

**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT
THIS PLAY IS FULLY PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT**

All plays, books, music and other materials published by Heartland Plays, Inc. are fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries which the United States has reciprocal relations including, but not limited to all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, The Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention. All rights to the plays and materials on our website are strictly reserved including, and without limitation, professional and amateur performance rights; motion pictures; public reading; radio and television broadcasting; audio and video recording and reproduction of any type known or yet to be invented; information storage and retrieval systems of any type known or yet to be invented; and the rights of translation into any and all languages. No individual or organization whether amateur or stock may perform this or any play published by Heartland Plays, Inc. without first obtaining advance permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. and paying the appropriate fees including Royalties and Single-Use Copyright fees. Heartland Plays, Inc. collects royalties on behalf of the Playwrights whose plays it publishes. Unauthorized copying, transcribing or reproduction of this or any play or excerpt, or storage or transmittal in any form and by any means whether known or yet to be invented, is strictly forbidden except as provided by Agreement with Heartland Plays, Inc. Any unauthorized use is a violation of copyright laws and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

FIVE SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER

1. DO take advantage of the free online perusal of our plays to help you make the best choice for your particular needs or production.
2. DO enjoy the convenience of our online purchase application for performance rights and single-use copyright.
3. DO understand that this play and all plays and materials on our website are controlled by Heartland Plays, Inc. and fully protected by copyright.
4. DO NOT attempt in any way to copy, transcribe or reproduce this play by any means or perform this play or use any play or material from our website without first receiving permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. Any attempt to use this or any other work without first obtaining permission is a violation of copyright and punishable by law.
5. DO NOT rob this Author or any of the Authors we represent of their right to be paid for the use of their property. **It is a crime and it is wrong!**

Product Code A0090-FC

A.R@UNI.GOV

A Comedy by Dan Borengasser

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
REPRODUCTION WITHOUT SPECIFIC WRITTEN PERMISSION
PROHIBITED**

**Performance Rights Available Exclusively through
Heartland Plays, Inc. at heartlandplays.com
playsnow@heartlandplays.com
customer service: 937-902-4194**

Copyright © 2009 by Dan Borengasser

A.R@UNI.GOV
A Comedy by Dan Borengasser

SETTING:

In the near future on a planet not so far away, perhaps your own; the office of the Bureau of Alternate Realities which examines the strange occurrence of relationships throughout the universe

CHARACTERS:

THE BUREAU DIRECTOR; *A rather peculiar man with long shaggy hair and a beard, sporting a white lab coat*

THE SUBJECTS OF INTEREST:

ADOLF HITLER & EMILY POST

SIGMUND FREUD & BARBARA CARTLAND

ARTHUR MILLER & MARILYN MONROE

ADAM & EVE

ROMEO & JULIET

KEN & BARBIE

TARZAN & JANE

G.I. JOE; the odd man out

ETC:

The couples listed in the "SUBJECTS OF INTEREST" may be played by multiple actors or by one male and one female as each couple appears in only one scene during the course of the play

A.R@UNI.GOV
A Comedy by Dan Borengasser

ACT I; SCENE ONE

(AT RISE: LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT on the office of the Bureau of Alternate Realities. The BUREAU DIRECTOR stands at a filing cabinet, looking through some documents. Over the cabinet hangs a sign "Bureau of Alternate Realities". The BUREAU DIRECTOR takes notice of the AUDIENCE as if they are members of a tour group that has just arrived for a visit to learn firsthand the business of the Bureau. HE greets them with a smile.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

Oh, I see you've arrived safely. Well, well. Welcome to the Bureau of Alternate Realities. I hope you didn't have any trouble finding us. Many first time visitors make a wrong turn and end up in the Ministry of Alien Abduction down the hall. God help you then – those people are crazy. *(Beat)* Our work at the Bureau is simple. Using an intermodal teleporter, we travel to and investigate alternate realities. We've discovered that there are an infinite number of them. That means that everything that could happen in our reality but doesn't, happens in another. *(Beat)* When we first began, there were many surprises. We found worlds without war, worlds without disease, even worlds without soccer. But we have yet to find a world without relationships. *(Beat)* It's the oddest thing – no matter how good or bad you are, you can find someone who'll swear to stick by you for better or worse, sickness or health, richer or poorer. *(Beat)* Name a disorder or infirmity and there's someone out there who'll love you for it. Or in spite of it. I suppose we'd all rather be with somebody – anybody – than be alone. *(Beat)* This shouldn't come as a surprise. Most of you seem to be with a significant other.

(The BUREAU DIRECTOR glances around the AUDIENCE and selects a COUPLE seated together)

(To MAN) You, sir. Is this your wife?

(To MAN, if the answer is "no") Sorry to see she couldn't make it.

(To MAN, if the answer is "yes" with a wink) Of course, she is, sir. Of course, she is.

(Continuing to MAN) In another universe, you might be here tonight with a living, breathing Marilyn Monroe. *(To WOMAN with him)* And you, with Brad Pitt. *(To BOTH)* Not that either of you would be interested in swapping each other out for an international sex symbol.

(The BUREAU DIRECTOR returns to addressing the AUDIENCE as a whole)

BUREAU DIRECTOR, *Continues*

Some Alternate Reality couples we've found might surprise you. Like EMILY POST, who wrote the book on Etiquette. Who do you think would an interesting partner for her? (*Glancing around the AUDIENCE*) Did someone say ADOLF HITLER? No? Oh, I was sure I heard someone...at least one of you was *thinking* it. Well, whatever the case, (*As HE crosses to pull out a file from the top drawer of the file cabinet*) it's interesting that someone thought of it because I just happen to have a file on just such a match. (*Pulls out the file*) Let's take a look.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT where EMILY POST is polishing the furniture in a modest den/living room. After a moment ADOLF HITLER goose-steps his way into the room. EMILY, upon seeing him, smiles warmly and cheerfully raises an arm in salute.)

EMILY

Heil, Honey.

ADOLF

Heil, Mein Liebchen. (*THEY greet each other with a light kiss*) How's your book coming?

EMILY

Really exciting. I decided on a title – The Immutable Laws of Etiquette. And I finished the chapter on table settings.

ADOLF

Good for you.

EMILY

How was your job?

ADOLF

Not bad. (*Proudly, pausing for effect*) I invaded Poland today.

EMILY

Oh, my. I hope no one was hurt.

ADOLF

Hurt? You're kidding, right?

EMILY

Well, no. It sounds like it might have been dangerous.

ADOLF

Emily! It was an IN-VA-SION!

EMILY

Okay. You don't have to use that tone.

ADOLF

Do you know what happens in an invasion?

EMILY

Well, sort of. (*Off his dubious look*) No, not really. I try not to pry into your work. You're always so busy.

ADOLF

Let me explain it. Our army marches into another country to try and take it over. Their army tries to turn us back. The one who kills the most people wins.

EMILY

Oooh! That sounds awful. (*Then realizing*) And...and you won?

ADOLF

Yes. We won. We killed the most people.

EMILY

How many?

ADOLF

66,000.

EMILY

66,000? My, goodness. How will you ever write that many letters of condolence?

ADOLF

What?

EMILY

I'll help, of course. Do you have addresses of the next of kin?

ADOLF

I'm not writing any damn letters of condolence.

EMILY

But it's good etiquette.

ADOLF

To hell with good etiquette. I'm still trying to live down that surprise bunker warming party you threw.

EMILY

If you're not careful, you're going to become known as a bully.

ADOLF

Don't you get it? A bully is exactly what I want to be known as. *(Beat)* I'm trying to conquer the world here.

EMILY

That's no excuse for being rude.

ADOLF

I've got news for you – you want to rule the world, you got to be rude.

EMILY

(With bruised feelings) To me, too, I suppose.

(EMILY dabs at her eyes with a tissue.)

ADOLF

No, no. Not to you.

EMILY

Then why are you?

ADOLF

I'm not.

EMILY

You are.

ADOLF

Well, if I am, I'm sorry. It's just all this prim and proper rigmarole. The infernal salad fork here, fruit spoon there, wine glass on the right, water glass on the left—

EMILY

On the right. Water glass on the right. Above the utensils. Just to the left of the champagne flute.

ADOLF

Gott im Himmel! Do you have any idea how utterly nonsensical that is?

EMILY

It's important to have a code of conduct. Of manners.

ADOLF

I'm sure. But I've got bigger things to be concerned with than RSVPs and party favors.

EMILY

Manners are the measure of a civilization. They're what separate us from the apes. And the ape-men, if you get my drift. It's all about respect and consideration. What's wrong with that?

ADOLF

At a debutante ball? Nothing. On the battle front? Everything. Hmm...should the bayonet pierce the right side of the gut? Or the left?

EMILY

You're impossible. Sometimes it seems like we're almost...total opposites.

ADOLF

You should have thought of that before we got married.

EMILY

I did.

ADOLF

Probably thought you could change me.

EMILY

Back then, there was nothing to change. Sure, you were decisive. Confident. But that's what I loved about you. You were so self-assured. Optimistic. Life was full of wonderful possibilities.

ADOLF

I haven't changed. What's more optimistic than thinking you can conquer the world?

EMILY

Now, it just seems bossy. Greedy.

ADOLF

But it's not about me. It's for the master race.

EMILY

Piffle. It's all about you.

ADOLF

Truth be known – you're the one who's changed.

EMILY

That's ridiculous! I absolutely, most certainly have not changed!

ADOLF

My, my, for someone in the polite business, you certainly sound argumentative. Some might even say combative.

EMILY

Combative? At least, I didn't invade Poland.

ADOLF

Add self-righteous to that list. And, while we're at it – overbearing.

EMILY

If I'm so overbearing, why did you marry me?

ADOLF

Because you were refined. A real lady. Genteel. Something I wasn't. And could never be. I was captivated.

EMILY

Speaking of captivated, did you...ah...take any prisoners? Or did you just shoot them all?

ADOLF

So you do know a little bit about invading. I'm proud to say we took as many prisoners as we could.

EMILY

How many?

ADOLF

Almost 700,000.

EMILY

700,000? That seems like a lot. I didn't think there were that many inns and boarding houses in the whole country.

ADOLF

They're in warehouses. Packed like sardines.

EMILY

You...you mean they're not comfortable?

ADOLF

Comfortable? Hell, no, they're not comfortable. They're prisoners.

(Once again, EMILY sniffles and wipes a tear from her eye)

EMILY

I don't think I can take this anymore. You're a barbarian.

(Beat, as the implications sink in)

ADOLF

Can't take it anymore? What's that supposed to mean?

EMILY

I'm leaving. *(ADOLF appears shocked)* I've been considering it for some time now. I guess it just took wiping out another country to really bring it home.

ADOLF

Oh, sure, blame it on Poland.

EMILY

I'm blaming it on you. Be honest, Adolf. This hasn't been working for some time now. You probably want me to leave as much as I want to go. Maybe more.

ADOLF

(Shrugging) You're right. So, leave.

EMILY

Fine. It's decided then. I'll be gone by morning.

(ADOLF's brow furrows. HE paces nervously)

ADOLF

By...by morning? You...ah...don't really have to go that soon. I mean, you could stay a week or so...you know...just to make sure you don't forget anything.

EMILY

I thought you'd want me out of here as soon as possible.

ADOLF

I do. *(HE looks away, embarrassed then mumbling, barely audible)* Not really.

EMILY

What? Did you say, "Not really?" *(ADOLF nods reluctantly)* But you said I was overbearing and self-righteous and combative.

ADOLF

You are. *(Beat)* But I can't ever forget that sweet, doe-eyed beauty I fell in love with. Every time I see you, even when you're sanctimonious and priggish, I remember that person. I guess I didn't realize till now – I'd hate to give that up.

EMILY

That almost sounds sentimental. Especially coming from you.

ADOLF

Even barbarians can have a sentimental streak. *(Beat)* Maybe we could work something out.

EMILY

I...I don't think so.

ADOLF

Why not?

EMILY

It's too late. Too much water under the bridge. *(ADOLF smiles)* You think that's funny?

ADOLF

I was just thinking of when we were canoeing down the Rhine and capsized. Under a bridge. You remember what you said? *(Falsetto, imitating EMILY)* “There's too much water under the bridge.”

EMILY

(Smiling) And when we were floating to shore on the overturned boat, you started yodeling.

ADOLF

Yodel? I did not yodel.

EMILY

Oh, yes, you did. You liked hearing the echo. Remember?

ADOLF

Maybe a polite, little yodel.

EMILY

You bellowed.

ADOLF

Bellowed? You're sure?

EMILY

Positive.

ADOLF

Please don't tell the Stormtroopers. (*THEY remain silent for a moment*) You know what the three essentials of good etiquette are? Empathy, courtesy and compromise.

EMILY

Where'd you come up with that?

ADOLF

Made it up. Back when I used to actually listen to all your gobbledygook.

EMILY

Gobbledygook? You're not advancing your cause here.

ADOLF

What I'm saying is – maybe we could try some kind of compromise. Discarding our marriage vows so easily seems selfish and vulgar.

EMILY

Well, you would know selfish and vulgar. Compromise how?

ADOLF

I don't know. I haven't gotten that far yet. Any ideas?

(*EMILY considers*)

EMILY

Give up your plans for global domination.

ADOLF

Whoa. That's a bit radical.

EMILY

Are you serious or not?

ADOLF

Yeah, I'm serious. (*Considering*) Okay, but how about if I conquer France before calling it quits? You know, just to burn off a little aggression?

EMILY

I knew you couldn't do it.

ADOLF

Hey, this isn't easy. What would you do? How would you compromise?

EMILY

I'd quit complaining about that nasty little mustache.

ADOLF

What the hell kind of compromise is that? — I give up my Alexander-the-Great destiny and you quit griping about my mustache. Eva Braun happens to like my mustache.

EMILY

That's why I hate it. *(Beat)* This isn't going to work.

ADOLF

Okay, okay. You want me to give up conquering the world? That's what I'll do.

EMILY

You're kidding.

ADOLF

Nope. No more invasions. Das Fuhrer is now das Milquetoast.

EMILY

You think you can do that? What about all that pent up aggression of yours?

ADOLF

I'll take up sports. Boxing maybe. I'll challenge Himmler to fisticuffs. I'll get the Gestapo involved in a soccer league.

EMILY

You'd do that?

ADOLF

Yes. If you can offer something better than not bitching about my mustache.

EMILY

Any suggestions?

ADOLF

Yes. For once – can we just act like real people? I'm tired of thank you notes. I hate butter knives. They're not even real knives, what with those stupid little round tips. And how about if I belch every once in a while without having to prostrate myself and beg your forgiveness? And I'd like to chew gum during my staff meeting. Guess what I'm asking is — Can we back off on perfection?

EMILY

Yes, we can. From now on, I won't criticize you. I'll change my "Laws of Etiquette" to "Guidelines". I'll practice empathy, courtesy and compromise.

ADOLF

That may be more than you can handle. You're such a fuss-budget.

EMILY

To prove it, I'll give it the acid test. I'll fix bratwurst for dinner tonight and serve it without utensils.

ADOLF

You...you mean?

EMILY

(Wiggling her fingers) You can eat with your fingers.

ADOLF

And...and drink a beer straight out of the bottle?

EMILY

Ya wohl, mein Milquetoast.

ADOLF

It's a deal.

EMILY

Let's give it six months and see what happens.

ADOLF

Okay. But I've got a good feeling. *(Beat)* Maybe we're right for each other after all.

EMILY

Well, they say opposites attract.

ADOLF

You ever wonder what we'd be like if we'd never met?

EMILY

Yes. Sometimes.

ADOLF

I bet it'd be scary.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE LEFT)

ACT I; SCENE TWO

(LIGHTS UP on the Bureau of Alternate Realities. The BUREAU DIRECTOR speaks to the AUDIENCE as he tucks the file back into the filing cabinet.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

In another universe, EMILY POST was in a relationship with a scrawny guy nicknamed Spoonbill who ran a salvage yard. That one didn't go so well. *(HE pulls out another file, turns and glances about the AUDIENCE)* Do we have any neurologists or psychopathologists out there? *(On the chance anyone raises a hand, the BUREAU DIRECTOR eyes them dubiously and responds)* Yeah, right. *(In either case HE continues)* Hmmmm...not quite as well educated as yesterday's group. But that's okay. I'm sure you all have your good points. And don't worry – you still should be able to follow our next case study. *(Opening the file in his hand)* This one is quite interesting. *(Again glancing around the AUDIENCE)* Show of hands — Who thinks that a relationship should be built on romance instead of just sex? *(Slight pause)* I would advise all the men to raise their hands. Quickly! *(Dismissing the show of hands)* Thank you. *(Beat)* Sex versus romance – that's the very dilemma our next couple faces. SIGMUND FREUD – or as you Behaviorists might like to call him, Sigmund "Fraud" – and legendary romance writer BARBARA CARTLAND find themselves having a bit of a hard time with the notion.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT where a breakfast table has been set. On the table are two cups of tea. Romance novelist BARBARA CARTLAND, dressed in a glamorous pink nightgown, stares across the table at her husband, SIGMUND FREUD, dressed in boxer shorts and an undershirt with his face buried in the morning newspaper.)

BARBARA

So, say it!

FREUD

(From behind paper) Let it go.

(BARBARA's arm shoots out and slaps the paper down so that THEY face each other.)

BARBARA

Why can't you just say it?

(THEY glare at one another)

FREUD

Okay. I love you. Happy?

BARBARA

Happy? Not with that! Say it and mean it.

FREUD

How many times do we have to go through this? And why this morning? I haven't even had my tea yet. (*BARBARA shoves an envelope over to him. HE picks it up, opens it and takes out a Valentine's Day card*) Oh, Valentine's Day.

BARBARA

Yes, Valentine's Day. (*Beat*) Aren't you going to read it?

FREUD

Sure.

(*FREUD glances at the card, then sets it aside*)

BARBARA

Read it.

FREUD

I did.

BARBARA

Out loud.

FREUD

What do you want from me?

BARBARA

Read it.

(*HE picks it up again and reads*)

FREUD

To my Valentine –
On this our very special day,
I confess with you I'll stay,
Forever, ever, and a day.

BARBARA

Well?

FREUD

For one thing – there's no such thing as forever and a day.

BARBARA

God! You're a machine.

FREUD

No. I'm a neurologist.

BARBARA

Same thing.

FREUD

Look, I understand. You're a romance writer. Valentine's Day is a big deal for you—

BARBARA

It's a big deal for all lovers—

FREUD

But I'm a scientist. My world is facts and data and measurements. Empirical evidence. Not bonbons and love letters and billing and cooing.

BARBARA

You're insufferable!

(FREUD cocks an eye, then takes out a small notebook and pen)

FREUD

Okay. I'm insufferable. How do you feel about that?

BARBARA

Don't you dare try any of that psychoanalytic crap on me!

FREUD

Are you experiencing hostility?

BARBARA

Put down that damn pen and notebook this instant!

(FREUD sets the notebook and pen on the table)

FREUD

I'm just concerned that you may be repressing some painful memory, which may be causing this antagonism.

BARBARA

You wanna know what I'm repressing? *(Brandishing a butter knife)* I'm repressing the urge to plunge this butter knife into your squalid, bloodless heart.

FREUD

Awfully phallic, my dear. I'm afraid you may have some serious father issues.

BARBARA
I've got husband issues!

FREUD
Calm down.

BARBARA
I will not calm down.

FREUD
You're getting all emotional.

BARBARA
So what? Emotion is my field.

FREUD
Mine, too.

BARBARA
Yes, but I celebrate emotions. You just analyze them. *(Beat)* I write about romance. And love.

FREUD
(Dismissively) Love.

BARBARA
What? What do you have against love?

FREUD
Nothing. It's the word. It's lost its meaning.

BARBARA
It most certainly has not.

FREUD
Performers tell an audience of absolute strangers they love them. How ridiculous is that? This person loves a pet schnauzer. That person loves ham on rye. You hear the word "love" bandied about incessantly. Consider yourself – you love a good pedicure. Therefore, by loving me, I'm on the same level as a toenail trim.

BARBARA
That's a false analogy, and it's not true! In fact, right now, you're dropped a few notches below a good pedicure! *(Beat)* Besides, I'm not sure if you even know what love truly is.

FREUD

I know exactly what love is. It's a chemical reaction in the limbic system, associated with an increase in serotonin and dopamine.

BARBARA

My point exactly! You have no idea. Love...love is the be all and end all of life. The perfect union of two souls. Undying devotion between two people.

FREUD

(Shrugging) You say po-tay-to. I say pah-tah-toe.

BARBARA

This is not a po-tay-to, pah-tah-toe thing, damn you! What did I ever see in you? We're like total opposites.

FREUD

That's the way it works.

BARBARA

The way what works?

FREUD

Mutual attraction. Sex. It's all about opposites. Just like everything is either concave or convex, which are total opposites.

BARBARA

Concave and convex again. It's always about sex for you, isn't it?

FREUD

Me and every other living creature on the planet.

BARBARA

You destroy the magic and mystery of it.

FREUD

That's unfair. I happen to believe in the mystery. The uncertainties. Like what causes a son's oedipal complex.

BARBARA

Don't start with the oedipal thing again.

FREUD

(Picking up the notebook and pen) Why? Does it make you feel uncomfortable?

BARBARA

Stop that!

FREUD

(Setting asides the notebook and pen once again) Is it so surprising that a boy would be sexually attracted to his mother and jealous of his father? Or the reverse for a daughter?

BARBARA

Well, you don't have to worry. Your sons and daughters won't be that way.

FREUD

Why not?

BARBARA

Because you won't be having any children. Not by me anyway.

FREUD

You're kidding, right?

BARBARA

I most certainly am not! We do not propagate the species in this household! We caress and fondle and snuggle and kiss and make love.

FREUD

But—

BARBARA

To me, creating a new life is a miracle. To you, it's a biology experiment, a sperm and an ovum joining to produce a new cell, a zygote.

FREUD

Ah...did I understand you correctly? You're cutting me off?

BARBARA

Yes.

FREUD

But...but we're happy. *(Beat)* Aren't we?

BARBARA

No.

FREUD

We have been.

BARBARA

We're incompatible.

FREUD

We are not.

BARBARA

See? We're not even compatible about whether we're incompatible.

FREUD

But you love me.

BARBARA

No, I don't.

FREUD

Your Valentine's Day card said you did.

BARBARA

You just momentarily triggered my limbic system. It could probably just as easily have been Carl Jung or B. F. Skinner.

FREUD

What? Jung? That old fraud?

BARBARA

At least, he studies the power of dreams and art and mythology. He believes in the wonder of life.

FREUD

I believe in the wonder of life, too, damn it.

BARBARA

You only believe in the wonder of life long enough to measure it and analyze it and codify it.

FREUD

Not with everything.

BARBARA

Name one.

(FREUD thinks, stumped)

BARBARA

What did I tell you?

FREUD

(Holding up his forefinger) I'll tell you one. Our wedding night, when I did that dance on the bed, wearing only my underwear and my bowler hat and twirling a cane. There was no analyzing there.

BARBARA

Oh, yeah, the cane. Awfully phallic.

FREUD

Not really. Sometimes a cane is just a cane.

BARBARA

And that's your example?

FREUD

Yes. I was impetuous. Delightfully madcap. *(Beat)* And we giggled. Half the night. That's not clinical.

BARBARA

I'm sure it was all triggered by some chemical reaction in the brain. Nothing very wondrous about that.

FREUD

Or how about that time in the pub on your birthday when I stood up and sang an aria from *Die Fledermaus*? That was romantic.

BARBARA

No. It was silly.

FREUD

And silly isn't romantic?

BARBARA

No.

FREUD

That's not what you said then. You were charmed.

BARBARA

Okay. Silly can be romantic. Sometimes. Maybe.

FREUD

And here's the most mysterious thing of all – that someone like you would fall for an old fuddy duddy like me.

(FREUD takes up his notebook and pen, and begins writing)

BARBARA

Don't you dare start with that! *(HE continues writing)* I mean it!

FREUD

I'm composing something for you.

BARBARA

What?

FREUD

A valentine.

BARBARA

A valentine? That'll be the day.

(FREUD finishes, tears off the sheet and hands it to her)

FREUD

Read it. *(Beat)* Out loud.

BARBARA

To My Valentine –
 Whether by nurture or an inherited gene.
 Or from somewhere in between,
 You're as addictive as morphine.
 And you always spike my dopamine.

(BARBARA glances up and eyes him calculatedly)

FREUD

Well? *(SHE does not respond)* Look, if we have the same feelings for each other, what difference does it make what we call them?

BARBARA

Quiet.

FREUD

And so what if mating is a biological imperative to facilitate mammalian reproduction? It doesn't make it any less thrilling.

BARBARA

Hush.

FREUD

Are you leaving me?

BARBARA

You spend all your time in a clinic. Well, I use a kind of clinic in my line of work, too. It's called a bedroom. Care to join me?

(BARBARA rises, holding out her hand)

FREUD

What? What just happened here? I thought you were through with me.

BARBARA

I did, too. Then you wrote me that Valentine's Day card.

FREUD

And you liked it?

BARBARA

Sweetheart, you had me at “dopamine”.

(FREUD rises, takes her hand and THEY walk off together. LIGHTS DOWN)

ACT I; SCENE THREE

(LIGHTS UP on the Bureau of Alternate Realities. The BUREAU DIRECTOR replaces the file in the cabinet and pulls out another without looking up, then turns and quickly scans the AUDIENCE and addresses the MAN from Scene One to whom HE originally spoke.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

What do you know? You were just fanaticizing about Marilyn Monroe, and here she is. *(HE holds up the file)* Although I regret to inform you she's not with you in this scenario...nor is she with you in any other reality we've explored so far. She is, however, with Arthur Miller. *(The BUREAU DIRECTOR addresses the WOMAN sitting with the MAN)* And, regrettably, Brad Pitt doesn't appear at all – either with you or without you. Better luck next time. *(With FILE in hand, The BUREAU DIRECTOR continues, addressing the AUDIENCE as a whole)* Some of you will no doubt say, "But Marilyn Monroe was married to Arthur Miller." One or two of you might even say, "Who the hell was Arthur Miller? Was he the one who sang "King of the Road" and "Dang Me"?" Actually, no, that was Roger Miller — Arthur Miller was the playwright who wrote "Death of a Salesman" and "The Crucible" among others. But, yes, you're right – Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller were married in real life in your reality. Obviously, the same couples can exist in other universes; in Alternate Realities. That's the way infinity works. But what happens in someone else's universe could be quite different from what happens in your own. Even with the very same two people.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT where MARILYN MONROE, wearing a dark, nondescript top and khaki slacks, taps away at a typewriter on the kitchen table. Her husband, ARTHUR MILLER, handsome, sexy, and nattily dressed, enters with a bottle of champagne.)

MONROE

What's the occasion?

MILLER

"Some Like It Hot".

MONROE

I suppose they do. But what's the occasion?

Miller

That's it. I got the part in "Some Like It Hot".

MONROE

What? That silly cross-dressing thing you were reading?

MILLER

Come on. It's Billy Wilder, for God's sake. *(HE ambles over to her and looks over her shoulder)* Ah...the next Marilyn Monroe play. The world awaits.

MONROE

I don't really need any sarcasm right now, thank you.

MILLER

Who's being sarcastic? I love your plays.

MONROE

You didn't even audition for my last one.

MILLER

I don't audition for plays. You know that. Not even yours. They know what I do. If they want me, they can call. *(Trying to read over her shoulder)* What's this one?

MONROE

It's called "Death of a President." About a Hollywood sex goddess who has an affair with the President of the United States.

MILLER

Really?

MONROE

Yes. What's wrong with that?

MILLER

Well, I'm no playwright, but shouldn't you be writing about something you actually know about?

MONROE

Like you're an expert.

MILLER

I am an expert. I have to play these characters. Why don't you make it someone more common – someone people can identify with? Like...like a bartender.

MONROE

“Death of a *Bartender*”?

MILLER

Okay, okay, not a bartender. You know what I mean. Something else. (*HE paces, thinking, then snaps his fingers*) A salesman. “Death of a Salesman”. I even have the protagonist's name for you – Willy. Willy...ah...Willy Loman.

MONROE

Willy Loman? As in Low-Man? That's a little ham-handed, don't you think?

MILLER

Like I said, I'm no playwright. I just know what works with an audience.

MONROE

You always do this. Always. Criticize incessantly. Nitpick it to death. You don't like anything I do.

MILLER

That's not true.

MONROE

What plays have you liked?

MILLER

I thought “The Crucible” had its moments.

MONROE

Its moments?

MILLER

Yes.

MONROE

It won a Tony, for Christ's sake.

MILLER

I know. That's what I said – it had its moments.

MONROE

I get so tired of your smug, condescending attitude. Just because every Hollywood producer and director kowtows to you, and women fawn all over you every time we go out, you think you're infallible. *(Beat)* I hate that, by the way.

MILLER

Me being infallible?

MONROE

The women.

MILLER

You may say you hate it. But those women treating me like a matinee idol make you a bit of a sex symbol, too – by association.

MONROE

You're really unbearable.

MILLER

And it gives you status.

MONROE

Status?

MILLER

You can walk into any restaurant in New York without a reservation. People you don't know defer to you. Producers probably give your work a little more leeway.

MONROE

What a nasty little thing to say.

MILLER

Nasty or not, it's true.

MONROE

It might have something to do with my being a good writer.

MILLER

(Laughing snidely) Come on. You know better than that. No one cares about the writer. It's always the performance. The actors.

MONROE

Are you going to open that bottle or not?

MILLER

Would you rather see a "Hamlet" at Shakespeare in the Park? Or at the East Boondocks Little Theatre? Same writer, after all.

MONROE

Don't be ridiculous.

MILLER

It's not ridiculous. Most people would prefer a good performance in a bad play to a bad performance in a good play. In fact, with a bad performance, it's hard to even know if it is a good play.

MONROE

Are you through pontificating? I've got work to do.

MILLER

If you didn't want to know what I thought, you shouldn't have asked me.

MONROE

I didn't ask. I never ask. But that sure the hell doesn't stop you.

MILLER

Just trying to help.

MONROE

Don't. I'm quite capable of writing a damn fine drama without your negative comments. Even another Tony winner.

MILLER

Well, la-dee-dah. Another Tony winner.

MONROE

Hey, my plays have launched careers. A couple of them certainly didn't hurt yours.

MILLER

You've been successful. No question. As a result, all you have to do now is come up with a reasonably dramatic idea, scribble it down, and somebody will perform it.

MONROE

That's not fair—

MILLER

Whether it's good or bad doesn't make much difference. Some actor – me, for instance – will have to go out and sell it to an audience.

MONROE

You didn't do much of a selling job on your last performance.

MILLER

There were a lot of production problems that—

MONROE

You shouldn't feel bad. You're a sex symbol. You don't really need talent.

MILLER

That's a cheap shot.

MONROE

Thank you. I learned from a master.

MILLER

I do not do that.

MONROE

(Exaggeratedly innocent) What, dear? You don't do what?

MILLER

Cheap shots.

MONROE

You do it constantly. Shot after shot after shot. All cheap. Bargain basement.

MILLER

I try to be supportive. That's all. Give you the benefit of my experience. If that's cheap, then—

MONROE

Oh, please, not the "misunderstood husband." Isn't there some other role you can play? How about the "guileless seducer" – you know, your favorite.

MILLER

You want a drink?

MONROE

Yes. But not the champagne.

MILLER

Gin?

MONROE

Sure. What's stronger than a triple?

MILLER

A quadruple. With a chaser.

MONROE

That oughta be good for a start.

(MILLER pours two drinks and hands one to her)

MILLER

We never used to fight like this. What happened?

MONROE

You became famous.

MILLER

That's not my fault.

MONROE

Nevertheless.

MILLER

So what do we do?

MONROE

What do we do?

MILLER

Yeah, to get back our innocence – the way we used to be.

MONROE

I can never tell when you're real or you're acting.

MILLER

Neither can I.

MONROE

(Smiling in spite of herself) Bless your heart. You can still deliver a line.

MILLER

I mean it. How do we go back?

MONROE

You tell me.

MILLER

Well, I certainly don't want to become unfamous. I rather like it. Maybe you should become famous.

MONROE

I already am.

MILLER

I don't mean idolized by a few drama critics and a bunch of grad students. I mean paparazzi famous. Supermarket tabloid famous.

MONROE

Don't ridicule me.

MILLER

I'm not. You could be that. You could be glamorous. A genuine sex pot.

MONROE

Is this another one of your sick little games?

MILLER

Look at you. You hide your arsenal under a floppy sweatshirt and bulky slacks. Change to a glamorous outfit, and you'd have photographers waiting by every sidewalk grate just hoping you'd come by and a gust of air would billow up your skirt.

MONROE

Don't do this to me.

MILLER

I'm serious. You've got the ultimate combination – beauty and talent.

MONROE

I don't believe you. You don't think I'm sexy at all.

MILLER

I most certainly do.

MONROE

Then why haven't you ever said anything before?

MILLER

Truth be known, I didn't want the competition.

MONROE

And now you do?

MILLER

No. But I don't want to lose you.

MONROE

Who says you're losing me?

MILLER

I'm an actor. My business is all about subtext and nuance. I can see it coming. You're unhappy. You're thinking of leaving.

MONROE

Actually, I'm not.

MILLER

Yes, you are.

MONROE

It's not enough for you to constantly tell me how to write. Now, you're telling me how I feel?

MILLER

What? You've never thought about it? (Beat) I know I have.

MONROE

You have? You've thought of leaving me?

MILLER

No. I've thought of you leaving me.

MONROE

And I suppose that comforts you.

MILLER

It fills me with panic.

MONROE

You'd never know it the way you act. Opinionated. Egotistic. Believing your own press releases.

MILLER

It's an act. I'm insecure. You know that. And afraid you'll see through me, that I'm not real – just a shape shifter – always pretending to be someone else – just interpreting someone else's material.

MONROE

Is that real, or are you acting again?

MILLER

(Shrugging) Damned if I know.

MONROE

Well, I'll give you that – you do know how to interpret someone else's material. *(Beat)* That's what I fell in love with, you know – your infinite variety.

MILLER

(Dramatic) "Age can not whither me, nor custom stale my infinite variety?"

MONROE

Yes. Antony and Cleopatra. You were my Antony.

MILLER

Then that would make you Cleopatra – the most beautiful, alluring woman of your time. Exactly what I've been saying. *(Beat)* But you'll need a new name. Imagine you're writing a new play – about this ravishing sex goddess. What would you name her?

MONROE

Why should I change my name? I happen to like Marilyn Monroe.

MILLER

I've got one for you. Jayne Mansfield.

MONROE

Jayne Mansfield? As in Man's-Field? What is it with these cheesy, in-your-face names?

MILLER

When it comes to sex appeal, there's no room for subtlety.

MONROE

Well, you would know that.

MILLER

Miller and Mansfield – Mansfield and Miller. We'd be media darlings.

MONROE

You know what happens to couples like that. Once in the limelight, it's open season for the press. It'd be like jackals bringing down a couple gazelles.

MILLER

They'd never break us apart.

MONROE

We're not even sure we can stay together now.

MILLER

I'm sure. It's you who's not.

MONROE

And how is that going to change?

MILLER

You know what Shakespeare said – "all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." We simply change our script. A revision. I'll become the "loving, supportive husband."

MONROE

I'm not sure you're that good an actor.

MILLER

You'd help me. With your performance as the "loving, supportive wife."

MONROE

Even if we wanted to, I'm not sure we can pull it off.

MILLER

Then, think of it as something we have to do.

MONROE

We don't have to. We could go on as before. Or split up. Or...Oh, God, this isn't some "you-are-my-destiny, we-were-meant-to-be" monologue from a long-forgotten performance of yours, is it?

MILLER

What if there was another reality out there – maybe thousands, millions of them?

MONROE

Oh, please...

MILLER

Come on, you're a writer. Writers love "what if's." You live in "what if" land, don't you? (*SHE does not respond*) Don't you?

MONROE

I suppose.

MILLER

In each of those thousands and thousands of alternate universes, there's an Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe. And they're all duking it out, toe to toe, just like us. It's even possible that in some cases I'm the writer and you're the performer.

MONROE

That's a little too much of a "what if" even for me.

MILLER

Granted. But they all have what seem like insurmountable problems. With whom they are. As individuals. As a couple.

MONROE

And this is your reason for us staying together?

MILLER

Yes.

MONROE

For them?

MILLER

Yes. To prove it can be done. To show that what you writers always say is true – that love conquers all.

MONROE

We don't all say that.

MILLER

Even when you don't, you want to. You're all looking for meaning. Who isn't? And in that context, love works pretty damn good.

MONROE

And you think you and I have this all-conquering love?

MILLER

Yes.

MONROE

Well, I suppose we did once.

MILLER

It doesn't go away. We simply have to rewrite it back into our lives.

MONROE

Is this real, or are you acting again?

MILLER
Is there a difference?

MONROE
No. I suppose not.

MILLER
Shall we give it a try?

MONROE
Couldn't hurt. *(Smiling, pointing at the champagne bottle)* Maybe we can start with a few glasses of champagne and a quiet night at home.

MILLER
Ah...we have dinner plans. Remember?

MONROE
Oh, yeah. Who did you say it was?

MILLER
Baseball player. Guy named Joe DiMaggio.

MONROE
Will I like him?

MILLER
I don't know. We'll see.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE LEFT)

ACT I; SCENE FOUR

(LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT once again on the office of the Bureau of Alternate Realities. The BUREAU DIRECTOR replaces the MILLER/MONROE file and thumbs through several others, eventually settling on one which he presents to the AUDIENCE.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR
As most of you no doubt realize, a good relationships is difficult. It takes work. *(Beat)* Anyone here been married ten or more times? *(In the event someone happens to raise his/her hand HE responds "You might want to opt for a kitten or a cute little puppy dog next time. Companionship without attorney fees." Otherwise HE continues)* Good. You're obviously better adjusted than my last group. *(Beat)* Relationships are always a gamble, aren't they? — Like rolling a pair of dice. And speaking of a pair-of-dice, our next couple actually lives in a paradise. *(Aside to the*

BUREAU DIRECTOR, *Continued*

MAN addressed in SCENE ONE) By the way, that's called a segue. Smooth, huh? *(Beat, then continuing to the AUDIENCE as a whole)* Remember when you first fell in love? Everything seemed perfect. You were in a state of bliss. A Par-a-dise. *(Beat)* Here's a picture you won't easily forget; one man, one woman, in a state of perfect bliss. Their very own paradise.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT where ADAM and EVE, wearing flesh-colored tights and leotards, gaze at their tropical paradise.)

ADAM

Wow, Eve. Another day. How many is that now?

EVE

I don't know, Adam. I've lost track.

ADAM

Think there'll be another one tomorrow?

EVE

Probably.

ADAM

How are you feeling this morning?

EVE

Happy. Very, very happy. How about you?

ADAM

Happy. *(Upbeat)* Same old, same old. *(Glancing around)* Gosh, today sure is...ah...you know...

EVE

Beautiful?

ADAM

Yeah, beautiful.

EVE

Like yesterday.

ADAM

Yesterday was really beautiful.

EVE

And the day before that – that was beautiful, too.

ADAM

Probably. I get them a little mixed up.

EVE

Sometimes I do, too.

ADAM

What do you think the weather will be like today?

EVE

Perfect.

ADAM

Yeah, I bet you're right. *(Beat)* It was really perfect yesterday.

EVE

Yeah. Perfect as perfect can be. *(Beat)* Paradise is great, isn't it?

ADAM

Really great.

EVE

What do you want to do today?

ADAM

I don't know. Worship, I guess.

EVE

I mean in between worshipping.

ADAM

We could rename the animals.

EVE

We've done that so many times, I'm beginning to get confused.

ADAM

Yeah, me, too. *(Beat)* I know. Let's lie down with the lion and the lamb.

EVE

I guess. But we went to sleep with the lion and the lamb.

ADAM

Then, frolic. We could frolic.

EVE

And gambol about. It'll be fun.

ADAM

Yeah. Really fun.

(THEY skip about, holding hands.)

ADAM

You ever wonder what it would be like if we weren't joyful and blissful 24/7?

(EVE stops skipping.)

EVE

What? Why would you ask such a thing?

ADAM

No reason. Just talking. You know, making conversation.

EVE

You aren't happy being happy?

ADAM

Of course, I'm happy being happy. Who wouldn't be happy being happy?

EVE

You've never asked such a thing before. Has something happened? You seem different this morning.

ADAM

Different good or different bad?

EVE

I don't know. Different. Is it me?

ADAM

No. Of course not.

EVE

How could it not be? I'm the only other person here. The only companion you have. Maybe you're getting tired of me.

ADAM

Hey, you're great. Okay? I can't think of anyone I'd rather be in Paradise with.

EVE

Something's different.

ADAM

I...ah...woke up early this morning.

EVE

I thought I heard something – like maybe you talking.

ADAM

That's right.

EVE

Who could you possibly be talking to?

ADAM

The serpent.

EVE

The serpent? You spoke with the serpent?

ADAM

Yeah. He stopped by bright and early. Asked for you. But I told him you were still asleep.

EVE

What did he want?

ADAM

It was the apple thing again. From that tree. The Tree of the Knowledge of Hot and Cold. Or whatever it is.

EVE

Good and Evil.

ADAM

Yeah, that's it. Good and Evil. Anyway, he said you were thinking about taking a bite of the apple.

EVE

I...ah...I might have told him that. You know, just so he wouldn't keep on about it.

ADAM

We're not supposed to have anything to do with that tree. Or him, for that matter. You know that.

EVE

I haven't done anything wrong—

ADAM

Yet. But you've been talking to him nearly every day. So, maybe it's you getting tired of me.

EVE

I...I don't go looking for him. He just always manages to show up where I'm at. And I'm not tired of you.

ADAM

I wouldn't blame you if you were. It's not like you picked me from a big group of Adams. I mean, I go to sleep one night, then wake up with a sore rib cage. And there you are. You had no choice.

EVE

I love being with you. I certainly wouldn't want to hang out with the fritz-el-bender all day.

ADAM

I think we changed the fritz-el-bender's name to "monkey."

EVE

Oh, yeah. But my point is – I could never get tired of you, Adam. Ever.

ADAM

I could never get tired of you either.

EVE

Anyway – the serpent...

ADAM

Oh, yeah. I talked to him for a while this morning.

EVE

And...

ADAM

Actually, he's sorta charming.

EVE

Oh, he's charming, all right. And persuasive.

ADAM

He even told me some jokes. God never told me a joke. Not one. With God, it's always do this – don't do that.

EVE

Hush! He'll hear you. *(Beat)* What jokes?

ADAM

Mostly elephant jokes.

EVE

Elephant jokes?

ADAM

(Laughing out loud) Yeah. They're great. *(Noting her dubious reaction)* I guess you had to be there. *(Beat)* And about this Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. What's that supposed to mean? We have knowledge of good—

EVE

And good is, of course, good.

ADAM

Oh, sure. Good is really good. But evil? We don't know anything about evil.

EVE

Why would we want to?

ADAM

I'm just saying to stick a tree in the Garden of Eden called the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, when all we know about is good, is kinda sneaky.

EVE

I don't know about that—

ADAM

It's not exactly something you'd expect from a Deity.

EVE

Shhh! Not so loud.

ADAM

Okay, okay. But stay with me a second – imagine you're the creator of this Paradise and you make a couple humans named Adam and Eve and tell them that anything goes, except they can't eat this so-called forbidden fruit.

EVE

Which is what happened.

ADAM

Yeah. But I'm wondering – would the creator want to create a couple of docile namby-pambies? I mean, he already made sheep. Sheep – is that what we're still calling them?

EVE

Yes.

ADAM

So, if I were God, I'd want to knock out a couple of critters who didn't cower and shake at my every little frown. I'd want creatures who were actually worthy of me. Of whom I could be proud.

EVE

But he said that if we disobeyed, we'd be expelled from the Garden of Eden. You'd have to work, and I'd have to bear children.

ADAM

Yeah, I know.

EVE

We'd also have to die. We wouldn't live forever.

ADAM

Well, I gotta tell you, some days - like yesterday, for instance - seem like f-o-r-e-v-e-r.

EVE

You didn't like yesterday?

ADAM

Of course, I liked yesterday. Who wouldn't like yesterday. *(Beat)* It just seemed endless, is all. *(Beat)* In a good way, of course. *(Beat)* Guess what I'm saying is — What if this serpent thing is a test? To see if we've got the guts to learn new stuff. Get new knowledge.

EVE

Like knowledge of Evil?

ADAM
Exactly.

EVE
But what if you're wrong?

ADAM
I've thought of that, too.

EVE
What do you mean?

ADAM
The serpent seemed to think you'd take a bite of the apple any day now. So what if you do? And God becomes furious and really does punish us? You know what would happen?

EVE
What?

ADAM
Your name would go down in history as the one who fell. The weak one. And if you talked me into taking a taste as well, you'd be branded a temptress. I won't let that happen.

(ADAM snatches up a concealed apple)

EVE
What are you doing?

ADAM
If anyone's going to take the fall, it's going to be me. I won't let you suffer the shame. And, if it is a test – like I suspect – everything'll be fine.

(As ADAM gets ready to take a bite, EVE grabs his arm)

EVE
Are you crazy? You can't do that!

ADAM
If I don't, you would. It's just a matter of time. *(ADAM quickly snatches the apple with his other hand and takes a bite. THEY glance furtively about, but nothing happens.)* This is pretty darn good.

EVE
Let me try a bite.

ADAM

No. Just me. Till we know for sure.

EVE

Whatever you say. Notice any difference?

ADAM

No. Not yet.

EVE

Smarter?

ADAM

Can't tell.

EVE

Stronger?

ADAM

I don't think so.

EVE

(Tickling him below the ribcage) More ticklish?

ADAM

No, I—

(EVE grabs the apple and takes a bite)

EVE

I'm not taking any chances. I don't want to be anywhere without you. If you're going to be banished, I'm going to be banished.

(SOUND EFFECT: THUNDERING BOOM)

ADAM

That doesn't sound good. *(HE looks up, pointing upward)* Uh-oh. Looks like a couple of angels heading this way. And they're not smiling.

EVE

I'm so ashamed. I can't face them. We should leave.

ADAM

Yeah. You're probably right. But I still think it could've gone either way.

EVE

Ah...you know, this is weird, but I'm beginning to feel a little awkward standing here naked. In front of you.

ADAM

Yeah, me, too.

EVE

I think I'll grab three fig leaves on our way out of Eden.

ADAM

Maybe I'll snatch up one myself.

EVE

Are you scared?

ADAM

Yeah. A little.

EVE

Me, too. No more perfection.

ADAM

Hey, even perfection wasn't always perfect.

EVE

But we're going to be miserable.

ADAM

Probably. At least part of the time anyway.

EVE

We may argue and have fights.

ADAM

I know.

EVE

We've never had a fight before.

ADAM

No.

EVE

What if we start growing apart? I couldn't take that.

ADAM

This is going to sound crazy, but I think – out there – we may become even closer. Love each other more.

EVE

How can that be?

ADAM

Because we'll know that every moment together is precious. Because we'll only have a limited number of them.

EVE

You think?

ADAM

Maybe.

EVE

I hope you're right. *(Beat)* No telling what lies ahead.

ADAM

But we'll have each other.

EVE

Yes. We'll have each other.

ADAM

Who knows? Might be one heck of an adventure. *(Beat)* But you know what I dread the most?

EVE

What?

ADAM

Having kids.

EVE

Whoa. Tell me about it.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE LEFT with LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT on the office of the Bureau of Alternate Realities. But this time the office is empty. After a moment, The BUREAU DIRECTOR steps into the light from off Stage Right and addresses the AUDIENCE.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

I'm sorry, Ladies and Gentlemen. We've had a bit of an emergency. Our intermodal teleporter broke down in Alternate Universe X3317L, and one of our Bureau observers unexpectedly ended up in a rather torrid relationship with Joan of Arc. *(Beat)* Don't worry. We should be able to handle it, but it will require my attention for about 10 minutes. In the meantime, please avail yourself of a snack and a stretch. You can chitchat and mingle and flirt – in other words, practice your relationship skills. And don't be alarmed if an odd stranger makes awkward conversation with you. It may be one of our Bureau researchers checking to see if you might be a good future test case. Then again, it might actually just be an odd stranger making awkward conversation. You decide. *(Beat)* I'll be back shortly.

(END ACT I)

ACT II; SCENE ONE

(AT RISE: LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT on the office of the Bureau of Alternate Realities. This time, The BUREAU DIRECTOR sits at his desk finishing up the report on the near Joan of Arc crisis. The BUREAU DIRECTOR looks up from his work and addresses the AUDIENCE.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

Just another moment. About finished with this report — *(HE returns to his paperwork, picks up a pen and signs the document)* There. *(HE rises, crosses to the filing cabinet and places the report in the lower drawer)* Thanks for your patience. I have to admit that was a close one. *(Closes the drawer and stands)* Joan of Arc was so broken up when our Bureau observer had to leave, we were worried. But she compensated by turning to religion – in fact, got all fired up over it. *(The BUREAU DIRECTOR opens the top drawer of the file cabinet, takes out a new file and glances at it.)* In our research travels, we made a rather unexpected discovery. It seems that couples who are fictional in one reality can be real in alternate universes. *(Beat)* Any fictional characters in our group today? *(Addressing a WOMAN in the AUDIENCE)* You, miss — are you real or fictional? *(In the event SHE says “fictional” The BUREAU DIRECTOR responds)* Well, that ought to save you a few bucks on dinner. *(In the event SHE responds “Real” HE responds,)* I'll say. *(Then continuing)* Moving on...Our next case is an older couple – fictional in your world but real elsewhere – who have to deal with a tragic issue from their past, which could have disastrous consequences. You could call them a pair of star-crossed lovers.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and ***LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT*** as Shakespeare's JULIET, in bifocals at the age of 64, enters a small den, glancing around and calling for her ROMEO.)

JULIET

Romeo! Romeo! Where art thou, Romeo?

ROMEO, *O.S.*

In the bathroom, dammit.

(SOUND OF TOILET FLUSHING)

JULIET

Sorry, dear.

ROMEO

(Entering) I've got to get more roughage.

JULIET

Problems?

ROMEO

The usual.

JULIET

A messenger came. He brought you a letter.

(SHE hands him a letter. HE opens it and reads it to himself.)

JULIET

What is it? Who's it from?

ROMEO

(Serious) Tybalt.

JULIET

Tybalt? My cousin Tybalt?

ROMEO

(Sarcastic) How many Tybalts do we know?

JULIET

How exciting! We haven't heard from him in years.

ROMEO

(Serious) Almost fifty.

JULIET

(Puzzled) But why now? After so long. *(Beat)* And why'd he write to you? I'm his cousin.

ROMEO

We're meeting at the pub. Tomorrow.

JULIET

Wonderful. I can't wait to see him.

ROMEO

Just me. Not you.

JULIET

But...but he's my relative. (*Beat*) And you hate Tybalt. Which I've never understood.

ROMEO

Doesn't matter. This is just between me and him.

JULIET

What? What's between you and him?

ROMEO

Unfinished business.

JULIET

What kind of unfinished business?

ROMEO

It's personal.

JULIET

Personal? How personal can it be? I'm your wife. (*Beat*) Let me read the letter.

ROMEO

No.

JULIET

Why not?

ROMEO

I told you.

JULIET

You're doing it again.

ROMEO

Doing what again?

JULIET

Shutting me out.

ROMEO

I'm not shutting you out. Do you let me read all your mail?

JULIET

No, but I would if you asked.

ROMEO

Fine. Go through my desk. Read everything you can lay your hands on. Or my diary – there's some great stuff in there.

JULIET

Don't change the subject. What I want to read is—

(SHE reaches for the letter, but HE quickly stuffs it in his pocket)

ROMEO

But not this. It's off limits.

JULIET

I never thought this would happen to us.

ROMEO

What?

JULIET

Keeping secrets. Growing distant. An end to romance.

ROMEO

This is not an end to romance. It's just a private thing between Tybalt and me.

JULIET

You know what you once said? – "What light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun?"

ROMEO

Yeah? Well, if I remember correctly, you said, "Parting is such sweet sorrow that I shall say good-night till it be morrow." Last night, you said good-night till it be 7:30.

JULIET

What happened?

ROMEO

I guess you got tired and wanted to go to bed.

JULIET
No. To us. What happened to us?

ROMEO
Nothing.

JULIET
Something happened. What was it?

ROMEO
(Shrugging) Age. Age happened. We grew old. It's like what your father said to his cousin the night of the ball – "You and I are past our dancing days."

JULIET
Why should that change anything?

ROMEO
I don't know. Maybe there are just no more surprises. No new discoveries.

JULIET
I don't believe that. You can't know anyone that well. Did we just quit trying?

ROMEO
Do we have to talk about this now?

JULIET
Yes. We do. *(Beat)* Do you remember being under my balcony?

ROMEO
How could I forget?

JULIET
Where'd that passion go?

ROMEO
It's different now.

JULIET
Different?

ROMEO
Yes. We got comfortable...used to each other.

JULIET
That's all you can say? — We got used to each other?

ROMEO

If you woke up every morning to the most glorious day you can imagine, within a few months, you wouldn't even notice it. You'd expect it. Take it for granted.

JULIET

You take me for granted?

ROMEO

All I'm saying is that beauty – and passion – aren't self sustaining. After a while, they need something – a stimulus of some sort – a flaw, a rival, an imperfection, an interruption—

JULIET

Absence makes the heart grow fonder?

ROMEO

Perhaps.

JULIET

So, we'd care for each other more if we split up? Is that what you're suggesting?

ROMEO

No, it's not what I'm suggesting.

JULIET

Maybe what we had couldn't last. Maybe we were just a pair of star-crossed lovers.

ROMEO

It's just that we know each other so well...

JULIET

You just think we know each other that well.

ROMEO

It's been fifty years, Juliet. Believe me – we know each other.

JULIET

Remember the dance where we met?

ROMEO

Of course.

JULIET

My parents had arranged for me to marry Count Paris.

ROMEO

I know.

JULIET

Here's something you don't know — The reason I took up with you so fast was to defy my parents. I was ready to get involved with anybody as long as it wasn't someone they chose. You being a Montague made it even better.

ROMEO

(Taken aback) I don't believe you.

JULIET

Think back. I meet you for the first time, immediately fall head over heels for you and we get married the next day. Does that sound real to you?

ROMEO

It was real. You weren't masquerading.

JULIET

Are you sure? It was, after all, a masquerade ball. *(Beat)* I was only fourteen. For me, it was a game of pretend.

ROMEO

(Shaken) Then...then why have you stayed with me?

JULIET

I don't know. Maybe you're right — I got used to you. It was comfortable. No surprises.

(ROMEO paces)

ROMEO

Oh! I am Fortune's fool. *(Reaching a decision)* I have a surprise for you, too. After I declared my love for you under your balcony – and you pretended to return it – Mercutio was killed in a duel.

JULIET

What? Mercutio? Your best friend Mercutio? I thought you said he was in Dusseldorf.

ROMEO

No. He's dead.

JULIET

What happened?

ROMEO

The next day, one of your relatives challenged me to a duel. Because of you, I refused to fight. But he wouldn't let it drop. Mercutio accepted in my place and was killed. *(Beat)* And I did nothing to avenge his death.

JULIET

Who was it? Who would do such a thing?

ROMEO

Tybalt.

JULIET

That's not possible.

ROMEO

When my father died last month, and I could bring no shame on him, I challenged Tybalt to meet me. A duel. He accepted. I'll finally have satisfaction for Mercutio's death. *(Holding up the letter)* And now you know what's in the letter.

JULIET

This is a trick. You're getting even with me for what I said.

ROMEO

It's no trick. Tybalt is a murderer.

JULIET

No!

ROMEO

Yes.

JULIET

But, Romeo, it was a duel. You said so yourself. They were both young and hotheaded. What he did was wrong. But Murderer? To name him Murderer? Murderer is not hand nor foot nor any part of my cousin Tybalt.

ROMEO

Nevertheless...

JULIET

You can't do this. It would turn our life into a tragedy.

ROMEO

I'll have my justice. I should have done it back then – when it happened.

JULIET

Don't say that. It would have been even worse. We would have had to sneak away, maybe trick our families into thinking I was dead, like with a magic potion. And what if you didn't realize and thought I was actually dead. You'd probably kill yourself in despair, maybe take some poison. I'd awake to find you dead and be so distraught that I'd stab myself to death with your dagger. That's the kind of thing that can happen.

ROMEO

You're being overdramatic.

JULIET

It would have been a tragedy then. It would be a tragedy now. And tragedies always end in death.

ROMEO

And comedies end in a marriage. Would you call our life together a comedy?

JULIET

We've had more than our share of laughs. From the very first. Remember when we started giggling so hard during our wedding vows that Friar Lawrence refused to pronounce us "Man and Wife" till we "acted like adults"?

ROMEO

(Smiling) Yes. That made it even worse. It took us ten minutes to stop snickering.

JULIET

Then, when we were finally married, we drank a toast. You got so tickled, you blew mead out your nose. And remember last year – at the ball...

ROMEO

I dressed up like you, and you like me, and we went as Romiet and Julio.

JULIET

Please don't go through with this. Don't turn our comedy into a tragedy.

ROMEO

I've already challenged him.

JULIET

If you kill Tybalt, I'll be devastated. But if Tybalt kills you, I'll be inconsolable. I won't be able to go on.

ROMEO

I doubt that. You only married me to spite your parents.

JULIET

I made that up.

ROMEO

What?

JULIET

To get you to tell me about the letter.

ROMEO

You deliberately deceived me? Have you now become a liar?

JULIET

I probably was defying my parents a little at first...But not after you appeared under my balcony. So, perhaps I stretched the truth a little. But liar? Such a harsh name—

ROMEO

What name would you prefer? That which we call a liar by any other name would be just as deceitful...

JULIET

Call me whatever you like, but don't meet Tybalt.

ROMEO

I will meet him.

JULIET

Then take me with you.

ROMEO

I won't hide behind a woman's skirts.

JULIET

I'll wear pants.

ROMEO

You know what I mean.

JULIET

You're 65. You both should be more concerned about your prostates than having a sword fight in a tavern.

ROMEO

Using you to avoid a confrontation would be cowardly.

JULIET

It would not be cowardly. It would be noble. And romantic.

ROMEO

Romantic?

JULIET

Yes. You'd be doing it for me – for our golden anniversary.

ROMEO

That's not fair.

JULIET

Fair or not – it's what I want. *(Beat)* I've never asked for anything. For fifty years. Till now. Would you deny me this? Because if you would, it would be another new discovery about you – that you're selfish and narcissistic.

ROMEO

(Slowly smiling) My God, you're a scheming wench.

JULIET

Yes, I am. Surprised?

ROMEO

No. I've been aware of that capacity of yours for some time.

JULIET

So, you'll take me?

ROMEO

(Considering) You realize what will happen if he makes one crack about my valor—

JULIET

If he does, I'll challenge him to a duel myself. He's hot-blooded, but he'll back down from me. And apologize. And restore peace between our houses. Which is what our fathers always wanted. *(Beat)* So I'll go?

(ROMEO smiles ruefully and kisses her)

ROMEO

Happy Anniversary.

JULIET

Good. It's settled. Now, there's just one other thing—

ROMEO

One other thing? My God, isn't this enough? First, against my better judgment, you—

(JULIET puts a finger to her lips to silence him)

JULIET

We vow to find ways to make our love stronger as we grow older. Do you promise?
(ROMEO does not respond) Well, do you?

ROMEO

Yes.

JULIET

You have to believe we can do it.

ROMEO

Get better with age? Why not? It works with wine.

JULIET

We'll talk more. And laugh more. Maybe we can rediscover the romance.

ROMEO

Ahh...the romance. I was once an incurable romantic. *(Beat)* Did my heart love till now? Forswear it sight.

JULIET

(Smiling) I remember when you said that. It was a long time ago.

ROMEO

I'm saying it again now – for I never saw true beauty till tonight.

(ROMEO caresses her cheek)

JULIET

(Smiling) Nice start.

ROMEO

We're just out of practice. You'll see. We'll become an example for all couples. And when we're gone, our love will be remembered. The poets will write of us —

"For never was a happier story yet...

Than this of Romeo and his Juliet."

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE LEFT)

ACT II; SCENE TWO

(LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT. The BUREAU DIRECTOR sits on top of his desk reviewing a new file.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

(To AUDIENCE) Our Alternate Reality subjects come in all shapes, all colors and all sizes. Some are ordinary. Some are grotesque. Some are real dolls. *(Surveying the AUDIENCE)* Another impromptu survey — Guys, how many of you are currently involved with someone you'd describe as a real doll? *(HE raises his hand as an example)* Okay, how many with an inflatable one? *(HE raises his hand again as an example, then scrutinizes the AUDIENCE dubiously at the low number/lack of hands, even cocking an eyebrow and pointing at an AUDIENCE MEMBER or TWO.)* That's good. And a very wise display of discretion from several of you, I'm sure. *(Beat)* One of last week's groups was the complete opposite. In fact, three men actually brought their inflatables. Unfortunately we had to adopt a policy prohibiting this practice after one of them sprang a leak and we had to apply an emergency tire patch to her forehead. *(Beat)* Nevertheless, our next case is about dolls — but they're the real type.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT where a very rigid KEN doll stands alone in a room with a couple of wooden chairs. BARBIE, with stiff, jerky, mechanical type movement, enters the room and waves at him. KEN and BARBIE are only able to bend their arm and leg joints and their speech is very precise.)

BARBIE

Hello, Ken.

(KEN returns the wave)

KEN

Hello, Barbie.

BARBIE

Do you know what today is?

KEN

No.

BARBIE

You should.

KEN

Give me a hint.

An anniversary.

BARBIE

Anniversary? For what?

KEN

For us, silly. For when we first met. One year ago today. When Katie bought you at the mall with her birthday money and brought you here. To live with me. In my Dream House.

BARBIE

Okay.

KEN

Aren't you excited?

BARBIE

Ah...sure.

KEN

Then why don't you act like it?

BARBIE

Barbie, it's just a day.

KEN

Just a day? It's when we began our life together.

BARBIE

Fine.

KEN

Fine? Is that all you can say – fine? It's our anniversary. And you don't even care.

BARBIE

I do care.

KEN

Did you get me a gift?

BARBIE

No.

KEN

Flowers?

BARBIE

No. KEN

Chocolates? BARBIE

No. KEN

Anything at all? BARBIE

No. KEN

Not even a card? BARBIE

Not even a card. KEN

Then, are we going out? BARBIE

Unh-uh. KEN

Something's wrong, isn't it? BARBIE

Nothing's wrong. KEN

You haven't been yourself lately. You seem depressed. BARBIE

I've had a lot on my mind. KEN

Is it me? BARBIE

No, it's not you. KEN

BARBIE

What is it? You should be able to tell me anything.

KEN

Nothing. It's nothing.

BARBIE

Our first anniversary and you're keeping secrets.

KEN

It's not like that.

BARBIE

Then what's it like?

KEN

Let it drop.

BARBIE

Whatever it is, we can get through it together.

(HE shakes his head)

BARBIE

If you don't tell me, I'll never speak to you again. I swear. *(KEN remains silent)* You know what you are? An oafish swine.

KEN

Don't say that.

BARBIE

Oafish swine...oafish swine...oafish swine...oafish—

KEN

Stop it.

BARBIE

Then tell me what's been bothering you.

KEN

You don't want to know what's bothering me.

BARBIE

If you can't trust me with your innermost thoughts – your dreams and disappointments – maybe we don't belong together after all.

KEN

(Resignedly) Okay. Fine. I'll tell you. But don't say I didn't warn you. *(Beat)* It's about us.

BARBIE

I knew it.

KEN

It's not what you think.

BARBIE

Then what? What about us?

KEN

You ever wonder why we never have sex?

BARBIE

(Relieved) Is that what's bothering you? You know why. It's because we don't have that kind of vulgar relationship.

KEN

No, Barbie. It's because we don't have genitalia.

BARBIE

That's crazy talk.

KEN

I make a eunuch look masculine.

BARBIE

If it doesn't bother me, why should it bother you?

KEN

Plain and simple – we're dolls, Barbie.

BARBIE

Dolls?

KEN

Yes, dolls. We're only here for Katie's amusement. So she can play with us.

BARBIE

How can you say that? Katie loves us.

KEN

Wiggle your fingers. *(Beat)* Go ahead. Try to wiggle your fingers. *(SHE can only move her wrists up and down)* See.

BARBIE

I can do it. You're just making me nervous.

(SHE flaps her wrists again)

KEN

Dolls.

BARBIE

It's not true. It can't be. *(SHE dabs at her eyes with a tissue)* Boo, hoo, hoo.

KEN

Listen to yourself. Boo, hoo, hoo? Real people don't cry like that. And have you ever looked in the mirror? Really looked? That tiny waist. And enormous bust. Nobody looks like that.

BARBIE

Dolly Parton does.

KEN

Okay. But nobody else. Our bodies are acrylonitrile butadiene styrene and our heads are polyvinyl chloride. *(Beat)* Pinch yourself. *(SHE tries unsuccessfully to give herself a pinch)* Oh, wait a minute, you can't pinch yourself. Because you can't move your fingers. *(Beat)* Then poke yourself. *(Glaring at him, BARBIE tentatively jabs her arm with her hand)* Hard as a rock. Not soft like Katie – who's a real person. *(Beat)* Face it, Barbie. We're dolls.

BARBIE

If...if what you say is true – if we are dolls – what does that mean?

KEN

For one thing, it means having underwear permanently molded to my body. The same underwear for twenty years. God help me if I'm ever in a wreck. *(Shrugging)* Although, on the upside, I suppose I won't ever have to worry about erectile dysfunction or liver spots.

BARBIE

No, I mean, for us. What does it mean for us? For our future together?

KEN

I don't know, Barbie. But how can we trust anything? Happiness? Anger? Even love. Just phantom feelings. All illusion. I guess that's why the idea of an anniversary hit me so hard. It's just a pretend holiday. Just like we're pretend people.

BARBIE

Well, I don't care what you say – it's our anniversary. And that's important.

KEN

How can it be important? Nothing's real for us. Not even an anniversary. It's just arbitrary. 365 days? Why not 364?

BARBIE

We already missed that one.

KEN

Or 400? And what's it celebrate – longevity? Endurance?

BARBIE

No. Commitment. Loyalty. Love.

KEN

Our life is a sham. Meaningless. Empty.

BARBIE

Isn't there something that can make it worthwhile for you?

KEN

How can I ever forget that I'm just a toy? A plaything? What's there to look forward to but a life of utter apathy?

(A G.I. JOE DOLL enters dressed in combat fatigues and wearing an army helmet)

BARBIE

G.I. Joe!

JOE

Hey, Doll.

(BARBIE bursts into tears at the word "Doll")

BARBIE

Doll? Boo, hoo, hoo. Boo, hoo, hoo.

JOE

What's the matter? Sissy Boy Ken bringing you down?

KEN

This is none of your business! Am-scray!

JOE

Maybe I'll make it my business. *(To BARBIE)* I know what'll cheer you up, Babe. What say you and me go to the firing range for some budda, budda, budda? A little rat-a-tat-tat. I got some new plastic bullets.

BARBIE

I...I don't know.

JOE

Certainly doesn't look like you're having a good time with Mr. Glass-Half-Empty here. What do you say?

BARBIE

I...I suppose I could—

KEN

Get out of here, Joe. Leave us alone!

JOE

Be cool, Kenny Boy. Don't go getting your polyester pants in a pucker. Besides, I ain't talking to you. Conversing with the little lady here.

KEN

I'm serious! Beat it! You've got a lot of nerve coming around anyway. Especially today.

JOE

Oh, yeah? What's so special about today?

KEN

It's our damn anniversary.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE LEFT)

ACT II; SCENE THREE

(LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT. The BUREAU DIRECTOR stands in front of the file cabinet holding the final file.)

BUREAU DIRECTOR

(To AUDIENCE) If nothing else, here at the Bureau of Alternate Realities we've discovered that opposites attract. If you don't believe me, just glance around at the other people in your group today. *(More encouraging, almost adamant)* I mean it. Really. Look around. I'll give you a few moments. *(HE waits)* Amazing, isn't it? And the truly remarkable thing is that while you're thinking, "Good Lord, how did that person end up with him or her?" someone else is thinking the same thing about you. It's almost sweet, isn't it? *(Beat)* Our final case involves a couple of total opposites. As well as a little monkey business. *(Eyeing a man in the AUDIENCE and wagging a finger at him)* Now, now, sir, you're getting ahead of me. It's not that kind of monkey business. *(Beat)* This is one of my favorite Alternate Reality couples. In fact, the husband has become my role model. He's strong, independent-minded and a man of few words. A real man's man. Much like myself.

(LIGHTS DOWN STAGE RIGHT on the Bureau of Alternate Realities and LIGHTS UP STAGE LEFT on the inside of a primitive jungle tree house. In the center of the mostly bare room is a picnic table with two benches. On top of the table lay a hunting knife. JANE, in her mid-thirties, wearing a short skirt and top made from animal skin, sweeps the floor with a crude, homemade broom. TARZAN, also thirty-something, enters wearing a loincloth, grabs the knife and hurries towards stage right.)

JANE

Tarzan! Wait! Where are you going?

TARZAN

Out.

JANE

Again?

TARZAN

(Holding up the knife) Hunt.

JANE

But you promised to stay home with me today.

(TARZAN slowly returns)

TARZAN

Tarzan forget.

JANE

But you remember now, don't you?

TARZAN

(Nodding, conflicted) Tarzan remember now.

JANE

Good. We'll have a lovely day together. We can even play some games. You like games. *(Beat)* We could play Scrabble.

TARZAN

Tarzan hate Scrabble.

JANE

Okay, we won't play Scrabble. We can go for a nice, long walk instead. Or go swimming. Or just talk.

TARZAN

Ah...Tarzan also promise Cheetah.

JANE

Cheetah?

TARZAN

Cheetah wait Tarzan bottom tree.

JANE

Waiting for you for what?

(TARZAN holds up the knife again)

TARZAN

Hunt.

JANE

Cheetah! It's always Cheetah. I'm getting real tired of that blasted chimp.

TARZAN

Cheetah friend.

JANE

Yeah? Well, Jane wife. And Jane thinks you've been hanging out with the great apes way too much. In fact, you're starting to smell like them, and, believe me, that's not a good thing.

TARZAN

What wrong apes?

JANE

They're primitive.

TARZAN

What prim-i-tive?

JANE

Uncivilized. Uncouth. And a bit barbaric.

TARZAN

Jane not like Tarzan friends.

JANE

I like them fine. But you're a married man now, Tarzan. You should be spending time with your wife – not swinging on vines and having banana fights with a bunch of hairy primates.

TARZAN

Apes Tarzan family. Raise Tarzan. You want Tarzan only see apes Thanksgiving, Christmas.

JANE

That's not true. I don't mind if you visit them regularly. Just not every day. *(Beat)* Besides, you don't always visit your family. Most of the time, you just go to hang out with your buddies. Literally. Which I'm not sure I understand.

TARZAN

With apes, Tarzan smart. With Jane, Tarzan stupid.

JANE

You're not stupid. You're very smart.

TARZAN

So Jane say. *(Beat)* Tarzan go now.

JANE

Wait! Not yet. We need to talk.

TARZAN

Talk after hunt. Cheetah wait.

JANE

What if I weren't here when you got back?

Jane hunt?
TARZAN

No. What if I went away? For good.
JANE

Jane leave Tarzan?
TARZAN

Maybe.
JANE

Why?
TARZAN

Why not? You don't seem to particularly enjoy being married. In fact, I'd say you'd rather live with the apes. I mean – why'd you marry me in the first place?
JANE

Jane beautiful.
TARZAN

That was it?
JANE

Kind. Jane kind to Tarzan. And to apes.
TARZAN

I suppose I was.
JANE

Tarzan go now. Hunt.
TARZAN

(TARZAN turns to leave)

I'm pregnant.
JANE

(TARZAN freezes in his tracks)

Preg-nant?
TARZAN

Yes. You know – with child. Baby.
JANE

Like Simba. TARZAN

Exactly. Like Simba. JANE

When? TARZAN

Probably seven months. JANE

(TARZAN paces, lost in thought)

Child. Tarzan father. TARZAN

Yes. JANE

Tarzan have name. Boy. TARZAN

Boy? JANE

Boy. TARZAN

What if it's a girl? JANE

Boy. TARZAN

Okay. Boy. JANE

Tarzan take Jane see doctor. TARZAN

It'll be fine. JANE

TARZAN
No. Jane see doctor.

JANE
Really? Which doctor?

TARZAN
Yes.

JANE
Doctor...Doctor Yes?

TARZAN
No.

JANE
Doctor No?

(TARZAN shakes his head)

JANE
Then which Doctor?

TARZAN
Yes.

JANE
But the...ah...name of the doctor isn't "Yes."

TARZAN
No.

JANE
Then what exactly is the name of the doctor?

TARZAN
Ho-Too.

JANE
Oooh...the witch doctor.

TARZAN
Yes. That what Tarzan say.

JANE

Ah...maybe not Ho-Too. Maybe another Doctor. In the city.

TARZAN

Ho-Too primitive?

JANE

Perhaps a little.

TARZAN

(Concerned) What if Boy like Tarzan?

JANE

Of course, he'll like you. You're his father.

TARZAN

No. What if Boy be like Tarzan? Primitive.

JANE

I didn't say you were primitive.

TARZAN

Apes primitive. Tarzan ape man. That make Boy primitive.

JANE

Wow. You know what you just did? — Deductive reasoning. Flawed, but deductive reasoning nonetheless. *(Beat)* You were raised by apes, not sired by them. So that means you're not primitive like them. Boy will only share our traits.

TARZAN

Then what if Boy stupid. Like Tarzan.

JANE

You're not stupid. You're very smart.

TARZAN

Not smart like Jane.

JANE

I just have a larger vocabulary. A firmer grasp of the English language. I can read better.

TARZAN

That apropos nothing. Tarzan not smart.

JANE

What did you just say?

TARZAN

Tarzan not smart.

JANE

No. I mean before that. Did you say "apropos"?

TARZAN

Yes. Tarzan say wrong?

JANE

No. Where did you learn that word? Certainly not from Cheetah.

TARZAN

Tarzan find book of words.

JANE

My dictionary. You found my dictionary.

TARZAN

Start beginning. A's.

JANE

I am so impressed. You have no idea what a rare quality that is – to seek out new words just for the sheer joy of learning them.

TARZAN

Actually – also new "A" word – actually Tarzan learn words beat Jane Scrabble.

JANE

That's a good reason as well. And it certainly means you're not stupid.

TARZAN

(Shrugging) So Jane say.

(TARZAN and JANE stare at each other – a momentary impasse')

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes