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Product Code A0130-FC

GOAT DANCE

A Full-length Play in Four Scenes

by

GEORGE A. FREEK

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GOAT DANCE

A Full-length Play in Four Scenes by George A. Freek

CHARACTERS:

FREDERICK; *An Insurance Company Employee in his early 50's*

ALICE; *His wife, a nurse's aide about 40 years of age*

KURT; *Frederick's brother, also 40*

THE FATHER; *Frederick's father, neither moves or speaks*

THE YOUNG MAN; *a Civil Servant in his 20's*

SETTING:

Frederick and Alice's living room in their modest house in a Midwestern city with a population of about 160,000 people

ETC:

The role of "THE FATHER" may be "played" by a dummy/mannequin

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SCENE ONE

(AT RISE: FREDERICK and ALICE seated at a table playing checkers in their rather shabby living room. To stage left stands an upright piano. THE FATHER is seated in a chair on the opposite side of the stage. HE is dressed in a World War II army uniform. A stepladder leads to a conventional painting of a remote cottage hanging on the upstage wall. FREDERICK and ALICE stare at the checkerboard.)

FREDERICK

It's your move, my dear.

ALICE

Is it?

(ALICE, with obvious indifference, moves a checker piece)

FREDERICK

(Making a double jump) I get the feeling you're not concentrating.

ALICE

I was listening to the music next door.

FREDERICK

I don't hear any music.

ALICE

It sounds like our new neighbors are having a party.

FREDERICK

They're boors.

ALICE

How do you know that? Have you seen them?

FREDERICK

I don't need to see them.

ALICE

(Sarcastically) Extrasensory perception?

FREDERICK

Let me explain my logic, my dear. They're having a party, aren't they?

ALICE

It sounds like it.

FREDERICK

And so they have guests. Well, ninety per cent of all people are boors. Therefore, it stands to reason boors are among their guests. And if one associates with boors, ipso facto, one is a boor.

ALICE

Remarkable!

FREDERICK

It's just that I have principles higher than the rabble. I only respect the few people truly worthy of respect.

ALICE

Tell me. Who do you find worthy of this exalted respect of yours?

FREDERICK

(Thinks) For one, Hubert Hotchkiss.

ALICE

Your boss?

FREDERICK

And also my friend.

ALICE

What you call respect, some might call toadyism.

FREDERICK

Good grief! I'm above caring what other people think!

ALICE

And now, suddenly, you admire your boss! Frederick, are you in danger of getting fired?

FREDERICK

Don't be ridiculous. Hubert and I had lunch just yesterday.

ALICE

Who asked whom?

FREDERICK

(Uneasy) That doesn't matter.

ALICE

And who paid?

FREDERICK

(Irritably) Damn it, it's your move.

ALICE

Oh no! Now I have THAT to worry about!

(ALICE angrily moves a checker)

FREDERICK

You would do better to worry about your game. *(Executing a triple jump)* You lose again.

ALICE

And you're losing another job! What are we going to do if you're fired?

FREDERICK

I told you there's nothing to worry about.

ALICE

I wish I could believe that.

FREDERICK

My boss is not a fool.

ALICE

That's what worries me!

FREDERICK

(Ignoring ALICE's remark) He respects me. I think I could even say he admires me. He recognizes the superiority of my work.

(ALICE shakes her head in dismay, rises and crosses to the upstage ladder. SHE climbs the steps, moves the painting aside and peeks through a peephole that was hidden behind.)

ALICE

It looks like the neighbors are dancing.

(FREDERICK laughs)

FREDERICK

There! You see. I told you they were boors.

ALICE

You mean because they're actually enjoying themselves?

FREDERICK

(Sighing with pleasure) And now I think I'll smoke my cigar.

ALICE

How does it make you feel to know that no one wants to have anything to do with us?

FREDERICK

Magnificent! It makes me feel superior.

(FREDERICK lights his cigar and begins coughing)

ALICE

(Restoring the painting to its place and crossing back down the ladder) The doctors have told you that you won't last another year if you keep smoking those vile things.

FREDERICK

The doctors are all asses!

ALICE

So you don't believe you might be dying.

FREDERICK

My dear, I'll live to dance on your grave.

ALICE

You'd look very dignified doing that.

FREDERICK

Let me tell you something. I haven't worked all my life—

ALICE

Oh, you don't have to tell me that.

FREDERICK

—so that when I'm dead you can indulge in every vulgar pleasure!

ALICE

You know you're a very unpleasant man.

FREDERICK

Do you wonder why we're never invited anywhere?

ALICE

I just told you why.

FREDERICK

(Ignoring the interruption) I'll tell you why. It's because once you have a few drinks in you, you throw yourself shamelessly at the closest man, even if his wife happens to be standing between the two of you.

ALICE

Frederick, that is an awful thing to say.

FREDERICK

It's an awful thing to HAVE to say!

(FREDERICK crosses to a cabinet and pulls out a bottle of whiskey, pouring himself a drink)

ALICE

Now you're going to drink whiskey, too?

FREDERICK

When taken in moderation, it's a pleasurable consolation.

ALICE

Moderation! When can I expect you to pass out?

FREDERICK

Nonsense! You know liquor has no effect on me.

(FREDERICK takes a drink, suddenly staggers, putting his hand to his forehead)

ALICE

(Looking from THE FATHER to FREDERICK) You know you're becoming more and more like your father.

FREDERICK

Thank you.

ALICE

You think that was a compliment?

FREDERICK

Father has always been a quiet, philosophical man.

ALICE

So quiet and philosophical he never speaks. Except when he mumbles something about goats, dancing goats....

FREDERICK

Fond reminiscences! In the good old days he and mother used to raise goats.

ALICE

(Crossing to THE FATHER and tapping him on the forehead) Hello.

FREDERICK

Stop that! You're disturbing his ruminations!

ALICE

The eerie part of it is there's nothing wrong with him.

FREDERICK

Of course there's nothing wrong with him!

ALICE

I mean it's not as if he'd had a stroke or something. He simply prefers to sit there, in silence, staring off at God knows what.

FREDERICK

I told you! He is recalling better days. When he and mother led a model life; raising goats, playing checkers, dining on quail and white burgundy... But you probably can't understand the meaning of such simple pleasures.

ALICE

I can't understand the meaning of PLEASURE!

FREDERICK

They led an idyllic life.

(FREDERICK takes another swig of whisky, reeling slightly)

ALICE

Frederick, listen to me. You're not well. You must face that.

FREDERICK

Hogwash! I'm well enough to see through you, my love. My 'illness' is merely a product of your fantasies. You'd like to think I'm unwell, but let me inform you, I'll live to be a hundred, possibly two, and all my faculties will be in tact... *(Suddenly becoming faint)*...All my fatuities...in a sack...

(FREDERICK swoons and falls into a nearby chair, staring off vacantly)

ALICE

Frederick? Frederick! *(She crosses to FREDERICK and shakes him)* Oh well, like father, like son!

FREDERICK

(Slowly coming around) What happened? Did you strike me?

ALICE

You had one of your spells. You're unwell.

FREDERICK

Oh yes, I remember now. I was dreaming. Mother was playing the piano and I was dancing. Then, suddenly, someone else entered the room. Dressed entirely in white. I stopped dancing; then he came over and grabbed me and took me outside and nailed me to a tree...

ALICE

More of your Christ complex!

FREDERICK

Damn it! Don't you understand! I was done for, and I knew it! I had finally reached the end. Suddenly, everything was pitch black! I was looking into eternity and it was nothing but a black, emptiness! Alice, I'm afraid.

ALICE

It's about time you faced it.

FREDERICK

Life is shit!

ALICE

(Crossing to the piano) Why don't I play something for you?

FREDERICK

Yes. Play something...

ALICE

(Tapping out the opening notes of Chopin's "Funeral March") How's this?

FREDERICK

How about something a little more lively? I want to dance. Come on, play something full of energy, full of vigor! *(In a state of nervous agitation HE begins spinning around the room, 'dancing')* Come on, play...play...

(FREDERICK once again collapses into the chair, out of breath)

ALICE

You're pathetic. I think it's time we thought about dinner.

FREDERICK

Yes. A good piece of meat will make us both feel better.

ALICE

(Salaciously) I'm sure it would.

FREDERICK

I'm ravenous.

ALICE

We're having tuna fish.

FREDERICK

(Pause) Life is shit.

ALICE

Quiet. Listen.

(ALICE once again crosses to the ladder, climbs the steps, tilts the painting and peeks through the peephole) I think that's Chopin they're playing now.

FREDERICK

The phonies! They can't appreciate him.

ALICE

(Crossing down again) Maybe you're right. Some of the guests do look like creatures out of a Bosch painting.

FREDERICK

The more intelligent ones, I'm sure!

ALICE

I'll go make the tuna casserole.

FREDERICK

One minute, my sweet. I have a surprise for you.

ALICE

Another one?

FREDERICK

We're having a visitor.

ALICE

Don't make me laugh. I couldn't stand it.

FREDERICK

I'm serious.

ALICE

Oh, I understand. You invited your boss over, hoping he won't fire you.

FREDERICK

As a matter of fact, I got a call from my bother, Kurt. He's coming.

ALICE

Kurt? Why would Kurt want to come here? He hasn't been to see us in almost twenty years.

FREDERICK

Is that my fault?

ALICE

Yes! You were so rude to him the last time he said he'd NEVER come back.

FREDERICK

He understood I was only giving him honest criticism.

ALICE

Then you mean... he really IS coming?

FREDERICK

Hmmm! I see you're pleased.

ALICE

He was here at the time our daughter was born.

FREDERICK

YOUR daughter!

ALICE

Please don't start that again, Frederick. By the way, didn't you tell me Kurt had picked up some money some how?

FREDERICK

Probably out of someone else's pocket.

ALICE

Listen, if we really are having company, don't you think it would be a good idea if you shaved and put on a clean shirt?

FREDERICK

Well, my love, I must say you suddenly seem very animated. But then it isn't every day one of your former lovers comes to visit, is it?

ALICE

Don't be silly. It isn't every day ANYONE comes to visit.

FREDERICK

Well, I wasn't born yesterday. Just remember that.

ALICE

(SHE looks at him) How could I forget it? Now listen, go put on a clean shirt. And try to be nice. After all, he is your brother. *(SHE kisses him on the cheek then wipes her lips)* And remember to shave.

FREDERICK

All right. But don't think I'll toady to my brother just because he's got a little money now!

(FREDERICK exits)

ALICE

My God...Kurt! Is he really coming? I feel like playing the piano. *(SHE Crosses to piano and hits a few keys)* Out of tune, naturally. I wonder if Kurt is married. Frederick didn't mention a wife. *(Suddenly the DOORBELL RINGS. ALICE freezes in fear.)* Kurt! *(The DOORBELL RINGS again. ALICE shakes herself free, crosses to the door and opens it. SHE immediately ushers THE YOUNG MAN in. HE looks very uneasy.)* It's been so long. I don't know what to say. How do I look?

THE YOUNG MAN

Excuse me, but I think you made a mistake...

(FREDERICK re-enters the room with shaving cream on his face)

FREDERICK

What the hell is going on here!

THE YOUNG MAN

I'm afraid there's been a mistake, sir. I'm with the IRS.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE TWO

(LIGHTS UP several hours later. THE FATHER remains stiff in his chair; ALICE stands by the piano. FREDERICK'S BROTHER KURT sits in a chair and FREDERICK stands nearby with a glass upraised in his hand, ready for a toast.)

FREDERICK

Kurt, I give you my wonderful wife.

ALICE

How wonderful! Kurt, will you take me?

(KURT and FREDERICK look awkward at ALICE's joke)

FREDERICK

(Recovering) Nevertheless, that was a wonderful dinner, my love.

KURT

Yes. It was an excellent tuna casserole, Alice.

(THEY drink)

ALICE

But it was your champagne that made it so good, Kurt. Wasn't it, Frederick?

FREDERICK

(Grudgingly) It was a very decent vintage.

KURT

Thank you, Frederick.

FREDERICK

Of course I've had better.

ALICE

Not in the forty years I've known you.

KURT

(Laughing) Let's not say another word about it.

FREDERICK

That's a very good idea.

ALICE

I might bring it up one more time.

FREDERICK

(Ignoring her remark and taking a seat) Well, Kurt, I hope we've made you feel welcome in our home.

KURT

Yes. Thank you both.

FREDERICK

Good. So then may I ask what you're doing here?

ALICE

Frederick! That was terribly rude even for you!

KURT

It's all right, Alice, I know Frederick.

FREDERICK

By that, Kurt, I assume you mean that you know my honesty and respect it.

KURT

(Laughs) Well, something like that.

ALICE

But Kurt, won't you tell us something about yourself. We heard you made some money.

FREDERICK

Nothing disreputable, I hope.

KURT

Why Frederick, you're not accusing me of dishonesty, are you?

FREDERICK

No. But I hope my faith isn't misplaced.

ALICE

Frederick, for heaven's sake!

FREDERICK

Kurt, I'm very happy if you've made something of yourself, and I know father is also.

KURT

(Looking at THE FATHER in dismay) It's time to talk about that, I think, Frederick. How long has he been like this? I feel as if he's only half-alive.

ALICE

You're giving him too much credit.

KURT

What have the doctors told you?

FREDERICK

The doctors! They are all fools!

KURT

What do you mean by ALL! Surely—

FREDERICK

I mean every one of them! Father has many good days, believe me...

ALICE

Yes, he does.

FREDERICK

Excellent days!

ALICE

And this is one of them.

KURT

Good God! You can't be serious!

ALICE

First it was dizzy spells. Then he began to sit for hours on end in a kind of semi-conscious state, staring into nothingness—

FREDERICK

Deep in thought!

KURT

But Frederick, haven't you tried to find some place where they can care for someone in his condition?

FREDERICK

(Rising abruptly, tipping over his chair) He belongs here! I owe it to him because of the fine example he set for me. Damn it, man, can't you remember what an exemplary marriage he and mother had!

(FREDERICK suddenly seems dizzy again wandering aimlessly, as if looking for a chair).

ALICE

(Picking up his chair) Calm down, you're over-exciting yourself.

KURT

(As FREDERICK finally stumbles into his chair) Frederick, are you all right?

FREDERICK

Of course!

KURT

Is there anything I can do for you?

FREDERICK

Yes. Get me a glass of whisky.

KURT

Whiskey! *(HE looks at ALICE)*

ALICE

(SHE shrugs as if to say 'What can I do'?) It's over there.

KURT

Good God, I had no idea!

(He pours FREDERICK a glass of whisky)

ALICE

That's right. He's a drunk, too.

FREDERICK

(As KURT hands him the whisky) Thank you, Kurt. You've been a good brother, in spite of everything.

KURT

(To ALICE) Shouldn't we call a doctor?

ALICE

You'd have to call another planet to find one he hasn't alienated.

KURT

But what about an emergency room?

FREDERICK

Nonsense! It's just a slight dizzy spell, Kurt. I'm fine now. Let me tell you, when the two of you are six feet under, I'll still be dancing. Now then, what were we discussing before you both over-reacted to a slight case of indigestion?

KURT

(Dazed) I can't even remember.

FREDERICK

Well then, pull up a chair beside me and let's have a good talk. It isn't every day you have the opportunity of talking to me, and how about a cigar? (*HE takes one for himself*)

KURT

No thank you, Frederick. I don't smoke.

FREDERICK

Oh yes, I forgot. The smoke was always too much for those delicate lungs of yours. You know, Kurt— if I may say something, brother-to-brother.

KURT

Of course.

FREDERICK

You're just a bit pathetic. (*HE lights the cigar, coughs*) These cigars are one of my last remaining pleasures. (*HE coughs badly*) But life really is a lot of shit. Don't you agree?

KURT

No, Frederick, I'm afraid I must disagree with you.

FREDERICK

YOU would! But enough philosophizing.

KURT

Listen, Frederick, there is something I'd like to discuss with you....

FREDERICK

What is that?

KURT

It's about your daughter, Judith.

FREDERICK

(Instantly forbidding) Never mind her.

KURT

You refuse to say anything about her?

ALICE

She never had a husband, Kurt. At least she was spared that.

FREDERICK

All right, Kurt, if you must know, I'll enlighten you. She disgraced us. And so I refuse to permit her name mentioned in my house. Now, does that satisfy your curiosity? (*ALICE crosses to the piano and begins to strike a few desultory notes*)

KURT

I'd like to know how Judith disgraced you, as you put it.

FREDERICK

First, perhaps you'll tell me something.

KURT

I will, if I can.

FREDERICK

Why all this interest in... *(He points at ALICE)*...her daughter?

KURT

HER daughter! What does that mean?

ALICE

Please, Kurt, you'd better drop it. You'll only make him angry.

(FREDERICK begins pacing which ALICE underscores with a single note rhythm on the piano)

FREDERICK

I'll tell you this, Kurt. It's a miracle I still have my sanity! God knows what might have become of a weaker man. While living alongside this common trash which calls itself humanity, I have tried to survive with dignity and integrity. *(HE stops, looks grimly at KURT)* Kurt, did you know that at one time men killed game by the strength of their bare hands?

ALICE

Frederick does everything with his bare hands, Kurt. It's part of that famous dignity.

FREDERICK

(Turns on her) Quiet, Hyena!

KURT

(Shocked) Frederick!

FREDERICK

Well, there you have it! She's jealous of me! Of my strength of character, of my pride!

ALICE

Don't forget your dignity.

KURT

But what does Judith have to do with all this?

ALICE

All right, Kurt, I've listened to enough of his pathetic boasting. Now I'll tell you the truth. For one thing, he can't hold a job. No one can tolerate his ludicrous arrogance. So I've been forced to take a job at the hospital, the lowest job they have. And yet I still bring home more money than him. Of course a trained monkey could do that. But still, every month I have to beg the grocer for a few scraps of meat to tide us over—

KURT

My god!

FREDERICK

The grocer is a pig.

ALICE

There you have it, Kurt. The whole truth! Such is our life.

KURT

I hardly know what to say.

FREDERICK

(Looking for some leverage over ALICE) Come, come now, we all know what life is, I think. But do you know, Kurt, it really is good to see you again. After all, we are brothers. I think we can still get drunk together. *(HE picks up the bottle and drinks directly from it)* Do you know, I still sometimes get melancholy when I think of the wonderful life mother and father shared. But then, in spite of everything, Alice and I have had our moments, too, haven't we, my love?

KURT

I certainly hope so.

FREDERICK

Oh yes. A few years ago we spent a weekend in Fort Wayne. Now there is a cultured and elegant city. And what superb restaurants! The pheasant, the veal, the quail! No, it hasn't all been a living hell, has it, my sweet? Come on, Kurt! Share a drink with me.

(HE drinks then passes the bottle to KURT)

KURT

(Staggered) You know I think I AM ready for a drink.

FREDERICK

That's it! Be a man, for once. Alice, bring us a snack.

ALICE

We had the 'snacks' for supper.

KURT

(Pulling out his wallet) Look, why don't I buy a little something?

ALICE

No, no, Kurt, that's not necessary.

KURT

Please. After all, you fed me supper.

(KURT tries to hand her some cash; SHE initially balks)

ALICE

Kurt, I'm so ashamed.

KURT

It's the least I can do.

FREDERICK

He's right. Go on, my dear. Take it.

ALICE

(Accepting the money) Kurt, I want to thank you for bringing a little light into this black hole.

(SHE exits to the outside, giving KURT a surreptitious kiss as she does so, which FREDERICK observes. A rather lengthy and uneasy silence follows.)

KURT

(Clearing his throat) Frederick, may I say something?

FREDERICK

I suppose you're disturbed by my blunt honesty.

KURT

Well, I'm telling myself you have reasons for what you do.

FREDERICK

For one thing, life is a manure heap.

KURT

And I can see conditions here are not the best.

FREDERICK

Well, I have a wife. What do you expect?

KURT

So it's all her fault?

FREDERICK

Of course!

KURT

Why is that?

FREDERICK

(Taking a huge swig of whisky) For one thing, she drinks like a fish.

KURT

ALICE does! That surprises me.

FREDERICK

Yes, it is surprising, considering she is the happiest woman alive.

KURT

She is?

FREDERICK

I see you know nothing about women. They are only happy when they can deceive and torment a man, making his life a living nightmare. And so, by that law, Alice is the happiest of a rotten lot.

KURT

Tell me, have you ever heard the saying 'Do Unto Others...'

FREDERICK

Absolute drivel! For weaklings! And I'm sure you've already noticed she can't keep her hands off men.

KURT

(Blushing slightly) But you can't convince me Alice would actually be unfaithful.

FREDERICK

If not, I'm quite certain she could convince you.

KURT

Perhaps we should change the subject.

FREDERICK

Nothing would make me happier.

KURT

You said something about your job. You claimed you were doing well.

FREDERICK

Why be modest? I'm doing extremely well. My task is to interview prospective employees.

KURT

That sounds like a responsible position.

FREDERICK

The boss finds my methods revolutionary. In fact, I'm writing a book on the subject which, if I must say it myself, is destined to become a classic. I'm calling it THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERVIEWING.

KURT

Then you really are doing well. I'm glad to hear it. Alice gave me a different impression.

FREDERICK

That's another thing about her. She's become extremely envious of me. Her own husband!

KURT

But Frederick, listen, we need to talk about your daughter—

FREDERICK

(Slamming his fist on the table) Damn it, she's ALICE's daughter! Listen, Kurt, I want to ask you a question. Have you noticed most people are vulgar scum?

KURT

I see you're still in love with humanity.

FREDERICK

How can one be in love with villains and jackasses?

KURT

Well, I ought to tell you that I've become a Christian, and I believe God loves us all.

FREDERICK

He has a strange way of showing it.

KURT

He works in mysterious ways.

FREDERICK

Rubbish! Such idiotic comments are like putting blinders on a horse in a storm! *(HE rises looking melancholy)* Ah, Kurt, what happened to the good old days? Surely you can remember them, too. I recall mother and father leading a model life. They knew what it was like to be truly happy. *(HE turns to THE FATHER)* Do you?

KURT

(Astounded) They did?!

FREDERICK

What serenity, what bliss! Sitting by the checkerboard, listening to the peaceful bleating of the goats, with an occasional tune on the piano; soft, quiet and soothing....

KURT

I think you're fantasizing.

FREDERICK

Damn it, man! We're staring at the end. It's the last stage of the journey. The locomotive is rushing towards the station, and what do we see? A black void! And there is no escape! *(Suddenly, HE swoons again, reaching out his hand)* Kurt! Where are you! *(HE tumbles into a chair, staring vacantly)*

KURT

Frederick? *(HE crosses to FREDERICK and shakes him)* Frederick! Merciful Heaven! You really are ill! Frederick!!

(At that moment, ALICE enters from without carrying a large bag overflowing with groceries)

KURT

Alice, thank God!

ALICE

Good heavens, what is it?

KURT

Frederick! Look at him!

ALICE

(SHE glances at FREDERICK and then begins to put the items away) Oh. Is that all?

KURT

ALL!

ALICE

That's exactly how it began with your father.

KURT

Well... But shouldn't we call a doctor?

ALICE

He won't thank you for that, believe me. And he usually snaps out of it in a few minutes.

KURT

He blacks out like this, then he simply snaps out of it?

ALICE

That's right. So we might only have a couple of minutes to talk, Kurt. *(SHE sits on the sofa)* Come and sit beside me. There's a lot I want to ask you.

KURT

You know I seem to remember you and Frederick were in love at one time. Frederick once had a strong influence on us both. He seemed so strong.

ALICE

Yes, he fooled both of us. But it seems I'm the only one who's suffered for it.

KURT

Are things really so terrible?

ALICE

Worse! But I'd rather not talk about that now. Tell me about yourself, Kurt. What is your wife like? I suppose she's young and beautiful. Do the two of you have any children?

KURT

Alice, please! I'm trying to understand what's happening here.

ALICE

I'd think it was pretty obvious.

KURT

But Frederick keeps talking about mother and father's exemplary marriage. A delusion! They hid the kitchen knives from each other. And father...(Glancing over at THE FATHER) The man was a sadist. He used to make mother arm wrestle with him—

ALICE

So that's where Frederick got that idea! *(Walking over and looking at FREDERICK)* Kurt, have you ever seen anything as ugly as he is?

KURT

(Looks at FREDERICK) He is pretty ugly.

ALICE

Isn't he! *(Laughs)* Oh, it feels so good to laugh again. Kurt, I want to thank you for making me happy, if only for a moment. You know, I remember you used to think I was attractive when I laughed. But that was a few years ago, you probably don't even remember.

KURT

Alice, please, we really need to talk....

ALICE

I agree. *(She sits beside him again, taking his hand)* Yes, about so many things. You know I had a very strange dream the other night. I want to tell you about it—

KURT

(Pulling his hand away) Now?

ALICE

It was strange but very beautiful, too. I was standing in the middle of a field, and this field was covered with snow, but I wasn't sad. In fact, I was happy. I was excited, because I was waiting for something. Do you know what I was waiting for, Kurt?

KURT

(Barely paying attention to her) What?

ALICE

You!

KURT

Me! Oh, well, that's probably because you knew I was coming.

ALICE

And now you're here. Oh, Kurt...*(SHE takes his hand again)*... I won't be angry if you want to—

KURT

Alice, listen, can you tell me about Judith?

ALICE

(Irritated and upset) Judith? All right, Kurt, I'll tell you. Judith is dead! *(SHE points at FREDERICK)* And it is all that monster's fault!

KURT

Dead! No! What makes you say that?

FREDERICK

(Slowly rouses) Dance? Did somebody say something about dancing?

KURT

(Looks at FREDERICK) Dear God! I think I need another drink.

ALICE

A wonderful idea! Let's both have one.

(ALICE takes the bottle, drinks, then hands it to KURT who shrugs helplessly then takes a drink)

FREDERICK

(Stands groggily) Now what's this about dancing? You want some dancing, I'll show you what it means! *(HE stumbles about knocking into furniture)*

ALICE

I told you he'd snap out of it all too soon.

KURT

Shouldn't we try and get him to bed?

ALICE

That would only make him belligerent. Forget about him, Kurt. Let's you and I dance.

(ALICE puts her arms around KURT, finally inducing him to dance with her)

FREDERICK

You call that dancing! Come on, you weaklings!

(FREDERICK stumbles around, then falls into the chair again)

KURT

Alice! Look, he's out again!

ALICE

Thank heavens!

KURT

But—

ALICE

But it won't last forever. We haven't much time.

KURT

Time for what?

ALICE

For... dancing, Kurt! *(SHE laughs wildly)*

FREDERICK

(Mutters) Dancing... like the goats, yes, dancing...

ALICE

Let's oblige him, Kurt! *(SHE starts to dance with a bewildered KURT)*

KURT

Can this be happening?

ALICE

That's how I feel! Isn't it wonderful! *(SHE pulls KURT very close)* Oh, Kurt, I knew some day you'd come back for me, I knew it!

(Suddenly ALICE kisses KURT passionately, as LIGHTS FADE OUT)

SCENE THREE

(LIGHTS RISE on the living room, the following morning. KURT sits gloomily staring at FREDERICK who is sleeping on the sofa. THE FATHER remains as before. Shortly ALICE enters juggling an I.V. and a pot of coffee. SHE places the pot of coffee on the coffee table and then attaches the I.V. to THE FATHER.)

ALICE

I must say. You don't look very cheerful, Kurt.

KURT

(Shaking his head) Alice, I hardly know what to say. *(HE looks around the room)* It's rather gloomy in here.

ALICE

You're right. I suppose this IS a rather gloomy house. Well, maybe a little coffee will cheer you up.

KURT

All right. *(SHE pours KURT a cup of coffee)*

ALICE

And now, how would you like me to play something for you on the piano?

KURT

Good God no! You'll waken Frederick.

ALICE

You're right. We don't want him awake yet, do we? Oh, Kurt, it was really a wonderful night, wasn't! (*SHE tries to kiss him, but HE walks off uneasily*) What's this? This morning you seem as shy as a school boy. (*Giggling*) Nothing like you were last night. (*SHE laughs merrily*)

KURT

Alice, wasn't I a little drunk last night?

ALICE

Certainly not.

KURT

I wasn't?

ALICE

I think the word would be 'plastered!' (*SHE continues happily*) I'm afraid we all were.

KURT

I have the feeling I made an ass of myself.

ALICE

Oh, thank you!

KURT

But Alice, look, there is your husband!

ALICE

I know he's there, Kurt, but do I have to look?

KURT

I seem to recall he was in a jealous rage last night. That must mean he still loves you.

ALICE

That rage was simply due to his hurt pride.

(*Spotting a saber on the floor, KURT crosses to it and picks it up*)

KURT

My God! What's this?

ALICE

(*Laughing*) Oh yes! Frederick got very upset about the way you and I were dancing!

KURT

You mean...! Now stop fooling, Alice.

ALICE

All right. (*Approaching him*) Kurt, last night you were telling me you inherited all your money when your wife died.

KURT

Yes, poor Grace.

ALICE

Was she very much older than you?

KURT

That was unimportant. What I can tell you is that she was an incredibly good and pious woman.

ALICE

Many people become so in their old age.

KURT

I miss her very much.

ALICE

I think you mentioned she left you over eight hundred thousand dollars?

KURT

But believe me, there are things far more important than money. For instance, we read THE BIBLE together every night.

ALICE

(*Placing her hand on his arm*) That must have been very stimulating for you.

KURT

(*Nodding appreciatively*) I'm glad you can understand that, Alice.

ALICE

I can't understand why you didn't have any children.

KURT

(*A light dawning*) Oh yes... children!

ALICE

But maybe she was too old for...that kind of thing.

KURT

Alice, listen to me. Last night you told me your daughter, Judith, was dead and that Frederick was responsible! Before he wakes up, please tell me what you meant by that.

ALICE
You want to know what the monster did?

KURT
Before he wakes up, please tell me.

ALICE
Well, first he kicked her out of the house.

KURT
His own daughter!

ALICE
He didn't think so.

KURT
What do you mean?

ALICE
Well, he always thought Judith was my daughter....

KURT
Naturally.

ALICE
And yours.

KURT
What!

ALICE
He's always believed you and I had an affair and Judith was the result.

KURT
What a ludicrous idea!

ALICE
Yes, wasn't it... at that time.

KURT
My God! Is he insane?

ALICE
Well, really! Look at him.

(HE does just as FREDERICK lets out a loud snore)

KURT

And because of that insane delusion he drove Judith from the house?

ALICE

No, it wasn't entirely because of that. He also caught her in the garage making love to the mailman.

KURT

What! I don't believe that.

ALICE

And with a Mormon in the closet.

KURT

Alice! What are you saying?

ALICE

I'm saying Judith had a rather active love life. Of course, I can't help feeling Frederick and I were partly to blame. You see what life is like around here, so maybe that was Judith's way of finding love. Well, for what it was worth, at least she DID find it. Well, there you are, Kurt, now you know the truth.

KURT

But even so, why do you say she is dead?

ALICE

It was an airline accident. When Frederick kicked her out, it seems she went to Chicago. From there, we learned she'd bought a ticket for California, but we later discovered the plane crashed without any survivors! And now do you realize what a selfish monster he is?! *(SHE clings to KURT, sobbing)*

KURT

(Reluctantly comforting her) You do seem to have suffered a great deal.

ALICE

But thank God, that's all over now, Kurt! Because of you! *(SHE impulsively kisses him)*

KURT

(Recoiling and backing away from her) Alice, sometimes you get a look in your eye that is a little frightening.

ALICE

(Smiling coyly) You seemed to like it last night.

KURT

Last night! Alice, what actually happened last night?—

ALICE

Where do you want me to start?

KURT

I need to remember—

ALICE

Yes, that's right, Kurt! Let's remember last night and think about all the nights to come!

(ALICE tries to embrace him once again)

KURT

(Fending her off) Just a minute, Alice, now I'm beginning to remember things a little more clearly. Nothing happened last night, except I remember FREDERICK attacking you.

ALICE

You call that nothing?

KURT

It was you he went after with that sword.

ALICE

Yes, it was I.

KURT

It's beginning to come back to me.

ALICE

Yes, he attacked me, but you certainly helped give him the reason.

(ALICE successfully grabs him once again and the suddenly, from another room, A TELEPHONE RINGS)

KURT

Alice, I remember now! Last night you tried to seduce me right in front of Frederick!

ALICE

Excuse me, Kurt. I *tried*?

(THE TELEPHONE CONTINUES TO RING)

KURT

(Pause) I think your telephone is ringing.

ALICE

Perhaps you also remember that last night you wanted to take me away from all this, Kurt.
(Suddenly, FREDERICK lets out a groan and rolls over) You'd better keep an eye on him.

(ALICE exits as FREDERICK begins to come around)

FREDERICK

(Muttering in a semi-conscious state) Whore... slut...

KURT

Oh boy! I see he's off to a flying start!

FREDERICK

(Tossing restlessly) Dancing like the goats, eh, father? Just like the goats...

KURT

I don't think I want to know what he means by that!

(KURT, slightly repulsed, backs away from FREDERICK as ALICE enters)

ALICE

That was Frederick's boss. I'd say he's definitely finished at work.

KURT

He told me he was doing very well at his job.

ALICE

Was that before or after he told you he was Napoleon? Oh well, now that I'm finally escaping from here, I suppose I can almost pity him.

KURT

Everyone deserves pity, Alice.

ALICE

But everyone doesn't get it.

KURT

Alice, listen to me. Last night I made a terrible mistake.

ALICE

You did? And what do you mean?

KURT

It was all a misunderstanding, Alice. After all, we were drunk.

ALICE

Are you saying what I think you are?

KURT

(Quickly) But don't think I hold you entirely responsible.

ALICE

My God, Kurt! Are you a hypocrite, too!

(Before KURT can respond, FREDERICK awakens, looking miserable)

FREDERICK

(Looking around groggily) Life... is a pile of shit!

ALICE

Well, perhaps it won't be a problem for you much longer.

KURT

Alice!

ALICE

I thought that news might cheer him up.

FREDERICK

Did I hear the phone?

ALICE

Yes, it was your boss. I told him you were sleeping off a drunk. Naturally, he sends you his warmest greetings.

KURT

Alice, will you please try to show a little common decency?

ALICE

What? And now you're going to lecture me, Kurt?

KURT

No, no, I'm sorry. It's just that I think we have to call a doctor. *(HE looks from FREDERICK to THE FATHER)* For both of them!

ALICE

Do you know something, Kurt? I think you're a bigger fraud than he is.

KURT

Alice! I only want to do what's right.

ALICE

Your sanctimony smells worse than his hangover.

KURT

Listen, Frederick, I want to apologize for any wrongs I might have done you last night.

FREDERICK

(His voice now very weak) I accept your apology, Kurt.

KURT

(With a meaningful glance at ALICE) I'm beginning to understand that your state of mind isn't entirely your own fault.

ALICE

Well, well! Aren't men wonderful! Aren't they noble! Aren't they full of strength and honesty!

FREDERICK

Well, my dear, it's better you learned that late than never.

ALICE

Well, let me tell you, I don't need either of you sniveling cowards!

FREDERICK

There, Kurt, you finally see what she is really like! But you know, I think she deserves more pity than I do, because I DO have strength and honesty to rely on. And now, as I come to the end of my journey, I realize that more than ever before. And so I ask you, Kurt, for my sake, feel pity for her.

ALICE

My goodness, what magnanimity!

FREDERICK

A superior person can afford magnanimity.

ALICE

(To KURT, about FREDERICK) I'd be amazed if he can even SPELL it!

FREDERICK

Oh, believe me, I know I haven't always been charitable towards my fellow man.

ALICE

Now THERE'S an insight!

KURT

Alice, please. Can't you show him some charity?

ALICE

Tell me something, Kurt. Can it be I was really planning to run away with you last night?

KURT

I didn't hear that, Alice.

ALICE

(Louder) I said— Can it be true I was actually planning to run away with you last night?

FREDERICK

Hmmm.

KURT

(Quickly, to FREDERICK) I hope you don't believe that of me, Frederick.

ALICE

You know, Kurt, I believe even Frederick is preferable to you.

FREDERICK

(Weakly) Thank you, my dear. But there's no point in insulting Kurt. He can't help the way he is.

KURT

(Insulted, condescending) Thank you! And Frederick, Alice, I truly am sorry if I have done anything to offend either of you.

FREDERICK

There's no need to apologize, Kurt. I know how she leads men on. All my married life I've had to witness these deplorable exhibitions. I should probably be asking your forgiveness.

ALICE

Now that would be something new!

KURT

At any rate, Frederick, you have my forgiveness.

FREDERICK

Tell me, Kurt. Is it possible? Can there really be a God who cares about us miserable creatures?

KURT

Can you doubt it?

FREDERICK

At this particular moment, I'd rather not.

KURT

Well, Frederick, I think I can safely say I know him well.

ALICE

I can't take much more of this!

FREDERICK

If He's your friend, Kurt, pray to Him. Pray to Him for me.

ALICE

What an act! You know something. I don't think he's dying at all!

FREDERICK

(Suddenly in a much stronger voice) Harpy! You won't have to wait much longer!

ALICE

You see, Kurt, he's already reviving.

KURT

But Frederick, how did you ever get the idea there was anything between Alice and me?

ALICE

Aside from the fact that last night we were making plans to run off together.

FREDERICK

She herself told me you'd been lovers, Kurt.

KURT

She told you that!

FREDERICK

And that Judith was your child.

KURT

What!

FREDERICK

What was I to believe?

KURT

(To ALICE) Good God! Have you no shame! What kind of monster...

(KURT suddenly grabs the saber and stares at ALICE, who defiantly holds her ground)

ALICE

For heavens sake! Put that silly relic down! You know, Kurt, you really are making an ass of yourself!

KURT

But how could you tell him those things?

ALICE

Oh, I see! Suddenly you have so much faith in his self-proclaimed honesty that you believe anything he tells you!

KURT

(Weakening) Well...

FREDERICK

(Grabbing the initiative) Alice, listen, it's time to forgive and forget the injuries we've caused each other.

ALICE

Doesn't that sound high-minded?! But can you do it?

FREDERICK

Yes, I think I am big enough to do that.

ALICE

(Looks at his belly) Well, in one sense you certainly are!

FREDERICK

I really only have one regret. That I was foolish enough to believe all your lies and vicious insinuations. But I forgive you for them.

ALICE

(Curtseying sarcastically) You ARE generous! Under that hideous exterior there really IS a heart of gold!

KURT

Alice, try to show some charity!

ALICE

And how wonderful you are, Kurt!

KURT

No, I'm only a modest Christian, Alice.

ALICE

(Looking at his loins) You have much to be modest about, Kurt.

FREDERICK

(Rising suddenly, shaking his fist at her) Whore! Leave us in peace!

ALICE

(As KURT recoils from FREDERICK's outburst) Well, well, Kurt it looks like he's getting some of that famous strength back, doesn't it?

KURT

(Uneasily) Frederick, perhaps you should be trying to conserve your energy.

FREDERICK

(Falls back into the chair again, weak-voiced) You're right, and there's so little time. Kurt, we must talk. Alone.

(FREDERICK and KURT look at ALICE)

ALICE

That's all right with me. I've had enough of this charade. Would you like some more coffee? Or how about some dancing?

(ALICE crosses to the piano and plays a lively march)

KURT

(Glaring at ALICE) Frederick, I truly feel pity for you.

ALICE

Maybe you'd like Frederick to run away with you, Kurt?

FREDERICK

I only regret I let her turn me against my own daughter.

KURT

Then you do admit Judith is your daughter.

FREDERICK

SHE turned me against Judith. That Harpy!

ALICE

Oh no!

FREDERICK

(In a weak voice) Yes. Yes...

ALICE

(Controlled) That is simply not true.

FREDERICK

(In a much stronger voice) Yes! It is!

ALICE

No!

FREDERICK

(Bellowing) Yes!

KURT

Please!

ALICE

I simply won't stand for this. Frederick, you forced her to leave, and you always believed Judith was my daughter and Kurt's!

KURT

But I had nothing to do with it!

FREDERICK

(Weak voice again) You see now, Kurt? Life is shit!

ALICE

Well, at least Judith managed to get some pleasure out of life. How many of us can say that! And now I'll go make that coffee.

(ALICE exits)

FREDERICK

So now, Kurt, finally, you see what I've had to suffer.

KURT

Listen, Frederick, there's something I must tell you. It's about Judith—

FREDERICK

(Suddenly suspicious) Nothing to do with you and Alice, I trust.

KURT

Of course not! It's just that Judith isn't dead.

FREDERICK

Thank you for saying that, Kurt.

KURT

But it's true.

FREDERICK

I know. You're telling me she is living in a better place, that God forgave her sins. How I wish I could! But I'm sorry to say she *was* a tramp, Kurt. Unfortunately, she had Alice as an example. She was as lecherous as a goat, her mother's daughter....

KURT

And YOURS, don't forget.

FREDERICK

Hmmm. Kurt, you can see Alice has always made my life a living hell. And do you know why?

KURT

Frankly, I understand nothing of what goes on here.

FREDERICK

Then let me explain. She's always been jealous of the ideal life mother and father led.

KURT

Frederick, you're ill. I feel this is a time for total honesty. Mother and father hated each other.

FREDERICK

Nonsense!

KURT

They were at each other's throats.

FREDERICK

(Growing heated, rising from his chair) Don't be a blind fool! Those minor disagreements simply proved how much they respected each other's opinions! Let me tell you something, a little blood means nothing when people truly love each other!

KURT

(Looks at FREDERICK suspiciously) You seem to be feeling much better.

FREDERICK

Thinking of mother and father always cheers me up.

KURT

Good, because it's time we spoke frankly about Judith.

FREDERICK

I kicked her out, and I'd do the same today!

KURT

Even believing she is dead because of it?

FREDERICK

Me! Her death was the pilot's fault.

KURT

You find nothing in yourself to reprove?

FREDERICK

I do blame myself for one thing. I was too soft! I should have booted the tramp out of here years earlier!

KURT

I must say, Frederick, it does seem like you really are feeling much better. Do you still want me to pray for you?

FREDERICK

It can't do any harm.

KURT

Naturally, I'm happy to see you're developing some faith. I still have some hope for you, for your soul...

FREDERICK

(Suddenly rising up and pacing) Kurt, do you remember the goats?

KURT

What goats?

FREDERICK

The goats! Damn it! I'm talking about father's goats. *(FREDERICK continues to pace agitatedly)*

KURT

Frederick, for heaven's sake! You're becoming over-excited again. I think you should sit down.

FREDERICK

I mean the goats he raised in the back yard! They were foul creatures, weren't they? How they stunk! But father would stand at the window and stare at them with fascination! Look at them he'd say, the goats are dancing! Come look at the goats, they're beginning to dance!

(FREDERICK laughs grotesquely; KURT backs away as the LIGHTS FADE TO BLACKOUT)

SCENE FOUR

(AT RISE: Later that day. Lights up slowly on ALICE and KURT, who is now holding his suitcase.)

KURT

(After a rather lengthy and uncomfortable silence) Frederick has been at the doctor's office for some time.

ALICE

Are you so worried about him, Kurt, or are you just anxious to leave?

KURT

Alice, please....

ALICE

It's all right. I can't blame you.

KURT

Alice, I would like to say something. There's a very good chance we'll never see each other again.

ALICE

Well, this occasion has been so pleasant I can't imagine what the next one would be like.

KURT

What I want to say is this: can't we try to understand each other before I leave?

ALICE

You need have no worries about that, Kurt.

KURT

Thank goodness...

ALICE

I believe I understand you very well.

KURT

Alice, please. I'm talking about Frederick's sanity. This morning he gave me a demonstration of his famous dancing goats. He was making grotesques noises. I've never heard anything like that!

ALICE

He was probably just singing.

I'm truly afraid he has lost God.

KURT

You think so?

ALICE

Yes, I do! Will you promise to try and get him to church?

KURT

If Frederick has lost God, I'm afraid God will have to find Frederick all by Himself.

ALICE

Listen, Alice, I truly understand your bitterness.

KURT

That sounds very condescending of you, Kurt.

ALICE

I'm sorry, but what I'm trying to say is that we all let things get out of hand last night. But I, for one, am willing to forgive and forget. Now can you forgive me?

KURT

(Pause, looking at him) No, I don't think so, Kurt.

ALICE

Well, may I at least ask you one question?

KURT

You may ask.

ALICE

Why do you stay with him?

KURT

If you recall, I thought I was leaving.

ALICE

(Blushing) But all these years...

KURT

The answer to that is really very simple. After so many years of making each other miserable, neither of us could stand to see the other one happy.

ALICE

KURT

Can that be?

ALICE

You see if one of us did leave, we would be constantly fearful the other one might possibly enjoy some little happiness.

KURT

Then you prefer tormenting each other to happiness?

ALICE

(Shrugging) It seems so.

KURT

You know, Alice, I don't think you ever intended to leave. I think you and Frederick used me as a pawn in this vile...goat dance of yours!

ALICE

You can believe that, Kurt.

KURT

(Rather pleased) Then I'm right?

ALICE

If it relieves your conscience!

KURT

You led me on.

ALICE

You have no reason to feel sorry for yourself, Kurt. After all, YOU'RE leaving.

KURT

I'll tell you something, Alice, many years ago father tried to take mother's wedding ring off her finger. Finger and all, with a hacksaw! Shortly afterwards, mother suffered a stroke and we had to take her to a home, where she eventually became totally catatonic. And now I see father in a similar state. Do you understand what I'm saying?

ALICE

No.

KURT

Behind it all I see the hand of God. Now what do you think?

ALICE

(She stares at him) I think you're crazier than Frederick!

KURT

All right, Alice, I see you are also obdurate. But before you go, I need to tell you about Judith—

(Before KURT can continue, FREDERICK, suddenly enters from without)

KURT

Frederick! Thank heavens you've returned. Tell us. What did the doctor have to say?

FREDERICK

He was amazed by my condition.

ALICE

Aren't we all!

FREDERICK

He says I can expect to live another fifty years. Minimum!

KURT

(Dubiously) Well, that's wonderful, isn't it, Alice?

ALICE

Not if I really believed it!

FREDERICK

And on the way home, I stopped in at the office. I simply explained I had an appointment with the doctor. The boss is very pleased. I'm in for a raise.

ALICE

Because you had a doctor's appointment!

KURT

That's very good news, indeed, Frederick, but if I can say it, you have had a narrow escape, so I hope the lesson isn't lost on you. Please try to remember that God always manages to make his point.

ALICE

Kurt, now that you're leaving, will you do me a favor?

KURT

(Hopeful) What is it, Alice?

ALICE

Please take God along with you!

KURT

I think you both need Him more than I.

FREDERICK

Well, I can tell you both something! There are going to be some changes made around here.

KURT

Well, I'm very glad to hear that. I truly hope from now on you and Alice will try to make each other's lives a little more bearable.

FREDERICK

I plan to start taking more firm control. Now that I know I'm fit, I refuse to be a doormat any longer. Severe discipline is called for.

KURT

(Sighs hopelessly) Well, I think I'll be on my way.

ALICE

(Facetiously) I want to thank you so much for coming, Kurt. You've been a great comfort. And don't forget to say goodbye to father.

KURT

(Nervous again) Yes. Father. Frederick, listen, something really must be done about father.

FREDERICK

Nonsense! He's fine.

KURT

Frederick, try to understand, he's very ill. It looks as if he's barely alive....

FREDERICK

(Suddenly enraged, knocking over the table with the chess pieces) Be quiet, damn you! I'm making the decisions around here! Father is simply deep in thought. He is contemplating eternity!

(FREDERICK begins reeling once again as KURT rushes to steady him)

KURT

Frederick! Are you all right? Here, let me help you!

FREDERICK

(Shoves KURT away indignantly) Back, Worm! I'm fine! You know you always were pathetic, sniveling around like a damned puppy, and now, here you come, trying to take advantage of my generosity once again...

KURT

How can you say that?

FREDERICK

I'll tell you how! Everything I have I earned with my own two hands! I didn't inherit a fortune from some silly, superstitious old widow! Tell me something, my dear rich brother, how do you manage to look at yourself in the mirror?

KURT

My God! YOU can ask ME that!

FREDERICK

Now, now, I'm not being personal. But I would think your conscience might bother you. As a Christian and, therefore, a coward, I assume you claim to HAVE a conscience.

ALICE

Frederick doesn't have one. He's read Nietzsche.

FREDERICK

(Thunders) I AM Nietzsche!

ALICE

Sorry, I forgot.

FREDERICK

And now let me ask YOU something, my good Christian brother! What were you doing with my wife last night?

ALICE

(Scratches her head) That IS an interesting question.

FREDERICK

You strut into my home and then, behind my back, you try to steal my wife's affections? Is this more of that famous Christian charity I've heard you yammer about?

KURT

This is disgusting! Alice, I DO feel pity for you!

ALICE

You'd better save it for yourself, Kurt.

KURT

I have nothing more to say.

FREDERICK

And there you have him, Alice! In the supreme moment, he is not only a coward he's SPEECHLESS! If he weren't so far beneath me, I'd toss him out. Alice, YOU throw him out!

ALICE

(Looking at KURT) Perhaps he'd like to stay a few more days?

KURT

I won't stand for much more of this!

ALICE

I don't blame you.

FREDERICK

Well then leave! For heaven sake, put your tail between your legs and go! And the next time you try to make a fool of someone who is twice the man you are, remember you're a donkey! And if you can't accept that, simply go off and bray to yourself and leave the rest of us alone!

ALICE

A worm, a puppy, a donkey! It seems you're a walking zoo, Kurt!

KURT

All right! That's it! I've had enough!

(KURT grabs his suitcase)

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