again. This time, Aspen just rolls her eyes.*

ADAM: No, Tony, this is wrong!

*As Adam objects to the gun, Wallace reacts. He takes one giant leap and throws himself in front of Connie, ready to take the bullet for her.*

WALLACE: NO!

*Unfortunately, Tony was not about to shoot and Wallace falls on his face in front of Connie while everybody stares at him for a moment.*

WALLACE: Owww...

CONNIE: Wallace, that was so brave! *(Connie reaches down to help Wallace up. Wallace is holding his back)* You were going to take that bullet for me?

WALLACE: Well, you know me. Selfish to a fault!

CONNIE: Oh, Wallace, I do love you.

GARY: Hey! What about me?

CONNIE: *(to Gary)* Oh, go glue your toupee to a table.

WALLACE: I love you, too, Sweetums.

*Connie and Wallace embrace as Gary pouts. Bobby wakes up. They are about to kiss when Tony grabs Wallace by the nose and pulls them apart.*

WALLACE: Ow, ow, ow, ow, ow!

TONY: *(handing Wallace to Joey)* Okay, take lover boy here and tie him up. We don't need any more heroes.

JOEY: No.

*Everybody stares wide-eyed at Joey for a moment.*

TONY: What do you mean "no"?

JOEY: These people are my... friends. And these two are in love. Love is worth more than all of the money and possessions in the world.

*Everybody except Tony smiles.*

TONY: Great. I come here to rob the place and I end up with Gandhi for a Brother-in-law. *(To Joey)* Alright, how's this, you big ox? *(Grabs Thomas by the lapel)* How about if I kill him? Is that okay? He's not as cute as she is.

*Thomas quickly hits Tony's hand in order to cause the gun to fly out of his grip and away from everyone. He then slips out of Tony's grasp and strikes a martial arts pose.*

THOMAS: Now that your muscle is gone, let's see just how well you can handle yourself!

*Tony stands with his hands on his hips as Thomas Karate chops him across the chest. Tony doesn't even flinch as Thomas looks at him. He then grabs his hand in pain.*

THOMAS: Ow!

TONY: Now it's my turn.

*Tony clumsily lunges at Thomas, who easily dodges Tony. Thomas backpedals around the couch as Tony swings wildly and tries to grab him. Thomas lands a few chops into Tony's torso which have no effect. Thomas backs around the couch and past Joey, who is watching intently. Tony comes to stand directly in front of Joey. Thomas tries one more chop but Tony catches his hand and twists the arm back, causing Thomas immediate pain.*

TONY: You can't beat me, old man. I always get what I want. Now, I want to hurt--

*Joey hits Tony on top of the head, which causes Tony to drop where he stands, unconscious.*

JOEY: Told you that they were my friends.

*Joey picks up the gun and hands it to Sheriff O'Hurley.*

SHERIFF: Thank you, but I'm afraid you and your brothers are going to have to answer to me down at the station.

*The Sheriff moves to get hold of Joey and Adam, but Thomas gets in his way.*

THOMAS: My dear Sheriff, I do believe that I speak for the entire household when I say that we will not be pressing charges against these two. They have more than made up for their past behavior. *(Looking at Adam disapprovingly)* Besides, this one is still employed with this household. Isn't that right, Mr. Martin?

WALLACE: That's true, Sheriff

*Adam and Wallace shake hands as Tony starts to moan. The Sheriff goes to him and helps him up after cuffing him.*

SHERIFF: Come on, time to go to the pretty jail house.

*Tony gets up, barely, completely confused and dazed.*

TONY: Oh goody! I like playing cops and robbers! *(Looking at the sheriff)* Why are there three of you?

SHERIFF: Just go with the one in the middle.

TONY: Oh, okey-dokey!

*The Sheriff and Tony exit.*

WALLACE: Thank you, Mr. DuMock. What are you going to do now?

JOEY: After taking a moment to reevaluate my life, I have decided to put my doctorate to work and pass my knowledge onto the next generation of children. It's the least I can do.

THOMAS: You have a doctorate?

ADAM: Yeah, and a law degree, but he decided that it would be easier to live with himself if he just became a real criminal.

WALLACE: What is your doctorate in?

JOEY: Theater. I find that losing myself in the skin of another helps my anger issues.

*Gary crosses to Connie.*

GARY: I know you were just saying those things in the heat of the moment, my dear, so I forgive you.

*Gary starts to hug Connie. Connie looks at him strangely. Wallace starts to say something but Connie waves him off.*

CONNIE: Did you know that your hair plugs are coming out?

GARY: Oh my God! Where?

WALLACE: Yeah, I heard you can die from that.

GARY: Die? I could die from bad plugs?

JOEY: I've seen it. It's not pretty. Swollen pores. The family could barely identify the body.

GARY: Oh my God! Thank you! Thank you all!

*Gary exits quickly.*

WALLACE: Do you think he'll be mad?

JOEY: Who cares? *(To Adam)* Hey, Little Brother, we'd better go. We've intruded on these people enough.

ADAM: Yeah, hang on. *(To Aspen)* Aspen, I'm sorry but--

ASPEN: Don't worry, Adam. *(Hugs Bobby)* I think I'm going to be happy.

ADAM: Really? Cool! *(Takes Sammy's hand)* So am I.

BOBBY: Hey, I have an idea! Why don't we all go someplace together?

ASPEN: Wait a minute. *(Crosses to Connie)* Mama?

CONNIE: Go ahead. Have fun.

ASPEN: Thank you, Mama.

*Aspen walks back to the group as Adam goes to Thomas and extends his hand.*

ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Smythe. I really appreciate what you did for me.

THOMAS: *(Shaking Adam's hand)* Go out tonight, have fun, but be here and ready to work all that much earlier tomorrow morning.

ADAM: You got it.

WALLACE: And Bobby, remember, if anything happens to my daughter--

JOEY: *(Puts his hand on Bobby's shoulder)* He'll answer to me, Mr. Martin.

WALLACE: I couldn't ask for anything more, Mr. DuMock. Have a good time.

*Joey, Adam, Sammy, Bobby and Aspen walk to the door.*

BOBBY: Hey, I know this really neat place downtown that's playing a Godzilla double feature!

ASPEN: Godzilla? Is that the foreign film about the woman who's really a guy?

*They exit. Connie and Wallace snuggle up to each other as Thomas addresses them.*

THOMAS: Well, it looks as though it is just the three of us this evening. May I get anything for you?

CONNIE: No, I think we have everything we need, Thomas.

WALLACE: Yes, why don't you just relax, Thomas? I think you deserve it.

CONNIE: We'll be upstairs if anyone needs us. And NOBODY had better need us for a long time!

*Connie gives Thomas a kiss on the cheek, which surprises him.*

WALLACE: I just want to know one thing.

CONNIE: What's that?

WALLACE: How were you doing that thing with your legs up over--

CONNIE: Shhh!

*They exit up the stairs, giggling like school children. Thomas walks over to the couch, dusts off the cushion and sits down.*

THOMAS: Now this is what life is all about.

CURTAIN

THE END