To Love And To Be Loved

Ву

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Cast of Characters

Ira:

An awkward, often ill-understood college student desperate to break into a social group and be accepted by both his "new hipster friends" and his new love interest. Emilee. Ira makes the error of mistaking the group's acceptance of him for Emilee's acceptance of his romantic conquest, eventually becoming conflicted with appeasing the odd natured group of hipster friends, and being himself to the woman he's fallen in love with.

Emilee:

A rebellious, younger, pretty college student struggling with the conflict of her love/hate relationship with her new love interest's desire to be the same as her brother's annoyingly "modern" hipster friends who call themselves her own.

Nathaniel:

Emilee's older, underspoken but widely respected brother and apparent leader of the group of hipster friends that come over for the night. Also, love interest to Gwyneth.

Gwyneth:

A typical hipster girl seemingly obsessed with being appreciated and accepted by the group. Gwyneth often gives into the group's thoughts on anything, until she is crossed wrongly. Also, Nathaniel's love interest.

(MORE)

Cast of Characters (cont'd)

Earnest:

Born in London and raised typical British upper-middle class, a loudly opinionated, extravagant hipster with an appetite for Christine and a nefarious plan at hand.

Riley:

A wildly extravagant hipster both in opinion and in fashion sense and the manifestations thereof. Riley proclaims everything as he were Noel Coward before the war. He's also Earnest's right hand man, assisting in his conquest of Christine in order to obtain promised employment at the group's favorite local espresso cafe'.

Sybil:

A soft-spoken but hard-hitting London-born and bred hipster with an elaborate quick wit and an inclination for picking fights with Christine, whom she strongly and often openly dislikes.

Cecily:

The innocent little girl of the hipster group of friends, appearing to be everyone's naive younger sister, though she has a not so innocent secret as to the identity of her romantic interest.

Dr. Hoenikker:

A 68 year old, severely tired, multi-award winning professor of physics at Boston University and Christine's official boyfriend.

(MORE)

Cast of Characters (cont'd)

Christine:

A witty, hard-hitting and loud and extravagant hipster with nothing but her nefarious nature seemingly keeping her company. And yet her nefarious efforts to rid herself of her current love interest, Dr. Hoenikker, in lieu of a more unexpected, unwanted relationship. Though her nefarious efforts and seemingly nineteenth century aristocratic views on social interaction are said to be social in nature, there appears to be a desperate need for love in the individual herself. A typical Oscar Wilde villain.

Gatsby:

Though widely celebrated as the most interesting, charming, and good looking man in the group, Gatsby appears upon his entrance to be a normal, unjudgemental, and happy individual with nothing special to offer by way of his friendship with the others but rather just an appreciation for their company. An anticlimax into himself.

(MORE)

Cast of Characters (cont'd)

Man 1:

A lonesome playwright in his basement apartment working, Man 1 hears the events of the night through the vent of the apartment and plays advocate to Ira, attempting to help him in his romantic conquest of Emilee, though at times appearing lost in what to do.

ACT I

Living room in NATHANIEL'S Boston flat on Linden Street in Boston, MA. The living room is colorfully decorated with portraits of obscure early 20th century artists, LP's decorate the walls and line the shelves while a record player sits atop a shelf near the kitchen door standing next to a large book shelf full of old books.

A large colorful rug with an old, low wooden table atop it sits in the kitchen-side of the room with a box of wine laying on top of it. A large broken reclining chair and a small couch sit on one side of the low wooden table opposite a large ruggedly upholstered old couch on the other side of the same table.

To the left of the large upholstered couch on the front door side of the room sits a small, square table and excessively large-framed glasses atop it. Four doors, a kitchen door, a bedroom door, the front door of the flat, and a coat closet door next to the front door stand in different parts of the room with an intercom speaker and several buttons on the wall, also near the front door.

NATHANIEL (O.S.)

Emilee! Emilee did you get the banner?

NATHANIEL enters through the kitchen door wearing a kitchen apron covered in chocolate and holding a large mixing bowl full of chocolate.

NATHANIEL

(yelling towards the bedroom door from the kitchen door)

Emilee! Did you remember to get Gatsby's banner?

GWYNETH enters from the kitchen dressed in a flannel shirt and tight, ripped jeans. Her flannel shirt is also covered in chocolate as she holds in her hand a large mixing spoon covered in chocolate.

EMILEE (O.S.)

I told Ira to bring it on his way over.

GWYNETH and NATHANIEL playfully flirt with the chocolate spoon as Emilee speaks from the other room.

CONTINUED: 2.

NATHANIEL

(At the bedroom door, attempting to overcome Gwyneth's flirtatious interruption)

Why didn't you just go fetch it when we went to the beer store?

EMILEE enters the room from the bedroom door wearing a robe and a towel on her head.

EMILEE

It's freezing outside! I figured if Ira is coming he might as well. He lives next to that awkward man who made the thing!

Emilee Crosses back into the bedroom.

EMILEE

You did invite Ira, right?

NATHANIEL unintentionally ignores his sister while he continues to playfully flirt with GWYNETH, eventually kissing her playfully and sending her back into the kitchen.

EMILEE

(annoyed)

Right?!

NATHANIEL rebounds his attention back to his younger sister who is again in the bedroom. Nathaniel crosses to the square table.

NATHANIEL

Yeah, yeah I did! You know, it's not stylish to be so concerned for a person to whom one has no formal responsibility.

NATHANIEL crosses, grabbing the thick framed glasses from the table and placing them in his flannel shirt's breast pocket behind his apron.

EMILEE enters the room wearing a bright, colorful sundress and a towel on her head, crossing towards her brother and sinking her finger in the chocolate bowl NATHANIEL holds.

EMILEE

(playfully)

I've been told I'm a dead ringer for Mrs. Robinson!

EMILEE playfully licks the chocolate off her finger as she smiles towards Nathaniel, who rewards her wit with a half-smile.

CONTINUED: 3.

The intercom BUZZES.

EMILEE begins to walk toward the front door intercom.

NATHANIEL

Some day you'll get religion, you know.

EMILEE

(her back to Nathaniel)
Religion is so old fashioned, Nathan.

EMILEE takes the towel off her head.

EMILEE

(into the intercom in a soft, guilty voice)

Forgive me father for I have sinned.

A silence proceeds for a small beat.

IRA

(from the intercom)

Umm.. Hello?

EMILEE turns to Nathaniel and smiles, maintaining her finger idly on the intercom button.

EMILEE

See?

IRA

(from the intercom)

Hello?

EMILEE playfully curtsies in NATHANIEL'S direction.

IRA

Hel-

EMILEE buzzes IRA up. NATHANIEL crosses toward the kitchen door.

NATHANIEL

Very fresh, Emilee. You're a regular Oscar Wilde.

EMILEE

Ol' Oscar! We made friends during my stint up river! We'd write poems for the posies on D block and trade them for cigarettes and incense.

CONTINUED: 4.

An entertained and chuckling NATHANIEL crosses to the kitchen doorway.

NATHANIEL

(chuckling)

You've lost your mind!

EMILEE

The whole damn prison was a bath and body works!

NATHANIEL

(smirking)

Long gone.

EMILEE playfully curtsies to NATHANIEL.

NATHANIEL exits into the kitchen.

EMILEE'S attention is suddenly shifted as a KNOCK is heard on the door. EMILEE enthusiastically turns toward to face the front door.

EMILEE

(loudly; playfully)

You shall not pass!

IRA enters holding a folded up banner in one hand and a dozen flowers in another.

IRA

(shaking the cold off himself; confused)

Hello?

EMILEE, smiling at the sight of Ira and the flowers, crosses towards IRA, taking the flowers from him as he proceeds to remove his coat.

EMILEE

(playfully)

You're quite late.

IRA removes his coat, quickly taking note of EMILEE calling him a stud. Smiling, he brings the flowers forth in front himself.

IRA

(playfully)

Well then we're both late.

EMILEE

(playfully)

Don't even joke!

CONTINUED: 5.

IRA throws the coat and the banner in the coat closet. EMILEE looks at the flowers lovingly before kissing IRA's cheek.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, GWYNETH enters from the kitchen wearing a new, clean shirt. GWYNETH stops at the doorway to observe the development between IRA and EMILEE with a smile.

EMILEE

(playfully)

I'll have to put these in water before the pawns come home.

EMILEE moves to cross toward the kitchen door. IRA catches her arm before she can cross.

IRA

(happily)

Wait!

EMILEE happily turns back to face IRA who appears to be preparing a great proclamation.

SUDDENLY, a LOUD BANG is heard coming from the kitchen. The three people in the room turn quickly toward the kitchen.

IRA and EMILEE finally take notice GWYNETH in the room. Consequently, IRA lets go of EMILEE'S arm takes a step back from her.

NATHANIEL (O.S.)

(screaming fearfully)

And a towel! Bring a shit load of towels!

GWYNETH quickly exits back into the kitchen followed by a fearful EMILEE who deposits the flowers back with IRA before running into the kitchen.

As both women exit, IRA is left alone appearing disappointed, staring at the flowers.

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 2

SOUND: AN OLD 1920'S JAZZ RECORD LIGHTS UP.

IRA sits alone in the living room eying the boxed wine. After a moment, GWYNETH enters from the kitchen holding two porcelain mugs.

GWYNETH

Ira, it's so nice of you to come. Sorry about the big rush.

IRA

(smiling; nicely)

Gwyn.

GWYNETH crosses towards the couch handing a mug to IRA before serving herself from the box wine.

GWYNETH

Gwyneth dear.

IRA

Sorry. Gwyneth.

GWYNETH

Box wine?

IRA

Please.

GWYNETH places her own mug on the table and serves IRA.GWYNETH hands IRA his drink and crosses towards the record player to change the record.

GWYNETH

So. What's this with you and Emilee?

IRA loudly coughs as if embarrassed while sipping.

IRA

I'm sorry?

GWYNETH

Oh please Ira, the way you look at her you'd think she was the last whiskey in the desert.

IRA stands in objection.

IRA

I haven't the faintest idea...

GWYNETH scoffs, finally choosing a record and replacing the initial record.

CONTINUED: 7.

GWYNETH

(softly chuckling)

Sit down, Ira. Riley was right about you.

IRA sits, appearing curious.

IRA

Riley? That's the graduate student, right?

GWYNETH

That's right. He's pretty dead set on being an espresso barista.

GWYNETH crosses towards Ira, sitting on the table top opposite him.

GWYNETH

Anyway, he insisted you had little to do with style. I'm starting to think he may have a point.

IRA

When did this occur?

GWYNETH

At the potluck a couple of nights ago. I think you had just left when he opened the forum for criticism.

IRA

Forum?

GWYNETH

Well, yes. It was quite pleasant of him to delay it all until you had left. It's quite unfashionable of one to conduct a criticism in the presence of the subject . It's simply not civil.

IRA

(skeptical; confused)

I see.

GWYNETH

Enough about Riley. Is there something you're going to do about Emilee?

IRA

Did she say something?

GWYNETH

About you?

IRA

Concerning Riley's comments.

CONTINUED: 8.

GWYNETH

Criticism.

IRA

Right. Criticism. Sorry.

GWYNETH

You apologize entirely too often, Ira. It's entirely unattractive in a man to be so apologetic. It's a damaging style.

IRA

Sorry. I mean-

GWYNETH stands to pour herself more box wine, interrupting IRA while doing so.

GWYNETH

(raising a hand in protest)

Please.

(beat)

As for Emilee, she insisted on Riley's overlooking your true nature or other. No offense Ira, but you're hardly a Banksy type.

IRA appears happy with the response.

GWYNETH

You've yet to answer my question by the by.

GWYNETH crosses to the couch, taking a seat on the arm of the couch nearest IRA. IRA appears to shake his head at the prospect of spewing his guts for GWYNETH.

GWYNETH

It's hardly my intention to spread gossip. I'll go as far as to share with you my own hidden gem!

GWYNETH, appearing quite excited, places her mug of wine on the table top and grabs IRA by the shoulder, pulling him towards her and looking him square in the eye with great excitement.

GWYNETH whispers as she speaks, watching the door for an unexpected entrance.

GWYNETH

(excited; whispering)

Tonight Nathan will announce to the group our courtship!

IRA appears unsure of how to respond, lending a fake surprised look to appease GWYNETH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 9.

IRA

(ambiguously)

Sounds romantic.

GWYNETH, in the rush of excitement, stands and quickly crosses while speaking to open space near the front door.

GWYNETH

(crossing and dancing)

Oh, it'll be ideal! I could realize it now, Ira!

GWYNETH begins to dance with an invisible partner.

GWYNETH

They'll applaud us and we'll kiss for them over and over as they cheer us on!

GWYNETH quickly stops and crosses back toward IRA who appears a tad shocked by so much sudden action and emotion.

GWYNETH

What do you think?

IRA

Uhh.. I don't mean to be discouraging.. but isn't an announcement like that your own business?

GWYNETH looks at IRA as disapprovingly.

IRA

(nervously; slightly embarrased)
I mean, is it really a public concern?

GWYNETH

Ira! It's absolutely horrific style to admit something like a relationship without the proper consent. I would think you'd want to announce your love for Emilee for everyone as much as you'd like everyone to accept it. I know for a fact it's what *she* would want.

IRA

(quickly)

Why? Did she say something?

GWYNETH

It's what every woman wants, Ira. You clearly don't understand the elementary procedures of loving and being loved.

IRA appears as if concerned with himself.

CONTINUED: 10.

GWYNETH

Nathan and I have placed a heavy burden on this evening. He's been holding off on making the announcement until Gatsby's party tonight just so he knew for sure everyone would be here. I wish you could do the same by Emilee, Ira!

GWYNETH suddenly calmly grabs her mug of wine from the table and crosses toward the record player slowly, maintaining her back to IRA.

GWYNETH

It's rather unfortunate, I guess.

(beat)

IRA stands, out of intrigued protest.

IRA

What exactly is rather unfortunate?

GWYNETH turns back quickly to face IRA.

GWYNETH

Your timing, well, with the whole Gatsby situation at hand.

IRA

I'm sorry, what does Gatsby have to do with-

GWYNETH

(excessively gasping)

Oh, you don't know!

SUDDENLY, EMILEE enters from the kitchen, dress covered in chocolate as well as holding several chocolate covered towels.

EMILEE

Know what, Gwyn?

GWYNETH

(quickly)

Gwyneth darling. Nothing of any importance little Emilee. How's the crash site?

EMILEE

It's an absolute mess.

(to IRA)

I'll have to go change my dress. It looked so nice before it got covered in chocolate!

CONTINUED: 11.

IRA

(innocently flirtatiously)
I think you look pretty in chocolate.

EMILEE smiles at the flattering comment while GWYNETH laughs aloud.

GWYNETH

Just like a man to want a woman covered in anything!

EMILEE chuckles as IRA appears slightly embarrassed by his prior comment, taking a seat on the couch as a consequence.

NATHANIEL enters from the kitchen shirtless and holding an apron and shirt covered in chocolate. He quickly crosses towards the bedroom door.

NATHANIEL

I have to be right back.

GWYNETH

Another cake disaster?

NATHANIEL

(stopping at the bedroom door and turning to face the lot)

No. It seems Riley and the bunch got caught on the subway platform on their way over here.

IRA stands in quick fear.

IRA

Did they fall onto the tracks?

NATHANIEL

Not at all. You're quite morbid, Ira.

IRA sits back down.

NATHANIEL

They've decided to join some busking that was going on with a couple of musicians. The cops detained Riley and Earnest for performing their naked mime routine.

IRA

Naked mime?

NATHANIEL

(slightly annoyed)

Yes, Ira. It's the one where you're trapped in the box and your clothes are laying tragically outside the box.

CONTINUED: 12.

IRA

And they take their clothes off for this?

NATHANIEL

It's performance art, Ira. No offense, but you hardly strike me as the type that would understand artistic expression.

GWYNETH

(to IRA, excited)

I told you!

EMILEE

(in defense)

If that's your contention then obviously you don't know Ira.

IRA turns and smiles at EMILEE who quickly returns the smile.

NATHANIEL

Emilee, go change your clothes before everyone gets here.

EMILEE

(strongly nodding playfully; German)

Mein Fuhrer!

EMILEE playfully smiles at a smiling IRA before crossing to the bedroom door, grabbing NATHANIEL's apron and t-shirt and exiting into the bedroom.

NATHANIEL crosses to the coat closet door drawing out his coat as he speaks.

NATHANIEL

Cecily asked me to go coax them off the subway platform so I'll be right back. I poured a couple espressos for drinks if anyone wants one.

GWYNETH

Would you like company for the walk?

NATHANIEL

No thanks Gwyn, I need an adult to stay and watch over Emilee, no offense Ira.

IRA

None taken.

NATHANIEL puts the coat on while talking and crosses to the front door, pulling it open and standing at the doors edge.

CONTINUED: 13.

NATHANIEL

I figured, but it's only polite. Also, Christine called some time ago and said she's on her way.

GWYNETH

Is she still dating that BU professor?

NATHANIEL

Yes, he's supposed to be joining us as well.

GWYNETH rolls her eyes in a greatly exaggerated manner.

GWYNETH

I don't care much for their engagement.

NATHANIEL

Yes, the man is rather slow.

IRA

Slow? I thought he was a university professor?

GWYNETH

Yep. Slow is exactly what I would call him.

IRA

(to himself)

How slow can a university professor be?

GWYNETH

(to NATHANIEL)

And you know what Christine will expect!

NATHANIEL

Yes, everyone knows how Christine is.

IRA

How is she?

NATHANIEL

(annoyed)

What do I look like, her biographer? I have to go.

GWYNETH

Call me if you need anything at all.

NATHANIEL

I'll be fine, Gwyn. Thank you.

NATHANIEL is about to make his way out when GWYNETH stands, quickly calls after him, catching his quick attention as he takes a step back in the living room.

CONTINUED: 14.

GWYNETH

Nathaniel!

NATHANIEL

Yes?

GWYNETH gives NATHANIEL a playful smile. NATHANIEL quickly drops his seriousness and blows her a kiss before he exits, closing the front door behind him.

GWYNETH twirls and flails onto the couch as if suddenly overcome by emotion.

GWYNETH

(in love)

Ugh! Ira, he's so romantic.

IRA

(playfully)

Nathaniel Montague.

GWYNETH

(in love)

You'll never understand!

IRA

(playfully)

Dead ringer for Nietzsche, I always said. Say, is it bad style to say it out loud?

GWYNETH quickly sits upright on the couch as if called to a militaristic attention.

GWYNETH proceeds to stand up straight and dust herself off slightly, arranging order for the small invisible wrinkles on her clothes before she speaks.

GWYNETH

I swear, Ira. Sometimes, I don't know about you.

GWYNETH crosses towards the kitchen door, stopping at the kitchen door before she exits.

GWYNETH

I just don't know.

GWYNETH moves to exit into the kitchen, quickly stopped by a calling IRA.

CONTINUED: 15.

IRA

(standing quickly)

Wait! Gwyn!

GWYNETH

Gwyneth darling.

IRA

Sorry. You mentioned something about Gatsby and Emilee earlier.

GWYNETH smiles at IRA as if empathetically.

GWYNETH

Ira,

(beat)

You're a sweet kid. But maybe you should consider being a bit more realistic. Just a bit of advice, kiddo.

GWYNETH exits into the kitchen.

IRA sits staring at the wall for a moment in thought. The silence is suddenly broken by the intercom BUZZING. IRA looks over quickly as if startled by the intercom, unsure of what to do. The intercom BUZZES a second time.

IRA makes his way toward the intercom, maintaining a safe distance as if the intercom were a dangerous wild animal. The intercom BUZZES a third time. IRA presses the 'talk' button on the intercom.

IRA

Umm... Hello?

Scene 3

As Christine speaks through the intercom, her voice increases in both annoyance, volume, and sense of discomfort.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

(in a cold, trembling voice; through the intercom)

Yes, hello?

IRA

Hello.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Yes, hello.

CONTINUED: 16.

A LOUD GROAN is heard in the background.

IRA

Hi.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Is this apartment 3A?

IRA

Yes. Is this Christine?

A second LOUD GROAN is heard in the background.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Yes. Would you buzz me up-

IRA

(interrupting; enthused and excited)

Oh, Hi!

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Yes. Hi. Can you please buzz us-

IRA

It's Ira! We met at the potluck last week!

A third LOUD GROAN is heard in the background.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Yes, I remember. It's rather cold out, Ira, can't you buzz us u-

IRA

How have you been?

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Can you fetch Gwyneth, Ira?

IRA

Oh, Gwyn isn't here.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Gwyneth.

IRA

Yes, sorry. Gwyneth is in the other room.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Well then is Emilee there?

IRA

No she's also in the other room. Though not in the same room as Gwyneth. She's getting changed in the bedroom. There was a small explosion.

CONTINUED: 17.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

I see. Well then, can you please buzz us up yourself?

IRA

Sure! Are you with the professor? I heard he's quite-

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

(yelling)

Ira I'm fucking freezing out here, buzz us the hell up!

IRA quickly buzzes up Christine, taking a couple backwards steps from the intercom out of a slight fear.

EMILEE enters from the bedroom behind an unknowing IRA, wearing a new dress. She sneaks behind IRA scaring him from behind.

IRA's sudden fright causes him to jump, fearfully knocking EMILEE to the ground with a swift motion. Attempting to help EMILEE quickly off the floor in a shear sense of embarrassment, IRA apologizes profusely for the incident.

The couple end up in a provocative physical proximity as IRA holds on to EMILEE once IRA has helped her stand.

EMILEE

(speaking while being helped up)

You know, some people like to be swept off their feet..

IRA

Jesus Christ I'm so incredibly sorry!

EMILEE

That's a shame. I've been getting into being knocked around by nervous men. We just need a safety word but otherwise,

(finally standing soundly)

I was hoping we can reproduce it all.

IRA

(severely embarrassed)

I'm so sorry...

EMILEE

(smiling)

Relax.

EMILEE grabs IRA'S hand flirtatiously, looking at it for a moment before continuing to speak.

CONTINUED: 18.

EMILEE

We just need a little coordination.

EMILEE begins flirtatiously dancing slowly with IRA.

They dance safely for a small moment before IRA remembers CHRISTINE, looking towards the door in waiting.

IRA

(watching the door intermittingly)
You know, Gwyn's been talking all night about her and
your brother..

EMILEE

(flirtatiously)

Is that right?

IRA

(nervously)

Uhm. Apparently things aren't going well until it's the royal wedding. Good style, Gwyneth calls it.

EMILEE

To be honest I never cared much for style.

EMILEE comes close to IRA as if considering kissing him.

EMILEE stops dancing as IRA nervously breaks the moment, much to EMILEE'S apparent dismay.

IRA

(nervously)

Christine's coming up the stairs by the way.. any moment now...

(beat)

EMILEE lets go of her part of the embrace, backing away from IRA. IRA attempts nervously to win back their previous position, finding an annoyed EMILEE unwilling to do so.

EMILEE

(annoyed)

I'll get her something, I guess.

EMILEE crosses toward the kitchen door. IRA follows her realizing what has happened.

CONTINUED: 19.

IRA

I'll go with you.

EMILEE stops quickly, causing IRA to stumble to a stop as well.

EMILEE

(annoyed)

It's alright.

IRA

(desperately)

Are you sure?

EMILEE

Yes.

EMILEE exits into the kitchen.

IRA, chasing EMILEE for a second turns back after she exits and crosses to the intercom, intermittingly pounding his head softly on the 'talk' button as if chastizing himself.

The intercom BUZZES along with every time IRA hits his head on it. Eventually after several soft pounds to the head, IRA places his back to the wall and sinks in slow embarrassment the ground.

The intercom BUZZES.

IRA is quickly caught off balance as a voice speaks over the intercom.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)
You alright there?

IRA stands quickly startled and examines the intercom before holding down the 'talk' button and speaking into it.

TRA

Umm.. yes?

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

You sure? Sounds like you're having a hard time getting something out.

IRA looks around nervously before holding down the intercom and speaking.

CONTINUED: 20.

IRA

Umm.. I guess..

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

(empathetically)

Well, what's going on?

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

Nothing.. I'm just.. having a bit of trouble saying what I need to say to someone.

(beat)

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Well.. have you come out with it to anyone yet?

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

Not yet, it's not that easy. There's a method, you know. A particular style about these people that makes them.. eccentric, I guess?

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

I know what you mean. Like sangria.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(confused)

I guess..

The intercom BUZZES

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

You've always been a bit different, huh? There's nothing wrong with being different, you know.

IRS looks particularly toward the intercom as if a tad confused, letting the feeling go after a beat.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

Sometimes I just wish there weren't so many rules, you know? I wish people were free to do what they wanted, like in musicals.

CONTINUED: 21.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Well, I think love is beautiful, no matter what kind of love it is. And if they can't accept you, well then you just need to go be gay somewhere else!

CHRISTINE enters from the front door.

IRA

(standing up to face the intercom; shocked and angered)

What! I'm not gay!

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Calm down. Pour yourself another sangria.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(angry)

I don't like sangria.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

What's wrong with sangria?

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(angry)

Nothing! It tastes pretty good honestly... with the fruits and all in it.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

It's ok to like fruity things.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

I'm not gay!

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Of course. You're just fond of sangria and musicals.

CONTINUED: 22.

CHRISTINE

Tra?

IRA quickly turns to face CHRISTINE in complete shock.

CHRISTINE

(suspiciously)

Are you alright, Ira?

IRA

Yes.. just.. talking to the man in the.. intercom...

CHRISTINE removes her coat, opening the coat closet and throwing it in before closing the door.

CHRISTINE

(crossing her arms)

The man... in the intercom...

IRA moves to speak, being interrupted by CHRISTINE as she crosses to the intercom, moving IRA aside and holding down the 'talk' button before she speaks.

CHRISTINE

(to the intercom, looking at Ira
skeptically)

Hello?

(beat)

The intercom is silent.

IRA

(embarrassed; in the background)

So.. how ya' been?

CHRISTINE

(to the intercom)

Hellooo?

The intercom is silent once again.

CHRISTINE lets go of the intercom button and crosses toward the kitchen door, stopping to quickly interrogate IRA from her short distance.

CHRISTINE

Ira, are you gay?

A moment of silence persists for a beat.

CONTINUED: 23.

IRA

(slow; nervous)

That's.. what I.. hear.

A moment of silence persists for a beat.

CHRISTINE

(crossing into the kitchen)

Ugh! I need a drink.

(to IRA; frankly)

You are one awkward person, Ira.

CHRISTINE crosses into the kitchen while he talks, exiting into the kitchen.

IRA speaks to the empty space aware of CHRISTINE'S ignoring him as she exits, simultaneously as he crosses slowly toward the intercom himself.

IRA

(crossing toward the intercom, appeasing, dismissive)

Emilee's in there making you a something to drink for you and you-

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(loudly whispering)

Why the hell didn't you say anything?!

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

I didn't want her to think you're talking to an intercom at a party.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

Well thank you. Now she thinks I'm a homosexual.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

I'm sorry. I heard everything through vent in my bedroom. Simple misunderstanding really.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

It's alright.

CONTINUED: 24.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Alright then, so what is it you're needing to say.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

I just need to tell someone I'm in love with them.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

A woman, then?

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(annoyed)

No. A turnip. Of course a woman!

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Just throwing it out there! Avoiding preconceptions, that's all.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(sligtly less annoyed)

Well.. yeah. I need to tell a woman I love her but it's.. it's proving more difficult than I originally thought.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Well, that's never as easy as it seems. I think it's best to simply come out with it. Like ripping off a band-aid. Give it a try.

IRA takes a beat to look into the intercom as if slightly confused before appearing to be looking lovingly into the intercom.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(quickly)

I.. love.. you.

A silence persists for an estranged moment.

CONTINUED: 25.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Thank.. you...

(beat)

I meant try it on her.

A suddenly frazzled IRA and MAN 1 shake themselves in embarrassment, both speaking embarrassed gibberish into and from the intercom for a moment until finally the embarrassed undiscernable discourse is broken by IRA speaking clearly.

IRA

I'll try it out then. I'll try it later.

A long silence persists for an estranged beat.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

(quickly)

Good then.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(quickly)

Good.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Good luck then.

IRA holds down the intercom.

IRA

(quickly)

Thank you.

IRA lets go of the intercom nervously before holding it down again.

IRA

Over and out.

(beat)

IRA backs away from the intercom nervously looking toward the kitchen door.

The intercom BUZZES.

CONTINUED: 26.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Don't do that.

IRA rushes toward the intercom, holding it down. EMILEE, CHRISTINE, and GWYNETH enter from the kitchen chuckling seemingly over pleasant conversation.

The girls catch IRA in his rant as they stare at him in complete confusion.

IRA

(intimately close to the intercom) I'm just noting the end of the conversation! Don't come barging up here with all that buzzing while everyone is in the roo-

GWYNETH

(loudly to catch his attention)

Ira!

IRA quickly and nervously turns around, smiling an awkward smile as he notices all three girls watching him.

(beat)

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Oh I see! Pizza's for 4G not 3A, sorry about that sir.

IRA smiles nervously.

IRA

(nervously)

Pizza... Wrong apartment.

GWYNETH

(softly)

Why don't we take a seat. Ira?

IRA nervously follows GWYNETH'S advice along with EMILEE and CHRISTINE as he crosses towards the couch, retrieving his mug of wine, and takes a seat next to GWYNETH on the couch opposite CHRISTINE and EMILEE.

Scene 4

CHRISTINE

So, Ira. When did your contempt for pizza delivery men become... available?

IRA

I... was molested...

The girls appear skeptical.

IRA

As a child.... by a pizza man.

A silence takes over the room for an embarrassing beat.

EMILEE quickly changes the subject.

EMILEE

Oh! Christine! Won't Dr. Hoenikker be joining us?

CHRISTINE

Yes! Barry decided to lay down for a moment on the couch by the mail slits downstairs before coming up the stairs. I have to admit, Emilee, it's quite inhospitable of Nathaniel and yourself, carrying on up here on the third floor the way you do.

EMILEE

(patronizing; annoyed)

Yes, I suppose it is.

GWYNETH

(oblivious)

Yes! I've been meaning to ask, Christine. It must have been somewhat challenging, announcing your relationship with Dr. Hoenikker?

CHRISTINE

If I may ask Gwyneth, how exactly did you arrive to that conclusion?

GWYNETH

(treading lightly)

Well.. it's just.. because he's so..

EMILEE

(vindictively rude)

Old! He's quite aged! Like a fine cheese.

EMILEE'S testy vindictive comment entertains IRA, who's attention is caught.

CONTINUED: 28.

CHRISTINE

(condescendingly)

Well, dearest Emilee, to some age is important. To others, loving and being loved is an exercise in compatibility and admiration.

EMILEE

I see.

CHRISTINE

(demeaning)

I suppose it would only seem practical once one has actually been wooed, my dear.

EMILEE forces a grudgingly fake smile.

GWYNETH

(with vigor to Christine)

Oh, but haven't you heard? Nathaniel has been plotting to mix up dear Emilee here with our great Gatsby!

The comment makes IRA stand suddenly at the sound of the news, much to the confusion of all in the room with exception to EMILEE who looks at him as if slightly concerned for his opinion.

Catching himself, IRA quickly takes back his seat. CHRISTINE condescendingly shoves a smile at Emilee who is caught staring at IRA. IRA does not return EMILEE'S gaze.

CHRISTINE

(cunning)

Lucky you, Emilee!

EMILEE catches her gaze and adjusts her attention to CHRISTINE, smiling as if happy about the prospect.

EMILEE

(patronizing)

Thank you. I look forward to meeting the gentleman.

GWYNETH

(quickly oblivious; enthusiastically interrupting)

Oh, Gatsby is grand! He's been everywhere you can think of, Emilee! His mother is an accountant for Pan-Am, so he gets free tickets across the world.

GWYNETH quickly crosses to the shoulder of the couch EMILEE is seated on in excitement, seating herself on the shoulder to share her excitement with EMILEE.

CONTINUED: 29.

GWYNETH

Do you imagine, Emilee? Visiting London, Rome, the Louvre, the Riviera! All while sharing your arm with a man as irresistably well read and adorably charming as Gatsby!

EMILEE

(appeasing)

Yes, I imagine it would be wonderful.

GWYNETH, smiling intensely at EMILEE, takes notice of IRA's seeming lethargy. She stands off the couch shoulder.

GWYNETH

(to Ira)

Oh enough of this woman talk.

(to everybody)

I could see Ira sleeping in his boots there.

EMILEE gazes at IRA as if not knowing what to say. IRA stares at the floor.

CHRISTINE catches wind of the subtle tenseness between the two of them. Finding it entertaining, CHRISTINE pushes the button further.

CHRISTINE

(cunning)

Oh, but my dearest Gwyneth, we cannot go on as if Gatsby's conquest of Emilee is hardly conversation worthy!

(standing up in faux excitement)

It's the announcement of the century! And to think I had it bagged with Barry! Seems like you've got my number, Emilee.

IRA stands up.

IRA

(to Emilee)

Excuse me.

(to everybody)

I need to use the bathroom.

IRA exits through the bedroom door. EMILEE looks after IRA as he leaves, ignoring the consequent conversation.

CHRISTINE

(cunning)

I hope he's not sick.

CONTINUED: 30.

GWYNETH

Oh, he'll be fine.

CHRISTINE

(to Emilee)

He seems rather hung up doesn't he?

EMILEE ignores CHRISTINE, focusing on the bedroom door.

CHRISTINE

Emilee?

EMILEE suddenly turns to face CHRISTINE.

EMILEE

What?

CHRISTINE

(conniving)

Ira. He seems hung up, don't you think dear?

EMILEE

(defensively)

He's just using the bathroom.

CHRISTINE

It seems that way.

EMILEE

What's that supposed to mean?

GWYNETH

Oh, calm down Emilee.

EMILEE stands up quickly, putting her drink on the table.

EMILEE

Nathan will be-

CHRISTINE

Nathaniel, darling.

EMILEE

My brother.. will be coming home soon. I should prepare.

CHRISTINE

How very hospitable of you.

EMILEE exaggerates a curtsy and exits into the kitchen.

Scene 5

GWYNETH

I'm sorry, Christine. I don't know what's gotten into her lately.

CHRISTINE

(eying the bedroom door)

Oh, I think I do. Interestingly enough dear, I actually ran into Nathaniel on the way over.

GWYNETH

On the street?

CHRISTINE

Yes. He was on his way to get Riley, he said.

GWYNETH

Yes! They were held up on some artistic subway platform.

CHRISTINE gets up and crosses toward GWYNETH, sitting on the arm of the couch.

CHRISTINE

He said so. We had quite an interesting conversation about you.

GWYNETH

(interested, happily)

Really? What about?

CHRISTINE

Well, he wasn't as happy to talk to me as I was him.

GWYNETH appears as if innocently concerned.

CHRISTINE

You see, I was placed recently in quite a compromising position.

GWYNETH

And what position would that be?

CHRISTINE

The position to out the two of you. (beat)

GWYNETH

(quickly, standing up)

Excuse me?

CONTINUED: 32.

CHRISTINE

Please, Gwyneth. You know well of what I'm talking.

GWYNETH

I assure you, I'm not entirely sure.

GWYNETH crosses in concern to serve herself more wine.

CHRISTINE

Well, it appears that Nathaniel and yourself have been pursuing an intimate tryst absent of public acknowledgement.

GWYNETH

In the nature of such things, I suppose. Stil, I can't entirely see how that would involve a position of your own.

CHRISTINE

Well, I feel as if it's my unfortunate responsibility to a civilized public discourse to make known your nefariously private activity.

GWYNETH

I assure you, Christine, Nathaniel is par to your course himself already. Frankly, I'm not entirely sure of your intention.

CHRISTINE swiftly stands and crosses to the opposite couch, sitting opposite GWYNETH, who is compelled to sit as well.

CHRISTINE

My intention is simply to commit to the ideal for which our integrity stands, my dear Gwyneth. Of course, my allegiance to integrity does not always outrank my personal allegiances, if the feeling is mutual, of course. You see, I have my own problems I could... use a friend for.

GWYNETH

(languidly; confused)

I see.

CHRISTINE

Let me speak plainly. I know things about you. Seeing as I have my own pursuits, I think we might be able to help each other.

GWYNETH

(annoyed, standing up)

(MORE)

CONTINUED: 33.

GWYNETH (cont'd)

You want blackmailing me? With something Nathaniel is going to announce publicly.. tonight. I don't think you've quite thought this through, Christine.

CHRISTINE

I don't think you're understanding me, Gwyneth. Why don't you sit down.

GWYNETH

(angrily, pointing at the door)
Why don't you get out!

CHRISTINE

Maybe that's not such a good idea.

GWYNETH

Maybe I can form my own judgments.

CHRISTINE stands up slowly.

CHRISTINE

Well.. if that's right.

CHRISTINE crosses to the coat closet, speaking as she exits into it, reaching through it for her purse. GWYNETH maintains her back to CHRISTINE as CHRISTINE speaks.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

It's rather unfortunate you'd be overwhealmed with the situation. You know, it's going to be difficult for me, seeing as I actually kind of like you Gwyneth.

GWYNETH

There's nothing you can say Nathaniel won't already announce tonight.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Now, dearest.

CHRISTINE reenters from the coat closet with her purse and a small green card in her hand.

CHRISTINE

I doubt that.

GWYNETH turns around to face CHRISTINE.

GWYNETH

(quickly)

What is that?

CONTINUED: 34.

CHRISTINE

It's your voter's registration, darling.

GWYNETH appears panicked, beginning to cross towards CHRISTINE before she's stopped by CHRISTINE'S speaking.

CHRISTINE

Eh! Sorry darlin', I've made a couple copies, you know, in case one were to mysteriously go missing.

CHRISTINE begins pacing around GWYNETH as she speaks in a manipulative manner.

CHRISTINE

It must be hard to hide, dear. I mean, so many nights. So many conversations. So many lies. What will be done with you? You'll be... burned at the stake at least, I mean.. A Republican!

GWYNETH, seemingly in a panic, quickly crosses toward CHRISTINE holding her to shut her up.

GWYNETH

(looking around fearfully)

Shhhhhh!

(beat)

What the hell is it you want?

CHRISTINE

(in GWYNETH'S arms)

Simple. I need a favor.

CHRISTINE releases herself from GWYNETH'S grasp, slowly crossing a short distance as she speaks before turning to back to face GWYNETH.

CHRISTINE

As you know, Gatsby will be coming this evening and I find myself in a very particular position. My discussion with Nathaniel has allowed him to agree to defend your honor, he's quite a catch by the way, congratulations. He's agreed to put myself forward to Gatsby upon his arrival in return for my secrecy. As you may know, there is only an individual in the way of my splendidly novel affair.

GWYNETH

Dr. Hoenikker.

CHRISTINE

(turning back to face GWYNETH)

Precisely!

CONTINUED: 35.

(crossing back toward GWYNETH)

I need you to handle this sensitive situation for me.

GWYNETH

You want me to seduce Dr. Hoenikker?

CHRISTINE

(scoffing)

Oh no dear, I wouldn't dream of it! I simply ask that you poison him!

GWYNETH

(in awe)

What?

CHRISTINE reaches in her purse pulling out a small vial.

CHRISTINE

I've managed to swipe this vile of water hemlock from the lab at BU. Simply spread some on his lips at any point in the evening. He will seem to die of natural causes, thus freeing myself up for Gatsby's advances, and yourself from suspicion. Genius, no?

GWYNETH appears speechless for a short moment.

GWYNETH

Isn't that.. a little old fashioned?

CHRISTINE

(annoyed)

What does it matter? Anyway, I take it we have an agreement?

GWYNETH appears to be taking a moment to think.

CHRISTINE flashes the voters registration card in front of GWYNETH.

GWYNETH

(reluctant)

Fine.

(beat)

Fine.

CHRISTINE appears splendidly appeared.

GWYNETH quickly reaches for the vial, snatching it from CHRISTINE before taking note of the registration. CHRISTINE notices GWYNETH'S staring.

CONTINUED: 36.

CHRISTINE

Did you want this as well, darling?

CHRISTINE places the voter's registration in front of GWYNETH. GWYNETH quickly snatches it as if desperate.

CHRISTINE

Remember darling...

EMILEE enters from the kitchen door.

CHRISTINE does not acknowledge her entrance as Gwyneth looks back at the sound of the door opening.

CHRISTINE

(coming close to Gwyneth, loud whisper)
I have several more.

EMILEE

I'm sorry. I'm afraid I'll need to steal Gwyneth for a moment, Christine.

GWYNETH looks at EMILEE nervously before looking back at CHRISTINE as if afraid. Attempting to speak, GWYNETH nervously utters rubbish for a second before being purposefully interrupted by a new, pleasant CHRISTINE.

CHRISTINE

It's quite alright dear. Why don't you tend to her, see if she needs anything.

A seemingly scared GWYNETH stands staring at CHRISTINE for a moment before speaking.

GWYNETH

Excuse me.

(beat)

I'll be right back.

CHRISTINE

Yes, dear. That sounds absolutely splendid.

IRA enters from the bedroom door.

GWYNETH

Excuse me.

GWYNETH and EMILEE exit through the kitchen door. IRA, confused by the sudden activity, watches skeptically as they exit.

CONTINUED: 37.

CHRISTINE

Tra!

CHRISTINE stands up and crosses towards IRA, collecting a drink from the table for him.

CHRISTINE

(crossing)

I wish you had told me sooner, love.

CHRISTINE hands IRA the drink, maintaining little space between the two.

IRA

(annoyed)

I'm not gay Christine.

CHRISTINE

(sensually)

You know. I know a couple things about you, Ira.

CHRISTINE traps IRA between herself and the intercom. IRA nervously shrugs.

IRA

(uncomfortable)

Ok.,

CHRISTINE

(sensually)

I know you want Emilee, for example. I know you're in love with Emilee. I know the thought of Gatsby's hands on her makes you downright.. rabid, isn't there?

IRA attempts to speak in his defense. CHRISTINE puts her finger on IRA's lips as if preparing to sexually jump him.

IRA appears severely uncomfortable, attempting to back away unsuccessfully as if in fear.

CHRISTINE

(attempting to pull herself towards IRA to kiss him)

There's something about you that makes me downright.. rabid.

SUDDENLY, the intercom BUZZES loudly.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

(loudly)

Hello?

CONTINUED: 38.

CHRISTINE squeals at the sudden noise from the intercom as IRA is nervously scared. IRA nervously and quickly turns around to face the intercom and holds down the button to speak.

IRA

(quickly and nervously)

Yes! Hello! Hi! Hello!

After the fright, CHRISTINE appears annoyed by the interruption.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Yeah, this is the super. I got some old guy sleeping down here. Tried to wake him up, but.. um.. he's kind of unresponsive.

CHRISTINE moves IRA aside as if concerned.

CHRISTINE

Is he still breathing?

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Umm... yeah. He's definitely breathing.

CHRISTINE

(disappointed)

Oh. Can you just wake him up and tell him to walk up to the third floor please?

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Umm.. I'm sorry ma'am, that doesn't seem like a possibility.

CHRISTINE

(annoyed)

Why not?

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Well, you see I've already tried to wake him up. He just keeps smacking me with his cane.

CHRISTINE

Oh don't be such a Frenchman! Tell him there are cucumber sandwiches up here and he'll be up like a shot.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Ma'am, I think he's having a nightmare.

CONTINUED: 39.

CHRISTINE

What's he doing?

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Screaming about Hitler being Charlie Chaplin in disguise. Yeah.. you're going to have to come down and get hi-

CHRISTINE

(angrily)

Ugh! I'll be there in a second!

CHRISTINE shoves IRA aside and ignores him as she crosses towards the front door and exits.

IRA stands in shock, leaning in relief against the wall and presuming a great sigh.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Umm.. Hello?

IRA holds the button

IRA

She's gone.

(beat)

Thanks.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

You're welcome. Sounded.. heavy.

IRA

Yeah.

IRA sits down leaving his arm elevated as his finger holds down the button as he speaks.

IRA

I don't know what's wrong with that girl.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

She sounds like a hedonist.

IRA

A what?

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

A hedonist. You know, someone who's entire life revolves around the pursuit of personal gratification.

CONTINUED: 40.

IRA

Isn't that everybody?

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

I guess. Sounds like she doesn't care who she runs over on the way though.

IRA

Yeah I guess.

EMILEE enters holding two glasses and a bottle of whiskey. She stops quickly confused by IRA seated on the floor.

IRA quickly stands up and begins quickly speaking into the intercom.

IRA

Yeah, sorry about that I hope you find the person you're looking for!
(beat)

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

(slightly confused)

Yeah.. Sorry about that.

Scene 6

EMILEE crosses to the table side of the couch, placing one glass on the table.

EMILEE

You ok?

IRA

(nervous)

Yeah.

(calmer)

Yes. How's your night going?

EMILEE

(sighing)

Ugh.

EMILEE serves two glasses of whiskey, lifting one towards IRA as if cuing him towards her.

IRA crosses toward the back side of the couch, grasping the glass.

EMILEE crosses around the couch to meet IRA on the backside of the couch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 41.

EMILEE

This is the worst party we've ever had.

IRA

I was under the impression the party hadn't started yet.

EMILEE looks around, prompting IRA to look around. The two laugh together noticing the empty room.

EMILEE

Sounds about right. You know, I don't mean to bring it up... but.. I don't have any intention of going anywhere with Gatsby.

IRA

(skeptical)

Is that right?

EMILEE

Yeah! I don't know why I bring it up. But.. it's true. (beat)

(fake embarrassed chuckle)

It's not like it matters... right?

EMILEE looks to IRA as if asking a genuine question. IRA appears as if he is about to speak, finding himself particularly speechless at the moment.

EMILEE crosses around the couch and sits while she speaks. IRA follows her for a second before he sits on the back spine of the couch looking at her. Both maintain their drinks in their hands.

EMILEE

My brother said it would be good for me. He said Gatsby's popular and smart. Everybody loves him. 'He's in touch', he says. To be honest, I really don't care about that stuff.

IRA

(skeptical)

Really?

EMILEE lifts her head and sits up, placing her drink on the table.

EMILEE

Yeah.

(beat)

Did you think so?

CONTINUED: 42.

IRA

Did I think what?

EMILEE

Think I was like them? Like Gwyn and Christine.

IRA

You're not them.

EMILEE

You know what I mean. Did you think I was.. concerned? (beat)

IRA

Umm..

EMILEE stands up.

EMILEE

You think I'm like them!

IRA

I already said I didn't. I don't think you're-

EMILEE

(crossing around the couch to IRA)
What? Contemptuous? Demeaning and image obsessed? Some half-assed ragged intellectual type? What?

IRA

What did I say?

EMILEE

You haven't said anything! You've been sitting here all night and you haven't said a thing!

IRA

I don't know if I should even be here anymore. The few opinions I have heard of me pin me as some drab, underdeveloped, disconnected prick. I'm not even sure what we're arguing about!

(beat)

EMILEE approaches IRA, getting close to him and looking into his eyes.

EMILEE

(softly)

Ira, I want you to do something!

CONTINUED: 43.

NATHANIEL, EARNEST, CECILY, RILEY, SYBIL, CHRISTINE and a slow DR. HOENIKKER enter through the front door in a loud bang of conversation. The conversation settles quickly as soon as they notice EMILEE and IRA standing so close together.

EMILEE and IRA continue looking at each other, ignoring the other people in the room.

EMILEE

Do something, Ira.

IRA stands still staring at EMILEE as if nervous.

GWYNETH quickly enters after the silence from the kitchen door holding a tray full of drinks.

GWYNETH

(stopping when noticing EMILEE and IRA together)

Drinks for everybo...

EMILEE

(to IRA)

Do something.

IRA stands looking at EMILEE for a moment before he turns his head to look at the gang of people.

(beat)

NATHANIEL

Hey.. Ira.

(beat)

NATHANIEL's speaking breaks the lack of movement as everyone starts taking off their coats and CHRISTINE walks DR. HOENIKKER to the couch.

Emilee, amidst the new noisy scuffle, is given a drink by the touring Gwyneth as she stands close to IRA with the whiskey drink still in his hand. She stares at IRA with a great contempt.

EMILEE, after a moment, forces an honestly fake smile and knocks her glass into IRA.

EMILEE

Here's looking at you, Ira.

EMILEE throws her drink down her throat before placing her empty glass inside IRA's glass full of whiskey, crossing across the room to say hi to everybody in the party.

CONTINUED: 44.

IRA watches her as she crosses, trying to speak as she walks by, finding himself unable to do so.

BLACKOUT.

ACT 2

Scene 1

The party goes on as all the party-goers sit in conversation in the living room sipping on their drinks. EMILEE sits widely apart from IRA, who is quiet trying to look at her without being noticed.

GWYNETH sits next to NATHANIEL on the couch. CHRISTINE and a seeming comatose DR. HOENIKKER sit closeby.

RILEY stands as he speaks as EARNEST sits on the arm of the couch next to SYBIL who sits on the couch sneaking looks at NATHANIEL whenever she can. GWYNETH takes note of this as SYBIL tries to avoid being caught staring.

RILEY

All I'm saying is that if there is anything wrong with America, it's England's fault.

EARNEST

I find this, although endearing..

(raises a glass to Riley)

Highly suspect at best. Americans are cynical, uneducated creatures who's contempt for intellectual stimulation is as alive as the raw sewage their fast food regiments perpetually shove down their throats.

(to Reily)

Such is not so in England, my dear friend.

CECILY moans in disagreement.

CECILY

I'm sorry Earnest, but that famous English charm only goes so far.

EARNEST

How far, would you say?

CECILY

Well.. the accent is nice.

EARNEST

(standing up)

This is not an accent!

SYBIL

Oh, calm down Earnest.

CONTINUED: 46.

EARNEST

No, Sybil! It is a tired and counterintuitive notion, the *English accent*! We are English! Would one say the Romans spoke accented Italian!

RILEY

One would say the Romans spoke accented latin, my dear friend.

EARNEST

The point is the English have little to do with the worldly state of affairs!

RILEY

Agreed! Of course with the exception of the international tea and pastry markets!

CHRISTINE

You know, I think it's all those bloody Catholics.

NATHANIEL

Hunter is a catholic.

GWYNETH

Which one is Hunter, again?

NATHANIEL

He's the one who had a piece published in The New Yorker!

CECILY

Oh yes, the letters to the editor piece.

NATHANIEL

Yes, it was splendid.

GWYNETH

What was the premise again?

NATHANIEL

A scathing criticism of the female orgasm.

SIBYL

A criticism?

NATHANIEL

Yes, he said the incessant laughing...

CECILY

The laughing.. during an orgasm?

CONTINUED: 47.

NATHANIEL

Yes.

CHRISTINE

Seems to me like reverse Freudian penis envy... Vaginal envy rather.

(to NATHANIEL)

I'm not sure Hunter has ever witnessed an orgasm in actuality, dear.

CECILY

(giggling)

Boom!

CHRISTINE

(to Cecily)

What?

CECILY

(explaining)

Boom!

RILEY

What's that supposed to mean?

CECILY

(giggling)

When someone says something daring, you're supposed to say 'boom!'. I saw it on Dexter.

RILEY

(giggling)

I see. Well then, 'boom!' Christine.

CHRISTINE

Thank you, I suppose.

(to NATHANIEL)

I still think Hunter has no reliable experience to draw from.

CECILY

(quickly, giggling)

Boom!

RILEY

(quickly, chuckling)

Boom!

CHRISTINE, seemingly annoyed, languidly joins in.

CHRISTINE

(sighing)

Boom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 48.

(beat)

NATHANIEL

Well then, I think he has! It's simply an issue born from a modern sociotheological conflict.

RILEY

I've heard of that! Catholics aren't allowed to moan within an eight foot radius of a bedroom, men and boys excluded, of course.

CHRISTINE

So what are we to do? Simply lay there in silence?

EARNEST

That would be horridly inhospitable. You could always fall back on polite conversation.

CHRISTINE

(sarcastically)

Of course. Let us talk weather while you're inside me.

EARNEST

With all the civility of a gracious host.

SYBIL

Oh please, Earnest. You don't agree with Hunter, do you?

EARNEST

Of course not. Personally, I play my Tchaikovsky records during love making.

GWYNETH

Oh, the Nutcracker? That piece is beautiful in the beginning.

GWYNETH hums the melody of The Nutcracker out loud while pretending to conduct an orchestra with her hands.

EARNEST

That's quite nice but no, I much prefer the 1812 overture for love making.

GWYNETH

(innocently)

Which one is that?

EARNEST

The ones with the cannons and the fireworks. You know,

CONTINUED: 49.

EARNEST enthusiastically hums the melody of 1812 Overture, stomping his feet in place of the cannons. Riley smiles and applauds in response.

CECILY

Is it some kind of celebratory gesture?

EARNEST

I feel it completes the carnal experience, if you time it correctly. The final cannons should come in during the last seconds before the dismount.

CECILY

Well obviously Earnest is... British.. but my primary concern is with the notion that women need to desensitize themselves to the pleasures of sex.

RILEY

I don't think you should so much mind it, Christine. It's just Hunter and his posse of Jesus fanatics.

(finishing off the wine in his glass)
I personally don't believe Hunter is any more a true genius than Obama is a true liberal.

SYBIL

Oh c'mon now Riley. I don't agree with him but he's quite smart.

RILEY serves himself box wine from the couch-side table.

CECILY

Yes, but he's so rigidly catholic. It's quite unbecoming of a modern intellectual.

Cecily finishes her own drink.

RILEY

CECILY

Why thank you, darling.

RILEY serves CHRISTINE wine from the box.

Scene 2

CHRISTINE stands up as she speaks, having her seat quickly stolen by RILEY. She paces about, eventually ending up next to a seemingly distracted EMILEE.

CHRISTINE

Well, if we might be able to amend the script for a more pleasant conversation, I believe there's been something of a rumor rushing about concerning none other than our very own Emilee!

EMILEE

(caught off guard)

Huh, what?

SYBIL

Well you're hardly mysterious, aren't you darling.

CHRISTINE

It's true EMILEE.

(to Nathaniel)

I have to admit, it's rather daring of you, Nathaniel, to see off your younger sister to a man like Gatsby.

NATHANIEL appears angered.

NATHANIEL

(offended)

And what of a man like Gatsby? I have to admit, Christine, it's rather tired and tacky, frankly, to sort one's conclusions from a rumor. There is nothing to be said that cannot be announced. Rumors are the product of a cowardly life, as is the nature all private lives. I assume Gatsby is proper enough to announce his intention, much in the same way we all plan to.

GWYNETH coughs up her wine in shock of NATHANIEL's statement, spilling her drink everywhere.

CHRISTINE

(quickly; cunning)

Well then, Nathaniel, I would hope there is a fitting announcement keeping your offense company, seeing as my unintended curiosity so keenly your attention caught.

NATHANIEL slowly sits down as he speaks.

NATHANIEL

(slowly; appearing angry)

I don't wish to wake Dr. Hoenikker.

CONTINUED: 51.

(beat)

RILEY

Well.. So much for pleasant conversation.

CECILY

While I agree, Riley, I feel Nathaniel is right. It's best to make things open, isn't it? I mean, we're all lovely friends. We should be able to accept each other's... quirks.

RILEY

Is it to suggest we play a friendly game of tension?

SYBIL

I think there's little room between friends for misplaced offense.

(to NATHANIEL)

I'm sure Christine meant nothing of it.

CHRISTINE

(sarcastically polite)

An interpretation! Why thank you Sybil. Yet, with a name as sincere as your own, one would think you'd be endearingly less courtly. But I suppose the irony would be lost on some.

SYBIL

(defensive; faux politeness)

It's my pleasure dear, as I see the eloquent well of wit is all but run dry. I'm relieved I need not remind you of the modern contempt for names and titles. I'm only happy to know that surely your own will come adrift safely in Dr. Hoenikker's will once his own... wit.. has run dry, which safely enough, counting on his.. seeming condition, cannot be too distant an event to attend. And all wit be well, for is it not a title you sought in him to begin with?

EARNEST stands in objection, brought back to his seat by the calm raising of CHRISTINE's hand.

CHRISTINE

Agreed, it is. With such a name comes such a mind. With such a mind, such a thought, and so on until such is made interesting with complexities. I find it quite dreary that such is not always the modern case, simple, I'm mean, Sybil.

RILEY stands in objection, brought back to his seat by the calm raising of SYBIL's hand.

CONTINUED: 52.

SYBIL

You're quite right, dear. Lovingly modern measure, as I suppose a complex man can only be measured with an equally complex palate. I only regret the evening's hospitality cannot supply for you an equally geriatric wine for your tastes. And yet you're hardly found wanting. Well then, surely, you must be worth your weight in complexity.

EARNEST stands in objection.

EARNEST

(angrily; proper)

Sybil, I will not stand for your offenses.

SYBIL

(quickly; annoyed; to Earnest)

Clearly.

RILEY stands in objection.

RILEY

(angrily; proper)

Nor I for yours Earnest.

EARNEST

I contend that Christine is quite complex.

CHRISTINE appears annoyed with EARNEST's objections.

SYBIL

(sly)

Agreed.

RILEY appears confused by her agreement, but stands his ground as EARNEST speaks.

EARNEST

(facing CHRISTINE as he speaks)

And were she ever less complex than in her current state, I would maintain she is ever more complex than yourself.

SYBIL

(slowly)

By leaps and bounds, darling.

CECILY stands up.

CECILY

(yelling)

BOOM!

CONTINUED: 53.

The party goers all flinch at CECILY's antic as she quickly sits down. SYBIL sits triumphantly still.

EARNEST paces the room slowly as he speaks as he were in a courtroom.

EARNEST

(to SYBIL)

Please Sybil, admit you've gone rather dry and out of line talking like that to Christine.

(as a lawyer would a jury)

Christine is owed an apology, and I shall not have it objected with wittingly bad humor.

RILEY paces the room slowly as he speaks, as he were in a courtroom himself.

RILEY

I don't mean to disagree with you Earnest, but I actually think it an interesting subject for conversation. Frankly, why else would Christine involve herself with a famous university professor like Dr. Hoenikker?

CECILY stands as if having something important to say.

CECILY

(qotcha!)

Does he have health insurance?

The partygoers look to each other as if thrown off by the statement.

SYBIL

(concerned)

Maybe you should sit, darling.

CECILY is escorted down to her seat by a seemingly concerned SYBIL.

GWYNETH

Honestly Riley, I think it quite unlike you to open a forum for criticism in the presence of the subject. You did the same last week with Ira, feeling no need then to bring it up without his absence.

RILEY

And do you suppose, Gwyneth, it belittles the point of your *current* argument to state plainly in Ira's presence that such a forum occured?

CONTINUED: 54.

GWYNETH sits silently for a moment. GWYNETH (less proclaimed;defensively) It only seems honest. RILEY Yes, it would only seem it. GWYNETH, embarrassed by the response, sips her drink as if bowing out of the argument. RILEY, acknowledging his own argumentative victory over GWYNETH, smiles cynically. RILEY Then, we agree. (to CHRISTINE) So? CHRISTINE (to RILEY, seriously) So. RILEY On with it. (beat) CHRISTINE (angrily) I don't wish to play this game with you, Riley. RILEY Oh come on! Were all friends! (beat) Right? (beat) IRA stands up. IRA I'm sorry. (to Nathaniel) Is there a fire escape in the kitchen? RILEY (cunning)

Is there a fire?

I don't like to smoke indoors.

IRA

CONTINUED: 55.

EMILEE

(standing up)

It's in the bedroom. I'll show you.

CECILY

(innocently; catching Emilee's arm)
Wait! You never said anything about the Gatsby
situation!

EMILEE looks nervously at IRA and then at NATHANIEL.

NATHANIEL

Gatsby's a marvelous gentleman and a -

CECILY

I know what you think, Nathaniel. What does she think?

EMILEE looks nervously again at an attentive IRA and a seemingly uninterested NATHANIEL.

EMILEE stops to look at NATHANIEL as she speaks, lifting her head to IRA as soon as she has finished speaking.

EMILEE

(nervously slow)

I think... it sounds wonderful.

CECILY

Me too!

IRA begins to cross toward the bedroom. EMILEE attempts to follow him, being held back for a slight moment by CECILY clenching her arm.

EMILEE

(quickly; nervously)

Let me show you where i-

IRA

(quickly crossing, back facing the party goers)

I'm sure I can find it.

NATHANIEL

It looks like a trap door.

IRA

(cunningly)

I believe it would.

IRA exits into the bedroom door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 56.

EMILEE sits down slowly, watching the bedroom door as she sits and speaks.

CECILY

(innocently; to Emilee)

Emilee, you'd think your friend was sitting at a funeral.

CHRISTINE

He may well be.

EARNEST

(to Christine)

We shouldn't mind him. That friend of yours, Emilee-

EMILEE

(to Earnest)

Ira.

EARNEST

(to Emilee)

Sorry?

EMILEE

His name is Ira.

EARNEST

(to EMILEE)

How unfortunate. That's spelled "I", "R", "A" is it?

EMILEE

(faux adoring)

Oh Earnest! Don't you just love the irony?

EARNEST

(entertained; giddy)

I'm not all arsenic and old lace, you know!

EMILEE stands up.

EMILEE

(bubbly)

It's just...I suppose the odds.. they're.. immeasurable!

EMILEE emphatically crosses towards the bedroom door.

EARNEST

What odds are those, love?

EMILEE

(bubbly)

The odds you'd both be named after things you know anything about!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 57.

EARNEST stands largely embarrassed by the statement. The partygoers all appear a tad embarrassed by the comment with the exception of SYBIL, who appears to have found it entertaining.

NATHANIEL stands up angrily.

NATHANTEL

(angrily)

Emilee! Where is your hospitality?

(to Earnest)

I'm sorry, Earnest.

CECILY

(to herself; shocked; slowly)

Boom.

EARNEST

It's alri-

EMILEE

Actually dear brother, I'm forced to be a tad less hospitable yet. Excuse me for just one moment, please.

EMILEE crosses to the bedroom doorway, being stopped to attention by NATHANIEL.

NATHANIEL

(annoyed)

Where are you going?

EMILEE, stopping to think, quickly crosses towards EARNEST, quickly going through his pockets and pulling out a pack of cigarettes.

EMILEE

(bubbly)

I'm grabbing a smoke!

NATHANIEL

(suspecting)

And when did you start smoking?

EMILEE crosses quickly back towards the bedroom doorway, stopping to turn around and speak to NATHANIEL.

EMILEE

(bubbly; examining the cigarettes)

When it became so fashionable to roll your own.

EMILEE exits through the bedroom door.

CONTINUED: 58.

NATHANIEL

(to Earnest)

You roll your own cigarettes?

EARNEST

(offended)

Of course!

(fixing his nonexistent cuff links)

I'm not a savage!

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 3

LIGHTS UP.

IRA stands at a fire escape smoking a cigarette and shivering from the cold.

EMILEE enters from the fire escape window.

IRA attempts ignoring her entrance. EMILEE stands next to IRA looking out for a moment. She fails to light her cigarette for several attempts before IRA reaches into his pocket and lights it for her.

EMILEE and IRA both look out into the night as they speak.

IRA

That's bad for you, you know.

EMILEE

Isn't everything? Besides, it's hand rolled, and all natural.

IRA

So is opium.

EMILEE

As they do.

(beat)

EMILEE smokes her cigarette in silence for a moment before casting it off to the wind. The wind chills her.

EMILEE takes note of IRA's shivering. IRA does not look at EMILEE as she speaks.

CONTINUED: 59.

EMILEE

You're cold.

IRA

I could say the same.

EMILEE

That's New England for you.

IRA

That's not what I meant.

EMILEE

Me either.

(beat)

I just thought we should talk.

IRA

What about?

EMILEE

(seemingly annoyed)

I'd hope it would be obvious.

IRA

(cynical)

There's little conventional wisdom these days.

EMILEE

(annoyed)

What's that supposed to mean?

IRA

Nothing.

EMILEE

And how am I supposed to respond, Ira? You seem more interested in freezing over than having any kind of conversation with me!

IRA

That's New England for you.

EMILEE

That's not what I'm talking about!

IRA

Me either.

GWYNETH enters from the fire escape window wearing a winter coat.

GWYNETH squeezes in the small space between IRA and EMILEE, clearly annoying the two of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 60.

GWYNETH

Am I interrupting?

EMILEE

You're fine.

GWYNETH

Next time then.

EMILEE

(annoyed)

I'm sorry Gwyn, I'll -

GWYNETH

Gwyneth, darling.

EMILEE bites her tongue, noticeably against her will.

EMILEE

Gwyneth.. might you excuse us for a moment?

GWYNETH

You know Emilee, private lives are for cheating congressmen and Noel Coward. They're hardly honest, and never hospitable. Just saying..

EMILEE

I'll see you in the living room, Gwyneth. Thank you for your advice.

GWYNETH

Welcome.

(pulling a cigarette from her coat pocket; to Ira)

How long does it take to smoke a cigarette?

IRA

I'm sure you should be all done by now.

GWYNETH

Thank you.

GWYNETH throws the cigarette over the fire escape.

GWYNETH exits through the fire escape window.

EMILEE and IRA stand together shivering in silence before they move closer together for warmth.

EMILEE

Ira,

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 61.

EMILEE (cont'd)

don't be so angry. It'll be fine, eventually. Everything will fall in it's proper place and-

IRA

Do me a favor, Emilee. Let's not talk proper. I can only assume we're not speaking about the same thing.

EMILEE

(angrily)

Well then, would you care to share with me exactly what the hell your problem is?

(beat)

We have a wonderful evening last week and then you come here, I'm hoping to reproduce the night, and somewhere in the middle of it all I seem to have turned into Mrs. Robinson. You've made little incident of your regard for me an-

IRA

(angrily)

Is that what you want, Emilee? You want me to make some New York Times announcement to a *minute* public as if we're 19th century aristocrats? All while the same ridiculous group of people expect your newest lover to walk through the door at any moment? The whole situation frankly is ridicu-

EMILEE appears to have an epiphany.

EMILEE

(smiling)

This can't be about Gatsby!

IRA

(angrily)

How can this not be about Gatsby?

EMILEE laughs out loud. IRA, scolding her with a stern look, causes EMILEE to attempt biting her lips to keep from laughing.

EMILEE, who cannot contain herself, fails to hold her lips together and laughs out loud once more.

IRA

You can't be serious Emilee?

EMILEE places both her hands over her mouth to stop the laughter.

CONTINUED: 62.

IRA

This was stupid. The whole night's been stupid.

IRA steps away from EMILEE, with his back to her.

IRA

I shouldn't have come here.

EMILEE

(loud, smiling, happily)

Oh, for the love of God!

EMILEE pulls IRA around back towards her, kissing him passionately for several moments before the two stand in each other's arms.

IRA

What about Gatsby?

EMILEE

What about him?

(beat)

He'll arrive, and the crowds will cheer and the band will play, I suppose.

IRA

Yes.

EMILEE

And I'll already be spoken for.

IRA

(sarcastically)

That'll go over with your brother.

EMILEE

Is it Nathan you're interested in? I could put in a good word, if you'd like.

IRA

Being a homosexual is no joking matter. Besides.. you stated *your own* interest in Gatsby in so many words.

EMILEE

I was just filling the air! What would it hurt to make all their illusions come true, Ira? They're all ridiculous and judgemental and they're.. downright Bostonian! But they're the only people I know! I just.. tell them what they want to hear! Like Woody Allen does with his sponsor at pedo's anonymous.

CONTINUED: 63.

IRA

That was rude.

EMILEE

(empathetically)

You're right.

EMILEE looks into the audience and shrugs apologetically.

(beat)

IRA

This is serious.

EMILEE

Hey, you never know!

IRA looks confused.

EMILEE

((pointing towards the audience))

He could be in there

IRA

Emilee!

EMILEE

Alright, alright. Don't worry so much about Gatsby. Just call me your own and we'll fill the air for the lot of them.

IRA

And your brother?

EMILEE

He just wants me to be happy... and hospitable.. apparently.

IRA

(joking)

I don't think you're being very hospitable.

EMILEE

(flirting)

I don't think you mind my hospitality. I do mind this cold though. It's warmer inside, you know.

IRA

I still need a second away from the entourage in your living room.

CONTINUED: 64.

EMILEE

(seductively)

Who said anything about a living room?

EMILEE grabs IRA by the hand and slowly leads him toward the fire escape window. Before the exit, they share an innocent kiss.

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 4

RILEY

(yelling; in an English accent)
I demand the portrait of Christopher Hitchens!

LIGHTS UP.

The party-goers all sit in the living room laughing as RILEY stands atop the living room table with his finger in the air as if making a loud proclamation.

RILEY

(in an English accent)

Nathaniel!

NATHANIEL

(giggling)

Get down Riley, before you embarrass yourself.

RILEY

Embarrassed! Fetch me that portrait would you!

NATHANIEL

I don't know where Emilee put it.

RILEY

(quickly)

It's up in the kitchen next to the General Mao. Earnest, would you please!

EARNEST crosses toward the kitchen as if confused. RILEY steps down and paces the room as he speaks, first noticing EARNEST'S slow pace.

RILEY

Double time Earnest!

EARNEST exits quickly into the kitchen.

RILEY paces around as he speaks.

CONTINUED: 65.

RILEY

There are few honest men in this world my dear friends.

SYBIL

I knew nothing of your being a feminist, Riley.

RILEY scoffs.

RILEY

Feminism's just an intelligent hobby.

SYBIL

(jokingly)

Found you again.

RILEY

My point is, no one is truly honest. Only when tested against the idols of one's paradigm will one deem it necessary to speak the *entire* truth!

EARNEST quickly enters from the kitchen.

EARNEST

(worried)

I can't find the portrait!

RILEY

(suddenly frustrated)

For the love of God, Earnest! I keep a spare one in my bag, there in the closet.

EARNEST rushes to the closet, exiting into it to dig through several bags.

CECILY

Are we understand that you're immune from this supposed plague of artifice?

RILEY

Good point Cecily! Modern sociology would argue this to be a first world problem. Seeing as I'm the only person currently in possession of a second world lineage -

GWYNETH

Isn't your family from Brooklyn?

RILEY

(annoyed)

My great-grandfather is Polish.

GWYNETH

Does that really count?

CONTINUED: 66.

RILEY

Ever heard of Oslo?

CHRISTINE

That's in Norway.

RILEY

(very annoyed)

Well then he's Norwish! Not much better off is it?!

CHRISTINE

I have friends from Canada!

RILEY

Friends doesn't count!

NATHANIEL

I suppose there is a point to all this, Norwish.

RILEY

(very annoyed)

There is!

RILEY brushing off himself as if catching his cool.

RILEY

Anyway.. presidents are inaugurated with bibles, but for those of us who preserve even a shred of integrity-

EARNEST eneters quickly from the closet door with a framed picture in his hand, raising the framed portrait up in the air like a torch.

EARNEST

(yelling triumphantly)

I've got it!

RILEY, crossing as he speaks, takes the portrait quickly from EARNEST as he continues to speak and pace.

RILEY

Thank you Earnest. As I was saying, those of us with a shred of moral decency and intellectual respectability depend on the portrait of a great man to keep our honesty steadfast.

RILEY crosses to CHRISTINE.

RILEY

And so I ask, for the nineteenth and final time...

CONTINUED: 67.

CHRISTINE

(annoyed)

As entertaining as your rant was, I already told you Riley, I -

CECILY

I don't see any harm in it, Christine, honestly.

GWYNETH

(slyly)

Yes, Christine. You can't do much harm, can you.

NATHANIEL

(slyly)

I agree.

CHRISTINE

I don't understand when my affairs became the center of public interest.

GWYNETH

Is that to suggest you have a secret?

CHRISTINE

(standing up)

Do I look like Neville Chamberlain to you, Gwyneth?

RILEY takes CHRISTINE'S hand, placing it on the portrait between them.

RILEY

(quickly)

Do you swear to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth so help you Christopher Hitchens?

CHRISTINE

(taking back her hand)

Leave it alone!

GWYNETH

Answer the question!

CHRISTINE

(to GWYNETH)

There hasn't yet been one!

RILEY takes CHRISTINE'S hand, placing it on the portrait.

RILEY

(sternly)

Do you or do you not in fact love Dr. Hoenikker?

CONTINUED: 68.

CHRISTINE

Enough!

SIBYL

(enthusiastically)

Answer the question!

CHRISTINE

(asking for help)

Nathaniel!

CHRISTINE looks at NATHANIEL threateningly.
(beat)

NATHANIEL

Leave her alone, Riley.

RILEY

(loudly)

Oh c'mon!

NATHANIEL

(sternly)

Leave it.

(beat)

There's not much left for drinks. Gwyneth.

(looking at Gwyneth)

Gwyn?

GWYNETH

Yes.

NATHANIEL

Why don't you take everyone to Blanchards? Tell them Nathaniel sent you and pick out whatever you'd like. That goes for everyone.

Gwyneth stands. The partygoers follow each at their own pace. CECILY and CHRISTINE remain seated with a seemingly comatose DR. HOENIKKER. CECILY sips her drink enthusiastically, watching the partygoers.

GWYNETH

(to Nathaniel)

Sure.

RILEY

(to Earnest; motioning towards

Nathaniel)

Il Duce'.

CONTINUED: 69.

EARNEST

(to Riley)

Careful not to offend the shooting squad.

The partygoers, without CECILY, CHRISTINE, or a seemingly comatose DR. HOENIKKER, make their way to the coat closet individually picking out their coats.

CECILY

Riley, would you pick me up a licorice nipper?

NATHANIEL

You should join them Cecily.

CECILY

But I'm so comfortable. Christine's staying!

NATHANIEL crosses to CECILY.

NATHANIEL

(nicely)

It won't last, Cecily. You'll be back in a second. And Christine is only staying to keep an eye on Dr. Hoenikker. I'm staying for obvious reasons, now, go on.

CECILY

But -

NATHANIEL

(quickly, lightly chastising)

Cecily.

The partygoers exit through the front door, GWYNETH stands by the door.

A reluctant CECILY stands up and crosses towards the coat closet, picking out her coat and exiting through the front door.

GWYNETH exits after CECILY, closing the door behind her.

NATHANIEL crosses towards the front door, stopping when he gets there to speak.

Scene 5

NATHANIEL

I take it Hoenikker is not asleep.

CONTINUED: 70.

CHRISTINE

(looking at DR. HOENIKKER, attempting to be entertaining)

Well, I'd hardly call him awake.

NATHANIEL appears annoyed, looking away from CHRISTINE as if disgusted by her. Christine takes note of NATHANIEL's being annoyed.

CHRISTINE

Well then, I suppose he's dead. The man hasn't been offered a beverage since the Berlin Wall fell.

(standing, crossing towards NATHANIEL)
(looking at DR. HOENIKKER)

Looking at him, I fear the natural course of life may dispel a need for the *original* plan altogether!

NATHANIEL

You're so... dead. Inside. You make mention of killing a man like it's just.. taking a stroll.

CHRISTINE

Let's be clear, Nathaniel. It's hardly murder you're against. And though I understand your thumping away angrily, honestly, I do, don't believe the life of you truly languishes nearby.

NATHANIEL

You have no right to say anything about me! Were it not for Gwyneth, I'd have nothing to do with you!

CHRISTINE

Oh the irony! You'll forgive me, Nathaniel. It simply moves me to see you so threatened about Gwyneth when clearly I'm not asking you to end anything.

NATHANIEL

(stricken with frustrating confusion)
Come out with it!

CHRISTINE

(angry)

Sure! Honestly, what do I care if you sneak off nights the way you've become accustomed to see *our dearest Gwyneth*. I don't see why you should be made so bothered by my proposal.

NATHANIEL

(angry)

Blackmail is hardly a proposition!

CONTINUED: 71.

CHRISTINE

Well how else should I keep your attention!

NATHANIEL

(desperate)

I don't love you!

CHRISTINE paces around NATHANIEL as she speaks.

CHRISTINE

(angry; defensive)

And who said anything about love! Love is an old ghost, Nathaniel. It's unfortunate you should see any affair as a labor of love! Relationships have as much to do with love as honesty does with politics. It's only the semblance that's recorded. Some fleeting fucking memory. Relationships are simple power struggles. You move, I move. I stand, you kneel or sit and so dance on this even keel until one of us fall off, often in a higher place then when we started. You think I love you? I need a standing asshole! My world is barely about me so it sure as fuck shouldn't be about you!

(beat) (calmer)

So it's quite simple. You publicly announce our love, and I'll ride you to the top... so to speak.

(beat)

NATHANIEL

And Gwyneth?

CHRISTINE composes herself.

CHRISTINE

(sly; cunning)

I've already talked to Gwyneth. She knows what to expect. I can care less what you do with your own time, Nathaniel, but for now, you should know better than to come between a woman and her affairs.

NATHANIEL crosses towards the kitchen door, stopping to speak before he exits.

NATHANIEL

You know, your a cunning woman, Christine. It's a tragedy they lost you to the dark side.

CHRISTINE

I love you too, darling.

NATHANIEL exits.

BLACKOUT.

ACT 3

Scene 1

LIGHTS UP.

A lively, energetic, smiling DR. HOENIKKER sits on the couch as if enthusiastically waiting for something, simultaneously rubbing his leg as if in mild pain.

CHRISTINE enters from the kitchen door holding a tray of glasses of tea. DR. HOENIKKER stands shaking his leg.

CHRISTINE

Darling!

DR. HOENIKKER

My love!

CHRISTINE places the tray on the table and crosses to DR. HOENIKKER, the two fall into each other's arms, meeting with a passionate kiss.

DR. HOENIKKER'S leg shaking persists during their kiss.

CHRISTINE

What's wrong with your leg, my love?

DR. HOENIKKER

It seems to have fallen asleep! I can't stand this bum leg of mine, help me wake it, will you?

CHRISTINE

Certainly.

CHRISTINE and DR. HOENIKKER both shake DR. HOENIKKER'S leg frantically for several moments.

CHRISTINE

(shaking)

Is it working?

DR. HOENIKKER

(shaking)

I'm not sure.

NATHANIEL and GWYNETH happily enter from the front door hand in hand followed by CECILY and RILEY.

CONTINUED: 73.

NATHANIEL

(happily)

It's done!

CHRISTINE

(happily surprised)

No!

GWYNETH

Yes! It's all been taken care of!

In a stir of happiness, GWYNETH and NATHANIEL passionately kiss.

DR. HOENIKKER

(excited)

So.. you're married!

GWYNETH

Yes!

CECILY

We were the witnesses!

RILEY

They even let us sign the papers!

CHRISTINE

Oh I've never been so happy!

CHRISTINE crosses towards GWYNETH and hugs her passionately.

DR. HOENIKKER

So what now?

NATHANIEL

Now we wait for Gatsby.

RILEY

Has he made it off the plane yet?

NATHANIEL

I haven't heard. He just said he'd meet us here.

CECILY

That's good enough for me. My feet are killing me!

GWYNETH

Take off your boots!

CONTINUED: 74.

CECILY crosses towards the couch, sitting and taking off her shoes. The partygoers all grab glasses of tea off the tray and sit on the couches.

RILEY

Where's Emilee?

NATHANIEL

She's out with Ira, I think they've gone to the theatre to watch a Samuel Beckett piece.

RILEY

(quickly)

That shouldn't take long.

CECILY

A theatre? I didn't take Ira for much of a theatre goer.

CHRISTINE

He's actually quite liberal. We went out to the MFA recently -

DR. HOENIKKER

(joking)

I remember that! She came back and wouldn't stop talking about the beautiful curt brushstrokes in Renoir's brilliantly dense color. There's no way I'd believe those were her words!

CHRISTINE playfully nudges DR. HOENIKKER.

RILEY

I'd quicker drink hemlock than think Christine an art enthusiast!

DR. HOENIKKER

Me too! I'd drink hemlock!

CHRISTINE

(playfully defensive)

C'mon now! I'm liberal! Did I ever tell you the story of the four men crucified with Christ? It's biblical!

NATHANIEL

I'm sure we've all heard it at least once!

RILEY

I haven't heard it!

CONTINUED: 75.

CHRISTINE

Well then, there were these -

GWYNETH

Oh no not this one again! You need to learn another story, Christine.

CHRISTINE

Well, what are we doing anyway?

NATHANIEL

We're waiting for Gatsby.

CECILY

He said he'd meet us here?

NATHANIEL

Yes, by the house.

RILEY

And what if he doesn't come?

NATHANTEL

Well then, I suppose we'll wait for him tomorrow. And the next day, and the next until he gets here.

GWYNETH

Were we not waiting for him yesterday?

DR. HOENIKKER

Nothing is certain when you're about.

SYBIL and EARNEST enter from the bedroom door.

EARNEST

(jokingly)

You're all horribly deaf! We've been ringing up for almost an hour!

RILEY

Has it been an hour!

SYBIL

We decided to climb the fire escape!

NATHANIEL

I'm so sorry!

SYBIL

Oh no darling, it was a nice stroll up the fire escape. The evening is absolutely gorgeous. What are we doing now though?

CONTINUED: 76.

RILEY

Waiting for Gatsby.

EARNEST

Is he meeting us here?

CECILY

Yes. We've been waiting for him since yesterday.

GWYNETH

I think it's been longer.

SYBIL

But what will we do in the mean time?

DR. HOENIKKER

(to Earnest)

Would you like some tea?

EARNEST

No thank you. Do you have any carrots?

CHRISTINE

No, I'm afraid we only have turnips.

RILEY

Oh, well then what will we do?

EARNEST

(enthused)

Let's hang ourselves!

GWYNETH

(looking around)

What from?

EARNEST looks around for something to hang himself from, sadly with no result.

SYBIL

Oh, you're so terribly European Earnest.

EARNEST

I am earnestly European.

CECILY

But you're hardly continental.

EARNEST

This is true. There is little about me that is continental.

CONTINUED: 77.

SYBIL

I so enjoy your honesty, Earnest. Would you love our friendship were I not so honest myself?

EARNEST

That is absurd!

CHRISTINE

Agreed, Earnest. Sybil you are quite the absurdist.

CECILY

And Earnest, European.

SYBIL

Yes, it's so wonderful.

NATHANIEL

It's quite impressive.

DR. HOENIKKER

Yes, very promising.

EARNEST

Wow! It's only now that I finally understand the very importance of being earnest.

GWYNETH

(to Earnest)

Come dear, don't be that guy.

EARNEST

I apologize. What guy should I be?

DR. HOENIKKER

(enthused)

We could figure it out while we wait for Gatsby!

EMILEE and IRA happily enter from the front door hand in hand.

IRA

(elated)

We've done it!

NATHANIEL

Ira! What is it you've done?

IRA

Emilee has accepted my proposal! We're engaged to be married!

GWYNETH stands.

CONTINUED: 78.

GWYNETH

(playful)

Tell me it isn't so darling! You proposed while we were all caught up?

EMILEE

Caught up with what, Gwyneth?

NATHANIEL

Caught up-

GWYNETH

Waiting for Gatsby of course!

IRA

Well, I figured it would be much more romantic to pursue the endeavor quite privately.

GWYNETH

Yes, I suppose there is something to be said for the good nature of privacy.

The partygoers nod and humm in agreement.

GWYNETH

Anyway, I'm so happy for the two of you!

The partygoers stand and celebrate in excitement for the engagement, hugging each other as well as EMILEE and IRA.

CECILY

So tell me, Emilee, what are you to do now?

EMILEE

I suppose I'll begin planning the wedding! I'm quite excited!

CHRISTINE

Yes, I'm so glad things are this way! I hope they will never change!

NATHANIEL

Dear Cecily, they can't ever change! Not as long as we're waiting for Gatsby!

CECILY

Yes, where is Gatsby?

DR. HOENIKKER

He said he'd meet us here.

CONTINUED: 79.

NATHANIEL

(pointing to the couch)

There?

DR. HOENIKKER

(pointing toward the table)

No, I suppose here rather.

CECILY

I see. And so now what?

RILEY

We wait.

GWYNETH

What for?

NATHANIEL

(correcting Gwyneth)

Whom for, dearest.

EMILEE

For Gatsby?

IRA

Yes!

CECILY

Right.

NATHANIEL

Right.

IRA

Right.

CHRISTINE

Right.

Everyone in the room stands around waiting several moments before anyone speaks.

(beat)

EMILEE

Is he here yet?

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 2

LIGHTS UP.

CHRISTINE sits next to a seemingly comatose DR. HOENIKKER. She stares at him only inches from his sleeping face with great contempt for several moments as he sleeps before she speaks.

CHRISTINE

You know, I don't like you old man.

DR. HOENIKKER makes a shift as if uncomfortably sleeping. CHRISTINE is not shaken.

CHRISTINE

Yes, yes just grumble. grumble. You have no troubles. You're just... old.

IRA enters from the bedroom door. Noticing CHRISTINE so closely staring at DR. HOENIKKER alone in the living room, IRA fakes a cough to make his presence known.

CHRISTINE immediately jumps.

IRA

I'm sorry.

CHRISTINE

(annoyed)

You startled me.

IRA

It wasn't my intention. I just need to run to the kitchen quickly.

(crossing to the kitchen)

Where is everyone?

CHRISTINE

They went to Blanchards to get more to drink. We've run out, according to Nathaniel.

IRA

Did he go too?

CHRISTINE, about to answer honestly, quickly changes her mind, quickly looking toward the kitchen door before turning back to IRA and answering.

CONTINUED: 81.

CHRISTINE

(cunningly)

Yes.

(quick beat)

Yes, I'm afraid it is only you, I, and our dear poor Dr. Hoenikker for several moments.

CHRISTINE stands up and crosses towards IRA.

CHRISTINE

You know, you've spent an awful amount of time on the fire escape with Emilee. I didn't know smoking was such a demanding task.

IRA

Well, we've had a lot to talk about. Coincidentally, there's a lot to talk about with the lot of you.

CHRISTINE

I'm sure there is, you know, with Emilee there's always a lot to talk about.

IRA

(not feeding into Christine's cunning bait)

Right.

CHRISTINE

I mean, first there's Gatsby. Isn't that dear of her darling older brother? To mix and match her with his friends, what a darling that Nathaniel.

IRA

(nicely appearing)

Yeah. It's quite a nice thing of him to do.

CHRISTINE reacts to IRA's seeming lack of concern. CHRISTINE crosses to the couch, sitting on the spine of the couch.

CHRISTINE

(cunning)

Is that to assume you've moved beyond the fact?

IRA

Excuse me?

CHRISTINE

(seductively)

Well you sound rather mild tempered on the issue. I wonder if there's no longer anything there.

CONTINUED: 82.

IRA

(appeasing)

I'm sure time will tell.

CHRISTINE

(skeptical)

Right.

CHRISTINE appears to take a moment before standing from her seat on the spine of the couch to speak.

CHRISTINE

I must admit, Ira. I've always been a tad annoyed with.. Emilee.

IRA

Why is that?

CHRISTINE begins crossing towards IRA.

CHRISTINE

Well, it's simply that... things tend to fall on her lap, Ira. And that's no way to live a life! Life is about risks! Life is about standing tall in the face of change. Facing your fears! Taking a chance!

(seductively)

I think I may just have to go ahead and do that myself, Ira.

IRA

(innocently)

Well, I wish you the best of luck then.

CHRISTINE

(seductively)

Do you now?

IRA

(innocently)

I do!

CHRISTINE

(seductively)

Well then.

CHRISTINE suddenly screams as if in great fear, consequently scaring IRA off balance. Quickly, CHRISTINE takes IRA by the hands, placing his hands on her neck and using his weight to reverse their positions, consequently pushing herself against the wall, bringing IRA closer to her.

NATHANIEL hurriedly enters from the kitchen door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 83.

EMILEE hurriedly enters from the bedroom door.

CHRISTINE quickly forces IRA's lips on her own before appearing to throw him off herself in fear and disgust. NATHANIEL and EMILEE stand in awe. IRA stands in his own shock and awe.

CHRISTINE

(to IRA)

Oh my God! What is wrong with you!

NATHANIEL

What's going on here?

CHRISTINE

(crossing toward NATHANIEL as if in disgusted fear; as if weeping)

Ira! Ira grabbed me by my throat and forced himself
onto him!

(pointing at DR. HOENIKKER)

In the presence of my fiancee!

NATHANTEL

(sternly, angrily)

Ira! Is this true?

IRA, in shear shock and terror, finds himself speechless as EMILEE looks at him with an angry gesture of inquiry. IRA manages to mutter several sounds of rubbish in his speechlessness before cut off by NATHANIEL.

NATHANIEL

Ira! What is wrong with you!

The partygoers enter in a loud, talkative boom from the front door holding several brown bags of alcohol. A seemingly sobbing CHRISTINE suddenly makes her way into the arms of SYBIL as if highly disconcerted. The partygoers, SYBIL especially, appear highly confused.

NATHANIEL

Did you not think we would notice the sound of a woman being taken against her will!

GWYNETH

Excuse me?

EARNEST

(to NATHANIEL)

Yeah chap, what's all this you're hammering about?

CONTINUED: 84.

NATHANIEL

Ira apparently decided to force himself on Christine!

The partygoers appear shocked, making several sounds of disapproval. EARNEST in severe anger throws down his bags and begins to angrily cross towards IRA as if intent on hurting him. IRA backs away from the oncoming assult in speechless fear. The partygoers together detain an angry EARNEST from approaching IRA any closer. All but GWYNETH and EMILEE who stand appearing skeptical to the accusation.

EARNEST

(stunned)

What the hell is wrong with you!

CECILY

(pointing at DR. HOENIKKER)

Yeah, Ira! Her fiancee is in the room!

(looking at DR. HOENIKKER)

Kind of!

RILEY

(looking at IRA as he speaks)

Everyone, file into the kitchen with the alcohol. I think Ira needs a moment to face himself.

(shaking his head)

God knows I would.

The party-goers all loudly cross and exit into the kitchen, making comments and sounds of disapproval leaving behind a seemingly comatose DR. HOENIKKER, IRA, and EMILEE.

EMILEE continues to look confused and skeptical of the ordeal. IRA tries to find the words to end his seeming plague of shock induced speechlessness. IRA mutters rubbish before actually speaking in desperately shocked clarity.

IRA

(desperate; frustrated)

I didn't do anything! I swear! She just.. she..

EMILEE

I don't know, Ira. I.. I need a minute.

EMILEE exits into the bedroom. IRA stands staring at the door before he moves.

Scene 3

IRA crosses towards the intercom.

IRA presses the intercom "talk" button.

IRA

Are you there?

(beat)

I know you're there.

(beat)

C'mon, talk to me.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Sorry. I ordered a pizza. What happened? You sound-

IRA presses the button.

IRA

I need you to tell me what to do.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

To do about what? To do about the girl?

IRA presses the button.

TRA

No! We solved that. I.. I was just jumped by one of Emilee's friends.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

One of them beat you up?

IRA presses the button.

IRA

No! She just..grabbed me out of nowhere and screamed. Now everyone thinks I tried to hurt her. She set me up!

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

I see.

(beat)

Did you try telling the truth?

IRA presses the button.

CONTINUED: 86.

IRA

It's her word against mine and I look like a goddamn deviant!

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Well then... I.. don't know.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

(frustrated)

You don't know? You have no opinion. There's nothing you think about anything? Well then what good are you?

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Listen, I don't know what you should do. All I've been able to hear through the night is that the one girl is blackmailing a couple into killing her boyfriend or something. I was going to call the police, but I figured she's just a college student, how evil can she really be.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

What girl?

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)
I don't know.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

(shocking)

Christine? Gwyneth?

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Maybe. I don't know any one voice from another.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

It has to be Christine. Her boyfriend's been asleep on the couch all night. Should I tell everyone?

CONTINUED: 87.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Would it matter if you did? Would they really believe you? That's kind of a serious accusation.

A frustrated IRA sinks against the wall in desperation.

IRA

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)
Calm down.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

I'm out of ideas.

IRA stands up and presses the button, facing the wall as he speaks. As IRA speaks, EARNEST enters the room quietly via the kitchen door.

Confused at first by IRA's talking into what he believes to be the wall, he stops to examine IRA, shaking his head before continuing to draw a cloth and a bottle of chloroform from his pocket.

EARNEST, items in hand, crosses towards the seemingly comatose DR. HOENIKKER, soaking the cloth in chloroform.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

I can't help but notice your ideas tend to live on a high wire.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

Can you be a art critic tomorrow?

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Sorry. Well, we know that they plan on poisoning the old man, right?

CONTINUED: 88.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

Right.

EARNEST looks over towards IRA as if confused by the conversation.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

And we know that this Christine person is blackmailing the others into it.

IRA presses the button.

EARNEST appears intrigued by the comments about CHRISTINE.

IRA

We don't know that for sure though. It could be someone else.

EARNEST looks up in confusion.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

It's not important. And otherwise I wouldn't know to tell you, but let's not get lost in the details. The only one we need to know is Christine.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

Should I bring it up to Christine alone?

The spy-like EARNEST, seconds from smothering a seemingly comatose DR. HOENIKKER, accidentally makes a sound while stepping, causing him immediately to drop to the ground below the table. IRA looks back, worried that he is being watched, only to find a seemingly empty room. IRA returns to the intercom to continue the conversation.

As MAN 1 speaks, EARNEST makes his way back up from the ground slowly.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

You simply need to make sure Christine gets you off the hook. Tell her you know her plans for Dr. Hoenikker and you'll call the police if she doesn't bail you out.

CONTINUED: 89.

Looking at IRA in extreme confusion, EARNEST slowly continues with his task of smothering DR.HOENIKKER, stopping intermittenly to watch IRA.

IRA presses the intercom.

IRA

It's so hard to believe someone would ever actually kill an old man.

The intercom buzzes.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

You'll be surprised the insane things people will do when they're desperate.

EARNEST covers DR. HOENIKKER's nose and mouth with chloroform soaked rag and begins to smother him. DR. HOENIKKER, suddenly awakened and made active by the silent attack, struggles madly in smothered silence.

IRA looks toward the wall as if desperately frustrated.

EARNEST finally begins getting the upper hand on the weakening DR. HOENIKKER as DR. HOENIKKER finally appears to be slowly knocking out.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Listen, get your thoughts together when you talk to this Christine character. You have to sound like you know everything, and you're not scared to reveal it.

EARNEST finally manages to subdue DR. HOENIKKER who is left sprawled out across the couch. He sits on the couch straddling a knocked out DR. HOENIKKER.

EARNEST quickly raises his hands in triumph before DR. HOENIKKER wakes again, making EARNEST force himself onto DR. HOENIKKER a second time, this time only for several seconds.

DR. HOENIKKER is quickly subdued a second time. EARNEST keeps his hands on the chloroform soaked towel atop DR. HOENIKKER'S nose for piece of mind.

IRA presses the button.

IRA

I don't like the turn this is taking.

CONTINUED: 90.

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

The odds are good, I think. It's all I can think to help.

RILEY enters from the kitchen door, bursting in speaking he quickly causes IRA to turn around in fear.

RILEY

Seriously Earnest, how long..

EARNEST, scared to be caught smothering DR.HOENIKKER, is shocked into a stunned silence, throwing his hands in the air with the choloform soaked rag still in hand.

RILEY stands for a moment also in shock for a moment before he breaks the tense silence.

RILEY

(languidly; bviously faux concern)
Oh no... It appears Dr.... Hoenikker is... Did you quite manage it the whole way through Earnest?

EARNEST gets up from the couch, throwing the chloroform soaked hand towel on the face of DR. HOENIKKER and wiping his hands off on Dr. HOENIKKER'S shirt as he speaks.

EARNEST

(matter of factly)

Yes actually, I think he's good to go.

DR. HOENIKKER suddenly appears to be stirring back into consciousness, much to the dismay of EARNEST.

EARNEST

(annoyed)

He's coming to again. Would you handle this please?

RILEY

Of course.

RILEY crosses towards the box wine, grabbing hold of the box and crossing back towards DR. HOENIKKER, beating him with the box until DR. HOENIKKER again looses consciousness.

RILEY

A geriatric Rambo that Hoenikker.

CONTINUED: 91.

EARNEST

(looking at Dr. Hoenikker; impressed)

I heard he survived 3 years in a Japanese POW camp way back when. Hmm..

(to Riley)

Thank you for that then. Cheers!

RILEY and EARNEST shake hands in a congratulatory gesture as they finally take second notice of IRA, who stands in shock and complete awe of what he has just witnessed.

RILEY

Ira.

(beat)

(as if embarrassed)

Surely you can-

EARNEST

Oh, Riley. Don't you worry about Ira.

EARNEST crosses towards IRA.

EARNEST

(to Riley)

It seems our friend Ira here has a bit of a love bust himself. A certain miss Emilee,

(to Ira)

appears to have captured our good friend's heart. As I'm sure you're aware, Riley, miss Emilee is meant to find herself courted by our excellent friend Mr. Gatsby later tonight. Now, though Ira appears to have won the favour of our good Emilee, still, was not he more than a tad brash when we walked in previously in the evening?

RILEY

Yes, he was very brash. Very brash indeed.

EARNEST

And so consider the following, if you will. Now that our dear friend Ira's.. brashness, has led to his falling from our Emilee's good graces, there does seem to be a curve for error which may lead to Gatsby achieving the upper hand. Were Gatsby's arrangement not to go through, dear Riley, would you have an opinion on such a prospect?

RILEY

(crossing towards Ira)
(to Earnest)
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 92.

RILEY (cont'd)

I would my dear Earnest. But I'd like further to hear your account.

EARNEST

(to RILEY)

Well, it's quite simple really. It appears my good, decent friend Ira would be in a position to announce himself to Emilee, assuming he may *somehow* recapture her good graces, and officially place her outside of the reach of other gentleman suitors. And to think, this process can be facilitated *so* easily.

RILEY

(to EARNEST)

If I may add, my dear friend, I can't help but feel there may be room for a separate outcome.

EARNEST

Keen observation, my dear friend. You see, the process may also be.. well.. made a bit difficult. Quite difficult, really, so much so that I only now can truly understand the importance of being.. hospitable. Hmm.

(to IRA)

Are you feeling quite.. hospitable, Ira?

IRA stands still contemplating the situation as if wildly unsure of what to do.

EMILEE enters from the bedroom door.

Scene 4

EMILEE

Ira.

EMILEE stops at the couch noting DR. HOENIKKER'S apparent condition.

As EMILEE takes note, skeptically turning to RILEY and EARNEST in confusion, RILEY quickly crosses towards EMILEE, wrapping his arm around her shoulder and turning her away from the couch to look towards IRA.

Simultaneously, EARNEST quickly crosses towards DR. HOENIKKER and removes the chloroform rag from his face.

RILEY

Did you need to talk to Ira alone for a moment?

CONTINUED: 93.

EARNEST

(crossing)

Yes, we don't mean to be bothersome.

EARNEST lifts the unconscious DR. HOENIKKER back to his previous position, as if to make him look asleep.

EARNEST

(lifting Dr. Hoenikker)

Oh this tired old bloak can sleep, can't he?

RILEY

Without doubt he's been out all through the night.

EARNEST finishes positioning DR. HOENIKKER. RILEY lets go of EMILEE'S shoulder.

RILEY

Well, we surely don't want to be intrusive, do we Earnest?

EARNEST

Sincerely, we don't. I would think this a better time than any to leave the two of you alone, would you say, Ira?

(beat)

EMILEE walks skeptically away from RILEY and EARNEST, towards IRA.

EMILEE

(skeptically)

I'm sorry. I didn't.. mean to be unsociable.

EARNEST

(quickly)

Oh, no love. You just continue with your conversation. Don't mind our exit, as I'm sure Ira as well would appreciate our hospitality. Isn't that right, Ira? (beat)

IRA

(slowly and seriously)

Yes.

EARNEST

(cunningly)

Alright then.

(beat)

Come Riley, our friends have been patient enough.

EARNEST and RILEY exit through the kitchen door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 94.

EMILEE stands apart from IRA for a moment as the two look at each other ambiguously before EMILEE crosses towards him.

Both EMILEE and IRA turn their backs to DR. HOENIKKER as they slowly come together. Eventually, EMILEE grabs hold of IRA'S hand.

IRA takes her hand in return, coming down to kiss her softly before the two of them look forward toward the AUDIENCE as they speak.

EMILEE and IRA speak as if conducting pillow talk.

IRA

(matter of factly)

Earnest was trying to kill Dr. Hoenikker.

EMILEE

(pillow talk)

Oh. Yeah, it looked that way.

IRA

(matter of factly)

Yeah. Riley and him, they're trying to blackmail me.

EMILEE

(pillow talk)

What with?

IRA

(matter of factly)

With you.

EMILEE

(entertained, pillow talk)

Heh. Quite ambitious, those two.

IRA

(entertained)

Yeah.

(looking at EMILEE)

You think Gwyneth would ever try it?

EMILEE

(looking at IRA)

Try what?

IRA

You know..

IRA signals with his head toward DR. HOENIKKER.

CONTINUED: 95.

EMILEE

(confused)

Huh?..

(quickly coming to, concerned)

Oh. Oh, no! Why do you ask?

IRA and EMILEE together turn their heads to face each other.

IRA

I think Christine was trying to get her to do it.

EMILEE

(slightly stunned)

Really?

IRA

Yep.

IRA and EMILEE simultaneously turn their heads back toward the AUDIENCE.

EMILEE

(turning her head)

Oooooohhhh. That's bad. Where'd you hear that?

IRA

(matter of factly)

The man in the intercom.

EMILEE turns to look at IRA in confusion. IRA keeps looking forward.

IRA

(loudly)

That's your cue!

The intercom BUZZES.

MAN 1 (OVER THE INTERCOM)

Sorry.

EMILEE appears entertainingly surprised. EMILEE turns back to look forward towards the AUDIENCE.

EMILEE

(pillow talk)

Interesting.

IRA

(matter of factly)

Yep. It's a little late now, anyway. You know... since..

CONTINUED: 96.

EMILEE

Yeah. You know, someone should do something about that.

IRA

Mmmmmhhhmm.

The two stand in silence for a second looking toward the AUDIENCE before IRA breaks the silence.

IRA

(matter of factly)

I love you.

EMILEE smiles in silence for a beat. Both continue facing the AUDIENCE.

EMILEE

(matter of factly)

I love you too.

IRA smiles.

A scuffle is heard coming from the kitchen, causing IRA and EMILEE to turn around in concern.

RILEY (O.S)

You can go screw yourself!

A louder scuffle is heard coming again from the kitchen. SUDDENLY, RILEY and EARNEST burst into the living room from the kitchen in a childish fight. The partygoers follow the scuffling RILEY and EARNEST into the living room, all seemingly worried by the scuffle except for CHRISTINE who stands at the far corner filing her fingernails.

Scene 5

RILEY pushes EARNEST onto the couch as the two proceed to scuffle on top of DR. HOENIKKER, causing him to fall over under them as the two continue childishly fighting on the couch.

EARNEST

(exasperated; yelling)

What the hell is your problem!

RILEY

(yelling angrily)

Don't get me talkin' John Bull!

Quickly, IRA and NATHANIEL run to RILEY and EARNEST, attempting to separate the two of them unsuccessfully.

CONTINUED: 97.

SYBIL

Riley, calm down!

NATHANIEL

(yelling)

Everyone calm down.

CECILY notices Dr. Hoenikker lying in a downward position.

CECILY

(slowly)

What's wrong with Hoenikker?

EMILEE

(slowly, to Riley and Earnest)

What's going on?

GWYNETH crosses hurriedly towards EMILEE.

GWYNETH

(to Emilee; worried)

We were talking about the cafe' when Nathaniel mentioned that Earnest had been fired recently.

 ${ t RILEY}$

I'll kill the bastard!

CECILY

(kicking at Dr. Hoenikker's feet,

innocently worried)

Hoenikker's not moving!

GWYNETH

(to Emilee; worried)

As soon as Riley found out Earnest got fired, he started at it!

SYBIL

(to Cecily)

Of course Hoenikker's not moving, there's a fight on top of him!

A worried SYBIL quickly crosses towards the scuffle, only to be accidentally pushed back toward CHRISTINE, annoyed by her seeming nonchalant.

SYBIL

(to Christine; worried)

Christine!

CONTINUED: 98.

CHRISTINE

(filing her finger nails; calmly) Barry darling, don't be rude.

NATHANIEL and IRA finally successfully separate the scuffling couple. IRA pulls EARNEST towards the coat closet while NATHANIEL pulls RILEY towards the kitchen door.

RILEY shakes IRA off himself, dusting himself off. NATHANIEL lets go of EARNEST who straightens himself out.

EARNEST

(straightening himself out)

My professional affairs are no business of yours, Riley!

RILEY is made angry by the remark, pushing towards EARNEST quickly before being contained by IRA.

RILEY

(angrily; pushing)

You could've said that earlier!

CECILY

(innocently; concerned)

Hoenikker isn't moving!

RILEY

Oh who cares!

(to Earnest)

What about the job!

EARNEST shrugs as if embarrassed.

EMILEE

(loudly; concerned and confused)

What job?

CHRISTINE finally takes note of DR. HOENIKKER dropping lifelessly on the couch.

CHRISTINE

(finishing up filing her nails)

He's a heavy sleeper. Just give him a good nudge, will ya'.

The partygoers all look at DR. HOENIKKER'S body laying lifeless. As they all look at him, his lifelesssly drooping body loudly falls on the floor.

CONTINUED: 99.

GWYNETH

Somebody help him up!

NATHANIEL quickly crosses towards DR. HOENIKKER, lifting him back onto the couch and turning back to the partygoers as if in fear.

NATHANTEL

(scared)

He's cold. I think he's.. dead!

NATHANIEL looks at GWYNETH as if stunned. GWYNETH returns the stunned look before realizing NATHANIEL'S suspicions. CHRISTINE looks at GWYNETH as if pleased.

GWYNETH

(nervously; to Nathaniel and Christine)
I didn't do anything!

The partygoers appear confused.

GWYNETH

(to the partygoers)
Seriously! I didn't do anything!

GWYNETH crosses towards NATHANIEL as if privately trying to convince him of her innocence while CHRISTINE speaks.

GWYNETH continues talking privately to NATHANIEL, who appears caught off gaurd and worried by the entire situation.

CHRISTINE

(exaggeratedly faux grief)

He must have died from entirely natural causes! Oh no! Barry!

CHRISTINE quickly runs toward DR. HOENIKKER'S body, laying on it as a grieving widow would. Quickly, CHRISTINE stands up.

CHRISTINE

(slowly; loudly; overacting)

It appears I've become a widow. A grieving.. inconsolable..

(to Nathaniel)

Romantically available widow!

EARNEST straightens himself as if preparing for a great speech.

CONTINUED: 100.

EARNEST

(straightening himself)

I'd like to make an announcement!

The partygoers stir in confusion.

RILEY

(angrily; pushing against IRA)
Oh no you don't! Hoenikker isn't dead!

The partygoers stirr again.

EARNEST

(angrily)

Belt up!

RILEY

Not until you get me my job!

CHRISTINE

Nathaniel, surely you can do something about it all!

NATHANIEL shies behind GWYNETH. RILEY crosses quickly as if concerned toward NATHANIEL.

RILEY

(loudly)

Nathan, Earnest promised me a job at the cafe'!

EARNEST crosses toward NATHANIEL and RILEY.

EARNEST

(loudly)

There's nothing I can do about that anymore!

CHRISTINE crosses toward EARNEST, NATHANIEL, and RILEY.

CHRISTINE

Would both of you get over this job! Nathaniel!

CHRISTINE, RILEY, and EARNEST all loudly squabble unintelligibly for several moments.

CECILY

(screaming)

Shut up!

The room becomes silent. The partygoers all look at CECILY as if slightly scared.

CONTINUED: 101.

CECILY

Is anybody going to do anything about Hoenikker?

The partygoers all look around as if expecting someone else to do something. After a moment, IRA crosses towards HOENIKKER, examining his body as others speak.

The intercom BUZZES.

IRA looks over at the intercom as if worried.

SYBIL

Who is that?

IRA

(worried)

It's no one.

RILEY

Relax Cecily, Hoenikker's not even dead.

CHRISTINE

(accusing; loudly)

How would you know that?!

RILEY

Because I know who killed him.

SYBIL

(quickly; skeptically)

But you said he wasn't dead?

RILEY crosses towards SYBIL.

RILEY

(explaining)

He isn't. He's just sleeping.

IRA

This guy is not sleeping.

RILEY

I don't mean sleeping sleeping! I mean... you know! Umm.. Earnest, help me out here..

EARNEST

I told you, I can't get you the job!

RILEY

With the word you dolt! What is it when you're... umm..

CONTINUED: 102.

GWYNETH

(quickly; loudly as if finding a missing puzzle piece)

Catatonic?

RILEY

No no no... it's.. ehh..

SYBIL

(quickly; as if a sudden revelation)
Imperceptive?

RILEY

No no no!

CECILY

Stop thinking about it! If you don't think about it it'll come to your subconscious!

RILEY

(as if a sudden realization)

Subconscious!

The partygoers look around to each other as if wildly confused.

RILEY

(quickly)

Unconscious! Unconscious!

(to SIBYL)

I got the words minced.

SYBIL nods at RILEY understandingly.

CECILY

So he's only unconscious?

CHRISTINE

(to Nathaniel; emphatically hopeful)

Does that count?

EMILEE

Count for what?

RILEY

I don't think it counts if he's just unconscious.

IRA

This man is not unconscious.

IRA stands.

CONTINUED: 103.

IRA

Dr. Hoenikker is cold dead.

RILEY

That's impossible.

(to Earnest; annoyed)

Tell them!

EARNEST looks at RILEY as if warning.

EARNEST

Fine, I will.

EARNEST makes space around himself by politely asking others except CHRISTINE to move slightly away. EARNEST kneels on a single knee.

EARNEST

(lovingly)

Christine... I love you!

The partygoers, with exception to RILEY, appear shocked. RILEY looks around nodding his head in an "I told you so" fashion. CHRISTINE appears severely uncomfortable with the remark.

SYBIL

(to CECILY)

How is that possible?

CECILY shrugs.

SYBIL

(to Cecily)

I mean.. physically. How is that possible?

The intercom BUZZES.

IRA looks over at the intercom as if concerned.

EARNEST attempts to take CHRISTINE'S hand, being stopped by RILEY'S motioning toward him.

RILEY

(to Earnest)

Oh no you don't!

CHRISTINE appears relieved.

CHRISTINE

Oh thank God.

CONTINUED: 104.

EARNEST

(to CHRISTINE)

I do! I love you!

CHRISTINE again appears severely uncomfortable. EARNEST makes a second attempt at CHRISTINE'S hand. CHRISTINE is made ever more uncomfortable, moving her hand back as EARNEST takes hold of a single finger as if begging.

EARNEST

(on his knee; to RILEY)

Belt up would you! I'm trying to-

RILEY

Earnest promised me a barista position at the cafe' if I helped him murder Dr. Hoenikker!

The partygoers, excluding EMILEE and IRA, appear in utter shock. EARNEST quickly stands in protest.

EARNEST

(pleading; to Christine)

Murder is a bit strong!

GWYNETH

(horrified)

You killed Dr. Hoenikker?

CHRISTINE

(taking her finger back)

Don't act so innocent, Gwyneth!

RILEY

(angrily)

He also lied about the barista job! He doesn't even work there anymore, the bastard!

SYBIL

(horrified)

Earnest! What are you turning into?

RILEY

I know, right?

SYBIL

You're just as culpable, Riley!

RILEY

(defensively)

Maybe, but atleast I didn't promise anybody a job!

CONTINUED: 105.

SYBIL

You can't be serious!

RILEY

(as if defending himself)

He didn't really want him dead anyway. He only wanted him to seem dead so he can propose to Christine before Hoenikker comes to.

EARNEST

(angrily)

He is dead!

EARNEST crosses to DR. HOENIKKER, lifting his arm before he speaks.

EARNEST

(holding up the arm)

What would you call this?

EARNEST allows the arm to drop. It makes a loud thud on the floor.

The intercom BUZZES.

IRA

(to the intercom, annoyed and worried)

I get it, leave it alone already!

EARNEST

(to IRA)

I was just making a point!

CHRISTINE

(confused)

Why would you want to kill him?

EARNEST

(proclaiming)

Because I love you!

The partygoers appear confused.

EARNEST

I killed Dr. Hoenikker!

(to CHRISTINE)

I did it because I'm absolutely in love with you.

(pacing about proclaiming to the air as

he speaks)

There are no limits to the things we have done for

love! Some cut off their ears, some drink poison! Some cheat and steal and lie for love!

(crossing quickly to CHRISTINE, taking

her hand)

CONTINUED: 106.

But for you, my love! For you, I took to your lover like a child to a pinata! Because I could no longer restrain my love, my dear, unrequited, love!

(softly, taking a knee)

I love you my dearest, fairest Christine. And if Hoenikker mysteriously wakes from this unfortunate, deathly sleep.. in...

(looking at his watch)

Twenty or so minutes.. That would have changed nothing.

EMILEE coughs violently for a moment as if finding it all difficult to swallow. EARNEST looks back as if annoyed at EMILEE.

EARNEST

And I'd like to know.. my dear Christine... would you.. have me?

CHRISTINE looks at EARNEST for a moment before looking around and turning back to face EARNEST.

EARNEST looks down at his watch.

EARNEST

You can think about it if you'd like, love. We're just.. running a bit short on time about now.

CHRISTINE looks EARNEST in his eyes somewhat empathetically before changing her demeanor completely.

CHRISTINE

(quickly)

Oh God no.

EARNEST appears caught off guard in surprise. The scene is silent for a moment.

EARNEST

... Why?

CHRISTINE

Well... I don't love you.

NATHANIEL

(yelling)

But I don't love you!

CHRISTINE

(to Nathaniel)

That's a separate issue! Besides, I've been waiting for you to speak up already!

CONTINUED: 107.

GWYNETH

(to Nathaniel; seriously)
What is she talking about Nathaniel?

NATHANIEL

I'm just going to come out and say it Gwyn!

GWYNETH

What are you talking about?

CHRISTINE

(getting worried)

Watch yourself Nathaniel!

NATHANIEL

Gwyneth, we can't go on like this! So if you won't come out and say it, I will!

NATHANIEL crosses to and stands atop the wooden table. GWYNETH appears confused.

NATHANIEL

Gwyneth!

GWYNETH

(as if having a realization; suddenly made happy)

Oh! Nathaniel are you sure this is a good time?

NATHANIEL

(confused)

You need to come clean, Gwyneth!

GWYNETH

(slightly annoyed)

You're in the damn relationship too, you know!

CECILY

(to Gwyneth, innocently concerned)

Did you kill somebody, dear?

GWYNETH is stirred by the question.

CHRISTINE

(worried)

Nathaniel, you should think this over!

NATHANIEL

Shut up Christine! I'm coming out with it!

(to the partygoers)

Everybody!

(beat)

Gwyneth is a Republican!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 108.

The partygoers appear utterly shocked. GWYNETH is shocked into embarrassment from the proclamation.

EMILEE

(to Ira)

Those are still around?

IRA

(to Emilee)

I don't know.

The intercom BUZZES.

IRA

I swear..

GWYNETH

Nathaniel!

NATHANIEL

Christine found Gwyneth's voter card and blackmailed the two of us!

CHRISTINE

(to the partygoers)

It's not true!

GWYNETH

Yes it is!

(to the partygoers)

She was going to tell all of you I was a Republican unless I poisoned Dr. Hoenikker with this!

(pulling out the vial of hemlock from

her pocket)

I didn't do it yet.. I mean, I didn't do it! But she wanted me to poison the man so Nathaniel could convince Gatsby to pursue her!

CHRISTINE

(quickly; loudly)

It's not true!

GWYNETH

(loudly; to Christine)

Liar!

NATHANIEL

(quickly, loudly)

She didn't do it!

GWYNETH

(loudly; to Nathaniel)

Liar!

CONTINUED: 109.

(quickly; Nathaniel)

Wait, what?

NATHANIEL

She told me she would tell everybody if I didn't announce publicly that I was in love with her!

GWYNETH

(thinking)

Oh.

GWYNETH looks lividly at CHRISTINE.

CECILY

(to herself)

This just keeps getting better.

(to Sybil; gossipy)

I'm so glad we came.

GWYNETH, with a loud scream, suddenly jumps atop CHRISTINE who falls on top of DR. HOENIKKER'S body as the two begin to scuffle. Everyone quickly runs to contain the scuffle, doing so unsuccessfully.

GWYNETH

(screaming furiously; fighting)

You evil bitch!

CHRISTINE

Shut up, you almost killed a man!

CECILY

(motioning towards Dr. Hoenikker in

concern)

You're on Dr. Hoenikker!

SYBIL

(pulling Cecily back)

I don't think it makes a difference anymore, dear.

IRA and NATHANIEL contain the scuffle, drawing CHRISTINE away from GWYNETH.

IRA

(breathing heavily from the scuffle,

loudly)

What the hell is wrong with you people?

GWYNETH throws IRA'S hands off herself as she yells.

CONTINUED: 110.

GWYNETH

(yelling)

We're in love you fucking dolt!

EMILEE

(to Gwyneth)

This is not love, Gwyn!

GWYNETH

What the hell would you know about love?

EMILEE

I'm in love!

The party goes silent. EMILEE crosses towards IRA as she speaks.

EMILEE

And I'm not... killing old people over it! Stop.. following these stupid rules and guidelines as if there's a safe way to go about it! There is no safe way to love.. or to be loved for that matter! It's a damn dangerous road and you take it at you're own risk but you still take it! There's no right way or wrong way. You just... have to do what feels right. And it's the most important thing that will ever happen to you.. to me. To anybody! So there's nothing to be crazy about.. it just... happens. You can't help it, you just... fall into love hoping it falls.. into you, hoping that it might be enough.

The partygoers stand in silence, moved by EMILEE's words.

Suddenly, CECILY crosses swiftly to SYBIL, kissing her passionately for several moments before letting her go.

The partygoers, SYBIL in particular, are silently stunned.

CECILY

God, I've been wanting to do that since we met. Listen, I don't know if you love me.. or even if you like women for that matter. But.. I had to see for myself.

SYBIL appears speechless and stunned along with everybody in the room.

Scene 6

Suddenly, GATSBY enters from the bedroom door.

GATSBY

What the hell's going on up here? I've been ringing the intercom for ten minutes and no one answered! I had to climb up the fire escape.

The partygoers are caught off gaurd, all staring as if speechless at Gatsby. SYBIL maintains her sight on CECILY.

EMILEE

(quickly; defensively; to Gatsby) I'm in love with Ira.

GWYNETH

(quickly; defensively; to Gatsby)
And I'm in love with Nathaniel.

EARNEST steps forward.

EARNEST

(defensively; to Gatsby)
And I'm in love with-

CHRISTINE

(desperately interrupting Earnest; to Gatsby)

Dr. Hoenikker died!

RILEY

He's unconscious! We had this conversation!

IRA

No... he's actually dead.

EARNEST

(to Ira, slightly worried)
That's impossible.

IRA

Seriously.

(looking down at Dr. Hoenikker) This man is seriously dead.

EARNEST doesn't believe IRA for a moment before he finally comes to the realization that DR. HOENIKKER is actually dead.

CONTINUED: 112.

EARNEST

(horrified, worried)

Oh my God.

SYBIL

(quickly, to Cecily)

And... I'm a lesbian.

CECILY turns to face SIBYL happily. The two share a quick, passionate kiss.

GATSBY

Sounds... exciting. Did someone call the police?

The partygoers look around to eachother.

GATSBY

About the body.. not the lesbians.

The scene is silent for a beat.

NATHANIEL

Yes... we did. He appeared to die of natural causes. (to the partygoers)

Right?

The partygoers rumble loudly in unintelligable concurrence.

GATSBY

Yeah, he is a bit old.

The partygoers, excluding CHRISTINE, all nod and grumble in concurrence.

GATSBY

Well, everyone, thank you all for the party, seemed really eventful. I couldn't sleep on the plane on account of a bickering couple in the next seats over, so I'm sorry but, I'm in desperate need of a bed.

NATHANIEL

No problem. Lay down in the room.

GATSBY

Alright then. Thanks again everybody. Goodnight.

The partygoers all say goodnight as GATSBY exits into the bedroom simultaneously.

The scene is silent for several moments as the partygoers look around to each other as if not knowing what to do.

CONTINUED: 113.

EMILEE

Umm... Someone needs to call the police about the body. (long beat)

Suddenly, all the partygoers loudly squabble unintelligably for several moments about who will call the police.

LIGHTS DOWN.