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Married Not Buried

by Lew Riley

A Not Too Naughty Comedy

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THE CHARACTERS

GEORGE WELLS; a middle-aged man, trying to scratch his 20-year-itch

CLAIRE WELLS; George’s conservative, good-natured wife

FLORENCE FLETCHER; the Wells’ ultra-conservative, inquisitive neighbor

DARRIN DEVEREAUX; a cocky, young swinger

GRETCHELEN DEVEREAUX; Darrin’s attractive, ditzy wife

TODD WELLS; the Wells’ collegiate son

JOYCE MASON; Todd’s mature girl friend

JENNY SAWYER; Todd’s former girl friend

THE TIME

The present

THE SCENE

The entire action of the play takes place in George and Claire Wells’ living room

ACT I

Scene I – Sunday morning

Scene II – The following Friday evening

Scene III – Sunday evening

ACT II

Scene I – Next Saturday night

Scene II – Later that evening
Married Not Buried
by Lew Riley

ACT I; SCENE I

(AT RISE: Sunday morning, GEORGE and CLAIRE WELL’S living room. The room is nicely furnished; a sofa, which unfolds into a bed, center and to its right a chair and small table. On the table are a lamp, phone and answering machine. Downstage right is an exercise bike. The front door is located upstage right against the back wall and to its left is a closet. A bar with a mirror above is also located on the upstage wall and to its left is a window and further left, the exit to the kitchen. A fireplace, center left, provides a warm, cozy feel to the room. Nearby is a small dinette table with two chairs. There are doors both left and right to bedrooms off. GEORGE, a nice-looking, middle-aged man is seated on the sofa nervously reading a newspaper. He looks at the newspaper, shakes his head, looks back again and thinks for a moment. Then he rises, crosses to the phone and anxiously waits to talk.)

GEORGE
(Anxiously) Hello—yes, I called a couple of minutes ago—but, uh, we were cut off.... Yes, I do want to, uh, purchase your services.... My phone number? But you have my credit card number.... Oh, yeah, that’s right. Uh, 555-6168.... Huh?.... Uh, George; what’s yours? Oh. (Feeling a tad silly) Good-bye. Pandora.

(GEORGE hangs up, takes a deep breath, and holding the paper in one hand, lounges back on the sofa. His respite is short-lived, however. Hearing the front door opening, He quickly stands, remembers the paper, looks around, sticks the paper under a sofa cushion – just before the door opens and CLAIRE WELLS enters. CLAIRE is GEORGE’S trim, attractive, pleasant wife.)

GEORGE
Claire!?

CLAIRE
(Crossing towards closet) Who else?... (Hanging up coat) Missed my appointment.

GEORGE
But I thought it was for 10 o'clock.

CLAIRE
It was.

GEORGE
(Looks at watch) But it’s only 10:10.

CLAIRE
Correction. 11:10.
GEORGE

What?

CLAIRE

Remember the last thing I said to you last night?

GEORGE

Uh.... That was great, honey.

CLAIRE

Yeah, right. I haven't said that in years. (Frowning) What I did say was, don't forget to set the clocks forward tomorrow.

GEORGE

Oh yeah, Daylight Savings Time. I completely forgot.

CLAIRE

Obviously. (Crosses towards kitchen)

GEORGE

Hey, you forgot, too.

CLAIRE

(As exits) But I didn't volunteer to change all the clocks.

(As soon as CLAIRE exits, GEORGE hurries to the sofa, picks up the cushion, looks at the paper until he finds the number he wants, then grabs the phone and dials.)

GEORGE

Hello, Pandora. (Pause; frowns) Oh, Cleopatra. Look, I need to speak to Pandora – and hurry. (Fiddles with his watch) C'mon, c'mon! Claire re-enters with a glass of water, and George, thinking quickly, resets his watch with the phone resting between his ear and shoulder.

GEORGE

The correct time is 11:12 and 40 seconds. (Hangs up phone)

CLAIRE

(Checks her watch, then) Say, did you do something with the aspirin?

GEORGE

Got a headache?

CLAIRE

Still.

GEORGE

Still?
Remember, I had a headache last night.

Oh, I thought you were just faking.

Faking?

You know. To avoid some—

(GEORGE hits fist of right hand into palm of his left hand.)

That reminds me. You better renew your Viagra prescription.

Hey, I don’t need Viagra.

Coulda fooled me. I don't remember the last time, we—

(CLAIRE hits her fist against the palm of her other hand.)

Oh, come on, Claire.

I’m serious, George. It seems like ages.

(GEORGE frowns as CLAIRE sits on the sofa, directly above the spot where he hid his paper. It makes a noise when she sits. CLAIRE stands, removes the paper.)

(CLAIRE) George, are you buying this filthy thing again?

It's not filthy – it's sexy.

Sexy, huh? Look at these ads. (Reads) Inflatable rubber doll: 38-24-36. Has everything a real woman has. And she can't talk.... You find that sexy, George?

(Matter-of-factly) Not really.
How about this one? Cheerleaders' Massage Parlor. Free enema with ad.

What's wrong with getting a massage?

That's the last thing you'd get, I'm sure.

I wouldn't know.

(Warily eyes him) Sometimes I wonder. (Shakes head) How can these places stay in business?

A lot of lonely people out there.

A lot of perverts, you mean. (Turns paper over) What's this?

What?

866-X-T-A-C.

How would I know?

(Sounds it out) Ecstasy.... Oh, come on, George; this is obviously an ad for phone sex.

No idea.

Someone would really have to be perverted to pay for an obscene phone call.

(SFX: PHONE RINGS; GEORGE bolts to answer it.)

I'll get it!

(Surprised) George!
GEORGE
I'm expecting a call.... Hello? (Relieved) Oh hi, there.... It's Todd.

CLAIRE
(Smiles) Oh.

GEORGE
Toddski, what's up?... Oh, really? Terrific.

CLAIRE
What?

GEORGE
He's coming home next week.

CLAIRE
Great. (Frowns) He didn't flunk out, did he?

GEORGE
(Frowns back) No, he didn't flunk out. (Into phone) You didn't flunk out, did you?... Oh yeah, that's right. (To Claire) It's the end of the quarter.

CLAIRE
That's right; I forgot.

GEORGE
What's that?... Lemme check with your mother. (To CLAIRE) He wants to bring a friend home.

CLAIRE
Why not. We'd be glad to have him.

GEORGE
Her name is Joyce.

CLAIRE
Oh.... Fine with me. Todd can sleep on the sofa bed.

GEORGE
No problem, son.

CLAIRE
Ask him how his classes went.

GEORGE
Okay, okay. (Instead, into phone) Did you see that perfect game on TV last week?.... Yeah, wasn't that great. First one I've seen.
(A frustrated CLAIRE throws up her hands and with nothing better to do begins leafing through GEORGE’s “paper.”)

GEORGE
Hey, the Dodgers are in town this weekend. Let's see a game.... Yeah, the four of us.

CLAIRE
Anything but a doubleheader.

GEORGE
(Into phone) What? Oh, that was your mom. She wants to say hi.... What?

(CLAIRE reaches out for the phone.)

GEORGE
Oh, really?... Sure, she will. Yes, I will, promise. G’bye.

(GEORGE returns the phone to the table.)

CLAIRE
George!

GEORGE
Sorry, honey; he had to hurry to class.

CLAIRE
Oh.

GEORGE
He did say he misses you a lot.

CLAIRE
I can't wait to see him again. Seems like he's been gone forever.

GEORGE
More like three months, dear.

CLAIRE
I guess that means he and Jenny Sawyer are history.

GEORGE
Out of sight, out of mind.... Hey, I thought you liked baseball. (Crosses to exercise bike)

CLAIRE
I do. I don't like doubleheaders.... Too much sitting.

GEORGE
C'mon, Claire; you can get lots of exercise at a ballgame. I always do.
CLAIRE
Yeah, getting beer. Then getting rid of it.

(*GEORGE hops on the bike as CLAIRE retrieves the paper.*)

CLAIRE
George, why did you circle some of these "ads"?

(*GEORGE, on exercise bike, pedals three, maybe four times.*)

GEORGE
I thought you might be interested.

CLAIRE
Oh sure. (*Finds ad*) Attractive, middle-aged couple looking for same. Object: fun and friendship.

GEORGE
You can't have too many friends.

CLAIRE
(*Frowns; reads*) Brown Sugar looking for Sugar Daddy.... Nasty black widow wants to make up for lost time with generous gent.

GEORGE
Nice-looking, isn't she.

CLAIRE
I can't believe people actually put their pictures in here.... Look at this one. Beautiful blonde Swedish twosome… (*Turns paper sideways*) … with large beach estate and ski chalet looking for young, winsome couple to share the good life with.

GEORGE
I wonder if we're young enough.

CLAIRE
Oh, George. You and your fantasies.

GEORGE
I can't help it if you're such a prude.

(*GEORGE gets off the bike and walks toward kitchen. CLAIRE yells after him.*)

CLAIRE
Yeah, I'm a prude. Just like 99 percent of the population.
GEORGE

(From kitchen) That's not true. Lots of couples are, uh— (Entering with drink) screwing around.

Yeah, name one.

The Devereauxs.

CLAIRE

The Devereauxs.... Who are they?

GEORGE

I played tennis with Darrin Devereaux last week at the club. Great guy. They live just a couple blocks from here. He and his wife are major swingers.

How do you know?

GEORGE

He told me. Says it does wonders for the marriage. And he should know.

CLAIRE

(Pause) Does he know about sexually transmitted diseases?

GEORGE

Yes, he knows about sexually transmitted diseases. Says he always wears a rubber.... And so would I.

CLAIRE

You hate rubbers.

GEORGE

No, I don't. (Looks proudly at long-necked bottle) Not since they started making them extra-large.

CLAIRE

(Shaking head) The fantasy continues. (Moves closer to him) George, do you love me?

GEORGE

Of course I love you.

CLAIRE

Then why do you want to make love to another woman?

GEORGE

I don't wanna make love to her. (Moves away) I just wanna have sex with her.
CLAIRE
Oh George.

GEORGE
There's a big difference, you know.

CLAIRE
Be serious.

GEORGE
I am serious.... Making love is a deep, romantic, emotional act between two people who really care about each other... You and I make love.

CLAIRE
Yeah, every once in a lunar eclipse.

GEORGE
Having sex, on the other hand, is nothing more than raw, unbridled lust – just for the hell of it. No strings attached; no commitment. (Pause) Understand?

CLAIRE
Yeah, I understand. (Crosses towards him) Why can't we "have sex" together? I'd love some of that unbridled lust every once in a while.

GEORGE
(Moves away) Impossible.

CLAIRE
Why?

GEORGE
(After sipping) We're married.

CLAIRE
George!

(SFX: PHONE RINGS again. Although GEORGE hurries to answer, he's too far away and CLAIRE reaches the phone first.)

CLAIRE
Hello?... What? Speak up. (Sarcastically) No, this isn't George Wells. Who is this?... Oh. Just a second. (To GEORGE) Pandora would like to speak to you.

GEORGE
I don't know any Pandora.

CLAIRE
Well, she claims to know you. Take the phone, George.
(Reluctantly, GEORGE takes the phone.)

GEORGE

George Wells.... (Nervously) Oh, hi – Dora. (With hand over phone; to CLAIRE) A business acquaintance. (Into phone) Say, Dora, can I call you back; I'm busy with my wife right now.... Yeah, I'd appreciate it. Bye.

(GEORGE quickly hangs up.)

CLAIRE

You've never mentioned a Dora.

GEORGE

I don't mention everyone I do business with.

What kind of business is she in?

CLAIRE

Uh-h.... Telemarketing. (Quickly) Look, I better go get baseball tickets.

Why don't you buy them on the Internet?

GEORGE

And pay those ridiculous “handling fees”? No thank you.

(GEORGE sets the bottle on the table and crosses to the closet to get a jacket.)

CLAIRE

Remember, no doubleheaders.

GEORGE

Do the best I can. (Kisses her on cheek) Bye, honey.

Drive carefully.

GEORGE

(Opens door, closes door and then turns back) By the way, I invited the Devereauxs over Friday night.

CLAIRE

The Devereauxs?

GEORGE

You know. (Hits palm against fist)
CLAIRE

George!
(Before GEORGE can open the door again, there is a knock on the door.)

GEORGE

Who is it?

VOICE, Off

Flor-ence Fletcher!

GEORGE

Ohmigod, the Whiney Wino!

(Agony suddenly fills GEORGE'S face; CLAIRE tries to hide behind a nook or cranny.)

CLAIRE

(Whispering) I'm not here.

(Unfortunately for CLAIRE, GEORGE opens the door revealing FLORENCE FLETCHER, an unsmiling woman in her fifties—at least.)

GEORGE

Florence.

FLORENCE

George. Is Claire home?

GEORGE

Sure is. Right there. (Points)

(CLAIRE quickly appears before FLORENCE is any the wiser.)

CLAIRE

Hi, Florence. Come in.

GEORGE

Sorry, can't stay. Just leavin'.

(GEORGE waves at CLAIRE, then quickly exits past FLORENCE. FLORENCE, a rather stiff, staid woman, enters, wearing her Sunday best set-off with an ungodly hat and carrying a bible indicating she has been to church.)

CLAIRE

How was church?

FLORENCE

Wonderful. Mind if I sit down?
Oh no, please do.

CLAIRE

Thank you. *(Carefully takes seat)*

FLORENCE

How are you today?

CLAIRE

Not too good; not too good at all.

FLORENCE

Oh, really, that's too—

CLAIRE

Did you hear what our cable company is planning to do?

FLORENCE

No, what?

CLAIRE

Install an X-rated channel.

FLORENCE

Really? By the way, did you know they don't use the letter "X" anymore? Now, it's NC-17.

CLAIRE

Well, it oughtta be S-M-U-T.

FLORENCE

You're obviously upset.

CLAIRE

Aren't you?

FLORENCE

*(Talking over her)* Oh, it does a lot of harm, believe me. That disgusting filth poisons the mind.

CLAIRE

Think so?

FLORENCE

I know so. Pornography is destroying our civilization. Just like it did The Roman Empire.
CLAIRE (Impishly) Gee. I didn't think Nero had a TiVo.

FLORENCE This is hardly a laughing matter, Claire.... I just wish I could destroy every X-rated movie ever made.

That'd be pretty hard to do.

FLORENCE Maybe so.... But our homeowners' association can sure as heck keep those degenerates from showing pornography.

We can?

FLORENCE We most certainly can. Remember how successful we were in keeping those male dancers out of town.

(CLaire crosses toward the bar. As she does, Florence adds—)

CLAIRE (Wistfully) Yeah.... I remember. Say, how about some coffee?

FLORENCE (Brightening) I’d rather have wine—red if you have it.

Wine? In the morning, Florence?

FLORENCE Wine is the perfect drink anytime, Claire. Especially red. You know it’s been proven beneficial for heart health.

That’s what I hear.

(CLAIRE reaches the bar and then reaches for a bottle. As she does, FLORENCE looks around and spots GEORGE’S "paper." She reaches over and grabs it.)

FLORENCE Mind if I take a peek at your paper?
CLAIRE

What paper?

(CLAIRE looks at FLORENCE and realizes exactly what she is about to read. She thinks for a moment, then yells—)

CLAIRE

Florence!!!

(Forgetting the wine, CLAIRE rushes over and grabs the paper out of a frightened FLORENCE’S hand.)

FLORENCE

What!?

(CLARA thinks for a moment, then rolls up the paper and begins swatting at the sofa behind FLORENCE.)

FLORENCE

What's wrong!?

(FLORENCE leans away and CLAIRE swats at the sofa a couple more times.)

CLAIRE

Got it!

FLORENCE

What?

(CLARA looks at paper; grimaces) What a mess.

(CLARA quickly walks toward the kitchen.)

FLORENCE

Claire, what was it?

(CLARA looks at the rolled-up paper.)

FLORENCE

A nasty black widow.

(CLARA recoils anew) Oh my goodness!
(With an impish grin on her grin, CLAIRE exits into the kitchen as LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

End of Act I; Scene I

ACT I; SCENE II

(AT RISE: The Well’s living room five days later. It is Friday evening. GRETCHEN and DARRIN DEVEREAUX are by themselves in the Wells' living room. Tanned and attractive, they are 10 to 15 years younger than the WELLS. DARRIN DEVEREAUX is sitting on the chair next to the sofa, while his wife, GRETCHEN, brushes her hair in front of a mirror.)

DARRIN
Your hair's gonna fall out if you're not careful.

GRETCI,EN
I'm just trying to look good, Darrin.

DARRIN
Honey, you look sublime.

GRETCI,EN
Is that good or bad?

DARRIN
You know, Gretchen, you should read a book every now and then instead of watching television 24/7.

GRETCI,EN
Who asked you!

DARRIN
Sublime is not a particularly difficult vocabulary word, dear.

GRETCI,EN
Hey, you coulda married a librarian, you know. You weren't so interested in big words when we were dating.

DARRIN
Hey, I thought you were just playing dumb.

GRETCI,EN
What the hell does that mean!?

(GEORGE enters from kitchen carrying a tray of drinks.)
GEORGE

Is everybody happy?

GRETECHEN

(Forced smile) Oh yes, we're sublimely happy.

GEORGE

(Unsure how to react) Oh.... Well, I thought you two might like an after-dinner cocktail.

DARRIN

You're a mind reader, George, ol' boy. (Grabs a drink) Thank you.

GEORGE

You're entirely welcome.... Gretchen?

GRETECHEN

Sure, I'd love one.

GEORGE

Your wish is my command.

(GEORGE gives her a drink and takes his drink off the tray, leaving one left.)

DARRIN

Ah, tasty. Say, George, where's that attractive wife of yours?

GEORGE

I don't know. (Looks back) She was right behind me. (Yells towards kitchen) Claire!

CLAIRE

Yes!

GEORGE

What are you doing!?

CLAIRE

The dishes!

GEORGE

(Forced smile) Can't the dishes wait?

CLAIRE

I'm almost done!

GRETECHEN

(Crosses towards kitchen) I should probably help.
GEORGE
(Quickly stops her) Oh no, Claire has her own special way of doing dishes. You'd just be in her way.

GRETCHen
(Stops) Oh.... Okay. (Pllops on sofa)

DARRIN
That was a great dinner, George. I'm full.

GRETCHen
Me too. I wish I could cook half as good as your wife.

DARRIN
So do I.

(GRetchen glares at DARRIN. GEORGE quickly jumps in.)

GEORGE
Uh, Claire's had a lot more practice, I'm sure.

DARRIN
Say, George, I left something in the car. (Sets drink down; crosses to front door) I'll be right back.

GEORGE
Sure.... Take your time. (Smiles at GRETCHen)

DARRIN
Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

(DARRIN exits. GEORGE takes a seat next to GRETCHen.)

GRETCHen
It's so hot tonight.

GEORGE
Isn't it. (Mops brow)

GRETCHen
Do you have a hot tub?

GEORGE
No. (Frowns) But I could dig one. Take about an hour.

GRETCHen
(Pause) My favorite thing in the whole world is kicking back in a hot tub with a bottle of wine.
GEORGE
Yeah?

GRETCHEN
Yeah, I really get crazy.

GEORGE
There's a pool out back.

GRETCHEN
(Teasingly) Pools are for swimming, George. (Rises) I better go help your wife. I'm sure she could use some company.

(Despite GEORGE'S sad look, GRETCHEN exits into the kitchen.)

GEORGE
(Peeved; talks to self) I knew I shoulda built that hot tub. (Mimics CLAIRE) But, George, shouldn't we spend the money on something we really need? Like a new sofa. (Kicks sofa) Ouch!

(GRETCHEN re-enters in time to see GEORGE kick the sofa.)

GRETCHEN
Something wrong, George?

GEORGE
(Forced smile) Oh, nothing. Is Claire done with the dishes?

Yeah.

GEORGE
Good.

GRETCHEN
Now she's mopping the floor.

What!?

GEORGE
Cleanest kitchen I ever saw.

(GEORGE quickly starts to kitchen, but GRETCHEN stops him.)

GRETCHEN
Uh, George, I need to freshen up a bit.
GEORGE
Oh sure. *(Points)* Bathroom's straight down the hallway; first door on the left.

GRETHE
Thank you.

GEORGE
You're welcome.

*(GEORGE smiles until GRETHE exits, then quickly storms toward kitchen.)*

GEORGE
Claire!?

*(GEORGE exits to kitchen and moments later, re-enters behind CLAIRE, who's putting on rubber gloves.)*

CLAIRE
But the oven needs cleaning.

GEORGE
The oven can wait..... What's wrong with you, Claire? We have guests over, and you're spit-shining the kitchen. How rude can you get?

CLAIRE
*(Hopefully)* Did they go home?

GEORGE
No, they didn't go home.... Claire, why don't you want to socialize with our guests?

CLAIRE
I don't mind socializing with them.... I just don’t want to have an orgy with them.

GEORGE
Oh, come on, Claire. I'm not interested in having an orgy. *(Pause)* Maybe foolin' around a bit.

CLAIRE
Oh George.

GEORGE
You don't think Darrin's good-looking?

CLAIRE
He's very good-looking.... That doesn't mean I want to fool around with him.

GEORGE
*(Pause)* He thinks you're attractive.
CLAIRE
Sure. *(Obviously flattered)* How do you know?

GEORGE
He said so.

CLAIRE
He did not.

GEORGE
Yes, he did. While you were spit-shining the kitchen.

CLAIRE
That reminds me. I have to finish the oven. *(Walks toward kitchen)*

GEORGE
Claire!

*(Despite GEORGE'S protest, CLAIRE exits—just before DARRIN re-enters, holding a liquor bottle and a box of some sort.)*

DARRIN
Where is everyone?

GEORGE
Gretchen's in the bathroom. *(Pause; frowns)* Claire’s in the kitchen.

DARRIN
Still?... You know, George, I get the feeling Claire doesn't like me.

GEORGE
Oh no, that's not true. She likes you a lot.... In fact, she just said you're good-looking.

*(Pleased)* Yeah?

GEORGE
Very good-looking, in fact. *(Pause)* What's all that?

DARRIN
Oh, I brought you a bottle of my favorite liquor.

GEORGE
That's nice of you. *(Takes bottle)* Thank you.

DARRIN
Welcome.
GEORGE

(Examing bottle) I've never tried ouzo.

DARRIN

Tastes great. Why don't we have some?

GEORGE

Why not.

(GEORGE grabs some glasses from the bar and prepares to open the bottle.)

DARRIN

I also brought our trivia game. Thought you two might like to play.

GEORGE

(As he pours drinks) To tell the truth, Darrin, I'm no good at trivia. Don't have the memory for—

(GEORGE is interrupted by GRETCHEN, who reenters.)

GRECHEN

You have an awesome house, George.

GEORGE

Yeah. (Irritated) Except for no hot tub. (Quickly) Say, would you like a drink?

GRECHEN

Sure.

GEORGE

It's the liquor you and Darrin brought.

GRECHEN

(Mispronouncing) Ow-zo?

GEORGE

No, ouzo.

GRECHEN

I know, silly. I call it Ow-zo 'cause it's so strong. Don't gimme too much.

DARRIN

It's not that strong, dear. Gretchen thinks any drink without fruit and a plastic umbrella is too strong.

(GRECHEN frowns at DARRIN, but quickly smiles as GEORGE gives her a drink.)
GRETCHE
Thank you, George.... Is Claire still in the kitchen?

GEORGE
(Frowns towards kitchen) Still.

DARRIN
George, whaddya say we swap wives for a while.

Darrin!

DARRIN
I always wanted a clean kitchen.

(CLAIRe enters with a huge tray of food.)

CLAIRe
Who's hungry! (Deafening silence) Don't all speak at once.

GEORGE
Honey, we just ate a big dinner.

CLAIRe
I know. I just thought you might want a little snack.

A little snack? Looks like you’re feeding an army.

DARRIN
(Walks toward CLAIRe) You know, I'm still a tad hungry.

CLAIRe
Try the canapés. They're my specialty.

DARRIN
(Moves closer) Which ones?

CLAIRe
Here. (Hands one to DARREN)

DARRIN
Thank you. (Looks into her eyes) If they're half as good as your dinner, they're delicious.

CLAIRe
Oh. (A bit uneasy) Thank you. (Moves away) Anyone want coffee?
GEORGE
No one wants coffee, dear.

CLAIRE
How do you know? Gretchen, would you like some coffee?

GRETCHEN
Oh, no thanks. I never mix my drinks.

How about you, Darrin?

DARRIN
Oh no. *(Moves closer to CLAIRE)* I'm already stimulated.

*(Steps back)* Maybe I'll have a cup.

CLAIRE
You know you'll be up all night if you do.

GEORGE
You're right. I think I'll fix some decaf. *(Crosses towards kitchen)*

CLAIRE
Claire, for heaven's sake! *(She stops)* The Devereauxs came by to visit both of us. Not just me.

GEORGE
That's right, Claire. It almost looks like you're trying to avoid us.

CLAIRE
Oh no—not at all.

GEORGE
Then have a seat. And a drink.

CLAIRE
I'm not much of a drinker.

GEORGE
It's some Ouzo Darrin brought. At least give it a try.

CLAIRE
Well, maybe one small drink.

GEORGE
That's more like it.
(GEORGE pours a big drink for CLAIRE.)

DARRIN
Good for you, Claire.

(There is A SLOW FADE TO BLACK. Moments later the LIGHTS RESTORE. EVERONE has been drinking and ALL are highly intoxicated; laughing—including CLAIRE. DARRIN has his shoes off and is standing on the sofa.)

DARRIN
Did you hear the one about the rich guy who lost a fortune in the stock market?

GEORGE
No—tell us.

DARRIN
Well, this guy comes home to his mansion and tells his wife, "Honey, I just lost a bundle on Wall Street. We're gonna have to fire the cook, so you better ask her to teach you how to cook."... Right away, the wife says, "Well, I guess we'll have to fire the chauffeur, too, so you better ask him to teach you how to screw."

(ALL laugh, particularly CLAIRE—until GEORGE glares at her. There's a pause and then—)

DARRIN
Hey, I've got an idea: why don't we play our trivia game.

CLAIRE
Oh no; George hates trivia.

GEORGE
More than anything.

CLAIRE
Except foreplay.

(Again, ALL laugh—except George.)

GRETCHE
Why don't you like trivia games, George?

GEORGE
They just test your memory. And mine's not that good.

DARRIN
Have you ever played Strip Trivia?
Strip... Trivia?

Yeah; every time you miss a question, you take off a piece of clothing.

Let's play!

What about Claire?

Naw, she won't play.

Whaddya mean? I'm great at trivia.

But this is strip trivia.

I know, George. I heard.

(Grabs bottle) I gotta get more of this stuff.

(Rises) I'll set it up. (Fetching game) Let's play the fast version.

The fast version?

Yeah; you keep stripping—till you answer a question right.

Fine with me. What about you, honey?

I'm game.

Hurry up before she changes her mind.

Go ahead, George; you can ask the questions.
Okay, I'll randomly pick someone to go first.

*(GEORGE puts one hand over his eyes, then moves the other hand around the room quickly, stopping when it points at GRETCHEN.)*

*GEORGE*

(Uncovers eyes) Gretchen goes first.

*GRETCHEN*

(Mock anger) Real random, George.

*(Looks at first card)* One of the most misspelled words in English is "rhythm." Spell it.

I can!

*CLAIRe*

*(Firmly)* It's not your turn, dear.

*DARRIN*

Gretchen's a terrible speller. She still can't spell "Devereaux."

*(Proudly)* I-T.

What?

*GRETCHEN*

That's how you spell "it," right?

*(GEORGE pauses; realizes what's happened.)*

*GEORGE*

No, Gretchen; when I said spell "it," I meant you were supposed to spell "rhythm."

Nice try, dear.

*I vote for Gretchen.*

*GRETCHEN*

Thanks, Claire.
GEORGE
No way, Gretchen. Spell “rhythm”... or pay the consequences.

GRETHEN
I know it starts with an "r."

GEORGE
Time's running out.

GRETHEN
(Frowns) Oh, I can't spell rhythm. (Smiles, then shakes hips wickedly) But I definitely got it.

CLAIRE

GEORGE
Wonderful, dear. Gretchen, you owe us a piece of clothing.

GRETHEN
(Faking displeasure) All right.

(GRETHEN stands up, touches her clothing as if she's going to take off her blouse or skirt— but removes a shoe instead.)

DARRIN
Two shoes count as one.

GEORGE
(Quickly) Yeah.

GRETHEN
Whatever. (Removes other shoe)

GEORGE
Next question. (Pulls a card)

GRETHEN
Gimme one on Brad Pitt.

GEORGE
Sorry.... Who wrote the Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Death of a Salesman"?

OH, I know that.

GEORGE
It's still not your turn.
Oh, I'm not good at murder mysteries.

I'll give you a hint.

No, don't!

Don't worry; she'll never get it. *(Starts to sing)* Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio—

Marilyn Monroe?

See I told you: she's not the sharpest tool in the drawer.

What!?

*(Quickly)* Marilyn Monroe was a very sexy actress, Gretchen. Almost as sexy as you.

Why, thank you, George.

I bet Claire knows who wrote "Death of a Salesman."

Arthur Miller.

Claire, you're not only extremely attractive, you're very smart, too.

Oh, thank you.... And you were on the right track, Gretchen. Joe DiMaggio married Marilyn Monroe before Arthur Miller did.

Really? So there, Darrin.

Okay, Marilyn—er Gretchen. You owe us more clothes.
(GEORGE salivates as GRETCHE N appears to have reached "the point of no return." She grabs for the top button of her blouse, but instead continues to move her hands up until she reaches her eyes and begins fiddling with one of them.)

GEORGE

Whaddya doing?

GRETCHE N

Taking out my contacts.

GEORGE

That's not fair.

GRETCHE N

Sure it is. I wear contact lenses.

DARRIN

She always pulls this. Don't worry, George; she's just prolonging the inevitable.

GEORGE

Two count as one.

GRETCHE N

I know, I know.

CLAI RE

Can you see without your contacts?

DARRIN

She can't see a thing.

CLAI RE

That'll save George some embarrassment if he has to take off his shorts.

GEORGE

(Snarls) Very funny, Claire.

GRETCHE N

I'm just gonna pretend like I took 'em out.

GEORGE

Fine, fine. (Grabs next card) Next question. “White Christmas is the best-selling record of all-time. Who wrote it?

CLAI RE

Oh, I know that.
GEORGE
Claire, please! Why don't you just tell us if you don't know the answer.

GRETCHEN
"White Christmas," huh?

DARRIN
The interesting thing is that "White Christmas" was written by a Jewish composer.

GEORGE
Time's running out.

GRETCHEN
I have no idea.... Adam Sandler.

DARRIN
(Laughing) Adam Sandler?

GRETCHEN
He's Jewish, isn't he?

DARRIN
Try Irving Berlin.

GRETCHEN
Never heard of him.

DARRIN
(Shakes head) Never heard of Irving Berlin, but she worships Michael Bolton.

GRETCHEN
Hey, what's wrong with Michael Bolton?

GEORGE
(Quickly) Nothing, Gretchen. We're waiting.

(Now down to the "bare essentials," GRETCHEN begins to unbutton her blouse. As she does, she starts humming – or trying to sing— "White Christmas." Unable to contain his enthusiasm, GEORGE begins humming or singing, too; two or three times faster than GRETCHEN.)

DARRIN
(As GRETCHEN removes her blouse) I gave Gretchen that bra on her birthday.

GEORGE
Bet you didn't use much wrapping paper.
DARRIN
Wait'll you see the matching panties.

GEORGE
*(Quickly grabs next card)* Next question, Gretchen. *(Gleefully)* Oh, this could be a tough one.

DARRIN
They're all tough for her.

GEORGE
Be nice, Darrin…. Okay, Gretchen, What is the largest organ in the human body?

GRECHEN
*(Smirks)* Well, it’s not Darrin’s willy.

DARRIN
Very funny Gretchen. *(Pause)* In truth, my, uh, willy is more than adequate. And I have more than a few references, believe me…

GEORGE
Oh, we believe you, Darrin… Gretchen, what is the human body’s largest organ?

*(GRECHEN acts stumped, then proudly.)*

GRECHEN
The skin?

DARRIN
The skin isn’t an organ, dear.

GEORGE
*(Looking at back of card)* Oh yes it is. *(Unhappily)* The largest one as a matter of fact. *(Reads)* The skin weighs about six pounds, which is nearly twice as large as the brain or the liver.

CLAIRE
Amazing! How did you know that, Gretchen?

GRECHEN
*(Smirking; towards DARRIN)* I saw it on Doctor Oz.

CLAIRE
Oh, I love Doctor Oz. He’s great, isn’t he?

GRECHEN
For sure. He can give me a physical exam anytime.

GEORGE
Can we discuss doctors later. *(Picks up new card)* We’re playing a game.
DARRIN
My turn.

GRETHE
Not for long. Darrin's middle name is trivia.

DARRIN
Oh, I miss a question. Every year or so.

GEORGE
Pretty confident, eh?... Okay, according to the famous quote, "Music has charms to soothe the savage" what?...

DARRIN
(Shakes head) Slam dunk. Beast. Savage beast.

GEORGE
Darrin blows the lay-up!

DARRIN
What?

GEORGE
It's "Music soothes the savage BREAST."

DARRIN
You're kidding?

GEORGE
I kid you not. Look.

(GEORGE shows DARRIN the card.)

DARRIN
That's ridiculous. Must be a typo. Who's ever heard of a savage breast?

GRETHE
Darrin, you tell me I have killer breasts.

GEORGE
Touché, Gretchen.

DARRIN
(Frowning at GRETHE) That's got to be a mistake. (Pause) Claire, help me out.

CLAR
I always thought it was "savage beast."
Darrin, it's only a game.

GEORGE

C'mon, Darrin; don't be a poor sport.

GRETCHE

But I know that's the wrong answer.

DARRIN

(There is an extended pause.)

GRETCHEN

If you're not gonna play, neither am I.

GEORGE

C'mon, Darrin!

DARRIN

Okay, okay. But I'm playing this game under protest. (Starts to unbutton shirt)

GRETCHEN

Your shirt first?

DARRIN

Hey, I won't miss any more questions.

CLAIRE

Besides Darrin wants to show us his savage breasts.

(After smiling at CLAIRE, DARRIN mimics GRETCHE by humming or singing "White Christmas" as he takes off his shirt. After removing it, he tosses it at a blushing Claire.)

GEORGE

Okay, Darrin, who is considered to be the father of exis—existen—uh...

DARRIN

Existentialism. Jean-Paul Sartre.

GEORGE

That's right. How'd you know that?

DARRIN

I was a philosophy major in college.

CLAIRE

You were? So was I.
Really? Free will or determinism?

Oh, free will, of course.

Me too.

(Expounds) I am the master of my ship. I am the captain of my fate.

Say, can we postpone the poetry reading for the time being? We're playing a game.

(Provocatively) Your turn, George.

(Grabs a card) Okay, George; your question is on cooking.

He might as well strip right now.

Hey, I can cook.

Yeah, you should see what he does with hot dogs in the microwave.

(CLaire makes an exploding sound and gesture, which causes ALL to laugh, save GEORGE.)

What is the main ingredient in Welsh rabbit?

Oh, that's too easy.

Welsh rabbit? Trick question, right?

(George sneaks a peak at Gretchen, who wiggles her fingers above her head like bunny ears.)

No comment.
Rabbit, what else.

Try cheese.

No wonder your Welsh rabbit tastes so peculiar, dear.

(*GEORGE frowns at CLAIRE as he begins to remove his shirt.*)

Not your shirt.

If it's good enough for Darrin, it's good enough for me.

(*After removing his shirt, GEORGE flexes as best he can.*)

Next question, George. What's the traditional gift for a married couple's 20th anniversary?

20th anniversary? Hm-m....

George, you should know this. Our 20th anniversary is this year.

You guys have been married 20 years?

(*Quickly*) I got married at age 12.

(*To Claire*) How old is George, anyway?

(*GEORGE and CLAIRE answer simultaneously.*)

34.

42.

No-o.
GEORGE

(Frowns at CLAIRE) Thanks a lot, Claire.

GRETNCHEN

Hey, as far as I'm concerned, men get better as they get older.

GEORGE

Actually, I'm 43.

DARRIN

Uh, George, you're avoiding the question.

GEORGE

20th anniversary? Um-m.... A noose.

CLAIRE

Oh George! C'mon, it's china.

GEORGE

Guess that means I have to strip.

DARRIN

That's right.

GRETNCHEN

Better believe it.

(GEORGE starts to remove his pants.)

GEORGE

China this, Claire.

(GEORGE strips down to comical-looking shorts, decorated with something like hearts or baseball gloves and bats.)

DARRIN

Next question, George. What's the only bird that can fly backwards?

GEORGE

(Smug smile) The hummingbird.... Sorry, ladies.

DARRIN

That's right; I didn't know hummingbirds could fly backwards.

GEORGE

Backwards, forwards, up, down. Claire's got feeders all over the place.
They're crazy about George's Welsh rabbit.

Loosen up a little, Claire.

Speaking of Claire, it's her turn. *(Pulls out card)* What do you call a horse that's had his testicles removed?

*(Quickly)* Unhappy.

*(Fake frown)* A gelding.

Wrong.

What?

No, you're right. Unfortunately.

That was too easy; let's give her another question.

No way. It's Gretchen's turn… *(Pulls card)* And here's your question, my dear…. What's the population of New York City?

What?

Within 10 people.

That's a tough one.

*(Sarcastically)* Honey, he's pulling your leg.

*(Hopefully)* Not yet. *(Looks at card)* Ah, a question on television.
DARRIN

She might get this one.

GEORGE

What comedian was known as "Mr. Television"?

GRETCHE

"Mr. Television"? Oh, I know, I know.

DARRIN

Bet she doesn't.

GRETCHE

Mr. T.

DARRIN

Mr. T.?

GRETCHE

Yeah; that's short for Mr. Television.

DARRIN

(Shaking head) Gretchen, Gretchen.

GEORGE

Milton Berle was called "Mr. Television."

GRETCHE

Oh yeah; one of those guys on "60 Minutes."

DARRIN

No dear; Milton Berle was TV's first big star—back in the early 50s.

GRETCHE

How would you know? You weren't even born back then.

DARRIN

Hey, I wasn't alive in 1780 either. But I know George Washington was our first President.

GRETCHE

Aren't you special.

GEORGE

C'mon, kids; let's not fight.

GRETCHE

I need another drink.
GEORGE

Comin’ right up.

(As GEORGE rises to pour another drink, GRETCHEN stands and removes her skirt... A distracted GEORGE can’t help but miss GRETCHEN’s glass.)

CLAIRE

George!

GEORGE

Sorry. *(Grabs card)* We’re getting down to the nitty-gritty.

DARRIN

Gretchen lost the last time we played, too.

GRETCHEN

I haven’t lost yet.

GEORGE

*(Reads from card)* What is the only state in the United States with one syllable in its name?... Ooh, that’s tough.

GRETCHEN

I’m not even sure what a syllable is.

No help anyone!

CLAIRE

Oh, c’mon, George. *(Pause)* Hm-m.... A syllable is hard to define. Maybe an example will help. *(Thinks)* Gretchen, both “Brad” and “Pitt” are examples of syllables. One sound without a, um, break in your voice.

GEORGE

That’s enough, Claire.

CLAIRE

I gave her very little help, if any.

GRETCHEN

*(Brightening)* You helped me a lot, Claire. I think I know.

GEORGE

Thanks, Claire. *(Pause)* Time’s up, Gretchen. What’s the only state with one syllable?

GRETCHEN

Um.... Pittsburgh!
GEORGE
(After some muffled laughs along with DARREN’s guffaw) Wrong, Gretchen. But good guess.

GRETCHE

But Pitt.... Pittsburgh?

DARREN
That's wrong on so many levels, Gretchen.... First of all—

GEORGE
No time for explanations, Wise Guy. Just tell her the answer.

DARREN
What? Well, uh....

CLAIRE
(After a long pause) Maine.

DARREN
Of course.

CLAIRE
That was really hard, Gretchen. Most woulda missed it.

GRETCHE
(Pause, then resigned) Oh, well...

DARRIN
Should have worn your watch, honey.

CLAIRE
Gretchen, you don't have to take off your bra if you don't want to.

GEORGE
Claire!

GRETCHE
Hey, it's okay; I lost fair and square.... You're all about to see some more of my largest organ.

(GRETCHEN stands and tries with little success – perhaps on purpose – to unhook her bra.)

GRETCHE
George, can you give me a hand.

GEORGE
Certainly. Two hands even.
(GEORGE quickly hops up to help Gretchen.... As he does, DARRIN moves over next to CLAIRE and semi-innocently throws his arm behind her neck. Unfortunately for GEORGE, he is so excited that his hands are shaking and he's having a tough time undoing the bra.)

GRETHECN

Ouch!

GEORGE

Sorry.

(GRETCHEN'S back is to the audience when GEORGE finally manages to finish the job. Just as he does, the front door opens and a young man enters—specifically, the Wells' collegiate-looking son, TODD. Barely visible behind TODD is his guest, JOYCE.)

GEORGE

Todd!!!

TODD

(Simultaneously) Dad!!!

(A shocked GEORGE flips the bra in the direction of the visitors.... It's hard to tell who is more stunned, GEORGE or TODD, who, along with JOYCE, is looking at his nearly undressed father face-to-face with a topless woman while his mother sits cozily with another man.... The conclusion to this embarrassing scene is left to the imagination as LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

End Act I; Scene II

ACT I; SCENE III

(AT RISE: at the house the following Sunday Morning. No one is in the living room when SFX: PHONE RINGS. When no one comes to answer the phone, GEORGE's curt voice is heard on the answering machine as it begins to play.)

GEORGE'S VOICE

Wells' home. Leave a message after the tone.

(There's a short pause, then a BEEP followed by a sultry woman's voice.)

WOMAN'S VOICE

George, I'd rather moan after the tone. (Giggles) This is Pandora, and I'm waiting to tell you how much I'd love to—

(Before PANDORA can complete her sentence, GEORGE comes running in from the hallway and picks up the phone.)
GEORGE
Not now, Pandora! I have company. *(Looks nervously toward kitchen)* No, they would not like to listen in on the extension.... Look, I don't think I'll need your services after all.... That's right. *(Frowns)* What!? You better not bill my credit card.

*(CLAIRE enters from the kitchen.)*

GEORGE
	Good-bye! *(Clicks off phone)*

CLAIRE
	George, who was that?

GEORGE
	Huh?... Oh, just a wrong number.

CLAIRE
	Well, you certainly weren't very polite.

GEORGE
	C'mon, Claire, how hard is it to dial seven numbers correctly?

CLAIRE
	Hey, the kids aren't back, are they?

GEORGE
	No, they're not. And Joyce is hardly a kid.

CLAIRE
	Her age upsets you, doesn't it?

GEORGE
	Well, geez, Claire; she’s much older than Todd.

CLAIRE
	Just like you’re much older than Gretchen Devereaux.

GEORGE
	Hey, that's a different story.

CLAIRE
	Oh, it is?

GEORGE
	Sure it is. Older men and younger women have always been attracted to each other....It's only natural.
CLAIRE
Oh, George—stop kidding yourself.

GEORGE
Well, it's true.

*(GEORGE and CLAIRE sit at the dinette.)*

CLAIRE
(Pause) Actually, George, it's much more natural for older women, to, uh, pair up with younger men.

What?

CLAIRE
That's right. According to the experts, a woman reaches her sexual prime in middle age; the male in his late teens—oh, 18, 19, 20....

*(CLAIRE raises one of her hands in a vertical position, then lets it droop after she says "20.")*

CLAIRE, Continues
Mother Nature obviously intended younger males to mate with older females.

*(GEORGE is stumped, but only for a moment.)*

GEORGE
You know we got along much better before you started watching Doctor Phil.

CLAIRE
You should watch him. Just last week he said, “You raise your kids the best you can—then hope for the best.”

GEORGE
Yeah, well, I wonder how Doctor Phil would feel if his 18-year-old son was getting serious with a much older woman—not to mention a yoga teacher.

CLAIRE
What's wrong with being a yoga teacher?

GEORGE
Aw, c'mon, Claire, how smart do you have to be to teach stretching?

CLAIRE
Joyce is hardly dumb, George. After all, she's one semester short of getting her diploma.
GEORGE
Yeah, a B.A. in nutrition. What kind of Mickey Mouse major is that?... She must be loads of fun at Thanksgiving dinner. *(Mimics)* No gravy or yams for me, thank you.

CLAIRE
*(Pause)* Speaking of nutrition, I'm gonna make some eggs. Want some?

GEORGE
Yeah please, I'm starving. Over easy.

CLAIRE
Yes, I know dear. I've been making your eggs the same way for 20 years. *(Walks toward kitchen)*

GEORGE
I'm just a creature of habit.

CLAIRE
Yeah. Whether it's eggs— *(Impishly)* or the bedroom.

GEORGE
Hey, wait—

CLAIRE
*(Smiling)* Yes?

GEORGE
If I'm so boring, why don't you try Darrin Devereaux?

CLAIRE
Why, so you can "try" Gretchen Devereaux?

GEORGE
It's a thought.

CLAIRE
It's an obsession.

*(CLAIRE exits into the kitchen just before the front door opens and TODD enters holding hands with his new girlfriend, JOYCE. For the first time, JOYCE is completely visible to the audience and it is clear she is at least 10 years older than TODD. GEORGE watches the couple as they enter, noticing, however old she is, JOYCE is attractive and in great shape—and seems to be quite pleasant and not the least concerned about the age difference.)*

TODD
Hi, Dad.
(Forcing a smile) Hi, Todd... Joyce.

GEORGE

Good morning, George.

JOYCE

You two left early this morning.

GEORGE

Oh, did we wake you?

TODD

No problem. I love to get up at 4:30 on a Sunday morning.

GEORGE

We wanted to jog before it got too hot.

JOYCE

Oh, so you were jogging.

GEORGE

Yeah, we ran 10 miles.

TODD

You don't look like you just ran.

GEORGE

Afterwards, we went to the gym to lift some weights, then we showered.

TODD

You're "pumping iron," too?

GEORGE

Every day. You oughtta try it, Dad. Never felt better.

GEORGE

Nah, heaviest thing I'll ever lift is a quarter-pounder.

CLAIRE

(Entering) I thought I heard you two.

TODD

Hi, Mom.

JOYCE

Hello, Claire.
CLAIRE
Good morning.... Who wants breakfast? I was just about to make some eggs.

JOYCE
Uh, Todd and I were gonna have some granola with flaxseed.

GEORGE
Todd, you’d rather have granola—with flaxseed—than Mom’s eggs?

TODD
(Unconvincingly) Yeah.

JOYCE
Eggs are the embryos of chickens, you know.

GEORGE
I don’t care what they are. They taste good, and that’s all that matters.

JOYCE
If it doesn’t bother you that eggs contain cholesterol, which is a major cause of heart attacks.

GEORGE
(Frowns) Never mind the eggs, Claire.

JOYCE
I didn’t mean to spoil your appetite, George.

GEORGE
You didn’t! (Pause, then softer) No time to eat anyway; we gotta get to the ballpark.

TODD
Oh, I forgot to tell you, Joyce. My dad got us all tickets for a baseball game.

JOYCE
(Trying to sound enthused) Oh, how exciting.

TODD
(Mom’s not going?) Have fun.

GEORGE
Not today.

TODD
But she likes baseball.
GEORGE
She does. She doesn't like doubleheaders.

JOYCE
(Frowns) We're going to see two games?

GEORGE
(Devious smile) Yeah, we'll be gone 6 or 7 hours. At least.

Oh.

GEORGE
Maybe you'd like to stay here and keep Claire Company?

JOYCE
Oh no, I'm game—so to speak. Just give me a second to freshen up. (Kisses TODD on cheek) I'll be right back, guys.

TODD
(After JOYCE exits) Dad, I need to, uh—uh, ask you a very important question.

(GEORGE assumes a horror-stricken expression.)

GEORGE
Oh no, Todd; ask me anything but that. Anything.

TODD
What?

GEORGE
Son, use your head; you've only known her a few months—and she's practically old enough to be your mother. Believe me, you need to shop around before you settle down. Don't just marry the first tight butt that comes along.

TODD
Dad!

GEORGE
They'll be plenty more where that—

TODD
Dad!!

GEORGE
What?
I'm not asking Joyce to marry me.

Oh. (Pause) I knew that—but your mother was worried sick....I'll let her know.

What I wanted to know, Dad, is if you were planning to drink much today.

Well, I plan to have a few beers, sure. (Frowns) Why?

Joyce hates alcohol. She always says, "Lips that touch liquor will never touch mine."

(A pause as GEORGE curbs the urge to say something he'll regret.)

Uh, Todd, whatever happened to Jenny?

Whaddya mean, whatever happened to Jenny?

I thought you two were going together—almost engaged, in fact.

Yeah, well, college gives you a different perspective on things.

I see. I bet she's really hurt.

She'll get over it. She's just a kid.

That's right. You are a whole year older, aren't you?

(Pause) You don't like Joyce, do you?

Never mind how I feel. The more important question is, do you like Joyce?

What? Of course I like Joyce.
GEORGE
Coulda fooled me. As far as I can tell, the two of you have absolutely nothing in common.

TODD
(Not that convincingly) Hey, Joyce and I have lots in common. (Pause) But even if we didn't, I don't have to justify her to you.

GEORGE
You're right, son. (Pause) Just answer me one question.

What's that?

TODD

GEORGE
(Pause) Are you having sex with her?

TODD
Dad! That's none of your business

GEORGE
Maybe not. But I certainly hope the answer is no. Take it from one who knows: sex is something that's so special, so intimate... so beautiful that it was meant to be shared only within the sacred bounds of marriage.

(Holding a bag, CLAIRE enters during the last portion of GEORGE's speech.)

CLAIRE
Would you please repeat that, George?

GEORGE
(Caught in the act; looks at watch) I don't have time, Claire. Where's your friend, Todd? We don't wanna miss the first pitch.

CLaire
Speaking of which, I thought you folks might like a snack to take to the game—I mean, games.

TODD
Whatcha got, Mom? (Takes bag)

CLaire
Oh, a little of everything. Ham sandwiches, chips, homemade chocolate cake.

TODD
Super!

GEORGE
Whaddya mean, super? You can't eat that stuff.
TODD

Why not?

GEORGE


*(JOYCE re-enters and TODD quickly hands the bag to GEORGE.)*

TODD

(Nervously) Hi honey. Ready to go?

JOYCE

Oh, ready and rarin'.

TODD

You sure you don't wanna go, Mom?

CLAIRE

Never so sure of anything in my whole life.

GEORGE

Your mother would much rather have a piece of chocolate cake— *(Smiles at JOYCE)* while she reads the Sunday paper.

CLAIRE

That's not true, George. I have plenty of chores to do.

GEORGE

Whatever. Let's hit the road. We might be able to grab an autograph or two.

*(GEORGE crosses to the closet to get a jacket and pair of binoculars.)*

CLAIRE

Uh, gee, Joyce; I'm sorry I didn't fix you anything. I wasn't sure what you liked.

JOYCE

That's quite all right. I left some broccoli bars in the fridge. *(Crosses towards kitchen)*

CLAIRE

(Quickly) Broccoli bars? I thought they were moldy Snickers—and tossed 'em out.

*(JOYCE frowns while behind her back TODD pumps his arm in celebration and mouths, "Yeah!" She turns in time to catch the tail-end of his exuberance and frowns again.)*

GEORGE

That's okay, Joyce. I'll buy you a couple of foot-long hot dogs and a brewski or two to wash 'em down.
CLAIRE
Remember, George: no more than one beer every three innings.

GEORGE
Unless there's a home run.

CLAIRE
By the HOME team.

GEORGE
Yeah, yeah.

CLAIRE
Have a good time, guys.

(GEORGE, TODD, and JOYCE exit as CLAIRE closes the door, leans against it, smiles, then exits into the kitchen, returning moments later with a piece of chocolate cake and part of the Sunday paper—and wearing a devilish smile.)

CLAIRE
I lied.

(CLAIRE sits at the dinette and carefully arranges the paper and the cake in front of her. Just as she's about to take her first bite, however, there's a loud knock at the door. She frowns and doesn't move as if debating whether to answer.)

MALE VOICE, Off
Claire!

(CLAIRE throws the paper aside, rises and crosses to the front door.)

CLAIRE
(Before opening) Who is it!?

VOICE
Darrin!

CLAIRE
(Puzzled) Darrin?

VOICE
Darrin Devereaux.

(CLAIRE realizes who her caller is. She looks in the mirror, frowns, pats at her hair, frowns again, then opens the door to the trivia-playing DARRIN who is dressed in a sporty tennis outfit.)
Hello there.

H-hi.

(Pause) I was wrong.

Oh really?... About what?

That quote. "Savage breast" was the correct answer.

What?... Oh.

(As DARRIN talks, he walks a few feet inside the home.)

"Savage breast" must be an oxymoron.

An oxymoron?

You know: words that seem like the opposite of each other. Jumbo shrimp. Military intelligence.... Microsoft Works. Savage breast.

Oh, I see. Maybe.... Look, Darrin.

I wanted to apologize to George personally. Is he here?

Uh, well, he's not here right now.

He's not?

No. He went to a baseball game—er games.

Oh. (Though he's already inside) Mind if I come in?
CLAIRE
What? No, I guess not. *(Looks outside door)* Where's Gretchen?

DARRIN
Right now? *(Looks at watch)* Watching The Cartoon Network.

CLAIRE
Oh.

Beautiful day.

DARRIN
Looks like it. I haven't been out yet.

CLAIRE
I've already played three sets of tennis.... Do you play?

No, I don't.

DARRIN
You must do some sort of exercising. To keep in such great shape.

CLAIRE
*(Slightly uncomfortable)* I go to the gym a lot. Look, uh, Darrin—

DARRIN
Claire, I have to be honest with you. I knew George wouldn't be here.

CLAIRE
You did?

DARRIN
He asked me if I wanted to go to the game with him.

CLAIRE
*(Uneasy)* Oh. Don't you like baseball?

DARRIN
I love it.... I just wanted to talk to you. Alone. *(Moves closer)*

CLAIRE
About what?

About... us.
Us?

(Darrin) You know you really excite me.

(Claire) Now wait just a second.

Darrin

Don't worry, Claire. I'd never touch you, I swear. Without your permission, I mean.

(Claire)

Look, Darrin; I really think you need to leave.

Don't I turn you on?

(Claire)

What? Well, of course not.

You don't have to get mean.

(Claire)

I'm not mean.... I'm married.

So am I.

(Claire)

Yeah right.... And does your wife know you here?

(Matter-of-factly) No. But she wouldn't mind, believe me.

(Claire)

Yes, well, George would mind, believe me.

Darrin

I'm not so sure. I'd be willing to bet your husband would be more than willing to partake in some, uh, mixed doubles.

(Claire)

(Pause) And I'd bet you'd lose that bet.... And even if he was interested, I'm certainly not.

Why not?
CLAIRE

I don't have to give you a reason.

DARRIN

I know. I'm just curious, that's all. Do you want me to leave?

(Unconvincingly) Yes.

(Now near the still-open front door, DARRIN walks toward it. At the last possible moment, CLAIRE deftly kicks it shut.)

CLAIRE

I believe in commitment.

DARRIN

And so do I.

CLAIRE

Yeah right! You can't be committed to one woman and make love to other women.

DARRIN

Sure, I can. Gretchen and I are totally committed to each other.

CLAIRE

Yeah, well, you and I must have totally different definitions of commitment.

DARRIN

Look, Claire: I love Gretchen and she loves me. We're totally honest with one another and would never cheat.

CLAIRE

Is that so? Then what are you doing right now—er, trying to do?

DARRIN

I don't cheat, Claire. I never make love behind Gretchen's back. (Pause) Usually we're in different rooms.

(DARRIN smiles; CLAIRE doesn't.)

CLAIRE

(After pause) If you really loved Gretchen, you wouldn't need to make love to other women.

DARRIN

Not true. Look, Claire, I love marriage—but I also like a little variety; I don't care what you're talking about. Food, sports.... or lovers. The same thing over and over gets boring. No matter how great it is. And Gretchen feels the same way.
CLAIRE
The grass is always greener, isn’t it?

DARRIN
Not necessarily. But the grass is different. (Pause) Believe it or not, Claire, making love to other women makes me love my wife even more.

That doesn't make sense.

DARRIN
How would you know for sure? Unless you've tried it?

(CLAIRED has no answer.)

DARRIN
How long have you two been married? You said 20 years, right?

Almost.

DARRIN
Nearly 20 years. And unless I miss my guess, George is the only person you've ever made love to.

That's none of your business.

DARRIN
Aren't you ever the least bit curious what it's like to sleep with another man?

(Pause) Not in the least.

DARRIN
If I'd only been to bed with one other person my entire life, I'd always be wondering what it would be like with someone else.

That thought never crossed my mind.

DARRIN
So—George has been the only one.

(Quickly) I didn't say that.
DARRIN

(Pause) You realize that most of the world practices polygamy.

CLAIRE
Yeah.... Well, we happen to live in the United States, and, here, marriage means one man for every woman.

DARRIN
Yeah, and here, 50 percent of all marriages end in divorce, which—

Actually, it’s 43 percent.

CLAIRE
Really? How would you know?

DARRIN
I saw it on “Oprah.”

(CLaire sits on the sofa and places a pillow across her stomach for “protection.” Darrin sits down next to her and grabs the pillow. She quickly grabs another pillow.)

DARRIN
(Small smirk) Whatever.... The percentage would be much less if more couples experimented sexually within a marriage rather than cheating.

CLAIRE
(Pause) That’s your opinion.

DARRIN
Wow, I would think a philosophy major would be more open-minded.

CLAIRE
So philosophers are swingers, huh?

DARRIN
Hey, Nietzsche said he hoped Dionysus would replace Jesus as a cultural icon.

CLAIRE
Yeah, and Nietzsche went insane.

(Darrin

(CLAIRE sits on the sofa and places a pillow across her stomach for "protection." DARRIN sits down next to her and grabs the pillow. She quickly grabs another pillow.)

DARRIN
(Pause) So you watch "Oprah"?

CLAIRE
Sometimes. Why?
DARRIN

Did you see her program on swinging?

CLAIRE

No, I didn't.

DARRIN

Well, you should have. Swinging has become very popular in America. In cities, suburbs—everywhere.

CLAIRE

I don't believe it.

DARRIN

I'll loan you the DVD.

CLAIRE

No thank you.

DARRIN

(Pause) Did you know swinging and wife-swapping are legal in Canada?

CLAIRE

Bully for Canada.

(There is an even longer pause.)

DARREN

I get the feeling you and George haven’t made love in quite a while.

CLAIRE

That’s also none of your business. (Pause) So what makes you think so?

DARRIN

The odds. I read that most married couples don’t have sex after 10 years.

CLAIRE

Ten years? That’s absurd.

DARRIN

And you’ve been married twice that long. (Realizes the need to switch tactics) Okay, Claire, just for the sake of argument, let's suppose neither of us was married. Then would you be interested in making love to me?

(DARRIN takes the pillow; CLAIRE grabs the last pillow on the sofa, moving away from him in the process.)
CLAIRE
But we both are married. (Long pause) Besides, you're younger than me.

DARRIN
Oh, so that's the reason.

CLAIRE
No, it isn't.

DARRIN
The real reason you're turning me down is because I'm younger—not because we're married.

CLAIRE
I didn't say that. You did.

(DARRIN takes the pillow she's holding; CLAIRE counters right as does DARRIN blocking her from running out of the room.)

DARRIN
(Gently reaching for CLAIRE, taking her hands and pulling her towards him) You know of course that a man reaches his sexual prime much sooner in life than a woman.

CLAIRE
Yeah.... So?

DARRIN
So.... We'd be perfect in bed.

CLAIRE
You don't give up, do you?

DARRIN
Not if I really want something. Or somebody.

(DARRIN leans his head close to hers.)

CLAIRE
I don't see why you're so persistent. I'm sure there are plenty of women who'd just love to sleep with you.

DARRIN
Oh, I'm sure there are. But it's hard to find someone as attractive, intelligent and sexy as you.... Very hard.

(CLAIRE appears to be surrendering.)
DARRIN
Claire, I'd really love to take you to bed.... I bet I'd appreciate you a lot more than George does.

(DARRIN moves in for the "kill" gently maneuvering CLAIRE onto the sofa. There is a knock at the door....When DARRIN doesn't react, CLAIRE musters all her willpower and taps him on the back.)

CLAIRE

E-excuse me.

(CLAIRE manages to push DARRIN away and rise, before composing herself and answering the door.)

Who is it?

FLORENCE, Off

Florence Fletcher!

(CLAIRE motions DARRIN to get off the sofa, quickly straightens her clothing and hair, walks toward the door, looks in the mirror, shrugs, and opens the door.)

Hi, Florence.

FLORENCE
Morning, Claire. (Pause) May I come in?

What? Oh sure.

(FLORENCE enters wearing her Sunday finery and carrying her Bible as before. She immediately sees DARRIN standing by the sofa.)

FLORENCE
(Disapprovingly) Oh, I didn't know you had, uh, company.

CLAIRE
Darrin, this is my neighbor—Florence Fletcher.

Glad to meet you, Florence.

DARRIN

FLORENCE
(Unconvincingly) My pleasure.
CLAIRE
How was church?

FLORENCE
Divine, thank you.

DARRIN
Florence Fletcher? Didn't I read about you in the paper yesterday?

FLORENCE
(Frowns) I don't know; maybe.

What happened, Florence?

FLORENCE
It was no big deal.

DARRIN
The cable company accused her of e-mailing bomb threats.

Oh no.

FLORENCE
Oh yes. (Scowls) The swine.

Claire
Oh, Florence, what a mean thing for them to do.

DARRIN
I'm curious why you wouldn't take a lie detector test?

(Getting angrier as she responds, FLORENCE walks toward DARRIN, backing him up as she lectures.)

FLORENCE
Why should I take a lie detector test? I'm not guilty of anything. They’re the guilty ones. Planning to show all those filthy movies to innocent citizens—destroying their minds with those so-called "films" that glorify every possible type of depravity. From homosexuality to group sex. And you want ME to take a lie detector? Surely, you jest.

DARRIN
Sorry I asked.

FLORENCE
As far as I'm concerned, this community would be a lot better off if the cable company was bombed.
DARRIN

(Half-stunned, half-bemused) I see.... Well, Claire, I better be going.

CLAIRE

Okay.

(As CLAIRE walks DARRIN to the door, FLORENCE moves toward the dinette. Her mood suddenly changes from anger to delight.)

FLORENCE

Ooh, chocolate cake. Do you mind?

CLAIRE

Help yourself.

FLORENCE

If you insist. Do you have any wine?

CLAIRE

Yes, can you wait a second?

FLORENCE

If I have to.

(FLORENCE takes a large piece, sits at the sofa and begins to devour the cake. As she does, DARRIN pauses at the door and talks in whispers to CLAIRE. Though they can't be heard, it's obvious that DARRIN is making some headway, as an apparently clueless FLORENCE eats cake and riffles through the paper. DARRIN's lips move ever closer to CLAIRE, who still is resisting—barely. Though still looking at the paper, FLORENCE suddenly speaks.)

FLORENCE, Continuing

The pastor gave a marvelous sermon today.

CLAIRE

R-really?

FLORENCE

Yes, really.

(FLORENCE still does not look back at the couple, but does lift her head slightly and proudly announces the title of the sermon.)

FLORENCE

"Adultery—One-Way Ticket to Hell."

(The spell broken, CLAIRE quickly slams the door on DARRIN as LIGHTS OUT.)

End Act I
ACT II; SCENE I

(AT RISE: The Well’s living room, the next Saturday night. TODD in his pajamas, lies on the sofa which has now been converted to a bed. TODD eats from a bag of potato chips, drinks from a giant 2-liter bottle of Coke and is reading “Sports Illustrated.” He appears to be thoroughly enjoying himself—until JOYCE calls his name. Quickly, he folds up the bag of potato chips, caps the cola and hides the "stash" under the sofa bed—moments before JOYCE enters, wearing a bathrobe. TODD seems surprised to see his girlfriend.)

TODD

Joyce!

(JOYCE lets her robe open to reveal a suggestive outfit, something that would make even Frederick blush.)

JOYCE

Like it?

TODD

(Forgetting stash) Wow!

JOYCE

I got it just for you.

TODD

You did?

JOYCE

Who else, baby....I thought you were going to join me in bed.

TODD

What if my dad comes home?

JOYCE

(Moves closer) What if he does?

TODD

We're not supposed to be sleeping in the same room.

JOYCE

Well, we won't be sleeping in the same room. (Purrs) At least I won't be.

(JOYCE kisses him passionately for a few moments—then quickly pulls away and starts spitting.)

JOYCE, Continues

Phew!
What's wrong?

Your lips are all salty.

Huh? *(Smacks them)* Oh, that must be because it's so hot tonight. I'm sweaty all over.

Better take some salt pills.

Good idea.

*(TODD tries to leave, but she pulls him back.)*

Not now.

But Joyce—

But what?

My parents might come home.

Yeah sure! Right now, they're probably in bed doing the same thing we should be doing.

But they're over at the Devereauxs.

That's right. And the last time we saw the four of them together they were about to get kinky. They're probably having an orgy right now.

Not my parents. *(Thinks a moment)* Not my mother at least.

Talk about a double standard. They're out gang-banging—and they won't let us stay in the same room.
TODD
Hey, we coulda been camping all by ourselves this weekend.

(Near the exercise bike, JOYCE hops on it and begins cycling. The angrier she gets, the faster she pedals.)

JOYCE
Yeah sure, camping by ourselves. If you don't count the spiders and snakes and bears and god-knows-what-all. If you'd only bothered to ask me, you would have found out I hate camping—almost as much as I hate baseball. (Alights from bike to confront him) Next time you make plans for us, you need to consult me first. Okay!?

TODD
Okay.

(Her angry face now very close to TODD'S, CLAIRE instantly changes moods—smiling as she pats him on the face.)

JOYCE
Love you. (Reaches for something) I picked up something else that goes just perfect with this.

TODD
What!?

(Wearing a seductive smile, CLAIRE reveals a pair of handcuffs.)

TODD
Handcuffs?... Why?

JOYCE
(Seductively) Why not?

TODD
Joyce, I don't know.

JOYCE
I do. A little bondage can be a big turn-on. Trust me. Or should I say, TRUSS me. (Kisses him) Gimme your hands, Tiger.

TODD
J-Joyce.

JOYCE
Hey, you didn't think you'd like spanking either. (Spanks him with both hands) Remember?

(TODD smiles but before JOYCE reacts SFX: HEADLIGHTS FLASH AGAINST THE WINDOW.)
TODD
Migod, my parents! Get outta here!

JOYCE
Todd, don't order me around!

TODD
I'm sorry, honey, but—

(A disgusted JOYCE tosses TODD back on the sofa bed and puts the handcuffs around his ankles.)

TODD
Joyce, what are you doing!

JOYCE
(As she grabs robe) If you want the key, you're gonna have to hop into my bed. And I do mean HOP.

(JOYCE laughs at her own humor as she exits. TODD looks futilely at his "foot cuffs" before covering his feet with his blanket.... Moments later he is surprised by a knock on the door.)

TODD
W-who is it!?

(TODD is surprised to hear a familiar female voice.)

FEMALE VOICE, Off
Jenny!

JENNY is barely visible to the audience.

TODD
Jenny?... Just a second!

(Forgetting that he is "foot-cuffed," TODD rolls out of bed and falls immediately to the floor.... After recovering from the traumatic header, he manages to stand as JENNY continues to knock.)

TODD, Continues
I'm coming! I'm coming.

(TODD manages to hop to the door, open it and peek outside.)

TODD, Continues
Jenny, hi.

(JENNY is barely visible to the audience.)
Hi, Todd. (Pause) Can I come in?

(TODD looks around, then back at JENNY.)

Yeah, sure, but gimme a second. I'm, uh, not dressed.

(TODD closes the door, hops as fast as he can back onto the sofa bed, and pulls the covers over his legs.)

Okay!

(JENNY SAWYER enters, dressed in a cheerleading outfit. She's attractive and a lot younger than JOYCE—an age difference magnified by what she's wearing.)

Todd?

Over here.

(Seeing TODD, JENNY walks toward the sofa bed with a bag in her hand. She is very pleasant—maybe too pleasant.)

Game tonight, huh?

Yeah.

Who won?

They did—but they were just lucky.

What was the score?

51 to 3.

Oh.
JENNY

(Awkward pause, then) You look good.

TODD

Thanks.... So do you.

(Another awkward pause.)

TODD

Uh, how did you know I was back?

JENNY

On accident. I happened to see you driving around today. (Pause) With a, uh, woman.

TODD

Oh....

JENNY

Is she your girlfriend?

TODD

As a matter of fact, yes.

JENNY

She looks older than you.

TODD

Yeah. A couple years.

JENNY

(Looks at bed) I'm not interrupting anything, am I?

TODD

Oh no. My girlfriend—uh, Joyce—went to bed.

JENNY

Joyce? (Frowns) That's my grandma's name. (Pause) Are your parents home?

TODD

Uh, no, they're not.

JENNY

(Speaking rapidly) I always liked your parents. They're about the only happily married couple I know. I always thought we'd end up just like them.... But that's life, huh?

TODD

Yeah, I guess.
**JENNY**

(Pause) So how long have you been home?

**TODD**

About a week.

**JENNY**

Too busy to call I guess.

**TODD**

Well—

**JENNY**

Doesn't matter that we were together two years and seven-and-a-half months.

**TODD**

That long, huh?

**JENNY**

Then all of a sudden I find out you've got a new girlfriend. So nice of you.

**TODD**

Well, I didn't want to lead you on—so I told you.

**JENNY**

So sweetly too. Let’s see, how did you put it? (Paces as she recites) Dear Jenny, how are you? Guess what? I've got a new girlfriend, so you're history. Don't take it too hard. Gotta boogie, Todd.

**TODD**

That's not what I said.

**JENNY**

No, you didn't say it; you texted it.... Too chicken to call.

**TODD**

C'mon, Jenny, let's be adults.

**JENNY**

That would be a first for you. (*Reaches inside her bag*)

**TODD**

What are you doing?

**JENNY**

Oh, just returning a few things.
Like what?

Like this.

*(JENNY pulls out a small object and crosses to him, holding out a ring.)*

My promise ring?

Yes, your "promise" ring.

Jenny, I don't want that back.

*(Reads inscription)* With all my love—forever and ever. Todd. *(Proffers ring)* Here, you can give it to Joyce; she won't *(Sarcastically)* know the difference.

C'mon, Jenny, I don't want that.

Well, I sure don't want it.

*(JENNY disdainfully drops the ring in his hand.)*

Hey, you could sell it.

I could sell it. How thoughtful. *(Reaches into bag)* Well, I know you'll want this back.

What?

*(Unfolding object)* Your letterman's sweater.

You don't want it?

Not anymore.
But. I gave that to you.

JENNY

Yeah. *(Mellows)* Remember when?

TODD

*(Also mellowing)* Yeah. On the hayride.

JENNY

First night you said you loved me.

TODD

Yeah. It was?

JENNY

I used to think the L stood for love—but now I know what it really stands for. *(Pause, then tosses sweater at him)* Liar!

TODD

Jenny....

JENNY

*(Reaches into bag)* I have one other thing you can have back.

TODD

What?

JENNY

Our prom picture.

*(As TODD takes the picture and looks at it, JENNY sits next to him on the sofa bed.)*

TODD

We were a cool-looking couple, weren’t we?

JENNY

That was taken right before you asked me to marry you. Remember?

TODD

*(Slightly chagrined)* Oh yeah; I did, didn’t I.

JENNY

Yes, you did.... And I said, not before you finish college. *(Looks ready to cry)*

TODD

Yeah.
JENNY
And then you said we'd name our first child Jennifer—

I did?

JENNY
Whether it was a boy or girl. *(Begins to sob)*

TODD
Oh, Jenny. *(Puts an arm around her)* Please don't cry, Jenny. You know what that does to me. *(She buries her head in his shoulders and continues to cry)* Jenny, please....

*(After a few bittersweet moments, JOYCE'S VOICE is heard.)*

JOYCE
*(Entering)* Who the hell is that!?

TODD
Huh?... Oh, uh—nobody.

*(JENNY quickly changes from sad to mad.)*

JENNY
Nobody!?

TODD
Jenny, I didn't mean it like—

JENNY
If I was your girlfriend for two years, nearly three, and I'm a nobody—what the freak does that make her!? *(Points at JOYCE)*

TODD
Now come on, Jenny.

JOYCE
*(Crossing closer to JENNY)* Oh, this must be the child you told me about.

*(JENNY turns her anger towards JOYCE.)*

JENNY
Child!?

JOYCE
That's what I said.
JENNY
Well, if I'm a child, what does that make him? He's only 11 months older than me.

JOYCE
I was referring to your emotional age.

JENNY
Really? You wanna talk child, huh? Does he still watch Saturday morning cartoons?

JOYCE
As a matter of fact, TODD doesn’t watch television at all anymore.

JENNY
(Looks at TODD) What?

TODD
(Frowns out of JOYCE's view) That's right.

JOYCE
The truth of the matter is, Todd doesn't need to get his thrills vicariously.

JENNY
Can't Todd answer for himself? Or do you get some kind of thrill answering for him—vicariously?

JOYCE
You're right, Todd. She does have a big mouth.

JENNY
What!? (To TODD) Oh, so you've been talking behind my back, huh?

TODD
I didn't say you had a big mouth.

JOYCE
No, you said she was a loudmouth.

TODD
(Quickly to JENNY) Just when you lose your temper.

JOYCE
Which is quite often, I hear.

JENNY
(To TODD) Is that all you ever talked about? Me?

JOYCE
Oh, heavens no.... There are myriad more exciting subjects to talk about than you.
(To TODD) Do you ever get a word in edgewise with her?

JOYCE
(Getting angry) Look, honey, you better toddle off home before you get arrested for breaking curfew.

JENNY
(Short pause) At least I won't get arrested for robbing the cradle.

JOYCE
Hey, you better shut your mouth, (Moves closer) before I shut it for you.

JENNY
What? Are you serious?

(Before JOYCE answers, SFX: LIGHTS FLASH AGAINST THE WINDOW.)

TODD
Oh no, my parents! Get outta here!

(As JENNY quickly repacks her bag, JOYCE gives TODD a passionate kiss.)

JOYCE
(Exiting to bedroom) See you later.... Tiger.

(TODD is obviously under JOYCE'S spell; JENNY is obviously hurt.)

JENNY
I'll be in your pool.

(JENNY moves quickly to the hallway.)

TODD
But you can't swim!

JENNY
(Holding back tears) I know! (Exits)

TODD
Jenny!

(TODD looks at JENNY as she exits, then looks in the direction JOYCE exited. He makes a quick decision and hops off after JENNY. A few moments pass before GEORGE opens the front door for a sexily dressed – and angry – GRETCHEN DEVEREAUX.)
GRETCHE
He thinks he's so smart just 'cause he has a degree. I know a lot of real dumb people who went to college, don't you?

GEORGE
Oh yeah, sure.

GRETCHE
Did you go to college, George?

GEORGE
Yes, I did, as a matter of fact.

GRETCHE
I didn't mean everyone who went to college is dumb.

GEORGE
I know you didn't. Hey, how 'bout a drink?

(GRETCHEN and GEORGE are too preoccupied – at least for the moment – to notice the unfolded sofa bed.)

GRETCHE
Thanks. I could use one.... Make it a double.

GEORGE
(Eyes light up) You bet. (Crosses towards bar) A double what?

GRETCHE
Oh, I don't know. Light beer.

GEORGE
(Keeping a straight face) Sorry, we're all out of light beer. Let me surprise you.

GRETCHE
Okay. (Pause) I was pretty drunk when I left, but that walk kinda sobered me up.

GEORGE
Lucky I saw you walking.

GRETCHE
We only live two blocks away.

GEORGE
I know.

GRETCHE
(Oblivious) Thanks for following me.
GEORGE
It's dangerous for a woman to be walking alone at night. *(Crosses to her with drinks)*
Especially an attractive woman.

*(GEORGE offers GRETCHEN the drink.)*

GRETCHEN
Thank you. *(Takes drink)* And thank you.

GEORGE
Welcome. *(They sip)* And welcome.

GRETCHEN
Ooh, what is this?

GEORGE
My favorite. A Tequila Sunrise.

GRETCHEN
It's so strong.

GEORGE
That's why they call it Ta-kill-ya.

GRETCHEN
George.... You are so funny. *(Laughs as she sips)*

GEORGE
That’s my motto. Make ‘em laugh; make ‘em breakfast.

GRETCHEN
Huh?

GEORGE
*(Quickly)* Do you usually storm out of the house when you get mad at Darrin?

GRETCHEN
Only when he puts me down.

GEORGE
You must not spend much time at home.

GRETCHEN
What?

GEORGE
’Cause he puts you down so much.
GRETCHEN
(Bittersweet laugh) Oh yeah. You got that right.

GEORGE
(Pause) It's really none of my business, Gretchen, but I don't like it either when Darrin puts you down. You deserve a lot more respect than you get.

(GEORGE takes her wrap and puts it in closet.)

GEORGE
(Continuing) If you were my wife, I wouldn't criticize you like that.

(GRETCHEN blushes, then turns away.)

GRETCHEN
The nerve of that guy. Making fun of me just 'cause I didn't know who was buried in Grant's Tomb. (Turns back) Did you know who was buried in Grant's Tomb?

GEORGE
Huh? Well, yes, I did.... But I've been to Grant's Tomb.

GRETCHEN
Well, there you go. I've never been there.

GEORGE
Plus, Darrin was only half right.

GRETCHEN
He was?

GEORGE
Absolutely. Most people don't know that Grant's wife is also buried in Grant's Tomb.

GRETCHEN
Really?... Oh, George. (Happily hugs him)

GEORGE
Uh, why don't we sit down?

GRETCHEN
Yeah, my feet could use a rest.

(GRETCHEN crosses around the sofa and notices it's now a bed.)

GRETCHEN
George, did you do this while I wasn't looking?
GEORGE
Do what? *(Sees sofa bed)* Oh no, Todd's using the sofa bed while he's home.

GRETCHE
Todd?... He's your son, right?

GEORGE
Right. His girl–er, woman–friend is sleeping in his room.

GRETCHE
Oh. Are they here right now?

GEORGE
No, they just left on a camping trip. So I have no idea why the bed is down. But gimme a hand and we can fold it up.

*(Instead, GRETCHE* flops on the sofa bed.)*

GRETCHE
Why?

*(GEORGE sits on the chair.)*

GEORGE
*(Nervous-excited)* Good question.

*(GRETCHE and GEORGE smile at each other and there's an awkward pause – which GEORGE breaks with a toast.)*

GEORGE
To a very attractive... and intelligent friend.

GRETCHE
Oh, thank you. *(They drink)* Do you really think I'm intelligent?

GEORGE
Hey, none of the rest of us knew skin was an organ. And we all have college degrees.

GRETCHE
Yeah—and even though I didn't go to college, I'm still an instructor.

GEORGE
Really? What do you teach?

GRETCHE
*(Proudly)* Jazzercise.
GEORGE
(Momentarily speechless) No kidding? Wow, that must, uh, take a lot of, uh, smarts.

GRETCHE
Tell me about it. It's not easy picking out the right songs for the right routines.

GEORGE
I'll bet... And that's not something you coulda learned in school.

GRETCHE
(Duly flattered) Yeah. (Pause) My turn to make a toast.

GEORGE
Okay.

GRETCHE
To a very funny guy... who's also very sexy.

GEORGE
Are you serious?

GRETCHE
Serious about what?

GEORGE
Serious about me being sexy?

GRETCHE
Very. I like older men.

GEORGE
(Smiles, then a pause) Then why did you marry Darrin?

GRETCHE
(Smiles) I like younger men, too. (They both laugh, then after a pause) Let's screw.

(GEORGE, in the middle of taking a sip, nearly chokes.)

GEORGE
(Wiping mouth) Beg pardon?

GRETCHE
You heard me.... Let's screw.

GEORGE
Uh, can I get you another drink?
GRETCHEN

(Seductively) I don't need another drink, Georgie.

Oh.

GEORGE

Ya wanna?

GRETCHEN

(Now that GEORGE can turn his fantasy into reality, the reality of it all quickly sinks in. Lust has come face-to-face with guilt.)

GEORGE

(Unconvincingly) Are you kidding?... Sure of course.

(GRETCHEN opens her purse and pulls out various paraphernalia including a string of condoms, KY jelly, and a little stuffed animal that she puts at the corner of the sofa bed—and even a small flashlight she waves around while checking to see if it works. After recovering from GRETCHEN's ritual, GEORGE nervously responds.)

GEORGE

Uh, maybe we should go upstairs.

GRETCHEN

Oh no, I never do it in the wife's bed. I'm superstitious that way.

(GEORGE quickly jumps out of the chair.)

GRETCHEN, Continuing

Where you going?

GEORGE

I'll be right back.

(GEORGE checks the closet to make sure no one's inside, makes sure the door's locked, and then out of view of GRETCHEN, pulls out some breath spray, which he sprays inside his mouth—and then as an afterthought, under his arms. He is now standing near the sofa bed.)

GEORGE

What about your husband?

GRETCHEN

What about him?

GEORGE

Would he, uh, mind?
Of course not. As long as I tell him.

Oh... You guys are swingers, huh?

Hey, you only go 'round once, you know. (Starts to remove blouse) What about you and Claire?

What about us?

Do you swing?

Oh sure, all the time.... We're married, not buried.

Hey, I like that.

(GEORGE sits on the bed and watches as GRETCHEM deftly unhooks her skirt and throws it aside.)

Are you sure you want to do this?

Positive. (Crawls toward him) Aren't you?

Y-yeah.

(GRETCHEM throws her arms around GEORGE, prior to unbuttoning his shirt.)

Here, lemme get this for you.

I can get it. (Starts to unbutton shirt)

Is something wrong?

No, of course not.
GRETCHEL

*(Helps take off shirt)* You have such a nice body. I would have never guessed you were 34.

GEORGE

*(Quickly)* 43.

GRETCHEL

*(Cheerfully)* Whatever.

*(GRETCHEL begins nuzzling GEORGE who is torn but finds it increasingly hard to resist.)*

GRETCHEL

C'mon, Georgie. I can't wait much longer.

GEORGE

Okay, okay.

GRETCHEL

*(Easily)* You're married, not buried, 'member.

GEORGE

Yeah.

GRETCHEL

My savage breasts need you.

*(GRETCHEL gently tugs GEORGE over to her side of the sofa bed, then strokes him.)*

GRETCHEL

How does that feel?

GEORGE

N-nice. Very nice.

*(GRETCHEL leans over and kisses GEORGE, who raises his hands briefly, then drops them in surrender.)*

GRETCHEL

I was sure you and Claire fooled around—never mind what Darrin said.

*(This time GEORGE kisses her, but pulls away after several moments.)*

GEORGE

What did Darrin say?

GRETCHEL

He said you and your wife didn't mess around.
How would he know?  

GEORGE

Claire told him.  

GRETCHEH

Claire did? When?  

GEORGE

When he came over here last Sunday.  

(A suddenly curious GEORGE sits up.)

GEORGE

Darrin was over here last Sunday?  

GRETCHEH

Yeah. You were at some game.  

GEORGE

Yeah, I know. What'd Darrin want?  

GRETCHEH

Your wife.  

GEORGE

What!?  

GRETCHEH

Darrin is crazy about Claire.  

GEORGE

He is?  

GRETCHEH

She really turns him on.  

GEORGE

She does?  

GRETCHEH

Hey, Claire's a very classy lady, you know.  

GEORGE

(Begrudgingly) Yeah, I know. (Nervously) So what happened when Darrin, uh, "visited" Claire?
GRETCHEN
Nothing, I guess. She told Darrin you two didn't play around. *(Rubs his neck)* She was obviously lying.

GEORGE
Yeah. *(Quickly)* You sure your husband and my wife didn't do it?

GRETCHEN
Oh no, not last Sunday. He woulda told me.

*(Relieved)* Oh.

GEORGE
Tonight's a different story.

GRETCHEN
It is?

GEORGE
If I know Darrin, he's got Claire in bed right now.

GRETCHEN
But we haven't been gone 30 minutes.

GEORGE
Yeah, and look where we are.

*(GEORGE reaches in his pocket and takes out his cell phone.)*

GRETCHEN
George! What are you doing?

GEORGE
I gotta make a call.

GRETCHEN
Who are you calling this late?

GEORGE
My wife.

GRETCHEN
Gee, George. I didn't think you were the jealous type.

GEORGE
I'm not! *(Not so frantically)* Just curious.
GRETCHEN

Georgie, c'mere. I want you.

GEORGE

No answer!

GRETCHEN

(Smiles) Darrin works fast.

(GEORGE frowns then throws the cell phone on the bed. A moment later, there is a knock at the door.)

GEORGE

(Brightening) That's Claire!

Knocking?

GRETCHEN

Probably forgot her keys.

(GEORGE grabs his shirt, hops over the back of the sofa, and crosses towards the door until an all-too-familiar voice causes GEORGE’S glee to vanish.)

FLORENCE, Off

It’s Flor-ence Fletcher!

(Stopping suddenly, GEORGE puts his finger to his mouth to let GRETCHEN know not to say anything.... GEORGE then watches as a key opens the door and FLORENCE enters.)

FLORENCE

George, didn’t you hear me?

GEORGE

Yes, I did, and how did you get a key to my house?

FLORENCE

Claire gave me a key the last time you went on vacation.

GEORGE

She did? Well, I want it back.

FLORENCE

I’ll give it to Claire as I promised. Is she here?

(GEORGE looks back in time to see GRETCHEN wave at FLORENCE.)
GEORGE
No, she’s not.

FLORENCE
Who’s that?

GEORGE
None of your business. Now if you don’t mind.

FLORENCE
I came over to borrow some wine.

( GEORGE looks toward the bar.)

GEORGE
Okay, I'll get you some wine, but don't you move an inch or no wine!

(GEORGE scurries toward the bar sideways, so he can keep an eye on FLORENCE. He quickly grabs a bottle of wine and walks quickly towards his neighbor.)

GEORGE
Here you go!

FLORENCE
Is it red?

GEORGE
(Looks at bottle) Yes, it's red. (Hands her the bottle)

FLORENCE
(Looking at label) Shiraz?

GEORGE
I don't know. Take it or leave it. But leave!

(FLORENCE takes the bottle quickly, frowns at GRETCHE then GEORGE and turns to exit.)

GEORGE
You're welcome.

(FLORENCE looks back disapprovingly before exiting. GEORGE slams the door and crosses quickly to the sofa bed.)

GRETCHE
Who was that?
GEORGE
A holier-than-thou alcoholic neighbor.

GRETHECN
She looks like a party hearty gal. You and Claire ever swang with her?

GEORGE
Oh god! Not in this lifetime. (Pause) Speaking of which—Gretchen, doesn’t it bother you that your husband and my wife are doing it over at your house right now?

GRETHECN
You're darn right, it bothers me....

GEORGE
If they already haven't finished—

(GRETHECN reaches up and pulls GEORGE onto the bed.)

GRETHECN
(Completing her thought) We got a lot of catching up to do.

(GRETHECN pounces on top of GEORGE and begins to rain kisses on him. Legs are flailing in the air as LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

End Act II; Scene I

ACT II; SCENE II

(AT RISE: The Well’s living room; later that evening. Some time has passed since an amorous GRETHECN was about to ravage an anxious GEORGE. There is a lump on the sofa bed, covered by the blanket. JOYCE enters, sees the lump, smiles, crawls into the bed, and starts to fondle the "lump" which appears to like the attention. After some sensuous massaging, JOYCE puckers up, pulls back the top of the cover, and very nearly kisses GRETHECN. JOYCE screams, GRETHECN screams, and JOYCE screams even louder.)

JOYCE
(Recovering) Who are you?

GRETHECN
Gretchen Devereaux. We met last week, remember?

JOYCE
(Frowns) Oh yeah, the swinger.... Where's Todd?

GRETHECN
Who's Todd?
JOYCE
He lives here.

GRETCHEN
Oh, that's right. George's son.

JOYCE
Yes. And that's his bed.

GRETCHEN
(Looks under the covers; impishly) He's not here now.

JOYCE
Better not be.

GRETCHEN
Todd's your boyfriend, right?

JOYCE
Ex-boyfriend—if I don't find him real soon. (Crosses to hallway)

GRETCHEN
Good luck!

JOYCE
(Looks back) Pervert!

(JOYCE exits. After she does, GRETCHEN rises and crosses towards the hallway.)

GRETCHEN
George!... Are you okay?

(GRETCHEN grabs a bottle from the bar, goes back to bed, opens the bottle, takes a swig, and yells "George!" one more time. A moment or two later, she hears someone coming, smiles, and crawls under the covers. Just after she does, TODD, still in his pajamas with ankles cuffed, enters and hops towards the sofa bed.)

TODD
Jenny?

GRETCHEN
No. (Pulls back cover) Gretchen. (Looks at TODD standing several feet away) Hi Todd.

TODD
H-hi.... Who are you?

GRETCHEN
I'm Gretchen Devereaux. Remember we met last week.... I wasn’t wearing as many clothes.
(As she leans over) Oh yeah. (Pause) What are you doing here?

GRETCHEN
Huh? Well, I was waiting for your fa— (Catches herself) Hey, I thought you went on a camping trip.

TODD
We decided not to go.

(GRETCHEN notices that TODD is holding his legs tightly together.)

GRETCHEN
Oh.... Say do you need to go to the bathroom?

TODD
Huh? (Looks down) No—actually, I, uh, have, uh, handcuffs around my feet.

GRETCHEN
How did that happen?

TODD
Don't ask.

GRETCHEN
C'mere; lemme take a look.

(TODD hobbles towards her and crawls on the bed. GRETCHEN looks closer, then laughs heartily.)

GRETCHEN
These are supposed to go on your hands.

TODD
Yes, I know.

GRETCHEN
Bingo!

(GRETCHEN removes the handcuffs and displays them to TODD.)

TODD
How'd you do that? Without a key?

GRETCHEN
You don't need a key with Lustcuffs.
TODD
Lustcuffs?

GRETCHEN
Yeah, you just press this button. *(Shows him)*

TODD
Oh. *(Rubs ankles)* Say, have you seen a girl wearing a cheerleaders' uniform?

GRETCHEN
No, but I did see a woman wearing a negligee. And she was looking for you.

Joyce?

GRETCHEN
I think that's her name.

She's up?

GRETCHEN
And super cranky.

Which way'd she go?

GRETCHEN
*(Points)* That way.

*(Suddenly, JOYCE'S voice can be heard.)*

JOYCE, *Off*

*(Calling)* Todd!

TODD
Oh god! I'm dead. *(Grabs blanket)* Tell her you haven't seen me.

*(TODD drops his head onto GRETCHEN'S lap and covers his head with the blanket. There is a moment's quiet before JOYCE's voice is heard again.)*

JOYCE, *Off*

Todd!

*(JOYCE enters and walks up to GRETCHEN, who is trying to look pleasant, as if not noticing the lump in her lap.)*
GRETCHEN
Did you find Todd?

JOYCE
No. *(Suspiciously)* But I thought I just heard his voice.

GRETCHEN
Really?

JOYCE
Really. And I think I know where he is. Unless you're pregnant.

*(GRETCHEN doesn't immediately realize JOYCE is making reference to the lump, which she is cradling.)*

GRETCHEN
Pregnant? *(Looks down)* Oh, that's funny.

JOYCE
*(Un-amused)* Ha-ha. Who's under the covers with you?

GRETCHEN
Huh? Oh, just my husband.

JOYCE
*(Short pause)* That would be a first, wouldn't it?

GRETCHEN
What!?! Now wait a minute.

JOYCE
No, I won't wait a minute.

*(JOYCE reaches down and rips off the blanket, exposing TODD, holding onto the liquor bottle, curled up in a fetal position.)*

JOYCE
Todd!

TODD
*(Sheepishly)* Oh, hi, Joyce.

JOYCE
I guess I should take a number.

TODD
I can explain.
JOYCE

Like father, like son.

GRETCHE

I like 'em both.

TODD

Joyce, please.

JOYCE

I can't believe it. Screwing up our relationship—and your liver besides!

*(JOYCE grabs the bottle, picks it up as if she's going to throw it at TODD, but instead tosses it on the bed and quickly walks toward the hallway.... TODD crawls on his knees across the bed.)*

TODD

Joyce! This isn't what it looks like. I never touched her, I promise!

*(In no mood for excuses, JOYCE exits. TODD and GRETCHE watch after her.)*

GRETCHE

She doesn't seem like a very nice lady.

TODD

Whaddya expect? She just caught me in bed with another woman.

GRETCHE

But we weren't doing anything.

TODD

She didn't know that.

GRETCHE

She coulda at least heard your explanation.

TODD

Yeah, you're absolutely right. *(Takes a swig from the wine bottle)* I trust her. She oughtta trust me. *(Swigs again)*

GRETCHE

I mean we don't even really know each other. *(Moves closer)* Unfortunately.

TODD

*(Uncomfortably)* Yeah. *(Quickly)* Speaking of explanations, how come you're in my bed?

GRETCHE

What? Well, uh—
TODD
I thought my parents went over to your house.

GRETCHEL
They did.

TODD
But you're here—

GRETCHEL
Doesn't make sense, does it. I need a drink.

TODD
Okay.

(TODD takes another swig then hands bottle to GRETCHEL.)

TODD, Continues
You're not, uh— doing it with my dad, are you?

GRETCHEL
Oh no, of course not. (Softer) Not right now.

(GRETCHEL puts one hand behind her back and crosses her fingers.)

TODD
I mean I can't imagine my dad having an affair. (Pause) It's hard enough imagining him making love to my mother.

GRETCHEL
I know what you mean. I wouldn't believe my parents ever did it—if wasn't for me.

TODD
Yeah. (Pause, then laughs) Maybe the stork brought us.

GRETCHEL
(Laughs) Hey, yeah.... You know you're funny. Just like your dad.

(GRETCHEL leans over and playfully puts her arm around him.)

TODD
He is funny, isn't he?

(They both laugh—until a familiar voice startles them as GEORGE enters and sees TODD and GRETCHEL together on the sofa bed.)

GEORGE
Todd!!
(TODD and GRETCHEN look over and see a less-than-jolly GEORGE, dressed in a bathrobe, staring at them.)

TODD

Dad!

GEORGE

(Crosses closer) What are you doing here?

TODD

Where's mom?

GRETCHEN

(Helpfully) She's over at my house with my husband.

GEORGE

Gretchen, please!

TODD

So my parents are kinky!

GEORGE

Now, Todd, wait a second!

TODD

Joyce was right.

(TODD crawls over GRETCHEN in an attempt to exit the other side of the sofa bed.)

GEORGE

Son, I can explain.

(GEORGE reaches over and grabs TODD, who pulls his father onto the bed. GRETCHEN is caught in between.)

GRETCHEN

Ouch! Oh no!... Don't move!

GEORGE

What's wrong?

GRETCHEN

My contact lens. I lost it.

GEORGE

Oh great.
GRETCHEN
Be careful. It's gotta be right around here *(Starts to feel around)* Well, don't just sit there. Gimme a hand.

*(GEORGE and TODD also begin feeling around the bed.)*

TODD
I don't even know what I'm looking for.

GRETCHEN
It's small and green.

GEORGE
Are you sure it's not still in your eyes? That happens to Claire.

GRETCHEN
I don't know. Maybe.

GEORGE
Here, lemme take a look.

TODD
What are you gonna do?

GEORGE
Look under her eyelid.

*(GEORGE leans down close to GRETCHEN, who is between him and TODD. TODD also leans down close and watches. Like a surgeon, GEORGE lifts up the eyelid.)*

GRETCHEN
Be careful.

TODD
Ooh, how gross.

GEORGE
Ah, there it is.

TODD
*(Moves even closer)* Where?

GEORGE
There.

TODD
Amazing.
(JOYCE has entered—and with a horrified look begins to walk a semicircle around the bed to view the proceedings.)

JOYCE

Oh–mi–god!

(GEORGE, TODD, and GRETCHEN turn to see a mortified JOYCE.)

JOYCE

A father and son with the same woman.... Now I've seen everything. (Hurries to exit)

TODD

Joyce! I can explain.

JOYCE

(Seen enough) There's no way you can explain this. (Exits)

TODD

Joyce, wait!

(TODD rolls over, hops out of bed and runs after JOYCE.)

GEORGE

Todd! Don't you dare go into her bedroom. Your mother will kill you.

TODD

Hah! You should talk.

(TODD exits. GEORGE blusters, but realizes his son has a point.)

GRETCHEN

I can see! I can see!

(GRETCHEN is ecstatic—until she sees GEORGE frowning at her.)

GEORGE

I'm gone 10 minutes and you're seducing my son.

GRETCHEN

George, why would I seduce your son, (Moves closer, sexily) when I have you.

GEORGE

(Not in the mood) I thought they went camping.

GRETCHEN

They decided not to go.
GEORGE

Great.

GRETCHE

Where did you go? I was starting to worry.

GEORGE

I was trying to find some aspirin. With no luck whatsoever.

GRETCHE

Aw, George, you got a headache?

GEORGE

I had a headache. (Touches head) Now it's a migraine.

GRETCHE

C'mere, I'll make it feel better. C'mon, sit down.

(GEORGE sits on the bed.)

GRETCHE

I can massage a headache outta anyone. Lay down.

What?

GEORGE

Go ahead; lie down and relax.

(GEORGE thinks a moment, then shrugs "what the hell" and lies back in bed.)

GRETCHE

First, we start with the piggies.

(GRETCHE is now at the foot of the bed—at GEORGE's feet....She can only massage a couple of times before a voice pierces the air. It belongs to JENNY, who has entered in time to see TODD's dad in what seems to be a compromising position with a strange woman.)

JENNY

(Entering) Mr. Wells!?

Jenny!?

GEORGE

What is this? A hotel?

(GENNY moves closer, GRETCHE, resigned, sits on the chair.)
JENNY
Mr. Wells, I never thought you'd cheat on your wife.

GEORGE
Jenny, you've got the wrong idea. She was just massaging me.

JENNY
Where's Mrs. Wells?

GRETCHEN
Oh, she's over at my house with my hus—

GEORGE
Gretchen, never mind! (Quickly changes topic) And what are you doing here, anyway?

JENNY
Well—I came over to see Todd.

GRETCHEN
Your son gets around, doesn't he?

JENNY
Oh, Mr. Wells. I'm so unhappy. (Starts to cry)

GEORGE
Jenny.

JENNY
I love Todd so much. And he doesn't care.

GEORGE
Now, Jenny—please don't cry.

(An upset JENNY crawls into bed next to GEORGE, who shrugs and put an arm around her.)

GEORGE
Everything's gonna be okay, honey. You have your whole life ahead of you.

JENNY
But I want Todd to be part of my life. (Cries more)

(G RETCHEN is so moved that she even begins to sniffle.... TODD enters from the hallway and can't believe his eyes.)

TODD
Dad?
GEORGE

Todd?

(TODD crosses closer, surveying the scene.)

GRETHECEN

Uh-oh.

TODD

Is that Jenny?

GEORGE

What? Well, of course it's Jenny.

TODD

I can't believe it. My father's not only kinky—he's a dirty old man!

GEORGE

Now, Todd, wait a second. I was only trying to console Jenny. She was crying over you.

(JENNY breaks away from GEORGE.)

JENNY

(With a straight face) No, I wasn't.

GEORGE

Jenny!

TODD

Jenny, I want to talk to you.

JENNY

Go ahead—talk.

TODD

Alone.

JENNY

No thank you.

TODD

Look, Jenny, I'm not kidding. You get outta that bed right now.

JENNY

Or what?

TODD

Or—I'll pull you out.
JENNY
Oh no, you won't.

*(JENNY rolls over GEORGE so he is between her and TODD.)*

TODD
I'll count to three.

JENNY
Do you know how?

GEORGE
Jenny, I think you better get up.

TODD
One... Two...

JENNY
Don't you dare!

TODD
Three!... Okay, you asked for it. *(Reaches over and grabs JENNY)* C'mere, Jenny.

GEORGE
Son!

*(TODD tries to pull JENNY out of bed, but instead ends up being pulled onto the bed. An excited GRETCHEN exits the chair and crawls onto the foot of the bed to watch the action... JENNY and TODD begin arguing across GEORGE, who is lying between them.)*

JENNY
I thought you said you grew up.

TODD
Looks who's talking.

GEORGE
Trust me, Todd; they don't make 'em much better than Jenny.

TODD
*(Pause)* Jenny, have you been, been—doin’ it with my dad?

GEORGE
Oh, come on, Todd.

JENNY
It's none of your business who I've been seeing. *(Seductively to GEORGE)* Is it, Georgie?
GEORGE
Jenny!

(During the commotion, JOYCE has entered and can't believe her eyes.)

JOYCE
My god in heaven!

(Everyone turns to see JOYCE, dressed and holding a suitcase.)

JOYCE
You are the weirdest, kinkiest bunch of sex fiends I've ever seen... Good-bye, Todd.

Joyce, wait!

TODD
What?

You forgot your Lustcuffs. (Lifts cuffs up for her to see)

GEORGE
Lustcuffs!?

TODD
You can't go. You don't have a car.

JOYCE
I've called a cab.... You can have little Miss Jailbait all for yourself.

JENNY
No thank you; I don't want him (Jumps out of bed to confront JOYCE) after you contaminated him.

You've got a real nasty mouth, you know.

JENNY
You started it.

JOYCE
Yeah, and I'll finish it, too. If you don't shut that big mouth of yours.

GEORGE
C'mon, ladies; let's be adults.
JOYCE
She's not old enough to be an adult.

JENNY
I'm old enough to take care of myself.

JOYCE
(Moves even closer) Oh yeah!?

JENNY
Yeah!

(TODD kneels on the bed between the two.)

TODD
C'mon, you two.

(JOYCE body slams TODD forward on the front of the bed on top of GRETCHEN.)

JOYCE
We'll see about that.

(JOYCE reaches down and grabs JENNY, trying to pull her up. Instead, JENNY pulls JOYCE onto the bed and they start rolling around – and over – the bodies of GEORGE, TODD, and GRETCHEN.... The chaos builds—until they are interrupted by someone knocking at the door.)

FLORENCE, Off
It's Florence Fletcher! Is everyone okay!? Claire!?

(GEORGE tells everyone "Quiet!" And, with their help, pulls the cover over all their bodies just a moment before FLORENCE unlocks the door and enters.)

FLORENCE
I heard people screaming.

(FLORENCE walks toward the bed. Although everyone in bed remains still, it is rather obvious there's a "cover-up" of bodies. As FLORENCE approaches, she becomes more suspicious with each step.)

FLORENCE
Lovely, just lovely.

(FLORENCE stops, peeks into the kitchen, then walks back towards the bed, shaking her head.... After a moment or two of indecision, she rips the cover off the bed and her worst fears are confirmed: Five people in various states of dress – or undress – are tangled up in the sofa bed.)
GRETCHEN

Surprise!

FLORENCE

Oh, dear lord! I think I'm gonna faint.

GRETCHEN

There's still a little room.

(It takes a moment for FLORENCE to recover.)

FLORENCE

Heathens! Sodom and Gomorrah had nothing on you.... Especially you, George Wells.

(FLORENCE crosses towards the front door, but makes a detour to the bar. She opens a cabinet and extracts a bottle of wine. She then marches toward the door slamming it behind her as she exits. After a long pause, during which everyone looks at each other, JENNY and JOYCE start clawing at one another—until GEORGE asserts himself.)

GEORGE

All right, everybody cool it! Right now.

(JOYCE and JENNY break apart, and there is calm on the sofa bed.)

GEORGE

Thank you. It's time we all acted like sensible, mature adults.

(The calm lasts only for a moment, as SFX: FLASHING LIGHTS AT THE FRONT WINDOW cause the mature GEORGE to react with child-like panic.)

GEORGE

Ohmigod, my wife! Everybody hide!

(Once again, the rest start to pull the cover over themselves.)

GEORGE

Anywhere but this bed! And hurry!!

(As TODD, JOYCE, JENNY and GRETCHEN quickly exit the bed, GEORGE reaches over and turns off the light next to the bed.... There is a moment of quiet in the darkened room before the front door opens. CLAIRE enters and switches on the light switch next to the door, bathing the room in light. Pretending to be asleep, GEORGE is lying on the sofa bed, the covers pulled up to his neck. CLAIRE, who doesn't see GEORGE because he's shielded by the back of the sofa bed, looks around a moment then removes her coat and walks to the closet. She opens the closet door and TODD is standing there, but she doesn't see him because she is removing her cell phone from her purse. He quietly shuts the door. CLAIRE closes her purse, looks at the closet door, frowns, then opens it again—and is shocked to see TODD standing in the doorway.)
Hi, Mom.

What on earth are you doing in the closet?

Well, uh, I was, uh, looking for, uh, Joyce.

In the closet?

Yeah....I looked everywhere else.

I thought you two went camping.

We decided not to.

Oh.... Isn't that Jenny Sawyer's car out front?

Oh yeah, I guess it is.

Is she here?

Gee, I don't know. I was kinda looking for her, too.

(There is a pause and then TODD'S saved – sort of – by a commotion emanating from within the closet. It's JENNY and JOYCE yelling at each other, using terms like "Barbie Doll" and "Grandma.")

What in heaven's sake?

Don't worry, Mom. I'll take care of it.

(TODD yells into the closet.)
Cool it right now! Both of you!

(The commotion stops and TODD leads JENNY and JOYCE out of the closet as a surprised CLAIRE looks on.)

Hi, Mrs. Wells.

JENNY

Jenny.... Joyce.

JOYCE

Claire.

TODD

We'll be in the backyard talking.

(TODD leads the two females, who continue sniping at one another, toward the hallway. After the trio exits, CLAIRE shrugs, hangs up her coat, and closes the closet door. As she does, SFX: PHONE RINGS. Momentarily startled, she recovers and moves to answer the phone still not noticing GEORGE in the sofa bed.)

CLAIRE

Hello?... (Frowns) No, this isn't George. Is this Pandora?...You really need to talk to George, huh? (Impishly) You can probably reach him at (Thinks a moment) 555-4371. If he's not there, his friend Florence will be happy to relay your message. No problem. Bye, Pandora.

(Smiling, CLAIRE hangs up, then redials and waits.)

CLAIRE, Continues

Oh hi, Darrin.... Just calling to say I made it home safe and sound....What? (Looks around) No, I've seen practically everyone but Gretchen....Wait a second....

(CLAIRE sets the phone down, walks to the closet, looks in it thoroughly and then walks back and picks up the phone.)

CLAIRE, Continues

No, she's not here.... Yes, I will.... And thanks again, Darrin. I really enjoyed it.

(At the mention of the word "it," GEORGE'S eyes, which have been shut during the chaos, pop open as his head pops up.)

CLAIRE, Continues

Good-night, Darrin.... What? Oh yes, you too.... (Smiling) G'bye.

(CLAIRE hangs up and then looks around for a moment until she is startled by GEORGE'S voice.)
GEORGE
What did you mean by "it"?

CLAIRE
George!?

(CLAIRe looks over to see a frowning GEORGE lying in sofa bed.)

CLAIRE, Continues
George, I didn't see you there. Were you sleeping?

GEORGE
It's rather hard to sleep during a three-ring circus.

CLAIRE
Yes, what's going on here tonight with Todd and Joyce—and Jenny?

GEORGE
No idea. Now please answer my question.

(GEORGE hops out of bed. Ever the perfectionist, CLAIRE begins to make the bed and fluff the pillows as she talks.)

CLAIRE
Oh, what did you ask?

GEORGE
I asked what you meant when you told Darrin you really enjoyed "it."

CLAIRE
Oh.... Did you hear that?

GEORGE
Of course I heard that. What did you mean by "it"?

CLAIRE
(Changes subject) Uh, is Gretchen here? Darrin wants to know.

GEORGE
No, she's not here. Obviously.

CLAIRE
She didn't come home with you?

GEORGE
(Pause) No, she didn't... She—she went to a bar instead.... Now, Claire, please—stop changing the subject and answer my question.... When you told Darrin you really enjoyed "it." (Pause) What did you mean by "it"?
CLAIRE

(After a long pause) What do you think I meant?

(GEORGE frowns; gulps.)

GEORGE

(Aghast) You made love with Darrin Devereaux?

CLAIRE

No.

(GEORGE breathes easier until CLAIRE clarifies her response.)

CLAIRE

I had sex with him. (Pause; smiles) There is a difference you know.

GEORGE

(Beyond shock) I don't know what to say.

CLAIRE

I do. I liked IT. A lot!

GEORGE

(Pause; shakes his head) I can't believe it. My wife went to bed with another man.

CLAIRE

(Short pause) Actually it was on the kitchen counter.

GEORGE

The kitchen counter!? 

CLAIRE

(remembering) Yeah. We couldn't wait.

GEORGE

What are you, anyway—some kind of pervert?

CLAIRE

(Devilishly) Don't knock it till you've tried it.

(GEORGE paces, trying to regain some semblance of composure.)

GEORGE

Migod, Claire; don't our marriage vows mean anything to you? The wife shall not cover her neighbor—or whatever that is.

(CLAIRE pauses, then counterattacks.)
CLAIRE

Now wait a second, George. If you'll recall, you encouraged me to sleep with Darrin. Remember? Said it would do wonders for our marriage.

GEORGE

Yeah, but—

CLAIRE

And you know, George, you were right. Having Darrin was great, but it just whets my appetite—for you.

(*CLAIRE moves close to her husband.*)

GEORGE

No, thank you! (*Moves away*)

CLAIRE

But, George—

GEORGE

I can't make love to you.

CLAIRE

Why not?

GEORGE

After you've done it with another man!?

CLAIRE

George Wells! Are you the same man who talked about wife-swapping nearly every night—who begged and pleaded for us to "get it on with another couple"?

GEORGE

Yeah right.... But I just talked about it.

CLAIRE

Where's that paper of yours? The one with the Swedish couple with the ski chalet? Let's give 'em a call.

GEORGE

Migod. I married a nymphomaniac.

CLAIRE

Oh, c'mon, George. I try one other man—at your suggestion. And I'm a nymphomaniac?

GEORGE

(*Disgusted*) I never thought you'd ever really have sex with another man.
CLAIRE

(Pause) I'll tell you one thing. It's nice to be with a man who finds me attractive. (Smiles as she recalls)

GEORGE

Dammit, Claire; I find you attractive!

CLAIRE

When's the last time you told me?

GEORGE

I don't know. I don't keep track.

CLAIRE

Well, I do.... And it's been a long, long time.

GEORGE

For crying out loud, Claire. You know I think you're attractive.

Prove it.

GEORGE

No. (Sits on chair) I'm too tired.

CLAIRE

(Seductively) You're not really too tired, are you?

GEORGE

Yes, I'm too tired.... To do it again.

(Frowning, CLAIRE backs off.)

Again?

CLAIRE

That's what I said.

GEORGE

What did you mean "again"?

CLAIRE

(Pause) What do you think I mean? (Pause, then smugly) Me and Gretchen.

(Incredulous) No?
GEORGE

Oh yessirree.

(GEORGE presents the Lustcuffs which he took off the bed.)

CLAIRE

Handcuffs?

GEORGE

No. (Proudly) Lustcuffs.

CLAIRE

(Pause) But you said Gretchen wasn't here.

GEORGE

I lied.... Of course, Gretchen was here; (Throws cuffs on bed) actually, there.

CLAIRE

No?

GEORGE

Oh yeah! And I enjoyed every second of IT.

Really?

GEORGE

Really. (CLAIRE moves away) What's wrong?

CLAIRE

Oh, I don't know.... I just didn't think you'd really sleep with another woman.

GEORGE

Well, I had no intention of doing so.... Until I realized you and Darrin were screwing— (Pause) like a couple of Welsh rabbits!

(CLAIRe paces and GEORGE watches her.)

CLAIRE

(Finally) I guess that makes us even.

GEORGE

I guess so.

(The silence becomes increasingly uncomfortable as the WELLS think about their indiscretions.)
CLAIRE
I'm going to bed. *(Crosses towards bedroom)*

GEORGE
*(Sarcastically)* By yourself this time?

CLAIRE
You should talk.

GEORGE
Nympho.

CLAIRE
Hypocrite.

GEORGE
*(Gruffly; just before CLAIRE exits)* Do you know where the aspirin is?

CLAIRE
*(Smugly)* Try the kitchen counter....

*(GEORGE looks daggers at an exiting CLAIRE, then exits dejectedly into the kitchen. Moments later, JENNY’S voice can be heard.)*

JENNY, *Off*
You can have her as far as I'm concerned.

*(JENNY enters and heads for the front door, with TODD following. JOYCE follows close behind.)*

TODD
Jenny, wait!

JENNY
*(Turns back)* What?

TODD
It's late. Let me drive you home.

JENNY
I'm not going home.

TODD
*(Surprised)* You're not?

JENNY
*(Boasting)* I'm going to a party.
A party? Where?

Todd, I'll give you one more chance.

Lexi is having a toga party.

Really? Can anyone go?

Todd!

Do you want to?

(TODD looks at JENNY and then at JOYCE—who has walked over to the bed and reclined sexily on it.)

Which would you prefer, Todd? A girl or a woman?

(After some deliberation, TODD crosses towards JOYCE.)

(Lovingly) Tiger.

(JOYCE reaches for TODD but he reaches for a sheet instead.)

I'll need a toga.

(TODD pulls a sheet off the sofa bed, throwing JOYCE off balance. With sheet in hand, he crosses towards JENNY.)

Jenny, would you wear my ring?

Are you serious?

(TODD answers by reaching into his pocket, pulling out the ring, and placing it on her finger.)

Oh Todd.
(Hand in hand, TODD and JENNY are about to exit when he turns back.)

TODD
Joyce, would you tell my parents I won't be back for awhile.

JOYCE
(Sarcastically) Don’t hold your freakin’ breath.

JENNY
(To JOYCE) Nice meeting you.

(As TODD and JENNY exit, they excitedly make plans.)

JENNY
After the party we can go to my house and Mom'll make breakfast.

TODD
Pancakes and eggs? Lots of eggs.

JENNY
Yeah—and we can watch Roadrunner cartoons.

TODD
And "Scooby-Doo." Oh Jenny.

JENNY
Oh Todd!

TODD
Oh God!

(Joyce, the self-proclaimed teetotaler, looks around, sees the liquor bottle, shrugs, takes a drink, kind of likes it, and takes another drink. SFX: CAB HORN.)

JOYCE
I'm coming, I'm coming!

(Bottle in hand, JOYCE walks to the front door. She opens it, to see DARRIN about to knock.)

DARRIN
Hey, there's a cab out front.

JOYCE
No shit, Sherlock.

DARRIN
How would you like me to pay off the driver and take you out for a couple of drinks?
JOYCE

(Smiles) How would you like me to kick you in the nuts?

(DARRIN quickly shields his groin with his hands and JOYCE exits. He shakes his head and pushes the door closed.)

DARRIN

Anyone home!?... George? Claire (Almost as an after-thought) Gretchen?

(Getting no immediate response, DARRIN walks to the exercise bike and begins cycling. As he's feeling his neck pulse while looking at his watch, a disheveled GEORGE appears. Seeing DARRIN, he grabs the fireplace poker [if there's a fireplace] or rolling pin from the kitchen [or some other potentially lethal weapon] and carries it behind him as he approaches his "neighbor.")

GEORGE

(Scowling) Darrin.

DARRIN

Sorry to bother you, ol' boy. The door was open.

What do you want?

GEORGE

Your wife.

(DARRIN laughs; GEORGE doesn't.)

DARRIN, Continues

Actually, I'm looking for my wife. (Looks around) Where is she?

Your guess is as good as mine.

She's not here?

Not now she isn't.

She did come home with you, didn't you?

Yes, she did.
DARRIN

When did you last see her?

GEORGE

(Pause, then points) In that bed—about 20 minutes ago.

DARRIN

Hey, congratulations, George. You scored.

GEORGE

Yeah, well—I only "scored" because you were "scoring" with my wife.

Yeah. What?

GEORGE

I said, the only reason I made it with Gretchen is because you and Claire were making it. On the kitchen counter, no less.

DARRIN

What’s your problem, then? We’re even, right?

Yeah.... But Claire’s not a swinger!

GEORGE

Coulda fooled me.

CLAIRE enters wearing a robe.

(CLAI RE enters wearing a robe.)

DARRIN

Speak of the devil—or should I say, angel.

Darrin.... Something wrong?

CLAIRE

Gretchen seems to be lost.

GEORGE

She hasn't come home yet?

CLAIRE

Nope.

DARRIN

We better call the police.
GEORGE
Before anyone calls the cops, let me check the house.

(*GEORGE starts to walk away, then turns back and glares.*)

GEORGE
I won't be gone long.

(*After GEORGE exits, DARRIN moves toward CLAIRE.*)

DARRIN
See I told you.

CLAIRE
Told me what?

DARRIN
That Gretchen and George would get together.

(*CLAIRE doesn't respond as DARRIN moves closer.*)

DARRIN
I really, really want you, Claire…. I'd even leave Gretchen for you.

CLAIRE
Are you serious? You'd leave Gretchen?

DARRIN
In a New York minute.

CLAIRE
But she's so sweet—and so sexy.

DARRIN
Yeah. And s-o-o stupid. I'd rather go to bed with a good book.

(*After a pause, GRETCHEN can be heard but not seen.*)

GRETCHEL
A good book, huh!?

(*A shocked DARRIN and CLAIRE look around for GRETCHEN, who is crawling out from beneath the sofa bed.*)

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes
MARRIED NOT BURIED
PANTOMIME CURTAIN CALL

(The following numbered scenes represent a quick reprise of the entire play. The action in this "curtain call" can be performed to the tune of "Swing Your Partners" or "Turkey in the Straw." NOTE: Since it would be difficult to turn the sofa bed back into a sofa and then back into a sofa bed again, some liberty must be taken—that is, the sofa bed will remain as is throughout the action, with the actors acting as if it weren't there. Fortunately, most of this curtain call involves action in the last act, when the sofa bed is part of the scenery.)

1. GEORGE is on the phone when CLAIRE enters. As she does, he quickly hangs up the phone, looks at his watch, and points to it. CLAIRE shakes her head, points at her watch and exits into the kitchen.

2. After CLAIRE exits, GEORGE quickly redials, but hangs up hastily when CLAIRE re-enters, holding her forehead. Not convinced, GEORGE hits one fist into the palm of his other hand. CLAIRE frowns, returns GEORGE'S "fist-into-the-palm" gesture and sinks into chair, looking a bit pale.

3. The phone rings and GEORGE moves quick as a cat to answer—even before CLAIRE can stand. He looks at her and mouths "Todd"; CLAIRE smiles, and then frowns when GEORGE starts to talk baseball. With nothing else to do, she picks up GEORGE’S "paper" and frowns.

4. There's a knock at the door and GEORGE bounds to answer. His enthusiasm dwindles when he opens the door to FLORENCE FLETCHER, who frowns at him as she makes her entrance. GEORGE flashes a fake smile and quickly exits.

5. FLORENCE is sitting on the chair reading GEORGE’S "paper," when CLAIRE rushes toward her, grabs it, thinks quickly, rolls it up, and begins swatting near a startled FLORENCE.

6. GRETCHEN is combing her hair when DARRIN mouths a snide remark. GRETCHEN snaps back—just before GEORGE enters and mouths, "Is everybody happy?"

7. The foursome is playing strip trivia. GRETCHEN is down to the bare essentials, but shocks the rest of the players—particularly GEORGE—by answering a question. GEORGE re-examines the card he is holding to be sure GRETCHEN is correct.

8. DARRIN removes his shirt, GEORGE removes his shirt and pants, and GEORGE asks GRETCHEN another question, which she answers incorrectly. He pops up to help her remove her bra, while DARRIN scoots next to CLAIRE. A moment later, the front door opens, and TODD and JOYCE enter—and it's hard to tell who is more shocked as GEORGE flips the bra toward TODD.

9. DARRIN is making a major move on CLAIRE at the front door when FLORENCE, sitting on the sofa, looks up and mouths, "Adultery—One-Way Ticket to Hell." CLAIRE quickly snaps back to reality.
10. JOYCE has just patted TODD'S rear when lights flash at the window, causing him to freak. JOYCE scolds TODD before "footcuffing" him then exiting with a taunt.

11. Between JENNY and JOYCE, TODD nervously watches them argue, until lights flash once again. TODD freaks again, JOYCE plants a big kiss on him before exiting, and a forlorn JENNY heads toward the pool. TODD looks both ways, then hops in the direction JENNY exited.

12. GRETCHEAN and GEORGE are in bed, and she's all over him—until she says something that makes him forget his amorousness and sit straight up in bed.

13. GEORGE is now standing by the phone, having just dialed a number. He frowns, and then smiles when he hears a knock at the door. His smile changes back to a frown when he opens the door to FLORENCE FLETCHER.

14. GEORGE is standing by the bed, frowning at GRETCHEAN. She pulls him onto the bed and attacks him.

15. GRETCHEAN is sitting on the sofa bed smiling at JOYCE, who rips off the blanket to reveal a sheepish TODD and a liquor bottle. She storms off as TODD and GRETCHEAN watch.

16. GRETCHEAN and TODD are now laughing it up on the sofa bed—until GEORGE enters and brings the festivities to a quick halt by mouthing "Todd!"

17. GEORGE, GRETCHEAN, and TODD are now in bed. GEORGE is trying to "fix" her contact lens as TODD looks on. Just as he does, JOYCE walks in, registers shocked disbelief and exits.

18. GEORGE is now consoling a distraught JENNY on the sofa bed, as a sympathetic GRETCHEAN, liquor bottle in hand, looks on from the chair. TODD enters and registers his own stunned disbelief.

19. Now standing next to the sofa bed, TODD is arguing with JENNY, in the sofa bed, as an exasperated GEORGE looks on. TODD tries to pull JENNY out of bed but instead is pulled onto the bed. Sitting on the sofa, GRETCHEAN can't help herself and joins the action.

20. FLORENCE enters to find feet and arms sticking out from beneath the cover of the sofa bed. She removes the blanket—and nearly has a coronary.

21. FLORENCE is gone, and there is peace and quiet on the sofa bed—until lights flash at the window. GEORGE panics and everyone frantically exits.

22. CLAIRE enters, looks around, opens the closet—and is shocked to see TODD. She is even more shocked when she hears noises in the closet and a sheepish JENNY, then JOYCE exit.
23. CLAIRE is on the phone, smiling as she talks. When she mouths "it," GEORGE’S eyes open as his head pops up.

24. Sitting on the chair, a morose GEORGE watches CLAIRE show real concern for the first time. Her frown widens when he proudly displays Lustcuffs.

25. DARRIN is wooing CLAIRE, when an enraged GRETCHEN crawls from beneath sofa bed.

26. GRETCHEN angrily dials phone in front of DARRIN. GEORGE, and CLAIRE.

27. GRETCHEN storms toward door and exits. DARRIN smiles for a moment or two then hurries to try to catch his wife.

28. A puzzled GEORGE is looking at CLAIRE, when she pushes him back onto the bed and flings herself atop him.

29. CLAIRE dangles Lustcuffs in front of GEORGE.

30. FLORENCE, bottle in hand, prepares to dive onto sofa bed.

(Traditional Curtain Call to Follow)