

(Name of Project)  
by  
(Name of First Writer)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by  
(Names of Subsequent Writers,  
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by  
(Current Writer, date)

Name  
Address  
Phone

HERE'S TO CALIFORNIA!  
By  
Stephen R. Schrum  
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**CHARACTERS**

Emil Henry II, a TV producer  
Lane, his butler  
Celia Moore, a film editor  
Ernest Reiter, a playwright  
Shirley Kochenour, an actress  
Duncan Wasserman, a poet/Philosopher  
Al King, a Broadway director  
Tony Ryan, a Playboy photographer  
Mary Lewis, assistant stage manager, LA Popular Theatre  
Katherine Henry, Emil's niece  
Theresa Carpenter, a lawyer  
Party Guests [Optional; can be offstage voices]  
3 studs (two twins and a Neanderthal man)

TIME: Spring, 1986.

PLACE: In and around Los Angeles, California.

The play may be produced with or without an intermission. If there is an intermission, it should follow scene 11. Due to the episodic nature of the play, full sets for each location are not necessary; in fact, the audience's imagination should furnish the sets rather than the designer. Thus the action will move more quickly if each room is suggested by lighting and furniture on a unit set. Some of the areas, used for one place, such as Emil 's bedroom, can then be later used for another area--Ernie's room, for example.

## SCENE 1

(BEDROOM OF EMIL HENRY II, A RICH TV PRODUCER. EMIL, 40-ISH, SHORT AND ROTUND AND SLIGHTLY BALDING, IS LYING ON HIS BED AND TALKING ON THE CORDLESS PHONE. HIS THIN, AGING BUTLER, LANE, ENTERS WITH EMIL'S LUNCH ON A TRAY. EMIL, USUALLY SOFT-SPOKEN, HAS A HARSH EDGE TO HIS VOICE IN THIS CONVERSATION.)

EMIL

What do you mean, no dancing Nazi women in short leathers?... Well, I don't care. How can we do this rock video properly if we don't have dancers in Gestapo costumes?... He wants what?... Sid, Sid, who ever heard of nuns in a rock video?... What's The Sound of Music got to do with a song called "Tuck Me In And F--what?... No.... No, it's not art. It's not art. Is he there? Tell him I said that.... What?.... What does "Fuck art, let's dance" mean?.... Look, Sid, you talk to him, and I'll get back to you.

(EMIL HANGS UP AND LANE PLACES THE TRAY OVER EMIL AS HE SITS UP STRAIGHT IN THE BED. AT THIS TIME WE SEE LOLA, A PLASTIC PARTY DOLL, DRESSED IN A FLIMSY BLACK NIGHTIE, SITTING NEXT TO EMIL. INCIDENTALLY, INSTEAD OF R NAVELE, SHE HAS PULL-RING, SINCE SHE IS A TALKING PLASTIC PARTY DOLL.)

EMIL (CONT'D)

I don't know, Lola. What do these people think they're doing? (PULLS RING)

LOLA

Oh, honey, I'm so hot for your body.

EMIL

(PATTING HER KNEE) Not now, dear. It's lunchtime. (AS LANE IS EXITING) Lane, have you placed the ad for boarders yet?

LANE

(RETURNING) Yesterday, sir. We've already had one call regarding it. The caller will be by this afternoon at three.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMIL

Oh, Lane, whatever happened to the good old days when a movie mogul could entertain dozens of hangers-on in his mansion. "In Xanadu did Kublai Khan a stately pleasure dome decree." I have to take in boarders for tax benefits. If it hadn't been for cable TV, Lane.

LANE

Yes, sir.

EMIL

Cable TV and the death of the movie studios. Oh, well. What is the name of this potential boarder, Lane?

LANE

A Ms. Celia Moore, sir.

## SCENE 2

(A SMALL APARTMENT IN A LARGE OLD APARTMENT HOUSE. OLD FURNITURE AND STACKED CARTONS AND BOXES CLUTTER THE FLOOR. CELIA, IN HER MID-20'S AND PRETTY, IS PUTTING BOOKS INTO A CARTON. WHEN THE DOORBELL RINGS, SHE LOOKS TOWARD THE DOOR, THEN SMILES.)

CELIA

(CALLING) Come in, Ernie.

(ERNIE REITER, A YOUNG PLAYWRIGHT NEWLY-ARRIVED ON THE WEST COAST, ENTERS WITH LUGGAGE. ERNIE IS NOT UNHANDSOME, BUT IS OFTEN PASSED OVER BY WOMEN WHO SEEK MORE RUGGED MASCULINE FEATURES. HE SITS HIS LUGGAGE DOWN AND CROSSES TO CELIA.)

ERNIE

I'm three hours early. How did you know it was me?

CELIA

It had to be you. (THEY HUG.) Hi.

ERNIE

Hi. I didn't know our telepathic link worked in such close proximity. So, how's my astral sister?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CELIA

Fine. How are you? How was your trip?

ERNIE

Oh, not bad...so far.

CELIA

You're not going to start insulting California again, are you?

ERNIE

No, not yet. I've only been here about two hours. And nine-tenths of that was on the highway.

CELIA

But a California theatre company is willing to produce an unknown playwright's first play.

ERNIE

(GRUDGINGLY) I know.

CELIA

Would you like a glass of wine?

ERNIE

Yeah, sure.

(CELIA GOES TO GET THE WINE FROM THE KITCHEN. ERNIE SURVEYS THE APARTMENT'S DISARRAY WHILE PACING AMONG THE MESS.)

ERNIE (CONT'D)

I'm just glad I can stay here with you. What with having to come out for the rehearsals and rewrites, I'm glad I can get cheap rent. (STOPS PACING, LOOKS AROUND.) You know, I hate to say this, but the place is kind of a mess, isn't it? It's a good thing my mother isn't here to see it. She believes in spontaneous generation; she says that if you leave garbage lying around long enough, mice and bugs will automatically appear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CELIA  
(RETURNING WITH TWO GLASSES OF  
CHABLIS) Ernie, I wanted to talk I  
to you about that.

ERNIE  
  
TAKING A GLASS) Spontaneous  
generation? (HE LOOKS ABOUT WARILY.

CELIA  
No.

ERNIE  
My mother. You agree with her that  
you and I should be married. Well,  
it's against my better judgment,  
but--

CELIA  
No, the living arrangements. I've  
decided to move out of this hole.

ERNIE  
Why? It looks like such a nice  
hole.

CELIA  
The building's been bought by a  
concern called Condorama,  
Unlimited. Tell you anything?

ERNIE  
Oh. So where are we going to go?

CELIA  
I called this morning about rooms  
for us at a mansion in Glendale. It  
seems kind of strange, but the  
owner is taking in boarders. So I'm  
going over this afternoon and check  
it out.

ERNIE  
Well, okay. (STOMPS AN IMAGINARY  
INSECT.) But I was just getting  
used to this place.

**SCENE 3**

(EMIL'S BEDROOM. EMIL IS SITTING ON THE BED, MAKING A FEW NOTES. LOLA IS COVERED BY THE SHEETS AND CAN'T BE SEEN. LANE ENTERS, ANNOUNCES CELIA AND ERNIE.)

LANE

Ms. Celia Moore and Mr. Ernest  
Reiter, sir.

EMIL

Please, come in. Sit down.

(THEY ENTER AS LANE SETS CHAIRS BY THE BED FOR THEM. THEY SIT AND EMIL LOOKS THEM OVER. LANE EXITS.)

EMIL (CONT'D)

So. You're here in answer to the  
ad. (THEY NOD.) A package deal? How  
long have you two been living  
together?

ERNIE

Uh, about four hours. (EMIL LOOKS  
PUZZLED.) We're not really living  
together, we're just close friends.  
We call ourselves astral siblings,  
since we have kind of a telepathic  
link, you see.

EMIL

Oh! I've heard of these things, but  
I've never experienced them myself.

CELIA

It usually happens when one of us  
experiences intense emotion. But  
it's nothing terribly supernatural.

EMIL

Oh, that's too bad. I like things  
that are very eerie. I have a  
complete set of Twilight Zone  
videocassettes. 1

ERNIE

A complete set? I'm impressed.

CELIA

And Ernie is not so easily  
impressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMIL

It wasn't so difficult to get them.  
I work in television.

ERNIE

(DISAPPOINTED) Oh.

EMIL

You don't like television, young  
man?

ERNIE

It's not that. It's just that--

CELIA

Ernie works in a rival medium, Mr.  
Henry.

EMIL

Oh?

ERNIE

I'm a playwright.

EMIL

Oh, how nice! I was in a  
correspondence school play once. Do  
you know Hedda Gabler? I played  
George Tesman. That was fun. Have  
you had anything produced?

ERNIE

Yes--the L.A. Popular Theatre is  
doing my first play, Nothing  
Personal. Rehearsals start next  
week.

EMIL

Wonderful! Well, and Celia, are you  
in theatre, too?

CELIA

I'm in film. I'm an assistant  
editor for Splice Is Nice,  
Incorporated.

EMIL

I know them. They do such wonderful  
trailers. One can always somehow  
tell theirs from everyone else's.  
Well. Let me tell you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

EMIL(CONT'D)

I've taken an immediate liking to both of you, and I'm never wrong in my assessments of people. Has Lane showed you the rooms?

CELIA

Yes, he did.

EMIL

Well, if everything meets with your satisfaction, I would be happy for you to move in. All right?

CELIA

Fine.

ERNIE

Sure.

EMIL

Good! I like doing business with people quickly. Oh, I'm sorry. I forgot to introduce you. (PULLS DOWN THE COVERS, REVEALING LOLA.) Celia, Ernie, this is my mistress, Lola.

CELIA

Um, hello.

ERNIE

H-hi.

(EMIL PULLS THE RING.)

LOLA

Baby, give me some love action right now.

EMIL

You needn't worry. I do know she's not real. It's just a--quirk of mine. I hope it doesn't bother you.

ERNIE

(TOO QUICKLY) Oh, no.

CELIA

Not at all.

EMIL

Good' Then it's settled? You'll move in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CELIA

Certainly.

EMIL

Fabulous! I'm giving a party tonight for some up'n'coming mini-moguls, so you can meet everyone then.

CELIA

(CATCHING EMIL'S ENTHUSIASM) Great!  
(CATCHING HERSELF) Uh, we can move in this afternoon, if that's all right.

EMIL

Perfect. I have some calls to make, so I'll see you later.

ERNIE

Great.

(ERNIE AND CELIA EXIT THE ROOM. OUTSIDE, IN THE HALLWAY, THEY STOP TO TALK.)

CELIA

What do you think?

ERNIE

At least the rent is reasonable, if our landlord isn't. I thought it was a dead body there when he pulled back the covers to reveal "Lola."

CELIA

Ernie, You've got to get used to things like that. You're in California now. Things are a little different here.

ERNIE

I am in California, but I won't get used to it. And you were surprised, too, and don't deny it. And to top it all off, he's in television.

LANE

(SUDDENLY APPEARING) Shall I show you two to the door?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CELIA

Oh, uh, no, thank you, Lane. I think we can find our way.

LANE

I thought I should ask. Some people do get lost on their way out. Once we had an aging movie actor who took a week to find the front door. When he finally emerged into the sunlight he discovered his career was over.

CELIA

It is a big house.

LANE

Indeed. (TURNS TO ERNIE) Oh, and sir, I should explain something. Mr. Henry does work in television, but not by choice. He'd rather be in film, but circumstances and certain people have closed him out of it. Still, he does try to make quality programs when he can. Ideally, he'd like to return to the good old days of Humphrey Bogart and Singing In The Rain. But that's impossible, of course. So do bear with him.

ERNIE

Oh. Sure. Okay.

LANE

I'll help you move your things in as soon as you get back.

(EXITS.)

ERNIE

Great. Exposition from the butler.

CELIA

Let's get our things. (THEY EXIT.)

**SCENE 4**

(LIVING ROOM OF EMIL'S MANSION. THE PARTY IS IN PROGRESS. MANY PARTY GUESTS DRESSED IN THE LATEST L.A. FASHIONS STAND AROUND THE ROOM WITH FOOD AND DRINK. IT IS ALL VERY MELLOW, INCLUDING THE MUSIC. EMIL STANDS BY THE FOOD TABLE TALKING TO SHIRLEY, A YOUNG ACTRESS WHO ALSO LIVES IN THE MANSION. ERNIE AND CELIA, DRESSED INFORMALLY FOR THE OCCASION, ENTER AND CROSS TO EMIL.)

EMIL  
Hi, kids. How are you this evening?

CELIA  
Fine, thanks.

ERNIE  
Yeah, great.

EMIL  
Good. Moved in okay and everything?

CELIA  
No problem.

EMIL  
Good. Will you have some of this brie? I hear it's on the way out, and that makes it so decadent.

CELIA  
Brie on the way out? Surely you jest.

SHIRLEY  
I do?

CELIA  
Pardon me?

SHIRLEY  
You said I jest.

CELIA  
When?

SHIRLEY  
Just now. You said, "Shirley, you jest."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMIL

Oh, I'm sorry, I forgot to introduce you. Celia, Ernie, this is Shirley Kochenour. She also lives here.

SHIRLEY

(TO CELIA) Hello. (TO ERNIE) Hi. You're cute.

ERNIE

Shirley--you jest.

SHIRLEY

(GIGGLES, THEN LOOKS ACROSS THE ROOM) Oh, I see Al King over there. I must say hello. Excuse me.

ERNIE

(STOPPING HER) You mean the Broadway director? (SHE NODS) Uh, Shirley, how about introducing me?

SHIRLEY

Okay. (THEY CROSS TO KING.)

EMIL

Shirley's quite an interesting young woman. I invited her here a few years ago as just another party decoration. It turned out that she is very intelligent, and she stayed on. Her sister Aida was living with us for awhile, too, but they had a falling-out when Aida began dating a terrorist. It was a terrible thing. They haven't spoken since.

(IN FROM ANOTHER ROOM COMES DUNCAN WASSERMAN, AN OUTSPOKEN POET, WITH A FEW HANGERS-ON. DUNCAN IS OF AVERAGE HEIGHT AND BUILD, YET HIS INTENSITY MAKES HIM APPEAR LARGER THAN HE IS. HE IS BALDING AND HAS A MUSTACHE AND GOATEE.)

DUNCAN

The problem with modern man is that he's too far from nature. He's conquered the world instead of trying to live in it. And now, instead of trying to fix it, he spends all his time with foolish distractions. Video games. Massage parlors. Hot tubs.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Cable television. Drugs. (LANE COMES BY WITH TRAY OF DRINKS, AND DUNCAN TAKES ONE.) People have to get out and experience their environment. Roll around in the mud. Get dirty. But no. They have no desire to become attuned to the pulse of the universe. They get stoned or drunk or screwed all the time, and are no damn good for anything but being human urinal backstops.

(THE HANGERS-ON APPLAUD AND AD-LIB AGREEMENTS. THEY THEN MOVE OFF TO THE SIDE, NEARER ERNIE AND HIS GROUP.)

CELIA

Who was that?

EMIL

Oh, you'd better keep Ernie away from him. That's Duncan Wasserman. He used to be a theatre critic for Harley Digest.

CELIA

That doesn't sound good.

EMIL

It's not. (LOOKS AROUND) Oh, here's someone I'd like you to meet. (CALLS) Tony! (TO CELIA) He's a photographer with Playboy. Come on, I'll introduce you.

(THEY MOVE OFF TO THE SIDE AND TALK TO TONY RYAN, WHO IS YOUNG, WELL-DRESSED UNDER HIS TRAVELER JACKET, AND A BIT OVERBOARD WITH JEWELRY--PINKY RINGS, CHAINS, ETC. HE'S ALSO WEARING SUNGLASSES, AS HE DOES ALWAYS, INDOORS OR OUT. ERNIE'S GROUP MOVES TO THE FOOD TABLE.)

AL KING

Have you ever heard of a director named Fritz Lucharno? I just saw a showcase he directed in New York.

ERNIE

Was it a good showcase?

AL KING

Well, it was A typical New York showcase. You know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ERNIE

I'm afraid I don't. I know very little about New York theatre.

AL KING

(AFTER A PAUSE) I thought you said you were a playwright.

ERNIE

I am. I have seen a few things in New York, and some touring companies. But I was not that impressed. I liked the things that you've done, but the others. . . . One director I ran into during a brief stay in the Big Apple was doing things that didn't even interest other theatre people. He was the man responsible for an Off-Broadway Commedia dell'Arte version of Oedipus Rex.

AL KING

That was Fritz Lucharno.

ERNIE

Well. Small world. Synchronicity, or something.

SHIRLEY

Is Oedipus Rex the same as Oedipus the King?

ERNIE

Uh, yeah.

SHIRLEY

Well, I don't think it would work as a farce. That's ridiculous.

ERNIE

You're right, it didn't. I mean, looking at it artistically, how could he do such a production?

AL KING

He had grant money coming out of his wazoo.

(THEY CONTINUE TALKING. FOCUS NOW GOES TO CELIA AND EMIL WITH TONY.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

TONY

Hey, I've got to run. (STARTS TO  
BACK OUT OF ROOM) Flying to the  
Midwest tomorrow. We're doing a  
nude pictorial of farm girls  
entitled, "No Famine Here." Ta.  
(EXITS.)

CELIA

I don't know if I should be  
insulted or flattered.

EMIL

About what?

CELIA

About being asked to pose nude for  
Playboy.

EMIL

Take it as a compliment. Tony only  
recruits the most attractive of  
women. Or women he wants to take to  
bed.

CELIA

So which am I?

EMIL

Well. . .he does bed the most  
attractive, too, so either way....

CELIA

(GLANCING ABOUT, NOTICES GUEST)  
Now he's very attractive. I wonder  
if he's gay.

EMIL

Oh, certainly not all the men you  
meet are gay, are they?

CELIA

If they're not, they should be. Or  
castrated. I don't meet a lot of  
good men.

EMIL

Don't be so hard on us, Celia.  
There are still a few good men in  
the world. And not all of them are  
in the Marines.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (5)

EMIL(CONT'D)

Unfortunately, all of the good men seem to waste all their time sitting around complaining about the women they meet. They say that they are either gay or married.

CELIA

That's what we say about men.

EMIL

Um, hmmm. (LOOKS AROUND) Now which one were you asking about?

CELIA

(POINTING) That one, over there.

EMIL

Oh, yes, he's gay.

CELIA

Oh. Do you know him very well?

EMIL

No. We met once.

CELIA

Then how do you know he 's gay?

EMIL

By his tush.

CELIA

Emil! You look at men's tushes?

EMIL

Only to see if they're gay.

(THEY SMILE ENJOYING THE REPARTEE. FOCUS THEN RETURNS TO ERNIE'S GROUP AS DUNCAN'S BAND FOLLOWS THEIR LEADER TO THE FOOD TABLE.)

DUNCAN

(TO ERNIE) Did I hear you talking about Oedipus?

ERNIE

Yes.

DUNCAN

Great guy. He really had the world by the ass, but then he lost it all.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Just like me with my credit cards,  
back when I had them. I was married  
then, too. With a kid. Triple  
threat, right, Shirl?

(DUNCAN GOOSES HER. SHE MOVES AWAY, TO ERNIE'S SIDE.)

SHIRLEY

Ernie Reiter, this is Duncan  
Wasserman, an old friend of Emil's.  
Ernie is a playwright.

DUNCAN

Really? I used to write theatre and  
movie reviews for various national  
publications. I can tell you that  
the old films are the best.  
Anything after Casablanca is shit.

ERNIE

Do you think so?

DUNCAN

Surely! (TO SHIRLEY) Sorry, babes,  
(BACK TO ERNIE) The silent film was  
the height of artistic achievement,  
and then some wiseass had to add  
sound. Totally stifled the  
creativity of the medium. I guess  
being in theatre you'd know about  
that.

HANGER-ON

Hey, Duncan, I heard that Potemkin  
is going to be on cable TV tomorrow  
night, and I'd like to know your  
feelings.

DUNCAN

Potemkin? Fabulous. I've seen all  
his films. He's just fabulous.

(HE WINKS AT ERNIE TO INCLUDE HIM IN ON THE JOKE. CELIA COMES  
TO ERNIE'S RESCUE.)

CELIA

Hi. I was in the neighborhood, so I  
thought I'd drop by.

DUNCAN

(FREELY ASSOCIATING, HE TOASTS  
THEM) If a woman says she was so  
close, she probably wasn't.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

DUNCAN(CONT'D)

(CELIA GLARES AT HIM) I think I  
need more wine. (HE EXITS, FOLLOWED  
BY HIS GROUP.

CELIA

He needs a kick in the pants.

SHIRLEY

Front or back?

CELIA

Yes.

AL KING

Excuse me. (CALLING) Harry! (EXITS)

SHIRLEY

You'll have to forgive Duncan. He  
is an overbearing jackass, but at  
least he 's consistent.

ERNIE

He's always like that?

SHIRLEY

Except when he's drunk.

CELIA

Then he's worse?

SHIRLEY

Then he urinates on the furniture.

ERNIE

What else does he do besides rub  
people the wrong way?

SHIRLEY

He is, by profession, a poet,  
philosopher and freethinker. He is  
a very cultured man.

ERNIE

Yeah, like yogurt.

EMIL

Come on in, kids, we're showing  
Annie Hall in the screening room.

(ALL GUESTS PASS AS ERNIE AND CELIA.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

ERNIE

I think I can really get into this film. I love the part where he goes to California and--

CELIA

Sshhhh.

(THEY EXIT.)

## SCENE 5

(SOME TWO HOURS LATER, OUTSIDE THE SCREENING ROOM. DUNCAN STANDS WRITING BY THE DOOR. CELIA AND ERNIE EMERGE TOGETHER.) SHIRLEY FOLLOWS.)

CELIA

I love that film.

ERNIE

Me, too. I've seen it eight times now. (SEES DUNCAN) Of course, it's not Casablanca.

DUNCAN

That's right. (TO CELIA) I've been waiting for you to emerge from the cocoon of celluloid darkness, my little flutterby. (PUSHES ERNIE TO THE SIDE.)

CELIA

Flutterby?

DUNCAN

(HANDING HER A DRINK AND SMOOTHLY LEADING HER OFFSTAGE) I've always felt that the word butter-fly was a spoonerism. You see, I think I made a had impression earlier, and I wanted to show you I'm not so had. I've saved this dance for you.

(BOTH EXIT.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHIRLEY

It doesn't look good, Ernie.

ERNIE

(WATCHING DUNCAN AND CELIA) What?

SHIRLEY

Duncan's taken an interest in Celia.

ERNIE

What's wrong with that?

SHIRLEY

Aren't you jealous?

ERNIE

(TURNING TO HER; TOO QUICKLY) No. Celia and I are just friends.

SHIRLEY

Oh.

ERNIE

Besides--she can take care of herself.

SHIRLEY

(REACTING WIDE-EYED TO SOMETHING SHE SEES OFFSTAGE) Oh!

ERNIE

No, really.

SHIRLEY

No. I mean what she just did.

ERNIE

(TURNING TO LOOK) What?

CELIA

STOMPING PAST THEM) Chauvinist shithead. (EXITS

DUNCAN

DOUBLED OVER, HOLDING HIS GROIN AND CHASING CELIA) Okay, forget the video equipment. How about just the mirrors? (EXITS

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

ERNIE

She didn't knee him in the groin,  
did she?

SHIRLEY

Uh, huh.

ERNIE

(SMILING) That's my Celia.

**SCENE 6**

(ERNIE'S ROOM. A WHILE AFTER THE PARTY. HE'S LYING ON HIS BACK ON THE BED. TRYING TO RELAX. THE RADIO IS PLAYING NEW WAVE MUSIC. BUT IT'S NOT HIS STYLE AND HE TURNS IT OFF. SOMEONE KNOCKS AT THE DOOR.)

ERNIE

Who is it?

CELIA

(OUTSIDE) It's me.

ERIE

Come in, Me.

(SHE ENTERS, AND CLOSES THE DOOR. SHE HOLDS SOMETHING BEHIND HER BACK.)

CELIA

(TAPPING HER HEAD) I got your call.  
You left the party early.

ERNIE

Right after you kneed our poet in  
the groin. Oh, Celia, I'm not sure  
I fit in here. I don't just mean  
the house, I mean California. I  
just got used to Pittsburgh.  
Gentrification was in full swing,  
the graffiti artists had just  
started to paint the subway. That's  
a lifestyle I can deal with.

CELIA

Come on. Of course you fit in out  
here. It's the others who don't and  
have to force it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERNIE

You think so.

CELIA

Yes. I'll bet, as soon as you get into rehearsals for your play, you'll feel right at home.

ERNIE

You're probably right, as usual. What are you hiding behind your back?

CELIA

(SHOWING IT) It's a bottle of wine from Lane's private stock. He said I should bring it to you, along with these glasses and his regards.

ERNIE

Some butler.

CELIA

Do you have a corkscrew?

ERNIE

Of course not. I always buy the mine with the twist-off caps. (DIGS IN A BOX) Um, here's a stage screw. Try that.

(SHE USES THE STAGE SCREW TO OPEN THE WINE. THEN SHE POURS TWO GLASSES AND HANDS ONE TO ERNIE.)

CELIA

Um, a toast?

ERNIE

All right. (PONDERING, THEN) Here's to California. The land of opportunity and odd fellows.

CELIA

And our home.

ERNIE

(SIGHS) For now.

(THEY CLINK GLASSES AND SIP.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Oh. Your little set-to with Duncan reminded me of something. Whatever happened to that guy you were dating?

CELIA

Oh, you mean Roger? Out of my life, thank God.

ERNIE

Really? You once wrote that he was a great hunk of man. (SHE SNORTS) He looked okay in that picture you sent me of the two of you.

CELIA

Oh, he was a looker, all right. But I would describe him as "Looks, 10; Cognitive Development, 3"--if that much. He turned out to be a real jerk. We were only casually dating, but one night he decided he should sleep together because he wanted to. When I said no, he said he could convince me. He tried everything except knocking me over the head with a club. Which is close to what I did to him.

ERNIE

In the groin?

CELIA

(SIPPING) Um, hmmm.

ERNIE

Ouch, This is becoming a recurring theme with you.

CELIA

When I say no, I mean no. Why can't men take no for an answer?

ERNIE

Some can. It's the only answer I ever get, so I always take it. :

CELIA

Maybe you'll meet someone out here.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

ERNIE  
Someone like Roger?

CELIA  
I hope not.

ERNIE  
Me, too. I don't know. I guess I'm  
afraid of being lonely for the rest  
of my life. That really scares m.

CELIA  
I know what you mean. It scares a  
lot of us. (THEY DRINK) Well, it's  
time for bed.

ERNIE  
Celia! Is that a proposition?

CELIA  
Oh, come on, Ernie. You know I  
never end the day with a  
proposition. Good night.

ERNIE  
Good night.

(SHE EXITS. HE POURS HIMSELF ANOTHER GLASS OF WINE. AND LIES  
BACK TO THINK.)

## SCENE 7

(ONE WEEK LATER. SEATED AROUND THE TABLE IN THE DINING ROOM  
FOR BREAKFAST ARE CELIA, EMIL AND LOLA. LANE IS POURING AND  
SERVING ORANGE JUICE FROM A PITCHER.)

CELIA  
Has anyone seen Ernie this morning?

LANE  
No, miss.

EMIL  
I haven't either. But then my eyes  
aren't open yet.

CELIA  
Maybe he didn't come home last  
night.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CELIA (CONT'D)

He went to that party to celebrate  
the play's first rehearsal. Maybe  
he met someone there, and, well....

EMIL

One can only hope. Right, Lola?  
(PULLS HER RING.)

LOLA

Fill me up with your juices now.

(PAUSE.)

ERNIE

(FROM THE HALLWAY) Oh, God.

CELIA

Here he comes now. His timing is  
almost perfect.

(ERNIE STAGGERS IN, SITS DOWN AT THE TABLE, AND HOLDS HIS  
HEAD IN HIS HANDS.)

CELIA (CONT'D)

Good morning, Ernie. We were just  
talking about you.

ERNIE

(PEEKING OUT BETWEEN HIS FINGERS)  
If it's morning, this must be  
breakfast.

CELIA

Exactly right. Would you like some  
eggs?

ERNIE

Lord, no.

LANE

(AT ERNIE'S SIDE) Anything for  
breakfast, sir?

ERNIE

A glass of orange juice and two  
aspirins, Lane. Over easy.

LANE

Yes, sir. (EXITS)

ERNIE

My first California earthquake and  
it has to be inside my head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CELIA

Good Party?

ERNIE

I hope so. I'd hate to feel like this without having had a good time. (REMEMBERING) Oh, no!

CELIA

What ?

ERNIE

I just remembered what happened. (PAUSE) I never made love to a woman with a blue Mohawk before.

CELIA

How was she otherwise? Nice?

ERNIE

She might be able to pass for a human being on a very cloudy day. (LANE BRINGS JUICE AND ASPIRINS) Why can't I ever meet a nice girl? (TAKES ASPIRINS WITH JUICE.)

EMIL

I've often asked myself that question.

CELIA

That's something I've been wondering about, Emil. If you don't mind my asking, you seem to get along fine with women. Me, Shirley, the others at the parties. But there's still--(GLANCES AT LOLA, NOT WANTING TO OFFEND)--there's still Lola.

EMIL

Oh, well, it's really nothing, I guess. It's just that I have an assertiveness problem with women. Not all women, just the ones I'd like to date. I get along great with omen who are friends and business associates--

CELIA

And party decorations?

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (3)

EMIL

Yes. But ones I am interested in I get very nervous with.

CELIA

Maybe you should take an assertiveness training course.

EMIL

I did. It didn't help. Part of the course as to make speeches in class. I didn't mind that so much, but we couldn't choose our own topics. The teacher assigned them to us.

CELIA

You should have told him you wanted to pick your own.

EMIL

Her. But I couldn't have done that. I just didn't have the nerve. Besides, I wasn't taking it for credit, so it didn't matter.

ERNIE

Well, I hate to break up this excitement, but I'm going to bed.

CELIA

Tired, huh?

ERNIE

You would be too if you spent the whole night on top of a large console TV, struggling to get away. (AS HE STAGGERS OFF) I wonder if she knows I'm gone? Oh, yeah. That's right. She was copulating with a cactus when I left. (EXITS.)

CELIA

I don't know, Emil. A lot of men/women relationships just don't seem to work.

EMIL

That's why I have Lola.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CELIA

I wonder if they have a model for women?

EMIL

Of course. But they're more expensive. More parts.

SCENE 8

(THAT NIGHT. BACKSTAGE OF THE L.A. POPULAR THEATRE. OVER THE STAGE DOOR IS A SIGN THAT SAYS, "LEAVE EVERY HOPE BEHIND, YE WHO ENTER." ERNIE IS READING IT AS MARY, A VERY CUTE BLONDE, WALKS UP TO HIM.)

MARY

That's left over from a production of Shaw's Don Juan In Hell.

ERNIE

Oh?

MARY

I played Dona Ana.

ERNIE

In that case, I can understand Don Juan's attraction. My name is Ernie Reiter.

MARY

I know. I saw you at the party last night. I would have introduced myself then, but you seemed to be quite involved with someone else.

ERNIE

The one with the Mohawk? (SHE NODS.) How involved' was I?

MARY

You were staring at her with what seemed to be total devotion.

ERNIE

No, it was more like abject fear. Or maybe complete panic.

MARY

Then I misread you--unfortunately. Maybe I should have rescued you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ERNIE

You probably would have needed the  
jaws of life.

MARY

I'm the assistant stage manager for  
your show. My name is Mary Lewis.

ERNIE

Hi. You know, my mother's name is  
Mary.

MARY

Really? Um, maybe we could have  
dinner later.

ERNIE

Yeah, sure. We can talk about  
hairstyles.

MARY

I'll see you right after rehearsal.  
Okay?

ERNIE

Perfect.

## SCENE 9

(THE NEXT MORNING AT BREAKFAST. EMIL AND CELIA ARE IN  
ATTENDANCE.)

CELIA

I don't know, Emil. This is getting  
to be a habit with Ernie.

EMIL

It's only been two days.

CELIA

Believe me, for Ernie, we've  
already established a tradition.

ERNIE

ENTERING, ALL SMILES) Good morning,  
everyone. (SITS)

CELIA

You're very cheery today, Ernie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERNIE

A lovely young lady and I spent the whole night together. Just talking. She's quite wonderful.

CELIA

That's nice.

ERNIE

Oh come on, Celia. Be happy for me. I am.

CELIA

Okay, for now I ill. But we'll see.

(KATE, EMIL'S NIECE, ENTERS, CROSSES TO EMIL AND KISSES HIM ON THE FOREHEAD. SHE IS A NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD LEGGY REDHEAD WITH BIG EYES.)

KATE

Good morning, everybody. How are you this morning, Uncle?

EMIL

Fine, dear. Uh, Ernie, you weren't here last night to meet my niece, Katherine. Katherine, this is Ernie, one of my boarders. She'll be staying with us for a while. (ALMOST AN ASIDE TO ERNIE) She wants to get into the movies.

ERNIE

(IN RAPTURE) Hi. She's really your niece, Emil?

EMIL

(PROUDLY) My sister Marlene's daughter.

ERNIE

Hi, Katherine.

KATE

Hi, Ernie. Celia tells me you write plays.

ERNIE

I try.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KATE  
(TURNING ON THE CHARM) Maybe You  
can write a play for me to star in  
sometime.

ERNIE  
(FULLY TAKEN IN) I'd love to. .

CELIA  
  
(NAUSEATED) Well, I've got to get  
to work. See you all later.  
(EXITS.)

EMIL  
I've got some phone calls to make.  
Ernie, entertain Katherine, will  
you please?

ERNIE  
Sure. (EMIL EXITS.) So, You're  
Katherine.

KATE  
You can call me Kate, if you'd  
like.

ERNIE  
I would like that. (TAKES HER HAND  
AND KISSES IT) My mother's name is  
Katherine, you know.

KATE  
Really?

ERNIE  
Oh, yes. And I think the two of us  
should spend the evening together.

KATE  
The evening? (GIGGLES) I'd like  
that.

ERNIE  
What do you say e go and trip the  
light fantastic?

KATE  
(GENUINELY PUZZLED) You mean...fall  
over a lamp?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

ERNIE

No, I mean, uh, have a great time together.

KATE

I'd love that.

# SCENE 10

(THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY, IN THE EXERCISE ROOM OF THE MANSION. SHIRLEY AND CELIA ARE DOING AEROBICS TO CLASSICAL MUSIC.)

SHIRLEY

Ernie sure is glowing after his date last night with Kate.

CELIA

Don't let Emil hear you say that.

SHIRLEY

I don't think he'd mind (PAUSE) And yet--maybe he would. Some people have odd sense of morality. They can do whatever they want, but no one else can do what they want.

CELIA

I don't see how some people can do whatever they want. I'm no prude, but some people get carried away.

SHIRLEY

I know. Some people are absolutely shameless.

CELIA

Like these women who pose for men's magazines. I still can not understand how women can allow themselves to be exploited like that.

SHIRLEY

I don't know either. My friend Judy asked me that back when we were doing a layout for Hustler, but she never came up with an answer .

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED:

CELIA

I wish you had. I was asked to do it.

SHIRLEY

Pose nude?

CELIA

Yes.

SHIRLEY

Are you going to?

CELIA

I don't know. I find the idea intriguing. It would certainly be a new experience. But I don't know if I could go through with it.

SHIRLEY

It is an interesting experience.

EMIL

(ENTERING, LOLA SLUNG UNDER ONE ARM) Ladies, have either of you seen my niece?

SHIRLEY

No, Emil. I think she's still in bed.

EMIL

Tsk, tsk, tsk. She'd better get up soon. It's almost noon. I know it's Saturday, but how can she expect to get a job in this town if she stays in bed all the time? (EXITS.)

CELIA

Think we should tell him?

SHIRLEY

No. (PAUSE.) Actually, it's pretty amazing how naive Emil really is.

LANE

(ENTERING WITH MAIL) Your mail, ladies.

(THEY STOP EXERCISING, AND TAKE THE LETTERS. LANE EXITS IMMEDIATELY.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHIRLEY

Thanks, Lane.

CELIA

Thank you.

SHIRLEY

(LOOKING AT AN ENVELOPE) Oh, no.

CELIA

What is it?

SHIRLEY

This guy. He only writes to me either when he's horny or when he's met someone new and just wants us to be friends again, and cool me off from his last horny letter.

CELIA

What's your relationship with him?

SHIRLEY

We don't have one. Except in his mind. (READS LETTER) He's amazing. He signed this letter, "Bare hugs and sloppy Kisses."

CELIA

How's "bear" spelled?

SHIRLEY

"B-A-R-E."

CELIA

Must be a horny phase.

SHIRLEY

Definitely. Otherwise he's have signed it, 'Your friend.. He was dating my sister, Aida, for awhile. They were pretty hot for a few months, but then suddenly he stopped calling her. After six weeks she said to me, I think it might be all over, but I don't want to jump to any conclusions. I said, "Honey, crawl to a conclusion." "I don't know," she said, "I'm beginning to think that he's a chauvinist." When I laughed she said, "No, really! It's true!"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CELIA

So what happened?

SHIRLEY

It turned out that he was lying low, trying to stay away from Aida so he could hit on me. He found me at a party one night. He came up and suggested we play "Nude Twister." When I said no, he said, "Hey, I just want to go to bed with you. It's nothing personal."

CELIA

My ex, Roger, had a way with words, too. Once he said, "Hey, I never asked you to feel anything for me. Then he leered and said, "I meant emotionally."

SHIRLEY

Why is it men always say "Hey" in situations like that?

CELIA

Must be a macho thing. (PAUSE)  
Shirley, speaking of the men you date, do you ever get any nice ones?

SHIRLEY

I seem to draw jerks like a magnet.

CELIA

Have you ever thought of getting together with Emil?

SHIRLEY

Oh, Celia, I couldn't do that to Lola.

CELIA

Shirley. Lola is a plastic party doll.

SHIRLEY

I know. I was just trying to make a joke.

CELIA

Not a very good one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SHIRLEY

Sorry.

CELIA

Well?

SHIRLEY

What?

CELIA

Shirley--you're hedging.

SHIRLEY

I know. It's just that, well, I do care for him a lot.

CELIA

Why don't you let him know?

SHIRLEY

I couldn't. We get along great as friends. If I approached him as a lover, it might change our closeness, You know how shy he is with women.

CELIA

Maybe it would work, since You were friends first. Then he wouldn't be so nervous about it. ,

SHIRLEY

Maybe....

CELIA

Think about it.

SHIRLEY

Okay. I'll think about it.

**SCENE 11**

(A FEW DAYS LATER, IN A SPANKING CLEAN, BRIGHT L.A. ART GALLERY. ERNIE AND CELIA ENTER, CARRYING THEIR PROGRAMS, AND LOOK AROUND. CELIA SEES SOMEONE SHE KNOWS AND WAVES.)

CELIA

(TO ERNIE) I hope you don't mind my dragging you to this exhibit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERNIE

Not at all. It's good to have a night off from Mary and Kate. I've been seeing them both on and off for almost a week, and--

CELIA

On and off? You mean, one on and the other off, then the one off and the other on?

ERNIE

Please. You make it sound like group sex. But I'll admit, it is beginning to take its toll.

CELIA

It sure is. Last night our telepathic link was working very strongly. It kept me up half the night.

ERNIE

Sorry. Between Kate and the full moon.... Well, anyway, I'm looking forward to seeing the work of a man who, uh, (CHECKS PROGRAM, READS) "Works in old media new discovered, with the anger and fire of the mad-as-hell-won't-take-it-anymore White Anglo-Saxon Protestant." Who wrote the program notes, Nancy Reagan Ferlinghetti?

CELIA

Oh, look, there's the photographer I told you about. I've got to say hello. I'll be right back.

ERNIE

Okay.

(CELIA WALKS OVER TO TONY RYAN WHO HAS JUST ARRIVED, AND THEY CHAT. ERNIE WALKS OVER TO THE NEAREST PRINTING AND LOOKS AT IT. A PUZZLED LOOK: HE CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT. HE TURNS HIS HEAD TO EACH SIDE, THEN TRIES TO LOOK AT IT UPSIDE DOWN. STILL NOTHING. JUST THEN THERESA CARPENTER WALKS UP BESIDE HIM. HE STOPS GAWKING AT THE PAINTING AND, UNDER THE PRETENSE OF READING THE PROGRAM, SNEAKS A GLANCE AT HER.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHE IS A VERY WELL-DRESSED YOUNG WOMAN, BRUNETTE, PRETTY AND VERY SELF-ASSURED.)

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Er, excuse me. What is this one called?

THERESA

(CHECKING PROGRAM) "Cubist Tornado."

ERNIE

(A REVELATION) Oh! Now I get it!

THERESA

Do you like it?

ERNIE

Well, it's uh, um, I, uh, no. It doesn't match my living room carpet. Actually it does. But I still think it stinks.

THERESA

You've very opinionated.

ERNIE

Yeah, well, I know what I like. And that's not it.

THERESA

You're right, too. It does stink.

ERNIE

(TAKEN BY SURPRISE) Yes. My name is Ernest.

THERESA

I'm Theresa.

ERNIE

Really? My mother's name is Theresa.

THERESA

Oh?

ERNIE

Yes. Uh, shall we look at some others? The odor of this one is beginning to overwhelm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THERESA

Let's.

ERNIE

You like art?

THERESA

I'm looking for something for my new law office.

ERNIE

You're a lawyer?

THERESA

Yes. I just left the local office of one of those nationwide attorney franchises. You know, the kind that specialize in auto accident cases. (LOOKS AT A PRINTING) Some of these resemble my old clients.

(THEY CROSS AWAY AS TONY AND CELIA COME TO THE PAINTING ERNIE AND THERESA HAD JUST BEEN VIEWING.)

TONY

Oh, look at this one, will you?

CELIA

Pretty putrid. (CHECKS PROGRAM) What's this next one. "Serene Landscape"? (THEY MOVE TO THE NEXT ONE) I should have guessed.

TONY

No, it's accurate. All his landscapes are set in post-nuclear war Ohio.

CELIA

It looks a lot like Pre-nuclear War Ohio.

TONY

It does. So what 's the verdict?

CELIA

On what?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

TONY

You know. The layout. We're doing  
"Golden Girls of the Film  
Industry," or some such nonsense.  
You fit perfectly.

CELIA

I'm not sure I have the long legs  
required for the job.

TONY

We'll put you under the covers.  
Just your beautiful breasts gazing  
from under the chaste, white  
sheets, offering themselves to the  
reader, your big blue eyes--

CELIA

Brown.

TONY

--brown eyes smiling--

CELIA

I can't do it, Tony. Take off all  
my clothes for--

TONY

So just take off some of your  
clothes. Whatever. We're flexible.  
I'd really like to have you do it.

CELIA

Well...let me think about it some  
more.

TONY

(SIGHS) Okay. Two more days. But  
that's all. And I want you to call  
me either way. (CHECKS WATCH) Well,  
I've got to run now. (POINTS AT HER  
AS HE WALKS BACKWARD TO THE DOOR)  
Two days. (EXITS.)

CELIA

Hmmmm. (LOOKING AROUND) Now where's  
Ernie? (SEES HIM WITH THERESA) I  
should have known.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CELIA(CONT'D)

(TURNS TO PAINTING, LOOKS IN PROGRAM FOR TITLE) "Nude in a Wasteland." (REPEATS ERNIE'S BUSINESS OF LOOKING) I wonder if that's what I'd look like?

**SCENE 12**

(A WEEK LATER. ERNIE HAS SET UP THE LIVING ROOM AS A WRITING ROOM, AND IS NOW TYPING REWRITES ON A MANUAL TYPEWRITER. EMIL STRIDES INTO THE ROOM TALKING ON A CORDLESS PHONE.)

EMIL

Yes, I saw the rushes. It was terrible. The set has 1880-ish architectural elements, the clothes are 1950-ish, the hairstyles 1940-ish, and it takes place in the 1930's.... So what did I think? Ish!.... It's not the designer's fault! It's the director's fault! He approved it.... Well, he should have!.... What eclectic? Look, I know it's only TV, but isn't there room for art, too?.... What do you mean, Not on the small screen?.... How much?.... Just to fix three scenes?.... All right, don't fix it, but use one of my aliases in the credits for producer. I don't want anybody to know it's mine. Especially since it's not.... Right. Call me then....Yeah, ciao. (HE HANGS UP.)

ERNIE

Trouble, Emil?

EMIL

If you're doing a show set in the 1930's, is it too much to ask to have everything look like it's in the 1930's?

ERNIE

That's how they did it in the 1930's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMIL

I guess it was easier for them then. Ah! Incompetent assholes I'm dealing with.

ERNIE

Emil! That's the harshest thing I've ever heard you say.

EMIL

Well, they make me mad! If only someone would just stop and think for a minute. But no. They just do it. For money. You can't even spend money to make money. Oh, I must calm down. It's not only this show. I've got other things on my mind. I'm concerned about--well, we're going to have a new boarder for awhile.

ERNIE

(JOKING) Anyone I Know?

EMIL

Yes. Duncan Wasserman.

ERNIE

Oh, my God.

EMIL

Now, come on, Ernie. He's not that bad.

ERNIE

You remember what happened at the party the first night we were here. (REALIZES) And if he's not so bad, why are You worried about his moving in?

EMIL

I'm afraid he might bother Celia. I guess I shouldn't worry. He 's just coming here for a few days to work on his latest book of poetry.

ERNIE

Great.

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

EMIL

Ernie, I know you don't like him, but try to get along. He's really not so bad, as I've said. A bit loud, perhaps, but--

ERNIE

Emil, he's a con artist.

EMIL

Oh, no, not at all. If he was a con artist, he'd be good at it. But he's not. I don't think he ever fooled anyone but a few pseudo intellectuals. And you.

ERNIE

(DRAWL) That's us gullible Easterners fer yuh.

EMIL

There's your trouble, Ernie. Don't be an Easterner. Just live. Enjoy it out here.

ERNIE

Even if art and money don't mix?

EMIL

Well--

ERNIE

East is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet.

DUNCAN

(ENTERING) Thus spake Zarathustra. And Nietzsche saw that it was good. Hello, you sons of bitches, hello.

EMIL

Duncan! Welcome! You remember Ernie Reiter.

DUNCAN

Ah, yes, the blue one, with the astral sister of the bony knees. You write in here, boy?

ERNIE

Until now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DUNCAN

Good! Wonderful inspiration, this room. I wrote three of my books in here, four days each book. No problem, I'll leave you some space. All right? S'all right! Great! Emil, where's my room?

EMIL

Same room as always, Duncan. Lane will take your things up to the--

DUNCAN

My bunk! Summer camp! I've got my name tags sewn on all my shorts, general, and my privates are tattooed. Lead on, Macduff, and Goddamned be he who first cries, Holy fuck! (EXITS QUICKLY.)

ERNIE

I don't know why you were worried about Celia, Emil. I think Duncan will be as quiet as a mouse. (BACK TO WORK) I wonder if I can finish my rewrites in five minutes?

CELIA

(RUSHING IN) What is that man doing here?

EMIL

Oh, my. He's moving in.

CELIA

After what happened last time?

EMIL

Oh, dear, I knew this would happen.

ERNIE

Uh, Celia, Emil was concerned that there'd be a problem.

CELIA

Well, there is.

ERNIE

What did he say to you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CELIA

When I passed him on the stairs, he  
smiled at me and winked.

ERNIE

Yeah, and then?

CELIA

Well, that's all. (PAUSE) But it  
was the way he looked at me. A Jack  
Nicholson leer. It made me feel  
cheap.

EMIL

I'll go and speak with him.  
(EXITS.)

ERNIE

Celia, I think you're overreacting.

CELIA

But he--

ERNIE

Come on, honey, calm down.

CELIA

That's easy for you to say.

ERNIE

What?

CELIA

Your life's okay. The play's going  
well, you're going out with three  
different women--

ERNIE

Hey, that's not so easy. I keep  
forgetting which one I'm going out  
with. If they didn't have different  
hair color, I'd be totally  
confused.

CELIA

(SARCASTICALLY) How terrible.

ERNIE

Hey, what's bothering you?

CELIA

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ERNIE  
Is it your job?

CELIA  
My job's fine.

ERNIE  
Then it's personal.

CELIA  
(GRUDGINGLY ADMITTING IT) Yes.

ERNIE  
What is it?

CELIA  
I told you about the photographer  
who wanted me to pose nude?

ERNIE  
Yes. (A BEAT) You didn't.

CELIA  
Well.... Tony said we should do a  
session fully clothed, to get me  
acclimated to it, as he said. So we  
did. And I got acclimated to it.  
And as I got more acclimated, I  
removed more clothing, and finally  
I was, well, you know.

ERNIE  
Uh, huh.

CELIA  
I still didn't mind that I had done  
it until he sent me some copies  
with the release form.

ERNIE  
The release form so they can print  
the pictures?

CELIA  
Yes. Now I feel pretty bad about  
it. Not really guilty, but the idea  
of someone having pictures like  
that of me....

ERNIE  
Yeah. Could I see them?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

CELIA

Ernie!

ERNIE

Right. Bad question. Shouldn't have said that. Shouldn't even have suggested it. Forget I said it. (PAUSE) So what are you going to do?

CELIA

I'm not going to sign the release.

ERNIE

Good.

CELIA

But I wish I could get the negatives.

ERNIE

Ask the guy. Maybe he'll give them to you.

CELIA

I doubt it.

ERNIE

Find out. It can't hurt. (LOOKS AT WATCH) I've got to go. I'm meeting Kate--no, Mary--no; one of them, in an hour. See you later. And good luck.

CELIA

Thanks.

ERNIE

Hey, Celia, you didn't, uh, sleep with this guy, did you?

CELIA

Of course not.

ERNIE

Good. See you later. (EXITS.)

(A PAUSE. SHE PONDERES THE SITUATION.)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DUNCAN  
(IN THE DOORWAY) Hello, Celia.

CELIA  
(COOLLY) Hello, Duncan.

DUNCAN  
Emil told me how you reacted to my greeting. I'm really sorry you took it that way. (BEGINS TO BUILD INTENSITY) It's my persona, you know? MY mask. The face the world sees--that I let it see. It's intense, it's-- (REALIZES HE IS BEING INTENSE, QUIETS DOWN)-- anyway, I'm sorry you took me so seriously. I never do.

CELIA  
Well, thanks, Duncan. I'm sorry I took you the wrong way.

DUNCAN  
(INTENSE GRIN) Honey, you can take me any way y-- (CALMS) Sorry. It's automatic.

CELIA  
It's okay.

DUNCAN  
Good, good. (PAUSE) When I get quiet, I get sensitive to my surroundings. Something tells me you're upset about something.

CELIA  
Yeah, but it's nothing for you to concern yourself with.

DUNCAN  
Butt out, huh? Okay, I get the message. (STARTS TO GO, THEN STOPS) Sure, I can't help? I mean, so I can get on your good side?

CELIA  
Can you get the negatives of nude photos of me from a photographer?

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

DUNCAN  
(SERIOUSLY) Maybe. Who's the flesh  
flasher

CELIA  
Are you serious?

DUNCAN  
Yeah, for a change. Who?

CELIA  
Tony Ryan.

DUNCAN  
That fucker? He's got nude photos  
of his maternal grandmother.  
(LAUGHS AN EVIL LAUGH) No problem,  
honey, just relax. I'll get them  
for you. He owes me.

### SCENE 13

(A FEW DAYS LATER. SHIRLEY AND CELIA ARE HAVING DRINKS AT A  
BAR.)

SHIRLEY  
So what happened with Duncan and  
your photographer?

CELIA  
I don't know. He said he'd go to  
see Tony, but I don't know if he  
did. Maybe he kept the pictures for  
himself. God, I hope not.  
(SHUDDERS) And Tony hasn't called  
either.

SHIRLEY  
You never did tell me if he made  
love to you or not.

1ST STUD  
(CROSSING TO SHIRLEY) Excuse me,  
would you like to dance?

SHIRLEY  
No, thanks.

1ST STUD  
What's the matter, don't you dance?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHIRLEY

Yeah, but I want to talk to my friend.

1ST STUD

I get it. What you're saying is, you don't want to dance with me. I guess I'm not macho enough for you. (EXITS.)

SHIRLEY

That's true. Anyway. You were saying?

CELIA

Well, I--

2ND STUD

(IDENTICAL TWIN OF 1ST STUD, TO SHIRLEY) Hey, doll. Glad you told that creep to get lost, so You could have me. He's a real jerk, even if he is my brother. So how about it, babe?

SHIRLEY

It looks like whatever it is, it runs in your family.

2ND STUD

(VAGUELY SENSING AN INSULT) Hay, it's cool. It 's cool. (STARTS TO GO; ASIDE:) Bitch. (EXITS.)

SHIRLEY

It's my turn to shudder.

CELIA

What is this power you have over men?

SHIRLEY

I don't know. I never seem to attract the ones I want.

CELIA

Like Emil?

SHIRLEY

(BLUSHING) Yes. I just get the dregs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

3RD STUD  
(A NEANDERTHAL MAN, TO SHIRLEY)  
Hey, chickies. Dance, wha duh yuh  
say?

SHIRLEY  
(IMPATIENTLY) No. I'm talking to my  
friend.

3RD STUD  
Oh. In that case, (TO CELIA) How  
about you, chickies? Dance?

CELIA  
No. I'm talking to her.

3RD STUD  
Weird. (EXITS.)

CELIA  
Well, Shirley' I'm glad we had this  
little talk.

SHIRLEY  
It was little, wasn't it? Let's get  
out of here.

CELIA  
I wish I could draw men like you  
do.

SHIRLEY  
It's not hard. Just get big boobs.  
I've seen guys go after ugly women  
with bigger ones than Dolly  
Parton's. I don't understand it.  
All I know is, it's not worth it.

CELIA  
Oh, I don't know. I think I'd like  
the attention, sometime.

**SCENE 14**

(TWO DAYS LATER. ERNIE IS AT WORK ON HIS REWRITES. DUNCAN IS ALSO IN THE ROOM, HEAVILY INTO HIS BOOK: NOTES ARE SCATTERED EVERYWHERE, AN HE PACES ABOUT, SEARCHING THROUGH THE SLIPS, WRITING A LITTLE, SEARCHING SOME MORE, ALL THE WHILE CHANTING "DADA DADA DADA DADA DADA...")

DUNCAN  
Hey, Ernie. Thorough.

ERNIE  
(SPELLING) T-H-O-R-O-U-G-H.

DUNCAN  
(WRITES IT DOWN) Thanks. You know just what I want. That's great.  
(CONTINUES THE SAME BUSINESS, THEN STOPS) Hey. particular.

ERNIE  
(SPELLING) P-A-R-T-I-C-U-L-A-R.

DUNCAN  
Great. (WRITES IT DOWN. REREADS THE WHOLE THING, THEN STARES.) Shit.  
What was I thinking about?

ERNIE  
(ASIDE) Suddenly a light went out over his head.

DUNCAN  
Shit. I need a break. C'mon, let's get out of here. Slip out onto the patio for a smoke.

ERNIE  
I'm trying to do some work on my play.

DUNCAN  
If you're still trying to fix it, it must really be broke. Come on, come on.

(DUNCAN EXITS TO PATIO. ERNIE SIGHS, THEN FOLLOWS. ONCE OUTSIDE, DUNCAN LIGHTS UP A JOINT, TAKES A BIG HIT, AND OFFERS IT TO ERNIE WHO FIRST REFUSES, THEN ACCEPTS IT.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Hey, lookit. a shooting star. I hope. We'll wait a minute, and if there's no flash or mushroom cloud, we'll be safe. Otherwise we'd better duck and cover.

ERNIE

That's not funny.

DUNCAN

Why not? It 's the ultimate cosmic joke, the perfect way to say, "Fuck it." And it would really separate the men from the boys.

ERNIE

It would separate the men from the cockroaches.

DUNCAN

At least it would be exciting, for a few minutes anyhow. How old are you?

ERNIE

Twenty-eight.

DUNCAN

Yeah. I'm thirty-one.

ERNIE

Really? I took you for late thirties. Sorry.

DUNCAN

It 's okay. I spent a lot of time baking in the desert. A lot of hard living in the streets. Not always a hard life, just hard living. You ever notice how our generation has missed out on all the excitement?

ERNIE

What do you mean?

DUNCAN

Right before we came of age, Vietnam was over. No real wars since, and the draft didn't affect us.

(MORE)

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Watergate left us cynical, the Recession slowed us down and put most of us on the unemployment line as soon as we got out of school. I graduated magna cum laude from the University of Texas, and pphhhht, nothing.

ERNIE

What was your major?

DUNCAN

English. I only made magna cum laude since I couldn't spell. (LAUGHS AT THAT) Oh, yeah. We got sandwiched between '60's relevancy and '80's back to basics. Our era's martial music was disco, for God's sake. Jesus. Even art is boring now. Everything's been done. It's the same with theatre, don't you think? Hey, no offense, you know. I mean, it used to be experimental, creative, wild. Now all the weird shit's been co-opted for Broadway musicals. All the creativity's been sapped away by IRA's and second mortgages and cocaine and valium and fucking hot little suburban babysitters before the wife gets home.

ERNIE

That 's quite a description.

DUNCAN

I oughta know. I did it myself. So, my point is, what are you doing in theatre

ERNIE

You really want to know? (DUNCAN NODS) Okay, I'll tell you. You know that moment when the houselights have faded and the stage lights haven't yet come up? Like when a plane is taking off, and the front wheels have lifted but the rear wheels are still on the ground.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ERNIE (CONT'D)

That moment is so full of excitement and promise--it contains all the magic of theatre, when the individual people are transformed into a single audience. That doesn't happen in TV. That's why you need that laugh track. In theatre, it's live, it's there in front of you. You can feel it. You can touch it. And for me, it's even more magic, because up there on the stage are people I created speaking words I wrote.

DUNCAN

Yeah, man, yeah, the words, man, the words. Each one is a bullet, man, a fucking laser beam into the soul. That's what we're doing, we're not trying to get their attention, we're grabbing them by their testicles and twisting their minds and making them crazy. That's what writing is all about, man: life. Living it. Doing whatever it takes. (PAUSE) Ah, shit. Did you ever bleed for a living, man? I'm telling you I did. I was so far down I had to. You haven't lived until you get the clap from a Mexican whore, you kill a man, or live off your own fucking blood. Or find somebody dead. You ever find somebody dead?

ERNIE

Yeah, I did, a friend of mine. Well, not really a friend. Four of us were living in this house one summer. I hadn't seen him all day, and then he got a phone call, so I went to find him. He'd slit his wrists with a razor blade. In his bed. Didn't even have the decency to do it in the shower. We had to burn the mattress and the sheets. I saw more blood that day than I ever care to see again.

DUNCAN

He leave a note?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

ERNIE

Yeah. (CHUCKLES) It said, "To whom  
it may concern: fuck it."

(BOTH LAUGH. SHARING THE COSMIC JOKE.)

DUNCAN

Oh, Yeah, yeah, yeah. I discovered  
something years ago, Ernie, my boy.  
It was an odd revelation. But it's  
true. Everybody has something  
they're afraid of. It might be  
success, or the lack of it, it  
might be death, it might be that  
there's nothing after death. That  
one's had me going for most of my  
life. But you know, if you can  
figure out your fear, if you know  
what you're afraid of and can  
confront that, look at it square in  
the face and say, "Fuck it!" you  
can make it to Enlightenment, man.  
You can reach that true oneness  
with the universe. )

ERNIE

And you've done this?

DUNCAN

Shit, no. To look at your fears  
squarely takes too much courage.  
I'd rather drink and smoke myself  
into a fucking stupor. Which sounds  
too much like a good idea. Let's  
get back to work.

## SCENE 15

(CELIA'S ROOM. SHE IS DRESSING FOR THE EVENING'S PARTY, AND  
IS FINISHING BY STUFFING HER BRA WITH KLEENEXES. ERNIE  
KNOCKS.)

CELIA

Who is it?

ERNIE

It's me. Can I come in?

CELIA

Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERNIE

(ENTERING) What are you doing?

CELIA

"Quod natura relinquit imperfectum,  
ars perficit."

ERNIE

Again, please, for I have so little  
Latin, and less Greek.

CELIA

"What nature leaves imperfect is  
perfected by art."

ERNIE

I thought it was, "What God has  
forgotten is made up for with  
cotton."

CELIA

I'm tired of being an invisible  
woman at these panties. I want to  
stand out.

ERNIE

Well, you certainly will.

CELIA

Shirley always has handsome men  
around her. I think I should, too.

ERNIE

Sure you should. But Shirley admits  
that 99 and 9/10ths per cent of  
them are jerks. And beefcake  
doesn't go looking for women with  
knives and forks.

CELIA

What?

ERNIE

It's a metaphor. If you can be  
obscure, I can be obscure. Look,  
what I'm trying to say is, that you  
should let men love you for who you  
are, not for what you look like.

CELIA

Is that how you feel about women?

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

ERNIE  
Of course.

CELIA  
Oh?

ERNIE  
Okay, I don't. But why should I?  
This country has always had a  
perfectly workable double standard,  
and it should be kept up. And I'm  
leaving now before I gag on my  
shoelaces. (EXITS.)

(CELIA LOOKS AT HERSELF IN THE MIRROR, THEN STUFFS MORE  
KLEENEX.)

## SCENE 16

(ERNIE STANDS IN THE LIVING ROOM, WHICH IS SET UP FOR ANOTHER  
PARTY, ALREADY IN PROGRESS. EMIL ENTERS, SNEEZES, CROSSES TO  
ERNIE.)

EMIL  
Ernie, do you have a Kleenex?

ERNIE  
Ask Celia.

EMIL  
Oh. Okay.

(PUZZLED, EMIL EXITS. ERNIE SIPS HIS DRINK AND VAGUELY  
LISTENS TO A CONVERSATION BEHIND HIM.)

GUEST  
Oh, yes, they've got great cuisine,  
but the food is terrible.

(ERNIE IS AMUSED BY THIS, BUT HIS SMILE DROPS QUICKLY WHEN  
MARY, KATE AND THERESA CROSS TO HIM FROM THREE DIFFERENT  
DIRECTIONS, AND SURROUND HIM.)

MARY, KATE THERESA  
(TOGETHER) Hello, lover.  
(SURPRISED) What? Who are you? Me?  
Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERNIE  
Oh, my God.

MARY, KATE THERESA  
(TOGETHER) Ernie, who are these  
women? (TO OTHERS) Stop that!

ERNIE  
Mary: this Katherine and Theresa.  
Katherine: Mary and Theresa.  
Theresa: Many and Katherine.  
(ASIDE) God: help.

MARY, KATE THERESA  
(SWEETLY TO ONE) Hi, nice to meet  
you. (TO ANOTHER) How do you do?

KATE  
(GRABBING ERNIE'S ARM) Ernie,  
what's going on? Who are they?

MARY  
(GRABBING THE OTHER ARM) Yes. I  
come to a party to see you and find  
you with them.

THERESA  
Am I your date tonight or not?

ERNIE  
Er...um....

MARY  
His date? We've been going out for  
three weeks.

KATE  
Ernie and I have been going out for  
three weeks.

THERESA  
Well, it's only been two weeks for  
me.

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY

(PULLING ERNIE TOWARD HER) Ernie and I are in love. I remind him of his mother, Her name is Mary, too.

KATE

Really? He told me his mother's name is Katherine.

THERESA

He told me her name is Theresa.

MARY

(RELEASING HIM) Oh? Well, which is it?

ERNIE

Well, her name's Mary Catherine.  
(PAUSE) Theresa is her confirmation name.

(THE GIRLS EXCHANGE LOOKS, DUMP THEIR DRINKS ON ERNIE ONE BY ONE, AND WALK OFF.)

MARY, KATE THERESA

Men! (EXEUNT.)

CELIA

(RUNNING OVER TO ERNIE) Ernie, what happened?

ERNIE

Forget hot tubs. This is much better.

CELIA

(PULLING KLEENEXES OUT) Here, dry yourself.

ERNIE

(TAKES THEM) What about your sex lure?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CELIA

So far I've gotten one "Let's winter in Bermuda together," two "Hey, chickies," three "What's shakin', babes," two "Let's make a porno flick together," and one "Sit on my face, honey." The one who said that looked like he had the Chrysler Building sit on his face. It made the offer for Bermuda sound very good.

ERNIE

I guess we both did better than we thought we would. Unfortunately. As for me, I am going to accept my anointing as baptism into the Church of the Celibate Bachelor.

CELIA

Come on, sailor' I'll buy you a drink. To drink.

(THEY EXIT PAST AN EXECUTIVE AND EMIL. LOLA SITS IN A CHAIR NEARBY.) |

EMIL

I heard the Jack Goodfellow was fired. He was one of the biggest production company heads in Hollywood. What happened?

MINI-MOGUL

We found out that he had an imaginary friend.

EMIL

There's nothing wrong with that. Lots of people do. Mostly as a tax write-off.

MINI-MOGUL

Sure, but he used to bring his friend to our board meetings. Some of us began to fear a possible leak in security.

2ND MINI-MOGUL

WALKING UP) Hey, Emil, Bobby, what's shakin'? Hey, Lola, what do you say? (PULLS HER RING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LOLA

Stick it in all the way, lover.

SHIRLEY

(ENTERING, CROSSES TO EMIL) Emil,  
could I speak to you alone, please?

EMIL

Sure, uh, let's go into the den.  
Harry, keep Lola company, would you  
please?

2ND MINI-MOGUL

You bet.

(EMIL AND SHIRLEY EXIT.)

## SCENE 17

(ERNIE'S ROOM. HE IS CHANGING CLOTHES, AND CELIA SITS ON THE  
BED, WAITING FOR HIM.)

ERNIE

I don't know. This trip isn't  
turning out quite the way I  
expected.

CELIA

What did you expect?

ERNIE

I don't know, but it wasn't this. I  
guess I shouldn't complain. The  
play's going well, and everybody  
has been pretty nice to me. I've  
even become friends with Duncan.  
But I'm still striking out with  
women.

CELIA

Come on. You spent three weeks  
hopping from one to the other.  
That's hardly striking out. Your  
only sin is one of timing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERNIE

Yeah, I guess. But you know, none of those three had everything I wanted. One was very intelligent, one had beautiful legs, and the third was an expert at making (BEAT) strawberry daiquiris. All three of them put together would make a wonderful woman for me. Unfortunately, they're three separate women. (PAUSE) Is it too much to ask for a mate who fills my every need--or at least most of them?

CELIA

I don't think it's too much too ask. There must be someone somewhere with all the qualities we want. Maybe you should take your mother's advice and marry me, after all.

ERNIE

Well, you know, the other night I made a list of everything I want in a woman.

CELIA

And I fit every category--except the legs category?

ERNIE

Your legs aren't so bad.

CELIA

So what are you saying?

ERNIE

I think I may be suggesting that we try to make a go of it. If you have no objections.

CELIA

Last week I was talking to Shirley about Emil. She loves him but is afraid to approach him since it might make him nervous. I said that since they started as friends, maybe it could work out for them.

( CONTINUED )



CONTINUED: (2)

ERNIE

So what are you saying?

CELIA

After I talked to her, I realized that maybe the same was true of us. We've been friends for years, and although we can't seem to find compatible lovers, we are very compatible. I was running from that realization tonight when I was stuffing my blouse.

ERNIE

You didn't run too far. We're still as close as we were.

CELIA

Maybe closer.

ERNIE

Do you think a relationship might interfere with our closeness? And what if we should lose our telepathic link?

CELIA

Well, maybe lovers shouldn't be that close.

ERNIE

You want to give it a try?

CELIA

Sure, why not? I make very good strawberry daiquiris.

ERNIE

Well, I'm game. (PAUSE) Where do we start?

CELIA

How about with a kiss?

ERNIE

We've never done that before.

CELIA

Might as well start now. We might even enjoy it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

(THEY KISS, AWKWARDLY AT FIRST, THEN AGAIN MORE SUCCESSFULLY.  
THEY BREAK.)

ERNIE  
Was that your tongue?

CELIA  
No. Not on a first kiss.

ERNIE  
Couldn't have been my tongue.

CELIA  
No wonder you have problems with  
women. You only kiss with one lip.  
Shall we try again?

ERNIE  
Um, hmmm. (THEY DO.) Ummm....

## SCENE 18

(THE DEN. SHIRLEY AND EMIL ARE ALONE.)

SHIRLEY  
So, Emil, what I'm trying to tell  
you is that I love you.

EMIL  
(AFTER A PAUSE, HE HOLDS OUT HIS  
HANDS, PALMS DOWNWARD) No  
nervousness. Okay, now for the big  
test. (CLEARS THROAT) Shirley, I  
love you. (LOOKS AT HIS HANDS) Like  
a rock.

SHIRLEY  
Oh, Emil! (SHE HUGS HIM) Uh, oh,  
now you're shaking.

EMIL  
That's not from anxiety.

SHIRLEY  
Oh, Emil, let's be bad.

EMIL  
My bed or yours?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHIRLEY

Mine. I sot it ready just in case.  
And Lane got your favorite p.j.'s  
for me.

EMIL

I don't think I'll be needing them.

(THEY EMBRACE, KISS, AND EXIT.)

## SCENE 19

(ERNIE'S ROOM. ERNIE AND CELIA ARE SEATED ON THE BED,  
CONTINUING TO EXPLORE KISSING. THEY BREAK)

ERNIE

I love you.

CELIA

I love you, too.

(THEY START TO KISS AGAIN, BUT ARE INTERRUPTED BY A LOUD BUMP  
IN THE NEXT ROOM.)

ERNIE

What was that?

CELIA

That's Shirley's room, isn't it?  
Well, Shirley was going to tell  
Emil tonight that she loves him. I  
hope it worked out.

ERNIE

I guess one thump meant yes. (SOUND  
OF RHYTHMIC SQUEAKING IS HEARD  
THROUGH THE WALL.) What's that? Oh!

CELIA

Exactly. Um, what do you say we  
march to a different drummer?

ERNIE

Sounds good to me.

(SHE GETS UP AND TURNS THE LIGHT OFF. COMPLETE DARKNESS.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CELIA  
I wonder if our psychic link is  
fading?

ERNIE  
You still know what I'm thinking,  
don't you?

CELIA  
(SIGHS) Oh, yes.

## SCENE 20

(THE NEXT MORNING. THE LIVING ROOM IS A SHAMBLES, WITH PEOPLE SCATTERED AROUND AMID THE CARNAGE OF FOOD, PLATES AND GLASSES. EMIL AND SHIRLEY ENTER AND WALK THROUGH IT ALL, HAND IN HAND, OBLIVIOUS OF ALL BUT EACH OTHER. THEY THEN SEE CELIA AND ERNIE EMBRACING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM.)

EMIL  
Good morning, you two! And what a  
beautiful morning it is.

(SEVERAL BODIES ROLL OVER, MORN, GROAN, GASP OR CHORTLE THEIR DISAGREEMENT.)

CELIA  
Good morning, Emil, Shirley. You  
slept well?

EMIL  
Never better. Things certainly  
worked out for us last night.

CELIA  
We had a realization last night,  
too.

SHIRLEY  
Really, Celia? I knew you too would  
get together, ever since we had our  
talk the other week. I suspected it  
ever since the two of you moved in.

ERNIE  
Why? We didn't even suspect it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHIRLEY

Just the way You spoke to each other, and some of the things you said when the other wasn't around. I could tell.

ERNIE

Hm! Well, it all worked out. Except for one person.

CELIA

Who?

ERNIE

Lola, of course. What about her, Emil?

EMIL

Well, when Shirley hit me with the news last night, I decided to forget about Lola and marry Shirley. Then, on the way to Shirley's room, I discovered Lola in the billiard room, getting gangbanged by a bunch of paparazzi, Probably someone pulled her ring and she said, "Do it to me twenty more times." I left her there with them.

(LANE ENTERS WITH TRAY WITH FOUR GLASSES OF ORANGE JUICE ON IT, AND LOLA, HALF-DEFLATED, SLUNG UNDER HIS ARM. HE OFFERS THE TRAY AROUND, AND CELIA, SHIRLEY, EMIL AND ERNIE EACH TAKE A GLASS.)

LANE

What shall I do with Miss Lola, sir?

EMIL

She will be in Shirley's old room, from now on, Lane. Shirley's moving \$into my room. Is that all right, Shirley?

SHIRLEY

Of course, love.

LANE

Of course, sir. (STARTS TO GO.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERNIE

(STOPPING LANE) Uh, Lane, wait a moment. One last pull, huh? (PULLS LOLA'S RING.)

LOLA

Oh, honey, I'm so tired. No more, okay?

ERNIE

Okay, babe. 'Bye, bye.

(LANE EXITS. ALL WALK OUTSIDE TO LOOK AT THE SUNRISE.)

EMIL

So what do you think of California now, Ernie?

ERNIE

It looks very good to me.

CELIA

Only one thing could make this day perfect.

ERNIE

What's that?

(ON CUE, DUNCAN SWEEPS INTO THE ROOM, CARRYING A MANILA ENVELOPE. HE CROSSES TO CELIA, KNEELS ON ONE KNEE, AND OFFERS THE ENVELOPE TO HER.)

DUNCAN

My princess, your knight has returned.

CELIA

Oh, Duncan. The negatives? (TAKES THE ENVELOPE)

DUNCAN

(RISES) Positively.

CELIA

(HUGS HIM) Thank you. Now it is a perfect day. (RAISES HER GLASS) A toast, everyone.

SHIRLEY

A toast!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CELIA  
Here's to California.

EMIL  
Yes!

ERNIE  
Cheers!

(THEY CLINK GLASSES. DUNCAN STEPS ASIDE AND PULLS A STACK OF PHOTOS FROM AN INSIDE JACKET POCKET. LOOKING AT THE FIRST ONE, HE COMPARES IT TO CELIA STANDING OFF TO THE SIDE, SMILES, THEN PUTS IT AWAY AND EXITS AS THE LIGHTS FADE. CURTAIN.)