

Pre-Show sound cues mixed in with pre-show music are random digging and jackhammer noises, like someone is tunneling through cement.

The set is a lobby of a spa/resort. There is a large check-in desk and a love seat that is used mostly for flirting with women. There are at least 3 entrances. A front door, a hallway to guest rooms, and a hallway to other spa facilities. If need be there can be other doors and entries.

At rise the stage is empty. There is grunting and shoveling sounds coming from behind the check-in counter. CHUCKIE and BILL pop up from behind the counter. Both are wearing miner helmets and “vacation” shirts.

CHUCKIE

A lobby? We did a lot of digging to get to the lobby.

BILL

This is a very exclusive resort. You can’t just walk in the front door.

CHUCKIE

But it’s just over---

BILL

Can’t. Just. Walk. In.

SKYLER enters. BILL and CHUCKIE quickly duck down leaving their shovel on the desk. SKYLER pauses, then takes the shovel with him as he exits.

CHUCKIE and BILL pop back up.

CHUCKIE

Okay. We’re five feet into the resort. Now what?

BILL crawls out of the hole and up onto the counter, CHUCKIE gets stuck. RHONDA enters with a tray of drinks.

BILL

Enjoy the free drink service.

BILL takes a drink. CHUCKIE reaches for one, but it’s just slightly out of reach. RHONDA stares unfazed.

RHONDA

I’m so glad I’m not in charge today.

RHONDA exits. CHUCKIE tries to get out of the hole again, struggles and gets stuck.  
SKYLER enters.

SKYLER

May I help you?

CHUCKIE

(not looking at SKYLER) Nope. I’m fine. This is all. Fine. How I planned it.

SKYLER

(to BILL, while taking away his drink.) May I help you?

CHUCKIE

(now noticing SKYLER) Looks like the jig is up. Better luck next time. (starts to work his way back into the wall.)

SKYLER

What are you doing here?

BILL

I *was* enjoying the free drink service.

SKYLER

Are you a member?

BILL

Yes.

CHUCKIE

No.

BILL

Maybe.

SKYLER

You have to leave. This is a very exclusive resort.

BILL

Okay tough guy. We’re going.

BILL starts heading in towards the spa facilities.

CHUCKIE

Are we leaving out the front door? Or the hole?

BILL

(frustrated and through his teeth.) How about the front door.

BILL grabs CHUCKIE and they exit out the front door. SKYLER leans on the counter. WILLIE pops up from behind the counter unnoticed by SKYLER. He takes the moment to look at the register book at the front desk. He comes up behind SKYLER, unnoticed, takes a moment to compose himself, and pose waiting for SKYLER to turn around. SKYLER doesn't.

WILLIE

(cough!) I'd like to check in!

SKYLER

(Startled and frazzled.) Check in!? Yes sir! Name?

WILLIE

(confidentially) Pete Thompson.

SKYLER

(conferring with the register book.) You've already checked in, sir.

WILLIE

Have I? Really?

SKYLER

Yes sir. About an hour ago. Looks like --

WILLIE

Let me see that.

SKYLER hands him the book.

WILLIE

"Pete Thompson"... Oh, I see what I did... I don't know what I was thinking. I'm Jake Renfield. I'd like to check in.

SKYLER

Ah. Mr. Renfield. Welcome back from Sweden.

WILLIE

Ja'. Is cold there, no?

SKYLER

Not this time of year, I'd think.

WILLIE

Ja' Vell, you're wrong.

(it should be mentioned here, that SKYLER has very thick glasses, and has a hard time seeing.)

SKYLER

Will you be staying with us the usual length of time?

WILLIE

Sure! How long is that?

SKYLER

One week.

WILLIE

Perfect. Let's talk room service. How's that paid for?

SKYLER

It's charged to your room, which is charged to your credit card. Just like normal.

WILLIE

Of course. And you have my credit card on file?

SKYLER

Yes sir. You're all taken care of.

WILLIE

More than perfect. Put me down for a steak -rare- New York strip if you've got it - or T-bone - if you don't, either way - bloody as hell.

SKYLER

Ha ha, Mr. Renfield.

Problem?  
WILLIE

This is a holistic vegan resort.  
SKYLER

And that means?  
WILLIE

No meat, sir.  
SKYLER

None?  
WILLIE

None.  
SKYLER

Not even a little.  
WILLIE

Nope.  
SKYLER

Just a--- just... not even a “moo”.  
WILLIE

Sorry sir. I believe that’s the reason you’ve been coming back all these years.  
SKYLER

Well then... I’ll take the equivalent ... sunshine moonbeam bean curd, or whatever -rare- bloody as hell.  
WILLIE

(Chuckling) I’ll see what I can do sir.  
SKYLER

And give yourself a big fat tip courtesy of Jim Renfield.  
WILLIE

SKYLER

Jake.

WILLIE

That too.

SKYLER

Here's your room key, sir. 1040 wing B just past the meditation pool.

WILLIE

Great. Say, where's the action the hottest, ladywise.

SKYLER

Uh. The mediation pool?

WILLIE

Really?

SKYLER

I'm probably the wrong person to ask, but sure, why not.

FRANK enters and crosses through.

FRANK

Yeah. Meditation pool's where all ladies hang out.

FRANK exits.

SKYLER

Thank--- you Frank.

WILLIE

Then you can send my bean curd poolside. Oh, and a couple of drinks. Wheat germ beer, or whatever. Time to start lubricating this party.

WILLIE exits towards the resort facilities as BILL and CHUCKIE enter, without their helmets, through the front door.

BILL

Okay, we'll try this again. This time (gives CHUCKIE a “zip it” sign. CHUCKIE nods.)

CHUCKIE

(Loudly) Oh oh. It's the same guy. He's going to recognize us.

BILL

Shhh! Nonsense. The people he thought he met before were wearing helmets and were coming out of a hole in the wall. Us? No helmets, and front door. Plus! (he pulls out sunglasses for both of them.) Remember, the key is to catch them off guard. (to SKYLER) You're in Big Trouble, Mister!

SKYLER

(freaks out) Trouble?! Who?! Where? Me? Me? Trouble?

BILL

Pleased to meet you. My name is Neville... Neville Chamberlain. I'm a Federal Agent. Spa and Resort division.

SKYLER

You're a Federal--

BILL

That's right. Federal Agent Chamberlain, in charge of spa and resort inspection and wood paneling fraud.

SKYLER

I didn't know there was such--

BILL

We've got divisions for everything. Now, what's your name, friend?

SKYLER

Skyler.

BILL

(to Chuckie) “Skyler”. Write that down.

CHUCKIE pulls out a small notebook attached to a retractable cord on his belt. Writes quickly and lets the notebook snap back to his waist.

SKYLER

What's this all about?

BILL

What it's about?

BILL snaps his fingers. CHUCKIE takes a rubber rat out of his pocket and drops it on the floor. BILL looks down at it shocked.

BILL (cont.)

Is that a dead rat I see?! It certainly is!

BILL quickly picks up the rat and waves it in front of SKYLER's face, then tosses it to CHUCKIE who pockets it.

BILL (cont.)

It's called breaking the law! Dead rats running around here, chewing through who knows how many miles of electrical wiring. I'm talking about Federal Crimes! Jail!

SKYLER

Jail?! But I need to --

BILL

Don't worry about it, you'll probably only get four, maybe five years... ten maximum. That is, if you've done anything wrong. You haven't done anything wrong, have you Skyler?

SKYLER

No, I --

BILL

We'll be the judge of that Skyler. Me and Agent.... (BILL looks at CHUCKIE who's wearing an orange vacation shirt.)... Orange, here.

SKYLER

Wait. Wait, I--- wait. Can I see some ID, or something?

BILL

You watch a lot of TV, don't you Skyler? Show the boy some ID, Agent Orange.

CHUCKIE shows his notebook to SKYLER. BILL turns SKYLER around before he can look.

BILL (cont.)

What we need to do here, Skyler, is a full inspection of the facilities and possibly interviews with all employees. Can you arrange that?



SKYLER

The owner is very busy and getting ready to leave for a ---, she's very busy, perhaps you could come back when--

BILL

Skyler! Don't you think the Federal Government has more important things to do besides wait around for resort owners to return?

SKYLER

I don't know, I--

BILL

We have more important things to do, Skyler. This can't wait. Remember, if we find any violations we're going to have to blame *someone*, and if you are in the immediate area, we're going to have to blame you. Cite you. And arrest you. SO! I'd advise you to stay away from us. (confidentially to SKYLER) It's for your own good, buddy. Come along Agent Orange!

BILL and CHUCKIE exit.

RHONDA enters just missing them and goes to the check-in counter to look at the book.

RHONDA

Who was that?

SKYLER

I don't know.

RHONDA

Mr. Renfield's back from Sweden?

SKYLER

(not listening) Uh huh.

RHONDA

You know Lana Johanson's coming today.

SKYLER

Yeah, I know. (realizing) Lana Johanson?!

RHONDA

Yeah.

SKYLER

Lana Johanson, Lana Johanson?

RHONDA

As she lives and breaths.

SKYLER

I’ve got to get ready.

RHONDA

(grabs him before he can leave. Grabbing his face and forcing him to the ground during her rant.) Listen up, little brother, you’re not going anywhere. Ruth put you in charge. In charge. In charge of the front desk. The front desk. And if you think you can leave your post just like that (snap) so you can get yourself all gussied up to impress a girl you’ve been pining for, for three years, and have yet to conjure up the nerve to so much as even say “hi” to-- you’ve got another thing coming. You’re staying here.

SKYLER

(face still clenched in RHONDA’s grasp.) I’ve said “hi” to her.

RHONDA

No. No you haven’t. I’ve watched. Everytime she and her family show up here, you do the same thing. (turns giving a dreamy glazed smile and vacant stare.)

RUTH enters. The owner of the spa. She is a non-stop flurry of movement with flowing bright print robes and scarves. She searches through the room getting ready to leave.

RUTH

Skyler, the lock is broken to the Magnatorium, and there must be a gopher loose near the mediation pool, holes everywhere. And I need to go. I couldn’t possibly be any later. I’ve never been this late before in my life, I swear. I gave you the keys, correct?

SKYLER

Yes Ruth.

RUTH

That’s one thing that I’ve got right today. I can’t believe it. Can you believe it? I can’t believe it, not for a minute. Some days, I just swear they are made up of less minutes than others.. Skyler, you’re in charge while I’m gone. I’ve said already, haven’t I?

RHONDA

Yes you have, Ruth.

RUTH

Well, I must have meant it. Where's my avocado?

RHONDA

Right here, Ruth.

RUTH

Thank you. Frank is *supposed* to be taking a personal day, so if you see him doing any sort of work around here, stop him. I am *not* paying him time and a half again. Cigarettes?

SKYLER

Right, here Ruth.

RUTH

Thank you Skyler. You're a dear, a darling, a sweet sweet young man. If I were ten years younger... you'd be too old for me. If anyone calls for October, we are totally booked, don't even try to appease them, they should have thought of that last year. I am really really really late. Skyler, you're in charge. Don't do anything I would do. Rhonda, you're in charge if anything should happen to dear sweet Skyler. I just love conventions.

SKYLER

I hear Las Vegas is beautiful this time of year.

RHONDA

Vegas is the same at all times of the year. It's a desert.

RUTH

Sunblock! I'm missing a whole bag. (Looks at the register book.) Oh, the Johansons are coming-- you must be very excited Skyler.

SKYLER

What? Why?

RUTH

Don't be silly. (looks at watch) Ah! You're in charge. I'll be in my room. Packing. Again.

RUTH exits.

RHONDA

So. "Boss". What are you going to do?

SKYLER

About what?

RHONDA

About Lana.

BILL and CHUCKIE enter. CHUCKIE is holding, and playing with a Magnet Suit.  
SKYLER sees them and jumps up with a jolt.

SKYLER

You're right. I've got to hide! (he ducks down behind the counter.)

RHONDA

Hide? How's she going to know you love her if you hide every time she's here?

SKYLER

(from behind the counter) I told you, that my love is subtle. A subtle little flower. A secret between myself and Lana.

RHONDA

It's only a secret between you two if she knows about it too.

SKYLER

I've got to go.

RHONDA

No. You're in charge.

SKYLER

Please please please! I've got to... I've got to prepare a fantasy evening.

RHONDA

If you leave, I'm not covering for you. Ruth left you in charge. She's going to be gone for two days and you are in charge.

SKYLER

Thank you, I knew you'd understand.

SKYLER exits quickly. RHONDA washes her hands of the situation and exits as well, CHUCKIE watches her go.

BILL

I’ve got an idea.

CHUCKIE

An idea?

BILL

We’re going to be desired by every woman who walks in here. We will be men! Giants among men!

CHUCKIE

Okay! Huh?

BILL

Yes.

CHUCKIE

Speak for yourself.

BILL

I do.

CHUCKIE

I mean, because, I don’t know about you, but I’ve been told, repeatedly, that I am not desirable.

BILL

Yes. Yes, I know. You aren’t. And, really, neither am I. But, we can pretend. Sound interesting?

CHUCKIE

Perhaps. Go on.

BILL

We’ll pretend that we own this resort. We’ll simply put on the airs that this place is ours.

CHUCKIE

Won’t the real owner be upset?

BILL

She's gone, didn't you hear? And that guy she left in charge, Skyler? Man. We've got him running away from us as fast as he can. It's so easy, it's almost like we have to do it. We just check the guests in, tell them we only accept cash, and ask what services they would enjoy. And then, the women will flock to us.

CHUCKIE

Now I'm listening. What women?

BILL

Have you not looked around?

RHONDA crosses through.

CHUCKIE

She looks a little...

BILL

Uptight?

CHUCKIE

Yeah, that too.

BILL

Of course she is, she works here. But the book is full --- full of rich, well-bred, well-groomed, spa women.

CHUCKIE

Spa women.

BILL and CHUCKIE

Spa women.

BILL

Yes. And, if they think we own this resort, they'll also think we can give them anything they want. Women love free stuff.

CHUCKIE

Complimentary?

BILL

Gratis.

CHUCKIE

A la carte?

BILL

If you like.

CHUCKIE

We could give them this Magnet Suit. I found it in the Magnatorium. It's very attractive, don't you think? This would drive women crazy, I bet.

BILL

What?

CHUCKIE

A Magnet Suit. It's got magnets on it. See?

CHUCKIE demonstrates the magnetic powers of the suit.

CHUCKIE (cont.)

What woman wouldn't love this?

BILL

Most, I'd imagine.

CHUCKIE

Aww, see, I'm no good at this.

BILL

Don't worry, just follow my lead. Watch and learn.

FRANK enters, he is lifting weights. He's resort staff as well, but he's the physical trainer, so he's dressed in a professional looking workout outfit.

BILL

Excuse me.

FRANK

S' up?

BILL

Do you work here?

FRANK

Yeah. S’up?

BILL looks at FRANK’s nametag.

BILL

Frank is it?

FRANK

You got that right.

BILL

Frank, let me be frank with you.

CHUCKIE starts to laugh uncontrollably. BILL and FRANK stare at him until he notices and stops.

BILL (cont.)

Frank. I own 54% of this resort.

FRANK

Yeah?

BILL

Yeah. The name’s Lenny. Lenny Bruce. And this is my personal assistant... Ted.

They both look at CHUCKIE who looks slightly panicked, shaking his head “no”.

BILL (cont.)

He can’t talk. Polio of the tongue.

FRANK

Lenny? Lenny? Huh. Sorry, never heard of you.

BILL

That’s because I’m a “Silent Partner” in the corporation.

FRANK

Still never heard of ya’.



BILL

I only recently purchased my share. Ted, show him the contract.

CHUCKIE flashes some paper from the desk too fast for FRANK to see.

BILL (cont.)

There, you see. The party in the first part is obliged to the party in the second part to obey the wishes and commands of the party in the third part when the first part does not follow the party in the second part, in which case all parties involved in the first part should be contractually obliged to the third part, resolved temperas unam, magnus opus, mea culpa, sid pro quo.

FRANK

Huh. I didn't know she had a business partner.

BILL

Because I'm a silent partner.

FRANK

Sure talk a lot for a silent partner. Y'ask me, he should be the silent partner.

BILL and FRANK laugh. CHUCKIE mime laughs. They all stop suddenly and together.

BILL

Frank. Let's get down to brass tacks.

FRANK

Sure boss. What can I do for you?

BILL

We're going to try a new marketing strategy. I want you to give away as many free drinks, meals and... what do you do here?

FRANK

Personal trainer, and masseuse.

BILL

Perfect. Free backrubs. Let's relax the hell out of our customers Frank. Loose, limber, easily manipulated, and --

CHUCKIE is frantically tapping BILL on the shoulder. BILL finally looks. CHUCKIE smiles and points to his mouth.

BILL (cont.)

And some ice cream for Ted.

FRANK

K'. Who'm I givin' all this free stuff too?

BILL

Any woman. That's our marketing strategy. Free things to beautiful women. And tell them it's all compliments of me.

CHUCKIE taps BILL on the shoulder.

BILL (cont.)

And Ted.

FRANK

(writing) Compliments of Mr. Bruce and... Ted. So you don't want to be a silent partner anymore?

BILL

I think I'm ready to talk.

FRANK

You got it boss. Free stuff for all the women. And they should know it comes from you. I'm on it. You know a lot of these ladies are repeat customers, they're going to love this new--

BILL

Repeat customers?

FRANK

Yeah.

BILL

So you can tell us all about them? Factual details that may be important?

FRANK

Yeah.

BILL

Make sure you're here when the next guests arrive.... the (looking at book) Johansons.

FRANK

Will do, Boss.

FRANK exits.

CHUCKIE

You're good. I can't think that fast.

BILL

Oh, it's mostly luck.

CHUCKIE

No one's that lucky.

BILL

Some people are Chuckie, some people are. And that's why I do most of the talking.

CHUCKIE

But everything you say is a lie.

BILL

Not everything. Most things.

CHUCKIE

Why? Why do you do it?

BILL

I can't help myself. It's so easy. I'm a natural. It's like... like asking how or why do you breathe?

CHUCKIE

Well. I'd probably die... or pass our first, I guess.

BILL

No. You breathe because it's natural for you. You don't have to think about it. You just do it.

CHUCKIE

I don't know. Sometimes I forget to breathe.

BILL

Alright. Well then, for most people... what do you do naturally well?

CHUCKIE

Eat.

BILL

Good. Lying, for me, is like eating for you.

CHUCKIE

That must be terrible for you. I'm hungry all the time.

BILL

It might be a medical problem.

CHUCKIE

Really?

BILL

Sure. I don't know. Why not?

CHUCKIE

Shouldn't you have that check out or something?

BILL

Are you kidding me? And give up this lifestyle? I can't. I won't. I'm far too comfortable. And so are you, I might add.

CHUCKIE

Are you lying right now? Have you always lied to me? Are you really who you say you are?

BILL

Of course.

CHUCKIE

How am I supposed to know.

BILL

You don't.... you can't.

CHUCKIE

You're not?!

BILL

Maybe.

CHUCKIE (flails)

BILL (cont.)

Who do you think I am?

CHUCKIE

You’re... you’re my friend Bill.

BILL

And why would I lie about that?

CHUCKIE

(Squinting his eyes) I -- don’t -- know. Wait! Have you lied to me today?

BILL

No.

CHUCKIE

Are you lying right now?

BILL

Nope.

CHUCKIE

Really?

BILL

Really.

CHUCKIE

Really?

BILL

Would I lie?

CHUCKIE

I don’t know. Would you?

BILL

Nope.

CHUCKIE

Is that a lie?

BILL

And is that a lie? And is that a lie? And is that a lie? You keep thinking in circles like that, you're going to end up back where you started. Looks like someone's coming up the drive. You stay here and check them in, I'll go get Frank.

CHUCKIE goes behind the counter. He plays with the bell. He writes with a pen, bigger and bigger with more and more flair. He breaks something and hides it under the counter. He decides he shouldn't touch anything. He looks out the door, they're not coming in yet. He drums his fingers on the table. Waits. He mimes going under the counter in an elevator. Then comes back up miming stairs. He looks out the door again. FRANK enters from the other direction that BILL left just in time for the JOHANSONS entrance. The JOHANSONS enter one at a time and pose dramatically.

FRANK

Ladies and gentlemen, I give you , the Johansons. That's Lana Johanson. Romance novelist. Beautiful, radiant, and single. She's seen and heard every come-on line in the book, in fact, she probably wrote most of them. (hits CHUCKIE with a knowing nudge on the shoulder.) She's going to be a hard heart to tame, but, I mean, come on, look at her. That's Donna Johanson. Lana's sister and personal assistant. She's nice and all. Arguably smarter than Lana, but she's no Lana. Let me tell you. Wow. Would you look at Lana. (CHUCKIE nudges FRANK out of his daze.) Oh, yeah. Donna's also single. Edith Johanson. She may look like their sister, but she's their Mom. Recently divorced and loving every minute of it. She's a Leo. She enjoys boating and bocce ball. This cougar is on the prowl. Oh, and she's looking for a rich bachelor for her daughter Lana. There they are, the Johansons, two sisters and a mom, looking great and on the hunt for wealthy men.

BILL enters.

BILL

Frank! Get to work.

FRANK

Right boss. Looks like someone needs a massage.

FRANK picks up EDITH and exits with her.

BILL

(to CHUCKIE) Who was that? (notices that LANA and DONNA are still there.) Oh. Ted, check our guests in.

LANA goes to the desk and checks in with CHUCKIE

BILL (cont.)

(to DONNA) Who’s that?

DONNA

That’s Lana, my sister.

BILL

She’s beautiful.

DONNA

Get in line.

BILL turns to LANA and focuses.

BILL

Your sister, huh?

DONNA

Yeah. Like I said, get in line.

BILL

Why? Who is she?

DONNA

That’s Lana Johanson. The romance novelist. You haven’t heard of her? Lana Johanson? “Midnight Desire”? “Lustful Youth”? “Throbbing--

BILL

Oh, *that* Lana Johanson.

DONNA

You’ve read her books?

BILL

Yes, yes, every one.

DONNA

Really?

BILL

Oh yes. They’re very good. They’re ... what’s the word?

DONNA

Sultry?

BILL

No.

DONNA

Seductive?

BILL

No.

DONNA

Heaving? Lusty?

BILL

No. No.

DONNA

Terrible?

BILL

Yes, that’s the word?

DONNA

Really? You... you really think they’re terrible?

BILL

Yep.

DONNA

Oh, I love you.

BILL

What?

DONNA

You *have* read her books.



BILL

They are awful.

DONNA

They are awful.

BILL

Dreadful.

DONNA

Predictable.

BILL

Banal.

DONNA

Yes.

BILL

Chuckie! Thesaurus!

CHUCKIE tosses BILL a travel thesaurus and exits with the Johanson's bags.

BILL (cont.)

(reading) Abhorrent! Appalling! Atrocious!

DONNA

Well, they're not that bad.

BILL

But they're still pretty... (reading and mispronouncing) rot-ten?

DONNA

Yes. Pretty rotten, that's a good way to put it.

BILL

So, why do people buy them?

DONNA

Because of her. Look at her. She's beautiful, smart charismatic, charming... did I mention beautiful?

BILL

Yes, yes you did.

BILL is lost in a moment, staring at LANA

DONNA

Look. I’ve got to go.

DONNA picks up her bags and starts to leave.

BILL

No wait! (to audience) I need to know more. (to DONNA) My what a lovely spring dress you have on today.

DONNA stops momentarily. CHUCKIE enters.

DONNA

Thank you.

CHUCKIE

Hey, can I borrow some money?

BILL

What? Yes. Here!

CHUCKIE exits. DONNA starts to leave again.

BILL

Wait! You’re a smart woman, aren’t you?!

DONNA

Yes.

BILL

(more to himself) And you need to be related to in an intelligent way.

DONNA

Yes.

BILL

Smart and beautiful. I'm not going to waste one minute more of your time. Because, I know you're a busy woman, am I right?

DONNA

Yes, I suppose.

BILL stands in her way, stopping her.

BILL

Let me tell you why I'm here. I want to show you an amazing new discovery that has just been... discovered.

DONNA

What are you talking about?

BILL

You might well ask, what am I talkin-- .. oh, you did. Sorry. Donna. May I call you Donna? I'm talking about... Magnets.

DONNA

Magnets?

BILL

Magnets.

DONNA

What about them?

BILL

You may well ask yourself--- oh, about them? Yes. Always one small step ahead of me, aren't you, Donna?

They laugh together.

BILL (cont.)

I'm talking about the healing power of magnets. The self-esteem boosting power of magnets. I'm talking about the amazing miracle that *is* magnets.

DONNA

You mean, like refrigerator magnets?

BILL

Ye--- no, not exactly. These are special magnets.

DONNA

Special? How do you know they're--?

BILL

Because I'm a doctor. Dr. Kafka. Dr. Franz Kafka. I work here at this resort. Tell me, is your sister single?

DONNA

What?

BILL

Trouble concentrating? I can see you need some magnet therapy right away. Yesterday is not soon enough! Seriously, is she single?

DONNA

Yes.

BILL

Here, try this on.

DONNA

What is--?

BILL

It's the Magnet Suit. It uses a series of interlocking positive and negative magnetic fields to help rejuvenate the body's natural magnetic balance.

DONNA

That doesn't sound very---

BILL

It's all very state of the art. Cutting edge. Experimental, even. You like to be on the cutting edge, don't you Donna?

DONNA

Actually, yes I do.

BILL

Then try this on. (he helps her one with the jacket.) Does your sister have a favorite flower?

DONNA

Roses. Typical.

BILL

Yes.

DONNA

Anything in a romance novel, she likes.

BILL

Pirates, stable-boys, that type of thing? How does it fit?

DONNA

Good.

BILL

Feel it working?

DONNA

Yes, I.... I think so.

The bell on the front desk starts to move across the counter towards her. CHUCKIE  
peeks up and grabs it before it flies off, and ducks back down.

BILL

Romance novels, hm?

DONNA

Yeah. But don't over think it. Really, just someone who says exactly what he wants.

BILL

Exactly what he wants?

DONNA

(rolls her eyes) Well, be a little poetic. Your watch is sticking to me.

BILL

Oh, sorry. Thank you Ms. Johan-- Donna.

DONNA

Thank you Doctor Kafka.

She starts to exit.

DONNA (cont.)

I feel so experimental.

She gets magnetized to a doorknob.

BILL

Mind the doorknobs.

DONNA

Yes. Thank you. Doctor.

DONNA exits. BILL turns towards LANA and walks up behind her.

BILL

You’ve dreamed of me all your life.

LANA does not turn around or even seem to notice that BILL is talking to her.

BILL (cont.)

On the hot sweaty nights in August. You’ve dreamed of a man who would ravish you. Dreamed of putting your hands on his glistening,... (pauses for a quick peek in his thesaurus) sinewy muscles. To let him take you the way a lusty pirate would pillage a ship.

BILL stops for a moment, confused by his own metaphor.

BILL (cont.)

You’ve dreamed of me, haven’t you?

LANA

Hm? I’m sorry. Are you talking to me?

BILL sits next to her.

BILL

Yes.

LANA

Oh. I wasn’t listening. What did you say?

BILL

Uh. You’ve dreamed of me. I will ravish you. Sweaty muscles.... uh... Pirate ship?

LANA

What?

BILL

My name is Johnny Roughrider.

LANA

What?

BILL

Look, do you or do you not want to have sex with me?

LANA

You’re awfully forward.

BILL

I believe in saying exactly what I want.

LANA

So do I.

BILL

Perfect.

LANA

I don’t know who you are, or where you get the nerve to talk to a woman like that, but let me just assure you that I would not now, nor ever, come so close as to even touch you.

BILL

I guess that rules out sex.

She slaps him and exits. CHUCKIE rises up from behind the counter.

CHUCKIE

Hmmm. Perhaps a little more subtle the next time, Johnny Roughrider.

BILL

I thought that’s what she wanted.

SKYLER enters with a letter. DONNA enters unnoticed behind him and watches the exchange.

BILL

Skyler!

SKYLER looks panicked, but can't get away.

SKYLER

Agent Chamberlain!

BILL

Where you off to?

SKYLER

Just.... just going to deliver a letter.

BILL

A letter? What kind of letter?

SKYLER

A lo---

BILL

Lo---?

SKYLER

Love --- a love letter.

BILL

A love letter? For whom?

SKYLER

You wouldn't know her.

BILL

Try me.

SKYLER

La--



BILL

La---?

SKYLER

Lana Johanson.

BILL

Let me see that letter.

SKYLER

No. I--- uh--

BILL

I have to see if it's a potential hazard for people in this resort. You know, paper cuts and whatnot.

CHUCKIE, behind the counter, has been trying to organize pens and some papers, at that moment he knocks a bunch of stuff to the ground making a big mess and a big noise.

BILL

See. Office supplies are some of the most dangerous items out there.

BILL tries to take the letter from SKYLER. Funny bit of SKYLER resisting, until BILL wrestles it from him.

BILL

Let's see. "You're radiantly beautiful... the one I want to be with... wild horses couldn't tear us--" Okay Skyler, this looks harmless enough, you--- hey, you didn't sign it.

SKYLER

I know. I'm her secret admirer.

BILL

Heck, anyone could take credit for it.

SKYLER

Oh, she'll know it's from me.

BILL

Well, then, by all means, deliver! The sooner the better!

“The Liar” by Mike Eserkain pg. 34

SKYLER runs off with the letter. DONNA exits from where she was. She now has a toaster stuck to her magnet suit. CHUCKIE gets up from the floor where he’s fallen.

CHUCKIE

Can I stop working back here now?

BILL

Yes. Come on, we’ve got more important work to do. I’ve got to see if she likes that letter. If that’s the kind of stuff she goes for, I’m in.

BILL and CHUCKIE exit just as RUTH enters with a number of bags. WILLIE enters, and sees her.

WILLIE

May I help you with your bags?

RUTH

Oh thank you Skyler, you are a dear. (she hands him the bags before realizing it’s not Skyler.) Oh, you’re not Skyler. Sorry, I mistook you for--

WILLIE

No. No I’m not. But, you are a beautiful lady, and of that, I cannot be mistaken.

RUTH

Thank you for the help, but I’m very la--- (he kisses her hand) --- ate.

WILLIE

Allow me to introduce myself. (he quickly looks through some business cards from his pocket.) I am Prince Renaldo Diablo---

RUTH

Prince?

WILLIE

An honorary title. (looks for a different card, and finds one.) My real passion is bull fighting.

RUTH

A bullfighter?

WILLIE

Matador. (kisses her hand again. RUTH is, so far, unimpressed.) I will forgive you if you cannot control yourself. Many women find themselves unable to control their passions when

WILLIE (cont.)

confronted with the raw masculinity of a professional matador.

RUTH

Excuse me.

RUTH tries to go around him.

WILLIE

Yes, very much like a dance, the matador and his prey. You don't know what living is until you've been on the business end of a bull's horns.

RUTH

I'm a vegan.

WILLIE

I'm a Scorpio.

RUTH

That reminds me, I forgot my loofah.

WILLIE

Scorpio reminds you of loofah?

RUTH

Yes.

WILLIE

I have an extra loofah in my room. What say we grab the horn by the bulls and rendezvous in my room for a drink. I can show you my saddling technique.

She slaps him hard and exits.

WILLIE ( cont.)

I guess that rules out sex.

EDITH enters with FRANK.

EDITH

Ahh, thank you Frank, that was wonderful. My, what hands you have.

FRANK

Anytime Mrs. Johanson, just let me know when your daughters want the same treatment.

FRANK exits.

WILLIE

Hello.

EDITH

Oh. Hello.

WILLIE

My name is Willie. Can I buy you a drink?

EDITH

Oh, I get my drinks for free.

WILLIE

Then you can buy me one.

WILLIE grabs two drinks from RHONDA who is conveniently passing by. WILLIE and EDITH sit.

WILLIE

So. Mrs. Johanson, is it?

EDITH

Yes.

WILLIE

Is there a Mr. Johanson, Mrs. Johanson?

EDITH

No, he left on an Arctic fishing trip and never came back.

WILLIE

Lost at sea?

EDITH

Yes. We still get postcards from him saying, “I’m never coming back.” And you? Is there a Mrs. Willie in your life?

WILLIE

No. She died in a tragic trampoline accident a few years back. Those things just aren't safe.

EDITH

That's very sad.

WILLIE

Yes. Wouldn't have been so bad if she hadn't have been playing Lawn Jarts at the time. So! It's just been me and my son against the world.

EDITH

You have a son?

WILLIE

Yes.

EDITH

Is he married?

WILLIE

Depends. Why?

EDITH

My daughter needs a husband. And, I'm sure, if your son is anywhere as handsome as you are, he'd be perfect. Does he, uh, have a lot of money?

WILLIE

Well, not a lot.

EDITH

(disappointed) Oh.

WILLIE

I mean, of the top ten oil barons, he's only--- let's say---- the eighth richest.

EDITH

Really?

WILLIE

Yes. The boy never really excelled. But, I suppose I should be glad that he's not in ninth or tenth place.

EDITH

Is your whole family well off?

WILLIE

Well, I don't like to toot my own horn here.

EDITH

Oh please, toot.

WILLIE

You're looking at... (consults his business cards) the inventor of aluminum siding.

EDITH

Really?

WILLIE

You betcha. Before I came along, people had wood panels on their houses, and sheets and sheets of aluminum just sitting in the backyard. And I said to myself, “Boy, that just isn't right.”

Blam blam, next thing you know, I'm rolling in the dough, and people's houses are recyclable.

EDITH

You're a creative man. Is your son around?

WILLIE

Oh, no. He has other things to do with his life. Making scads of money and such. So, he really doesn't have time for “relaxing”. Or spending afternoons with beautiful woman. Perhaps afternoons that stretch into evenings, and even mornings.

EDITH

I'm sure I have no idea what you're talking about.

WILLIE

I'm sure you do... Mrs. Johanson.

EDITH

Please, call me Edith.

WILLIE

Edith.

She moves in close as if to kiss him, then pulls away.

EDITH

You’ll have to catch me first!

WILLIE

Let the running of the bulls begin.

They run off. LANA and DONNA enter and sit on some deck chairs. They are wearing terry cloth robes and towels on their heads.

LANA

Tell me what you think of this section. I think the working title is “The Stable Boy”.

DONNA

Okay. Hit me.

Throughout this section, BILL, CHUCKIE, FRANK, and SKYLER enter, hide nearby and listen in, getting more and more excited as the story unfolds.

LANA

”The moon lit everything blue. Rebecca had just finished putting away her saddle, and was ready to sleep. She went towards the house--”

DONNA

Wait. She was tired and exhausted. Her breast heaved as her heavy breathing made them swell against the tight restraints of her corset.

LANA

That works. Okay. (writing and having obvious trouble with spelling.) “It was a warm night---”

DONNA

The sweat beaded on her cleavage as she thought of the sweet release she would soon feel. When she would finally remove her clothes and lay naked in her bed in the cool sheets.

LANA

Good.

DONNA

Perhaps, she dreamed, a man would help her with her clothes.

LANA

A stranger.

DONNA

A handsome mysterious stranger.

LANA

Like the one she had seen in town earlier that morning.

DONNA

Just then, Raul, the stable boy came up from behind Rebecca and grasped her breasts in his rough workman's hands. His breath was hot upon her neck. "I want you" he heatedly whispered in her ear.

LANA

"I know" she sighed.

DONNA

Her full soft lips kissed him passionately on the mouth, their tongues entwined and their hands began to explore each other's bodies. His hands moved slowly down her waist towards her supple buttocks. She reached down and grabbed his hot, throbbing---

CHUCKIE falls off the desk. He had been leaning over too far trying to get a better listen. All the other men quickly try to "act natural".

LANA

We obviously can't work here.

DONNA

Obviously. Do you boys mind?

The men exit. As they are leaving, SKYLER turns and tries to give LANA the love note. He can't do it. BILL tries to push him, but SKYLER won't budge. BILL takes the letter from him, hands it to CHUCKIE who hands it to LANA.

CHUCKIE

Here you go, this is for you.

FRANK

Hey. I thought you couldn't talk.

CHUCKIE

I can't.



FRANK

Oh. Okay.

FRANK exits.

CHUCKIE and BILL both give SKYLER a look of “there now, that wasn’t so hard.”  
And they leave. SKYLER begins to hyperventilate and runs off.

LANA

It’s a love letter.

DONNA collapses frustrated into the chair.

DONNA

(sarcastically) Great.

LANA

What?

DONNA

You know that they don’t mean half the things they say. You know that, don’t you? Lemme see that.

DONNA grabs the letter away from LANA

DONNA

(reading) “My dearest Lana. Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” Well, he stole that part. “Your eyes radiate a light brighter than the sun” He misspelled radiate, and use the wrong “than”. “You are the only one I ever want to be with.” Dangling participle. “Wild horses couldn’t...” blah blah blah... cliché... blah blah... predictable.... And, he didn’t sign it.

LANA

Ooh. A secret admirer.

DONNA

Secret admirer? Horses. Sunsets. I’ve read better.

LANA

He seems nicer than most of them. (DONNA gives her a look.) You’re probably right.

DONNA

I’m going to need a couple of drinks to get through this. You mind?

DONNA exits. LANA, sipping her drink, watches her go. She tosses the letter on the floor. She sits on a chair with her legs spread in an undignified and manly way. She sighs with a release of exhaustion. BILL enters wearing a robe and a towel on his head. He also has a mud mask on. LANA turns and looks at him, but does not change her demeanor. BILL talks in falsetto.

BILL

Hello.

LANA

Yeah.

BILL

Can I borrow some lotion?

LANA gives him some lotion. She pauses and looks him in the face. He looks back, unfazed. He squirts too much lotion all over his hands.

LANA

Do I know you?

BILL

I don't think so. I just arrived. Do I know you?

LANA

No.

BILL

What's that there on the floor? Oh! A letter! Hmmm..

BILL picks up the letter.

BILL (cont.)

Can I read it?

LANA

Here, you can have it if you want. I don't want it.

BILL takes the letter and reads it quickly to himself.

BILL

Oooh, is your name Lana?

LANA

Yes.

BILL

Well, then, this is for you.

LANA

I know. I read it already.

BILL

Oooh., he didn't sign it. A secret admirer.

LANA

Yeah.

BILL

So, you have no idea who it's from?

LANA

None.

BILL

Is there anyone you're hoping it's from? Perhaps someone you met earlier today? Someone who, perhaps, said something a little too forward, but you're really attracted to anyway? Maybe someone named Johnny Rough--

LANA

I hate love letters.

BILL

Oh.

LANA

I get thousands a week.

BILL

Oooh. Is that a lot?

LANA

I don't know. It's too many for me. They are starting to blur together. Trees, soft skin, twilight, on and on. Letters and letters. I've got enough letters to open my own post office. Every man I meet is either too forward, or too shy. (pointing to the letter) Too shy. If mean, he couldn't even deliver it himself.

BILL

Well, secret admirer---

LANA

And earlier today, some guy asked me, straight out, if I'd like to have sex with him.

BILL

No!

LANA

Yes.

BILL

And that was too forward?

LANA

Yes. I need someone who's a little forward, assertive, confident, but also a bit mysterious. I need someone in between.

SKYLER enters, unseen, and listens in.

LANA

I need a mysterious man, who is bold enough to talk to me, and tell me what he really wants.

BILL

Mysterious.

SKYLER

Mysterious.

CHUCKIE

(entering randomly from somewhere) Mysterious?

SKYLER ducks back down. BILL gives CHUCKIE a glare that makes him leave.

LANA

Intriguing.

BILL

Like Zorro?

LANA

Yes. Kind of like Zorro.

BILL

Well. Good luck to you.

LANA

Yeah. Thanks.

LANA exits. BILL takes off his mask and head towel. SKYLER comes out of hiding and runs into BILL.

BILL

Skyler! What's this I found!? A Towel!? Someone could get overly dry with this towel! Chapped, even!

SKYLER runs off. BILL follows after.

CHUCKIE enters and goes behind the desk. He tries to look busy. He ducks down to pick up something. RHONDA enters. CHUCKIE pops his head up, enters and sees her. Romantic music swells. RHONDA is lit by a single spot light, the rest of the stage goes dark. There is a spotlight for CHUCKIE, but he is not in the right place for it. He sees this and moves to be in the light. Just as he moves, the light moves for him. Eventually, he ends up with his hands and face lit only.

CHUCKIE

Excuse me.

RHONDA

What are you doing back there?

CHUCKIE

(aside) Now's my chance. Now, while she's least suspecting. I'll simply tell her a most fantastic lie. Something she'll have to believe, because I can be trusted. I can be just as wily as--

RHONDA

I can hear you, you know.

CHUCKIE turns back to her, smiling.

CHUCKIE

Of course you can. Did you , uh, did you understand what I was saying?

RHONDA

Just the part about lying to me.

CHUCKIE

I would never. Never. Lie to you. You must have misheard me. I meant, I would like to lie with you. Lie down. Together. Perhaps naked.

RHONDA slaps him.

CHUCKIE

Perhaps I move to quickly.

RHONDA

Oh, I think that perhaps you did.

CHUCKIE

(hurt puppy) Can I... uh... could we start over? ... that is... ahem.... Allow me to change my tact.

RHONDA

No. Allow me to change mine.

CHUCKIE

Oooh... I like that.

CHUCKIE closes his eyes and prepares for a kiss.

RHONDA

Oh, don't be stupid. You're lucky you're cute. Come here. Sit down. Let's talk.

CHUCKIE

Talk. Huh?

RHONDA

Yes. “Talk. Huh?”

CHUCKIE

Okay. I can talk.

RHONDA

I know, you don't stop.

CHUCKIE

You mean, you want conversation?

RHONDA

Most women do.

CHUCKIE

(taking out a notebook and writing.) Fascinating.

RHONDA

You haven't done this before, have you?

CHUCKIE

No. No I haven't. It's... weird.

RHONDA

Well, let's take it step by step. I'll tell you something about me, then you tell me something about you.

CHUCKIE gets up and goes as far away as he can from RHONDA

CHUCKIE

(aside) If I'm going to lie, tis' best to lie from the start, that's what Bill says. Make everything a lie. Mixing the truth with lies becomes too complicated. Right. Good pep talk. Well done. Why thank you.

RHONDA

You done yet?

CHUCKIE

Almost.

CHUCKIE takes a couple of deep breaths and shakes himself out. He returns to RHONDA.

CHUCKIE (cont.)

Ready.

RHONDA

Okay. We'll start with names.

CHUCKIE

Good. I know that one. My name is Chuck--- I mean, my name is... El Rato!

RHONDA

Really?

CHUCKIE

Really. I'm a Cuban revolutionary... well, counter revolutionary... counter-counter revolution--- anyway... Viva la Revolution! Ah, to go back to Cuba again. The sunsets over the lush green forested mountain... mountain range, El Caborachi. My title was... Captain. Captain of the Revolution. It was a big deal. I remember, one night, Carlo and Pedro and I had just secured the southern-most mountain pass of Los Calimari, and Pedro said to me, "El Rato" it means "Tiger". Anywho, he says "El Rato, what's it like to be the Captain of a Revolution? And I said, "Welp! It beats working!" Ha ha ha ha ! Ha!. Oh, how we laughed. On that mountain pass. Until the army shot our sheep. But, that's a different story. For now, I'd like to talk to you.

RHONDA

Good. I myself am a world famous gourmet seismologist.

CHUCKIE

Really? I didn't know there were any female world famous gourmet seismologists.

RHONDA

You just haven't been looking in the right spot. So, El Rato--

CHUCKIE

Please. Call me, "El".

RHONDA

Okay. El. What do you like to do, on your time off from the revolution, I mean.

CHUCKIE

Counter Revolution.

RHONDA

Counter counter revolution.



CHUCKIE

Yeah. Oh, the usual stuff. Knitting. Farming... um... shoveling.... uh... ooh!... Fire Eating!

RHONDA

Fire eating? Really?

CHUCKIE

Yes! I’m a part-time professional Fire Eater!

RHONDA

Oh. Ever burn yourself?

CHUCKIE

Not yet, but I expect to any day.

RHONDA

Wonderful. So, El, everything you’ve told me has been a lie, hasn’t it?

CHUCKIE

Yes. Wait! No! ... uh... Maybe!.. Darn. You’re smart, you. You’re a quick one.

RHONDA

And you’re cute. But, you’re also a liar. A no good stinking liar. So, what’s your real name?

CHUCKIE

Chuckie.

RHONDA

Well, Chuckie. You have no chance with me. Good-bye.

RHONDA exits.

CHUCKIE

That didn’t work at all. Wonder what I did wrong.

CHUCKIE exits as DONNA enters with FRANK trying to give her a backrub.

DONNA

Will you stop it.

FRANK

It's a free service ma'am. No one passes up a free service.

DONNA gets magnetized to a doorknob. FRANK pulls her off.

DONNA

I've recently developed a disdain for free things. I have to find Dr. Kafka and get this thing off. The zipper is magnetized up. (FRANK tries giving her a backrub again.) Will you stop that!

SKYLER enters dressed as Zorro, only more colorful. He has a sword in his belt.  
DONNA gets magnetized to his sword.

SKYLER

That's my sword.

FRANK tries to pull him off. The three of them are in an awkward/humorous position.  
RUTH enters. Pauses. Continues on her way out.

RUTH

(as she exits) Remember, Skyler, it's Frank's day off, he shouldn't be working at all. I'm not paying him time and a half.

SKYLER

Yes Ruth.

DONNA pulls herself free and exits. SKYLER makes his way across the room to LANA's door. He tentatively tosses a pencil towards her door.

SKYLER

Psst. Hey. Psssst. Lana. Hellooooo?

FRANK

Hey, buddy, s'up?

SKYLER jumps.

SKYLER

What?!

FRANK

What's with the mask?

SKYLER

I’m trying to-- (quieter) I’m trying to woo a woman.

FRANK

Woo a woman, huh? Yeah, I’ve been there. It’s tough. Nice mask though. So, where is she?

SKYLER

She’s in her room. I can’t get her attention.

FRANK

What have you tried?

SKYLER

Psst. Hey. Lana. Psssst. (pause) And I threw a pencil.

FRANK

Oo-kay.

FRANK goes to the front desk and grabs the PA system.

FRANK (cont.)

YO LANA! SOME GUY WANNA TALK TO YOU ! (to SKYLER) Good luck.

FRANK exits. LANA appears at her door with a towel around her.

LANA

What’s going on out here?

SKYLER

Psst. Lana.

LANA

What?

SKYLER clears his throat and poses himself a little more dramatically. DONNA leans in, unnoticed.

SKYLER

I am the Champion of Mystery!

LANA

Oh. That certainly is intriguing.

SKYLER

And mysterious.

LANA

That goes without saying.

SKYLER

I’ve come to woo you.

LANA

Who are you?

SKYLER

I am the Champion of Mystery.

LANA

Yeah. You said.

SKYLER

I’ve come to ask you if you’d like to... maybe, go somewhere... sometime.

LANA

Where and when?

SKYLER

(reading from notes) To a dewy meadow, that I know. We can watch the sun rise, and hold hands. Breathe in the soft spring air.

LANA

You know what, Champion of Mystery, okay.

SKYLER

Okay?

LANA

Sure. Give me a moment to get ready, and grab my calendar.

SKYLER

Great!

LANA exits. BILL enters from the other side of the room. He is wearing the same outfit as SKYLER, mask and everything. He sneaks across the room backwards. BILL and SKYLER bump into each other. Both turn slowly and see each other.

BILL

Skyler?

SKYLER

Yes? Uh... Agent Chamberlain?

BILL

Nope.

SKYLER panics and runs off. LANA enters.

LANA

Champion of Mystery. Are you still there?

BILL

Yep. That's me. Champion of Misery.

LANA

Mystery.

BILL

Yes. Mystery.

LANA

Well, I'm available next week Thursday, looks like most of my mornings are booked. That is when sunrises are, correct?

BILL

What about tonight?

LANA

You want to watch the sun rise tonight?

BILL

No. I've changed my mind. Lana, I can't be away from you a minute longer. I need to feel your embrace.

LANA

Tonight?

BILL

Right now.

LANA

And you won't tell me who you are?

BILL

No.

LANA

And you are self-assured enough to know exactly what you want?

BILL

I know exactly what you want.

BILL sweeps LANA up in his arms and starts to exit. He struggles because she's apparently heavier than she looks, or he's weaker than he looks.

BILL (cont.).

Victory is mine!

LANA

The name's Lana.

BILL

I know. It just seemed more appropriate to say “victory is mine” instead of “Lana is mine”. Sounded weird.

LANA

And a little presumptuous.

BILL

(LANA is getting heavy for him to hold.) Of course. There's that too.

LANA

Where are we headed?

BILL

Uh... this way.... No, wait, we'll go.... this.... way.... (exhausted) Victory... is ... mine.

Blackout.

## ACT II

The next day. Scene is the same. SKYLER enters dragging an electric piano... it's very heavy... or, if there's room enough, and budget enough, SKYLER pushing a real piano could be very funny too. RHONDA is close by,... noticeably not helping.

DONNA enters with a number of spatulas on her.

RHONDA

What about the love letter?

SKYLER

What about it?

RHONDA

Did she get it? Did she read it?

SKYLER

Yes. I think so.

RHONDA

Did she like it?

SKYLER

I'm going to have to go with, no. I haven't heard anything back.

RHONDA

Yeah. I found it in the trash.

SKYLER pauses and gives her a look.

DONNA

You wrote that letter?

SKYLER

Yes. No. Maybe.

RHONDA

Yes he did.

DONNA

Oh. (pause) Do either of you know where I can find Dr. Kafka?

RHONDA and SKYLER look at each other, then shake their heads “no”.

DONNA (cont.)

(looking at SKYLER with subtle and mild attraction. SKYLER doesn’t even notice her, he’s busy with the piano.) Well, if you see him.... I .... just let me know, I suppose.

DONNA exits awkwardly.

RHONDA

How about your Champion of Mystery thing? That seemed like a good one.

SKYLER

Yeah. Someone stole that one.

RHONDA

Stole it?

SKYLER

Right out from under me. It has become apparent that I’m in a competition, and time’s not on my side. I’ve got to bring out the big guns. (grunt) Heavy. I should have taken up flute.

RHONDA

But, then how would you sing?

SKYLER

Probably still terribly.

RHONDA

Aw, come on, you don’t sing that bad.



SKYLER

Yes I do.

RHONDA

Yeah, you do.

SKYLER

But only in proximity to Lana.

RHONDA

How ironically unfortunate.

SKYLER

It's true. I can quantify it. The closer she gets, the worse my singing is.

RHONDA

So, you're going closer to her?

SKYLER

I must. Do you understand me? I must. There's a competing suitor. It's the only way.

RHONDA

You're very brave.

SKYLER

Oh, don't worry. She's in her room with the door closed. I'm not going to knock.

RHONDA

So much for brave. Why don't you just talk to her?

SKYLER

Ha! You have no idea how love works.

RHONDA

I know how love *doesn't* work.

SKYLER

Yeah? Well, I know how a car doesn't work either, but I can still drive. (Rhonda smiles smugly.)  
Drive, the car... Nevermind.

SKYLER exits as CHUCKIE rises up from behind the check-in desk, yawning.

RHONDA

Hey Chuckles.

She gives him a friendly slap on the cheek and exits, plugging her ears as she goes.

CHUCKIE

It's Chuck.... ie.

Piano starts playing off-stage. DONNA enters and tries to nonchalantly go to listen to SKYLER. She gets magnetized to an air duct in the wall.

DONNA

(nervous laugh) Air duct. Magnet suit. ... uh... little help?

CHUCKIE starts to pry and pull DONNA from the wall.

DONNA

This building has far more air ducts then you'd think. Makes it very difficult to navigate the hallways.

CHUCKIE

Why don't you just take the magnet suit off?

DONNA

I can't. I need Dr. Kafka to help with the zipper.

CHUCKIE

Oh, he probably can't help.

DONNA

What?

CHUCKIE

Neverm---

SKYLER starts singing a 1950's love ballad off stage. It is terrible. CHUCKIE reacts as if he's been pieced through the head with a needle. Reeling and twitching.

The piano playing stops abruptly. SKYLER runs in, sees CHUCKIE, turns to run other way, remembers why he was running, turns and smacks into CHUCKIE, falls to the ground and crawls/stumble away as fast as he can.

BILL enters wearing his Champion of Mystery outfit. It appears that he slept in it, and he just woke up.

BILL

I need some aspirin.

CHUCKIE

What were you doing in there?

BILL

Guh. It's like having my ears scratched by angry cats.

CHUCKIE

Was that a girl's room?

BILL

Did you see who was doing that awful singing?

CHUCKIE

Skyler. I slept in the lobby, behind the desk.

BILL

(with a low knowing and amused laugh.) Huh ha...ha hu hu hu... Skyler.

CHUCKIE

Was that a girl's room?

BILL

Huh? Oh. Maybe. Hold that thought. (offhandedly to DONNA) Which way did Skyler go?

DONNA

(points) Dr. Kafka, could you--

BILL exits.

CHUCKIE

(yelling off) Was it a girl's room?!

DONNA

It's my sister's room. Lana Johanson.

CHUCKIE

I can't believe it. He lies all the time. All the time. And yet, he wakes up in a--- well, in a room. I want to wake up in a room. With someone. I've been trying. You'd think someone would want to meet me, but nooooo they all want Mr. Liey-pants. I don't know why I bother.

BILL enters with SKYLER.

CHUCKIE

Who's room were you in?

BILL quickly covers SKYLER's ears.

BILL

Oh, Lana's. But she wasn't there. We were going to go on a date and she told me to wait in her room, while she... something, I don't know, she said she'd be right back. I waited hours. (pause) She lied to me.

CHUCKIE

Sounds like it.

BILL

She. Lied. To me. That's never happened before. I like it. (takes his hands off SKYLER's ears.) Skyler, was that you "singing"?

SKYLER

Yes. Sorry. Was that against the law Agent--

BILL

(Stops him before he can give away the lie to DONNA.) No, no, it was fine Skyler. Just fine. In fact, I was going to ask you to play some more.

SKYLER

Re-really? But, it was terrible.

CHUCKIE

Yeah. It was terrible.

SKYLER

I'm better when I'm not near.... La... Lana.

BILL

I figured. Fear not, my nervous friend, Lana is not in that room. She's not around for miles.

SKYLER

Really?

BILL

Honest to gosh. Go. Play.

SKYLER exits to play. CHUCKIE looks for a place to hide.

CHUCKIE

Why would you do that? You’ve killed us all!

BILL

I feel your concern. But, please, observe.

SKYLER begins singing and playing. It’s not bad, really.... well, at least it’s better than before. BILL taps CHUCKIE and gestures towards DONNA who’s listening to SKYLER very attentively. She swoons and faints, still hanging on the wall.

CHUCKIE

My God! You killed her!

BILL

She’s just swooning. (off) That’s enough Skyler! Don’t come back in here for awhile, we’ve got some inspecting to do. But, we’ll need you to practice again soon.

SKYLER

(off) Yes, of course, Agent Chamberlain.

CHUCKIE

I can’t believe you killed her.

BILL

Haven’t you seen a girl swoon before?

CHUCKIE

That’s a swoon?

BILL

Yes.

CHUCKIE

Well, why do they do that? She's certainly no use to us now.

CHUCKIE picks up her arm and drops it. It falls limply to her side.

CHUCKIE

What a useless talent, making girls swoon.

BILL

It's a very popular thing.

CHUCKIE

I could see if she was attacking you or something. Like a defensive measure or some such thing. But really, how are you supposed to woo someone in that condition.

BILL

She's been wooed. This is the end result of wooing.

CHUCKIE

That's what we're doing with all that wooing??! I must be doing it wrong, my girls don't even get tired.

BILL

Listen, you're completely missing the point.

CHUCKIE

Sometimes I need a nap. I get very tired of wooing, let me tell you. It's exhausting. And that's it, huh?

BILL

Well, we're not going to use this on everyone.

CHUCKIE

Good, cause there'd be dead girls all over the place. It'd be a disaster. We couldn't walk anywhere without stepping on a pretty girl's face. Disturbing, really.

BILL

We're only going to use this on one particular girl. Skyler's songs may be cliché, and is singing... right around average too terrible depending on his proximity to a girl, but it's music. Women love music.

FRANK enters.

BILL

Isn't that right Frank?

FRANK

That's right Mr. Bruce. She need help?

CHUCKIE

She's been woo-ed to death.

BILL gives CHUCKIE a “zip lip” signal.

CHUCKIE

Oh, sorry, forgot you can't hear me. (quickly) She's stuck in there real good and she might be dead.

FRANK

You talk pretty good for a guy who can't talk.

BILL

He's getting better.

FRANK

I really shouldn't be helping. I'm supposed to be having a personal day.

BILL

Frank. Who owns the club? Who pays you, ultimately?

FRANK

You do, Mr. Bruce.

BILL

I'll pay you time and a half.

FRANK

(enthusiastically) Okay!

FRANK frees DONNA and exits with her over his shoulder.

FRANK

You're getting your free massage now.

BILL

We're going to pretend to be singers. Music will soothe that savage beast. There'll be no way she can resist me. It'll even work on that girl that, whatshername, girl you're after.

CHUCKIE

Rhonda. But, you can't sing.

BILL

I know that. You know that. Heck, most people I know, know that. But she doesn't know that.

CHUCKIE

You can't play an instrument.

BILL

She doesn't know that.

CHUCKIE

You have no musical talent whatsoever.

BILL

She doesn't know that.

CHUCKIE

You don't--

BILL

She doesn't know. Doesn't know! She doesn't know! She's blissfully ignorant! She walks around in a pink fluffy daze all day. With princes and ponies, lip gloss and Tupperware parties. God, I wish I was her.

CHUCKIE

Someone's going to find out.

BILL

Who?

CHUCKIE

Someone's going to tell.

BILL

No one's going to know. Have I failed yet?



CHUCKIE

No. But I have. And if you're involving me, then it's going to fail.

BILL

We'll be fine. Come on, we've got to find Skyler, shower and rehearse... not necessarily in that order.

BILL and CHUCKIE exit just as SKYLER is being pushed into the room by RHONDA.

RHONDA

I'm sick of this. You've tried every indirect approach in the book. Now, you going to march right up there and talk to her face to face. To her. Words will issue from your lips to her ears, and she'll finally know how you feel.

SKYLER

You're right, I have to be direct. It's the only way.

RHONDA

Go.

SKYLER

Just give me a moment or two alone, please.

RHONDA

You are a moron-in-love.

SKYLER

At least I'm a moron... in love. (pause) I need to prepare.

RHONDA exits.

SKYLER

Okay. Hello Lana. Hi, Ms. Johansen. Hey, baby. Okay okay, wait....

SKYLER stares at the ground and thinks intensely. CHUCKIE enters, unseen by SKYLER, and is walking quietly past. CHUCKIE is getting a rubber ducky from behind the desk.

SKYLER

Hold it right there.

CHUCKIE stops.

SKYLER (cont.)

That's right, I'm talking to you.

CHUCKIE looks around and sees no one else, he points to himself and mouths the words, "Who, me?"

SKYLER (cont.)

Yes, you. I've seen you around here you know. I've been watching you. I know you've seen me, and I know you might not find me "attractive".

CHUCKIE gives a coy "aw, come on" arm wave.

SKYLER (cont.)

I just know what I know. That a person like you could find themselves attracted to just about anyone, including me.

CHUCKIE puts his hand to his lips with embarrassment.

SKYLER (cont.)

May I call you buttercup? Can I call you sweetheart? How about... Frisky bunny?

CHUCKIE gives a nod to each of these names, and an enthusiastic nod to "Frisky Bunny".

SKYLER (cont.)

So, you know how I feel. What are you going to do about it?

CHUCKIE

I'd kiss you, but I've got to rehearse and take a shower.

SKYLER spins around.

SKYLER

Agent Orange!

CHUCKIE

Uh, yeah.

SKYLER

You scared me.

CHUCKIE

Yeah. You scared me too.

CHUCKIE exits just as LANA enters with FRANK. She's wearing a terry cloth robe and a towel on her head. SKYLER hyperventilates.

LANA

Thank you for the massage Frank. It was very... liberating.

FRANK

Any time Ms. Johan-- Lana. (they both giggle) Will you be needing any other "services" at this time?

LANA

(giggles) Not right now, thank you.

FRANK

You know where to reach me. I'm available 24 hours a day.

LANA

Thank you.

FRANK starts to leave, he spots SKYLER

FRANK

S'up Cowboy.

FRANK gives SKYLER some mime friendly gunshots and exits. LANA is about to exit.

SKYLER

(too loud) Ms. Johanson! WAIT! Ahem. I mean. Wait. I have a message... I've come to deliver a message to you- -- for you.

LANA

Deliver.

SKYLER

Someone.... ulp... someone... . someone loves you very much.

LANA

What?

SKYLER

Some "one". "Loves". You. Very. Much.

LANA

Oh?

SKYLER

Maybe.

LANA

That's a very strange message. Are you sure you got it all?

SKYLER

No. Yes! I mean yes!

LANA

Someone loves me very much. Strange. Do I know this person?

SKYLER

Oh, yes.

LANA

Has this person made his love for me known before?

SKYLER turns away.

SKYLER

No. Not directly. Yes. In little ways. Little pathetic, pitiful, meaningless ways.

LANA

Is this from Frank?

SKYLER

No.

LANA

Oh. Is this person... you?

SKYLER

NO! Never! I mean, not "never" never, just.... never. No. Not. Wrong answer! (making a buzz like a game show wrong answer.) Eeeent! Sorry. Ha ha ha! You think that I'm ... I'm not in love... with you... HA! No no no no no no... nono...um.... no. Well, yes. (he starts to sink

SKYLER (cont.)

down to the floor, lower and lower.) Really. But, not really. I. I have to go now. I have to run away and.... and you might not see me again for quite sometime.

LANA

Really? Where are you going?

SKYLER is now laying completely flat on the floor and slowly pushing his body off.

SKYLER

Probably a mountain. Or a hole in the dirt. You know. Somewhere dark. Anyway. Message sent. Someone, and the love and all that, and.... good-bye.

SKYLER exits quickly. LANA sits. RHONDA enters and sits next to LANA.

RHONDA

Ms. Johanson. Are you enjoying your stay here?

LANA

Yes, thank you.

RHONDA

Any... love in the air?

LANA

You know, it's strange, there has been someone pursuing me, but I have no idea who it is.

RHONDA

He still didn't tell you?

LANA

What?

RHONDA

Nevermind.

RHONDA sighs. CHUCKIE enters, he is wearing a robe and towel on his head. He sees them both.

CHUCKIE

Ladies.

LANA and RHONDA

Hello.

CHUCKIE

(as though it makes him instantly more sexy/attractive.) I just took a shower.

LANA and RHONDA

Good for you.

CHUCKIE goes off to the side, out of their earshot.

CHUCKIE

Perfect. I'll just wait for Lana to leave, then I'll make my move.

CHUCKIE waits facing away from the ladies. BILL enters from the other side.

BILL

Ladies.

LANA and RHONDA

Hello.

BILL

(as though it makes him instantly more sexy/attractive.) I just took a shower.

LANA and RHONDA

Good for you.

BILL goes off to the other side, out of their earshot.

BILL

Perfect. I'll just wait for that, whatshername,---

RHONDA

Rhonda.

BILL

Rhonda to leave, then I'll make my move.

BILL waits facing away from the ladies.

RHONDA

Well. I should get back to work.

LANA

Yep. I’ve got another free massage coming my way.

RHONDA

Lucky you.

They both get up and walk away in opposite directions. They each run into one of the men. LANA runs into CHUCKIE. RHONDA runs into BILL.

CHUCKIE and BILL

You’re leaving?

LANA and RHONDA

Yes.

CHUCKIE and BILL

You coming back soon?

LANA and RHONDA

No.

CHUCKIE and BILL

Yes!

LANA and RHONDA exit. CHUCKIE and BILL watch them go, then slowly enter the room backwards. They edge their way towards the seat. They sit, back to back. Smiles come across their faces.

They move their hands to each other and hold them. More smiles.

BILL turns and faces CHUCKIE’s back. CHUCKIE is wearing a terry cloth robe and a towel on his head. BILL starts to rub CHUCKIE’s back. CHUCKIE is slightly surprised, then pleased. BILL gets more and more passionate. He rubs more and more. He edges his hands down to CHUCKIE’s chest. He stops for a moment. They both have a quizzical look on their faces, BILL searches around on CHUCKIE’s chest. They both shrug and continue.

BILL kisses CHUCKIE on the neck while still rubbing his chest.

They freeze. They slowly turn their faces to one another. And freeze.

CHUCKIE

Hello.

BILL

Hello.

CHUCKIE

You're not Rhonda.

BILL

No. No I'm not. You're not Lana.

CHUCKIE

No. No I'm not. Would you believe that this is the second time today something like this has happened to me?

CHUCKIE looks down at BILL's hands still on his chest.

They both jump up and run just as RHONDA and LANA are entering. They slam into them and fall to the floor. CHUCKIE runs into LANA, BILL runs into RHONDA.

BILL

Sorry.

CHUCKIE

Sorry.

They get up, and dust themselves off. The women start to leave.

BILL and CHUCKIE

Wait!

LANA and RHONDA

What?

BILL

I'm... excuse me. I'm the Champion of Misery, er, Mystery.



LANA

(Disappointed.) Really? Johnny Roughrider?

BILL

You said you'd come right back last night and left before I could unmask.

LANA

I thought you followed me.... (aside) so, you're not Frank.

BILL

Well, there's no way you're going to get away from me this time. Chuckie. (pulls CHUCKIE aside.) I've got to get Skyler... keep them here. Ladies! I'll be right back. Don't move.

BILL exits. CHUCKIE jumps onto the front desk and grabs the PA microphone.  
DONNA enters.

CHUCKIE

Ladies and... ladies. Welcome to the Blue Room. My name is Chuckie, I'll be your host for tonight as we trip the light fandango... Our first performer will be coming up in just one moment, so keep your seats on your chairs and your eyes on the prize... so... how many of you are from out of town? Just me? Great. (BILL's hand comes in with a "thumbs up".) Oh, looks like our first performer is ready. And now, the Blue Room proudly presents, a man who needs no introduction, a Champion of Mystery, a suave debonair ladies man. Mr. Johnny Rough-Rider!

BILL appears and lip-synchs to SKYLER singing off stage. SKYLER's song is better than ever, and BILL really sells it. He targets each lady individually thinking he's making them swoon (sometimes he is, sometimes he isn't.) DONNA looks off stage and sees that it's SKYLER singing. She swoons. EDITH enters and swoons. LANA swoons. CHUCKIE swoons. BILL picks her up and carries her off. RHONDA is unaffected by the song and gets up to leave. CHUCKIE leaps to his feet.

CHUCKIE

Wait!

RHONDA stops, and CHUCKIE seats her. SKYLER enters, CHUCKIE runs to him.

CHUCKIE

Where are you going?

SKYLER

To find Agent Chamberlain.

CHUCKIE

He's not here right now. He's with Lana.

SKYLER

(sadly) He's with Lana?

CHUCKIE

No. No, no no. He's not with Lana. Uh... Lana's right there. (points to DONNA passed out on the floor.) She's waiting for you to play another song.

SKYLER

She heard me play my song?

CHUCKIE

Yes! And she loved it. She wants another one.

SKYLER

Why's she on the floor?

CHUCKIE

Just... a way to listen better. Play another song, man!

SKYLER

(very nervously) She's right there.. and wants me to.. to sing.

SKYLER exits. CHUCKIE returns to the desk and RHONDA

CHUCKIE

You're still here. I'm so glad you stayed.

RHONDA

Oh, I'm so glad I stayed too.

CHUCKIE

Thank you Ladies. Thank you. Out next performer is a personal favorite of mine. He puts the "Man" in "Manly", the "Stud" in "Studly", the "Jock" in "Jockey".. Truly a legend in his own mind. A man who needs little to no introduction... So, I won't. I'll just tell you that this song goes out to a special lady. A lady who's sitting right there. That's right, you. I put a lot of thought and time into this song selection. I think it really sums up who I feel about you.

SKYLER sings off stage. It is terrible. The sound wakes DONNA and she sees what's going on with CHUCKIE and RHONDA and exits quickly. CHUCKIE tries his best to

make it work, but he can't. RHONDA exits. SKYLER faints off stage. BILL enters.

BILL

How's the wooing going?

CHUCKIE

Frankly, not good.

BILL

Mine's going great. I told her I own this place and she loves me even more. Where's Skyler, I have to make sure he's out of the way... can't have anything messing this up now.

CHUCKIE

He fainted back there.

BILL

Did you tell him Lana was out here?

CHUCKIE

Apparently.

BILL

Welp. I gotta go.

BILL is about to exit, but is blocked by EDITH entering.

EDITH

There you are Mr. Lenny Bruce. I never got to thank you properly for the free services.

BILL

Oh, uh, sure, no problem.

EDITH

Could I just have a moment or two of your time? I promise it won't take more than an eensy weensy minute.

BILL

I really have something else I need to be doing right now.

EDITH

Nonsense. It can wait. What I'm offering you can't.

BILL

Perhaps you could talk to my assistant Ted?

CHUCKIE shrugs his shoulders and "pinches" his mouth away. He can't talk, remember? He goes back behind the counter and turns his back on BILL and EDITH.

EDITH

I'm afraid I'd dominate the conversation. Besides, it's you I want to talk to. You own this resort?

BILL

Well, 54% of it.

EDITH

Oh, so that makes you pretty rich?

BILL

(can't help himself.) Fabulously, fabulously wealthy, yes.

EDITH

Really?

BILL

Yes. Ah, it's such a problem for me. So much money. And I just don't know where to spend it all. Sigh. If only I were to meet someone who would want to go out with me, join me at my mansion... and spend money. But, alas, I wouldn't even know where to begin to look.

EDITH

I might. I do. Oh, yes. I do. You're such a successful and handsome young man.

BILL

Guilty as charged.

They both laugh together.

BILL (cont.)

Guilty on all counts! Send me away! Lock me up!

EDITH

And you're single?

BILL

Very single.

EDITH

You're rich, handsome, and single. (she turns to him seductively) You're perfect. (She pulls him close to her face.) I want to make you a proposition.

BILL

(His face smooshed between her hands.) A proposition. (pulling away.) Whoa! (he shakes out of her grip.) Just a moment, Mrs.... uh...

EDITH

Please. Call me, Edith.

BILL

Edith. Right. I need to go over here right now and.... check the chlorine in the pool.

EDITH

Surely that can wait.

BILL

Won't be a moment. (Looks at his watch, then quickly takes a random look at the reservation book.) Yep. 9:53, time to check the chlorine level. Insurance purposes and all. Burning, with the eyes and the skin and I'll be right back.

BILL goes behind the desk to CHUCKIE. EDITH primps herself in various ways not listening.

BILL (cont.)

Quick. Who is she?

CHUCKIE

Who?

BILL

Edith.

CHUCKIE

Oh. Her. That's Edith.

BILL

I know that! Who is she as far as we're concerned?

CHUCKIE

Oh. That's Edith. She's looking for a rich and single man to make a husband. She has a list.

BILL

Oh. Do you suppose I might be on that list?

CHUCKIE turns to him in mock surprise.

CHUCKIE

Oh! I bet you are! Why not!? Heck heck heck, why the heck not?! You've wooed everyone else here, why not start wooing their moms!? Leave some for the rest of us, why don't you? 'Cause, let me tell you, I'm getting some astoundingly happy feelings watching you win over the hearts of every woman here, just like that! (snaps his fingers) Meanwhile, good time Chuckie has been trying to get anything other than a slap from one girl and I can't even seem to manage that. So, please, do! Go ahead! Take away the old lady too!

BILL

Are you done?

CHUCKIE

No. (he flails his arms in frustration.) There. Now I'm done.

BILL

Okay. I wasn't asking for me, I don't want anything to do with her.

CHUCKIE

Liar.

BILL

No, now, really. I've decided that my heart belongs to Lana. And that's the truth.

CHUCKIE

You love Lana?

BILL

Yes.

CHUCKIE

And you don't want nothing to do with her?

BILL

Right.

CHUCKIE

And you think she's got a thing for you?

BILL

I'm assuming. What do you think?

CHUCKIE

Just a second.

CHUCKIE leans over the counter to look at EDITH. She is adjusting her make-up, hair, and breasts.

CHUCKIE (cont.)

Oh yeah. She's got it bad.

BILL

I don't want to get tangled up with her? What should I do?

CHUCKIE

Well, you could act like me. That seems to repel women away.

BILL

Ah! I've got it. I'll talk to you later.

BILL goes back to EDITH. CHUCKIE throws his arms up in frustration and exits.

BILL (cont.)

Woo! That was some chlorine! Let me tell you!

EDITH

Too much?

BILL

Just right. So, where were we?

EDITH

I was telling you about a woman who would be prrrrr-erfect for you.

BILL

Oh? Someone you know?

EDITH

(giggling) Yes. I know her all her life.

BILL

Oh. Does she... look like you?

EDITH

(giggles) There have been those who have said so, yes.

BILL

Are you trying to seduce me, Edith?

EDITH

Would you like me to seduce you?

BILL

I have to tell you something! I'm engaged to another woman!

EDITH

You can get out of that.

BILL

I am married! To another woman!

EDITH

That can change too.

BILL

I... I'm married to a man!

EDITH

Pardon?

BILL

Yes. There it is. Finally, the truth. I ... cannot consider, anything .. any offer you might have



BILL (cont.)

about me and... another “woman” ... Because. I am married to another woman, and ... ah-hem, and a man.

EDITH

Oh. My. I should... I should go.

BILL

If you must. I’m sorry.

EDITH

No, no. I’m sorry. I should have... I’m sorry. I’ve got to go and... and tell people.

BILL

I wish you wouldn’t.

EDITH

Oh. Okay. I’ll try to contain my-- myself. Goodbye.

EDITH exits incredibly quickly. CHUCKIE enters.

CHUCKIE

I remember what she was to us! Edith Johanson. Her daughter. Her daughter is Lana Johanson. She’s been trying to fix her daughter up with someone respectable.

BILL

WHAT?!

CHUCKIE

Didn’t I tell you this?

BILL

No! No, you did not tell me that.

CHUCKIE

I could have sworn I....

BILL

You did not. That is a key piece of information! She was trying to set me up with Lana. That is the... the... guh!

CHUCKIE

I remember. I was going to tell you, but when I heard it I had a craving for ice cream. I have no idea why. You never can tell when those cravings will come up. It's like the hot fudge is calling you from the can, saying "Eat me! Eat me!" So, I went to get some ice cream, but I only had a dollar on me, so I had to borrow some money from you, which I did, of course then I remembered that we don't need any money here because we get everything for free. So, then I went to get the ice cream. Looking back now, I betcha I could have told you about her and the daughter thing when I came to borrow some money from you. But, I was pretty focused on the ice cream by that time. Here's your money back, by the way. You know--

BILL

If you don't shut-up right now...

CHUCKIE

What's the big deal? What's you tell her?

BILL

That I'm married.

CHUCKIE

But you're not --

BILL

To another woman. And, another man.

CHUCKIE

Both?!

BILL

Sort of.

CHUCKIE

One of them would have been good enough, don't you think?

BILL

She was all over me. I had to do something. We've got to stop her before she tells Lana.

CHUCKIE

I suddenly have a craving for ice cream.

WILLIE enters. BILL lets out a small scream.

BILL

Things might just have become more difficult.

CHUCKIE

Yeah? Good.

BILL

(smiling at WILLIE) Hello Dad.

WILLIE

Bill, my boy. What are you doing here?

CHUCKIE

Well hello Mr. Cleaver, what a pleasant surprise to see you here.

WILLIE

Hello Chuckie.

BILL

Dad. Dad dad dad dad daaaad.

WILLIE

Son. Son son son.

BILL

Dad dad dad.

WILLIE

Son.

BILL

What are you doing here Dad?

WILLIE

Well, you know, I've got a lot of free time, since your mother left me for missionary work in Bolivia.

BILL

Is that the current story?

WILLIE

Yeah. What do you think?

BILL

Good. That’s a good one. Hard to verify.

WILLIE

Way, where’s that wife of yours?

CHUCKIE

Wife?!

WILLIE

I tell you, I was so happy to see you finally married. I do have to tell you, that I did tell a bit of a fib to a nice lady here. I told her you were a wealthy oil baron. But that was really for my purposes. Now that you’re here, I can’t wait to tell everyone about your wife. I’m so happy, just want to tell the whole world!

FRANK enters.

BILL

Ix-nay on the ife-way.

WILLIE

Oh, Frank. I want you to meet my son Bill. Bill, this is Frank, he works here. He’s been giving away free massages. Some sort of management special.

FRANK

Mr. Bruce?

BILL

I-- I’ve never seen this man before in my life.

WILLIE

What?

BILL

Frank? Have you been giving this man free drinks and massages?

FRANK

As per your orders, sir.

BILL

First of all, it was supposed to be for the female guests only. Secondly. You weren't supposed to give anything free to a... Corporate Spy!

WILLIE

What's going on here Bill?

BILL

This man is pretending to be my father. I personally think he might be a little coo-coo, but Ted here thinks he recognizes him as a Corporate Spy from our competitors.

FRANK looks upset at WILLIE and cracks his knuckles.

FRANK

Really?

WILLIE

Son? What are--

BILL

Enough with the crazy talk, Mr. Bond, if that is your name. Frank you're going to have to subdue him, and maybe lock him up until I can get the proper authorities here.

WILLIE

Chuckie, what in the world is my son doing?

FRANK

You're going to have to come with me, sir.

WILLIE

You obviously have no idea who you're dealing with. I have a black belt in Ty-kwo-do, kara-tee, and... various other things.

WILLIE gets into a fighting stance. FRANK pinches his shoulder and WILLIE collapses into FRANK's arms. FRANK starts to drag him off.

BILL

Thanks Frank.

FRANK

No problem, Mr. Bruce. I'll put him in the exercise room. Weigh him down.

BILL

Good. Great. Perfect.

FRANK leaves with WILLIE

BILL (cont.)

Alright. Now to find Lana.

BILL starts to leave, but CHUCKIE stands in his way.

CHUCKIE

So.

BILL

What?

CHUCKIE

Soooooooo!

BILL

What?!

CHUCKIE

Oh, I don't know (pause) You read any good books lately?

BILL

What? No. What?

CHUCKIE

Just thought you might have read a good book lately.

BILL

What's your problem?

CHUCKIE

I've been reading a book.

BILL

Yes?

CHUCKIE

Yeah. It's a short book. You might like it. It's called... hmm... how does the title go again? Oh yes, I remember, it's call “GETTING MARRIED AND NOT TELLING YOUR BEST FRIEND!”

BILL

Haven't heard of it.

CHUCKIE

Are you sure?! The subject matter seems really close to you.

BILL

Are you upset?

CHUCKIE

No. (pause) YES!

BILL

Look. Sorry. It was a long time ago. And it was a short thing. Like a one-month kind of thing. Las Vegas. It just didn't work out, you know? Who knows if it was even legal anyway. I had all but forgotten about it until Dad brought it up. Not a big deal. Really.

CHUCKIE

You lied to me.

BILL

No. No I didn't.

CHUCKIE

You told me that your lie to Edith about being married was a lie, when in fact it was the truth, which means you lied to me and told the truth to her.

BILL

Look. I'm not going to tell you that I'm not no longer not married.

BILL points one direction and quickly runs in the other direction. CHUCKIE is confused for a moment, then runs after BILL. DONNA and LANA enter. DONNA now has numerous soup ladles and spoons on her suit. Perhaps some doorknobs and hinges as well... oooh, maybe a bird cage!

LANA

Where'd he go? “I'll be back in two seconds” he said.

SKYLER stumbles in. DONNA hides, but remains to listen.

SKYLER

Lana. What did you think of my song? I love you. Wow. I said it. I actually said it. To you, even. I said it right to you. Lana, I love you. I've loved you since I first saw you. I've thought of you every moment of everyday. You are the sun, the moon, the stars. You are so gorgeous and goddesslike. I love you.

He clasps her hands and holds her close.

LANA

Who are you again?

SKYLER keeps her held tightly to himself.

SKYLER

My name is Skyler.

LANA

I'm sorry. I don't think we've met.

SKYLER lets her go. She backs away from him.

SKYLER

You don't know who I am?

LANA

Sorry. No.

SKYLER

Champion of Mystery?

LANA

You're not the Champion of Mystery.

SKYLER

So... You don't love me back?



LANA

Skyler, was it?

SKYLER

Yes.

LANA

Sorry. No. I don't love you. I don't even know you.

LANA exits. SKYLER watches her go. He reaches into his shirt, pulls out his heart and drops it on the floor. He stomps on it. He falls to the floor. DONNA enters from where she was hiding.

DONNA

Skyler?

SKYLER

Hi...

DONNA

Donna. Are you all right?

SKYLER

Yes. I'm wonderful.

DONNA

I saw what she did to you. I've seen everything that you've tried for her. I think it all was extraordinarily adorable.

SKYLER

Thank you. What is that you're wearing?

DONNA

It's a magnet suit. Dr. Kafka says it will help my self-esteem.

A spoon falls off. SKYLER picks it up and gently hands it to her.

SKYLER

It's very attractive.

DONNA laughs and does a geeky snort.

SKYLER

You said I was adorable.

DONNA

I did.

SKYLER

No one’s ever told me that before.

DONNA

I find that surprising. Because you are. Here.

She picks up his heart and hands it to him.

SKYLER

Thanks.

DONNA

Do you think you could feel the same way about me, as you did about Lana?

SKYLER

Do I?

SKYLER’s music swells and the lighting changes to romantic and SKYLER and DONNA begin dancing. RHONDA does a cross through tossing rose petals. SKYLER and DONNA end up standing on top of the desk dancing. RUTH enters and the music abruptly stops.

RUTH

What is going on here Skyler?

SKYLER

We’re in love.

RUTH

I can see that. What’s this I hear about free drinks? And an inspection?

SKYLER

Agent Chamberlain is inspecting the whole resort and...

RUTH

Who?

SKYLER

Agent Chamberlain. Neville Chamberlain. Federal Resort Inspector.

RUTH

There's no such thing.

SKYLER

Oh, they have divisions for everything in the...

RUTH

Listen Skyler, my dear, my sweet boy, you've been lied to. Where is he now Skyler?

SKYLER

I don't know.

BILL enters. RUTH has her back turned towards him and doesn't see.

DONNA

Dr. Kafka.

SKYLER

Agent Chamberlain.

SKYLER and DONNA look at each other confused.

RUTH

What?

BILL ducks out quickly.

SKYLER

Agent Chamberlain, the Federal Resort Inspector was right behind you.

DONNA

That was Dr. Kafka, or that's what he told me.

RUTH

You've both been lied to.

FRANK enters.

FRANK

Oh, hey, welcome back Ruth. I just bumped into your Silent Partner.

RUTH

What?

FRANK

You know, Lenny Bruce.

RUTH

I don't have a partner, silent or otherwise.

She goes to the desk and uses the P.A. system.

RUTH (cont.)

May I have your attention, resort staff. Please intercept and restrain anyone going by the name Lenny Bruce, Dr. Kafka, or Agent Chamberlain, and bring him to the lobby. Thank you.

She shuts off the speaker.

RUTH (cont.)

Now, let's go get this liar.

RUTH and FRANK leave in one direction. SKYLER and DONNA leave in another direction. BILL and CHUCKIE enter from the only other direction possible. All at the same time.

BILL

Any sign of her?

CHUCKIE

Who?

BILL

Lana. I have to find Lana, and tell her the truth.

CHUCKIE

You mean the lie?

BILL

Lie, truth, whatever.

BILL freezes and sniffs the air.

CHUCKIE

What?

BILL

That smell....

CHUCKIE attempts to sniff the air.

CHUCKIE

I don't smell any....

CHUCKIE sniffs his own armpits.

CHUCKIE (cont.)

No. What?

BILL

Remember that “wife” that I have?

BILL does the quotes with his hands.

CHUCKIE

The one you “didn’t” tell “me” “about”.

CHUCKIE does the quotes wrong and BILL gently puts CHUCKIE’s hands down, correcting him.

BILL

That’s her perfume. I’d recognize it anywhere. Guh! I knew the back of that head looked familiar.

CHUCKIE

Huh.

BILL

She was right here. Wait, she made that announcement. We’ve got to get out of here.

A big clank is heard off-stage.

BILL

What was that?

CHUCKIE looks off stage.

CHUCKIE

It’s your Dad.

BILL

He got out of the exercise room?

Clank!

CHUCKIE

Barely. He looks angry.

BILL

Come on, let’s get out of here.

FRANK and RUTH enter. BILL sees them before they see him. BILL grabs CHUCKIE and they hide behind a piece of furniture.

CHUCKIE

What?

BILL

That’s her. That’s my wife.

CHUCKIE

Oh.

WILLIE enters with some sort of large piece of exercise equipment attached to him.

RUTH

Prince Renaldo--

WILLIE

Uh. Yes.

CHUCKIE

Prince Renaldo?

BILL

Shhh!

WILLIE

I'm looking for my son.... Prince... Renaldo Jr.

RUTH turns to FRANK.

RUTH

There's your Lenny Bruce.

WILLIE

Well, last I heard he was running after some girl.

FRANK

Lana!

FRANK exits in one direction. RUTH exits in another direction.

WILLIE

When I find that boy, he's going to get a piece of my mind.

WILLIE exits, clanking all the way. LANA enters.

BILL

There she is.

He stands up.

BILL (cont.)

Lana. Just the person I wanted to talk to.

LANA

Really? What about? Your wife or your husband?

BILL

News does travel fast, doesn't it? I'd rather not... go into details about those... misleading statements.

LANA

Misleading? Misleading? What’s misleading about being married?! Whether or not it’s to a man or a woman. Here’s what’s misleading. Trying to get me to marry you when you’re already married... twice! As far as I can tell.

BILL

That’s what I’m saying. I’m not married twice. I’m not even married once. Sure, I might have said that I was. It might even look like I am on paper, but the truth is, I’m not.

LANA

You’re not married?

BILL

Nope.

LANA

But, it looks like you are “on paper”?

BILL

I’m afraid so, yes.

LANA

But you’re “not”.

BILL

Right. You see. (very quickly) I worked, for a short time, in a law office. And we had to learn how to fill out forms, and such. For example, marriage certificates. And so, I may have, in fact I did, file a certificate that stated that I was married. I did this twice... thinking that somehow the second one of being married to a man was somehow different then the first. But, I never met these people, in fact, it’s quite likely that they don’t exist, and so I’m not technically married. Well, technically I am because I filed the forms, but not really married. No.

Pause as LANA considers this.

LANA

Were they different?

BILL

What?

LANA

The forms. Were they different?



BILL

Oh, yeah. Circle the “M” instead of the “F”. No big deal.

LANA

So you really don’t know who these people are?

BILL

Nope.

CHUCKIE stands up.

CHUCKIE

He’s lying.

LANA

Please don’t tell me you’re the husband.

CHUCKIE

No. But his real wife is here at the resort.

LANA

Why, you lying...

LANA chases BILL off stage. FRANK enters.

FRANK

Where is he?

CHUCKIE shrugs his shoulders, and points in the direction BILL just ran. DONNA enters.

DONNA

Have you seen Dr....

CHUCKIE points. DONNA runs off. EDITH enters.

EDITH

Have you seen my daughter?

CHUCKIE points. EDITH exits. BILL enters, grabs CHUCKIE and they both hide.

BILL

Thanks for your help. “Buddy”.

RHONDA enters looking for BILL. CHUCKIE sees her and tries to get up and talk to her. BILL grabs him, covers his mouth and pulls him back down. RHONDA exits.

CHUCKIE

That was Rhonda. The girl I want to...

BILL

I know, now's not the time.

CHUCKIE

Now is the time.

CHUCKIE stands up goes to the P.A. system, and uses it.

CHUCKIE (cont.)

Everyone! He's right here!

Everyone enters from different doors. DONNA, LANA, RUTH, EDITH, WILLIE, FRANK, SKYLER, and RHONDA

BILL

Hi, everyone.

SKYLER

Hello Agent Chamberlain.

FRANK

Hello Lenny Bruce.

DONNA

Hello Dr. Kafka.

LANA

Hello Champion of Mystery.

SKYLER

What?!

WILLIE

Son.

RHONDA

I don't believe we've met.

RUTH

Hello Bill.

LANA

How do you know him?

RUTH

He's my husband.

ALL

Husband?!

LANA

You are married.

BILL

Um.... Let me explain.

LANA

You've explained enough.

She slaps him, spinning him around.

RUTH

What's her problem?

CHUCKIE

Bill and her had a little...

He make a weird gesture implying BILL and LANA had sex.

RUTH

I knew it.

RUTH slaps BILL.

EDITH  
Bill?

BILL  
Yeah?

EDITH  
Your name is Bill?

BILL  
Uh...

EDITH  
You don't own this resort.

BILL  
No.

EDITH slaps him. Then turns to WILLIE.

EDITH  
That's your son?

WILLIE  
I don't know where he gets it from.

EDITH  
The oil baron?

WILLIE  
Oh, yes.

She goes to slap WILLIE. He grabs her hand mid-swing.

WILLIE  
You love it.

EDITH  
You're right, I do.

They kiss.

FRANK

You made me give away free back massages.

FRANK slaps BILL.

DONNA

You made me wear this stupid thing.

DONNA slaps him.

SKYLER

You stole my Champion of Mystery idea.

SKYLER slaps him.

BILL

I can explain it all!!

CHUCKIE slaps him.

BILL

What was that for!?

CHUCKIE

Everyone else was doing it.

BILL

Listen. I can explain. I’m a... actually... I ... The truth is....

CHUCKIE

Just a second everybody. Come here.

CHUCKIE and BILL move downstage.

CHUCKIE

Now here’s your chance. Now is your chance to come clean. Finally tell everyone the truth.

BILL

The truth?

CHUCKIE

The truth.

BILL

You mean, that I’m actually married to Ruth. That I’m not the Champion of Mystery, that I’m not a Doctor, nor do I own this resort, that I’ve spent all the money that Dad gave me for college on women, cigarettes and booze. That I’ve actually spent the last five years of my life with no job and no money, and yet have been able to talk my way into a life of free drinks and easy women. That truth?!

CHUCKIE

Yes. I think that covers it.

BILL

You’re right. I’ll tell them. What have I got to lose?

They go back.

BILL (cont.)

Everyone. The truth is. I’m in the witness protection program. But, they haven’t decided what new identity I should have yet. So, they suggested that I try some out.

CHUCKIE

He’s lying.

ALL

We know.

WILLIE

Son. I hate to do this to you, but you’re going back to your wife. And you’re never going to lie again.

BILL

Yes sir.

WILLIE

And I get Edith here.

EDITH and WILLIE hug.

DONNA

And I get Skyler.

DONNA and SKYLER hug.

LANA

I'll take Frank.

LANA and FRANK hug.

RHONDA looks around at all the love going around, then looks at CHUCKIE.

RHONDA

Oh, fine.

CHUCKIE hugs RHONDA enthusiastically. Everyone stops and looks at RUTH and BILL.

BILL

Well. Do you think you could be married to a good for nothing liar?

RUTH

I've missed you.

BILL

Really? Wow.

RUTH

You'll have to work here.

BILL

Just so long as you don't press charges.

Everyone freezes except BILL and CHUCKIE who step forward.

CHUCKIE

Well, all's well that ends well. At least you've finally learned your lesson.

BILL

Hmm?

CHUCKIE

I said, at least you've finally learned your lesson.

BILL

Oh? And what would that be?

CHUCKIE

Don't lie. Not to lie. The lesson that you're supposed to have learned was, don't lie.

BILL

Hm. Nope. No I don't see it. Lying has got me everything I ever wanted. I'm quite a proponent of a lying lifestyle.

CHUCKIE

Bu..but, what about...? What about the kids?

BILL

Who?

CHUCKIE

You know, the...

CHUCKIE attempts a sly gesture and knowing nod towards and indicating the audience.

BILL

Oh. Well, kids, you saw it. Lying is good for you. It gets you the things you want, and if you're good at it, you won't get in trouble.

CHUCKIE

That's terrible.

BILL

It's true.

CHUCKIE

But. But.

CHUCKIE flays his arms around in frustration.

BILL

I can see that you're upset. Here. This will help. Children. Don't lie. It's a bad bad thing to do. I know I'm never going to lie again. I'm finished with lies, starting... now.

CHUCKIE

Does that include the last thing you just said?



“The Liar” by Mike Eserkaln pg. 105

BILL

It most certainly does not.

Blackout