

PARADISO

A play by Michael David Stoddard

ONE-ACT VERSION, *Paradise*
WINNER AT THE 2023 WINTER NEW YORK THEATRE FESTIVAL:

Best Play

Best Director

Best Actor

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SUMMARY

A young newlywed couple arrives at Paradise Cove Resort in Cancun, Mexico to celebrate their honeymoon. Sara and John have just eloped and John's last minute travel deal has left the couple trapped inside a vacation nightmare. A once thriving resort, the hotel is on death's doorstep hosting a procession of nosy guests, thin walls, giant cockroaches and one incompetent employee. The dreadful experience brings the couple's fragile insecurities to a head, leaving them wondering if they, perhaps, rushed into marriage. With the couple's union now on the rocks, the lesbian couple next door, alongside a manic hotel manager, bulldoze their way into the relationship in order to resolve the conflict and restore the newlywed's faith in love, trust and each other.

SETTING:

A run-down hotel room at the "Paradise Cove" in Cancun. There are three doors and two large windows. Stage left is the door from outside leading into the room. Upstage left is a small broken table propped up with a bible and three chairs. On the table exists a vase of dead flowers. Behind the table on the wall is a fire extinguisher. Stage right is the door that leads to an adjoining bathroom and upstage right is a closet. A queen size bed lives center stage with windows on each side. A broken air conditioner exists below the UR window. The windows upstage reveal that an ocean view no longer exists and in its place is the back shiny wall and alley of a new luxury high-rise.

TIME:

Present day.

CHARACTERS:

- JOHN DAVIDSON** Late 20's. He just eloped to Sara and lacks self-esteem and doesn't feel he is good enough for his new bride. His lack of confidence causes dishonesty and jealousy. He is handsome, but a "normal" guy with a receding hairline.
- SARA DAVIDSON** Late 20's. She just eloped to John. She is fit and beautiful and appears to be high maintenance on the surface, but is actually witty, kind and full of empathy. She just left her job and life in Chicago to move in with John in Indianapolis.
- TINA:** A 50 year old vacationing lesbian next door. She's married to Denise and is motherly, caring, kind and full of advice. The love she has for Denise is palpable.
- DENISE:** The other half to the lesbian couple who is also in her 50s . She is from Queens and is blunt, sarcastic and says it like it is. She has a huge heart under a crusty surface.
- MR. GONZALEZ:** Owner of Paradise Cove Resort. He runs the failing hotel alone, but pretends to have a full staff by taking on all the roles himself. Staff members include Miguel the bellhop, Greg the maintenance worker and Chef Gordon. He yearns for a way out and a personal connection.

SCENE 1: THE ARRIVAL - 1:26 P.M.

We hear voices outside the door leading into the honeymoon suite. The conversation cannot be made out, but a loud and forced Mexican accent is heard. We hear a key in the lock and the sound of the door failing to open. After a few failed attempts there is a loud thud and the door is kicked open by the hotel bellhop, Miguel. Miguel pushes into the room. He bears a large, almost fake looking mustache and wears an old bellhop uniform.

MIGUEL

My apology. The door, it stick in d' ugh, how do you say? The oomidity. Gah! *(Miguel notices the curtains open at the window and runs to close them)* But come in, come in! Welcome to Paradise Cove.

Sara and John enter the room as Miguel runs back into the hallway to get the luggage. They react to the overwhelming smell that exists in the room.

SARA

Ugh. What is that smell...

The first bag soars in and hits the floor.

...Ah! Thank you...ummm...

The second piece of luggage is thrown in causing John and Sara to dodge out of the way.

...Ah! What did you say your name was again?

Miguel carries in the last piece of luggage.

MIGUEL

It is Miguel. *(kissing Sara's hand)* Anything at all you need you just ask for Miguel and Miguel will be at your service, okay?

The third piece of luggage is tossed into John's gut.

JOHN

Ugh...Miguel. I think there may be some...mistake? I reserved your honeymoon suite.

MIGUEL

Si, yes. The honeymoon suite. Welcome. The finest room here at Paradise Cove.

Miguel notices the dead flowers in the vase on the table and edges closer to dispose of them by shoving them in his pants.

JOHN

The finest...? *(to Sara)* I'd hate to see the other rooms.

MIGUEL

Que?

JOHN

Look Mr. Miguel. This is a very special occasion for us.

SARA

We just got married. *(kiss)* We're on our honeymoon.

JOHN

Yes, *(pulling out his cellphone)* and this room, this hotel looks nothing like the photos online. I mean, nothing...

MIGUEL

Oh yes. Very old website. Very old photos. But not to worry. *(ignoring the phone and heading for the door)* We show you lovers a good time, okay?

JOHN

No it's actually not okay.

SARA

John, sweetheart. As long as we're together it doesn't matter. I'm sure we'll barely be in the room anyway.

JOHN

Just what a guy wants to hear on his honeymoon.

SARA

Oh shut up. You know what I mean.

JOHN

Look, I know this was all last minute, but I want this weekend to be special. You deserve it.

SARA

Relax. It doesn't matter where we stay. (*putting her arms around John*) Let's just order some food from the cafe downstairs and go enjoy the beach for a while. If you behave I may even let you rub some lotion on my sunburn when we get back. (*they kiss*)

Miguel inches closer to the private moment.

MIGUEL

Oh ho! Nice. (*thumbs up*) You see? All is happy. All is good. (*exiting*) I will leave you two romantics to yourselves. Oh and by the way. (*he turns back*) The cafe is closed.

JOHN

Well what time does it open?

MIGUEL

Any day now.

SARA

Day?

JOHN

(*to Sara*) Rat infestation.

MIGUEL

(*laughing*) Oh no no no. Aww, I like you. Always with the jokes. We have no rats here at Paradise Cove.

SARA

Oh thank god...

MIGUEL

But the roaches. Eesh! Truth be told, some are as big as rats. But if you keep a light on you will be fine. Okay? You see? Miguel is here to help. Now I leave you to your, ummm, "lotioning." Uh ho! You Americans.

Miguel holds out his hand waiting for a tip for his good service. John looks at Sara in disbelief and takes his wallet out of his pocket.

JOHN

(*pulling out an American twenty-dollar bill*) Sorry Miguel. All I have is American money and I don't have anything smaller than...

MIGUEL

(ripping the twenty from his hand and heading for the door) Oh, very generous. I knew I liked chu. Remember, you let Miguel know if you need anything else okay? *(exiting)* Que tenga un buen dia! *(he slams the door then quickly reopens it)* And remember, lights on. *(slams the door)*

JOHN

Can you believe this?

*Sara and John begin to put the luggage away.
John's bag is left next to the end of the bed.*

SARA

(laughing it off) Where did you find this place anyway?

JOHN

A website. Some normal, romantic-getaway website.

SARA

Discount website?

JOHN

No...Yes. Look I'm sorry, but all this was rather last minute.

SARA

How about we use the word spontaneous. Last minute makes it sound like we forgot. "Oh crap! Did you see what day it is? Tomorrow is the wedding and I don't even have my dress yet!" *(laughs)*

JOHN

(finally smiling) Noted.

SARA

Wait a second. Was that...? Why I think it was. A smile? *(she kisses him)* It's a wedding miracle. *(she kisses him longer)* Now what do you say we forgot about everything else and go take a walk on the beach. *(she removes her jacket and throws it)* Unless...

JOHN

I like unless.

Sara pushes John back on the bed and lowers herself over him. John screams, and throws Sara off of him which sends her onto the floor SR. He jumps out of bed SL.

Bedsread! Bedsread! Gahhh.

He rips the bedspread off of the bed sending it over Sara's head who remains on the floor. John itches uncontrollably.

Gross! Gross, gross, gross, gross.

SARA

Ah, hello? That was your wife you sent soaring onto the floor. What is with you?

JOHN

Look around. If they've got rat roaches, imagine what lives in that thing?

SARA

In the thing you sent sailing over your wife's head. (*standing up*) Let's find out. Check my hair!

JOHN

We have to face facts. We got ripped off.

SARA

We?

JOHN

Me. I. I got ripped off. We are the victims of hotel identity theft! Your cheap husband ruined your vacation by getting us a room at tetanus hotel and now you probably have lice and have to shave your head!

SARA

My what?

JOHN

Your head! At least. I should probably shave mine too. (*unraveling*) My entire body. And I'm gonna need help, cause there's no way I can reach that rogue patch of hair down by my ass.

SARA

Stop.

JOHN

I can't wait to see these honeymoon photos. People won't be able to tell us apart! We'll look like a couple of bald burnt Sphinx cats with sunglasses!

SARA

Stop!

JOHN

(begins opening his luggage which was left DS of the bed) I think I packed extra razors. *(pulls out a large box of condoms)* Well I guess we won't be needing these anymore! I told you we didn't have to buy condoms at Costco!

SARA

John, Stop! *(approaching John)* Please. You're unraveling again. Look, if you can't let this go then call the manager and get us out of here. Personally, I would have focused more on your sexy wife who was trying to have sex with you.

JOHN

We both sat there and watched that blacklight episode of Dateline.

SARA

So?

JOHN

So...what kind of sicko wants to roll around in other people's fluids?!

SARA

Excuse me?

JOHN

What? No. No no...oh no.

SARA

Well *this* sicko is trying to save *our* honeymoon. So call the front desk or get over it.

John silently walks over to the phone by the bed to call the front desk. He almost sits down and stops himself, but awkwardly covers up his phobia from Sara by pretending he'd rather stand. He tries to be cute and flirty to lighten the mood.

JOHN

It's ringing *(Sara just stands there with her arms crossed)* I'm so sorry Sara. *(She doesn't move)* Still ringing... You know I didn't mean that *you're* the sicko. *(she gives him a death-glance)* I don't know what came over *(desk picks up)* MI-GUEL!?! This is John in the honeymoon suite... Stop talking about lotion! Look, I need to speak to the manager pronto. Sure, yes. Mr. Gonzalez. Can you put him on the phone...? Well when will he...No he doesn't need to come up...hello? Hello? *(hangs up the phone)* Apparently, Mr. Gonzalez will be up in a few minutes.

SARA

I gathered.

The two sit in awkward silence at the bed and table.

JOHN

I'm sorry sweetie. But this is our honeymoon and I wanted everything to be perfect.

SARA

I'm not mad. Just get us our money back and let's get the hell out of here so we can start celebrating, okay?

JOHN

Okay. I love you. *(Sara is silent so he approaches)* I said I looove you.

SARA

I heeeced you. *(smiling)* I love you too...even with that rogue patch of ass hair.

JOHN

Hey! It's technically on my back.

SARA

Mmm hmm. *(she grabs John)* What da ya say we weedwack that thing anyway.

Both playfully wrestle and laugh and end up in a long kiss and embrace.

JOHN

How about we start celebrating now?

SARA

(sarcastically) But what about...the "bedspread?"

JOHN

Some things are more important. *(they kiss)* Besides, you like to be on bottom anyway.

SARA

Says you.

Sara pushes him back onto the bed. John closes his eyes and lays like an uncomfortable stiff corpse.

JOHN

(squeals) Geeeeeew.

Well that's attractive. I'm not used to you making that face before you orgasm.

John opens his eyes and laughs revealing Sara taking off her spaghetti strap top revealing a bikini top. This forces John to get his act together. He stands up, kicks off his shoes and removes his shorts revealing a pair of boxer shorts. Sara crosses and embraces him.

Now that's more like it, "Mr. Davidson."

JOHN

I aim to please, "Mrs. Davidson."

SARA

(kissing him) We sound so grown up. "The Davidsons." *(she kisses him then pulls away)* We're your parents!

JOHN

Sara sweetie. Can you not mention my parents? It's a real boner killer.

SARA

Sorry Mr. Davidson...mommy's in charge.

Sara pushes John onto the bed and lowers herself on top. After a moment John realizes he is on bottom touching the bedspread again and begins to get uncomfortable. Just as this happens there is a quick sound of a key and the sticky door is kicked open by Mr. Gonzalez, the hotel manager. Sara and John scream which sends Sara soaring onto the floor again.

**Mr. Gonzalez bares a striking resemblance to Miguel and should be the same actor in disguise wearing a wrinkled linen suit, no mustache and glasses.*

GONZALEZ

Oh! Oh my. How may I be of service to you two love birds?

JOHN

You could start by knocking!

John realizes he is holding the bedspread and throws it in into Sara's face knocking her over again.

GONZALEZ

My apologies, but Miguel said it was urgent. Is there a problem with the room?

SARA

Yes. You're standing in it.

GONZALEZ

I am so sorry. Let me start over. My name is Mr. Gonzalez and I am the manager here at Paradise Cove. One of the finest resorts in all of Cancun. (*approaching John for a handshake*) Oh my. Sir, you may want to readjust. I can see the fruit of your looms.

John quickly grabs his shorts and holds them in front of himself.

Now, how can I be of service? I understand you are on your honeymoon. We don't waste any time do we? (*thumbs up*) Nice...

JOHN

Mr. Gonzalez. No offense, but this place looks nothing like the pictures online.

SARA

(*to John*) That's because it was decorated before the invention of the internet.

JOHN

Sara please. Let me handle this. Mr. Gonzalez...there's no excuse for not updating your website and letting people believe they are staying in a four star luxury resort. A resort, may I add that smells like cigarettes and old clams.

GONZALEZ

Oh that's an easy fix. (*crossing to the UL window*) It's merely the dumpsters in the alley.

Mr. Gonzalez pulls open the drapes revealing a view of the back wall of another hotel. He shuts the window and shuts the drapes again.

You see? The window was open. Problem solved. Just use the air conditioner.

Mr. Gonzalez crosses UR and turns the knob and nothing happens. He kicks it and a loud motor slowly gains power until the sound overpowers the room like an

airplane engine. The three must shout over the sound of the engine.

Now if that will be all!

JOHN

No. That will not be all!

John approaches the window and throws open the drapes revealing the lack of an ocean view.

See! We also paid for an ocean view. Not the view of an alley and...oh my. Is that a group of elderly people dancing?

GONZALEZ

(approaching the window) No, of course not. It's Yoga. You don't find Yoga relaxing?

JOHN

They're naked!

GONZALEZ

It's hot Yoga, and we who are playing peek-a-boo through our skivvies should not throw stones.

John crosses away covering his crotch again.

JOHN

You're ripping us off and we'd like our money back!

GONZALEZ

Both of you. Come here. Come, come. Now look out this window and tell me what you see?

SARA

Oh my god. They are naked!

GONZALEZ

No, not there. There. Look in the reflection of that window down the alley and tell me what you see? Come. Get closer.

JOHN

Well I suppose it looks like waves.

GONZALEZ

(crossing away) Correct. Ocean view! Now if that will be all.

JOHN

Stop. There isn't even a restaurant. How can you charge people for an "all you can eat" package and not have a restaurant?!

GONZALEZ

We have a fruit bowl at the front desk. Take as much as you want.

Sara pushes John aside who looks like he is going to have an aneurysm. Sara tries to take the sweet approach which is lost on Gonzalez with having to shout over the AC.

SARA

Mr. Gonzalez, sir. Can you please just give us our money back so we can enjoy our honeymoon? This is a really special occasion for us. Please.

GONZALEZ

I see. So you're upset because you read the website from top to bottom and created this fun little list of things that don't meet your American expectations?

JOHN

Well I wouldn't put it that...

GONZALEZ

(heading for the door) I understand. Well you know what they say? *(turns to the couple)* A bush on the hand is worth more birds in your bush.

JOHN/SARA

What?

GONZALEZ

NO REFUNDS! *(Mr Gonzalez slams the door then reopens it.)* Always read the fine print. Have a lovely stay. *(the door slams again.)*

John and Sara stare in shock and disbelief. The AC unit makes another noise and increases its volume.

JOHN

Sweetie?

SARA

(not able to hear him) What did you say?

JOHN

Can you freakin' believe this shit?

SARA

(crossing toward the bathroom door) If you gotta go then go. I'm sure the bathroom is no worse than the rest of this dump.

JOHN

I know we're married now, but I really didn't need to know you were going in there to do that.

SARA

Huh?

JOHN

What?

SARA

Just go to the bathroom

JOHN

Just go to the bathroom

SARA

What did you say?

JOHN

I can't hear you.

SARA

I'll check the bathroom

JOHN

I'll turn off the A.C.

SARA

What?

JOHN

Huh?

SARA

Forget it!

JOHN

Nevermind!

John crosses to the A.C unit while Sara goes to inspect the bathroom. The AC knob and doorknob do not work so both pull on them frantically until they come off in their hands. John then decides to unplug the cord from the wall, but somehow the unit continues running while Sara tries to reattach the doorknob. John crosses to get the fire extinguisher found on the wall inside the door, but it is empty. They both lose any patience they have left and begin kicking the door and unit and screaming.

SARA/JOHN

Gaaaaaaaah!

The A.C. unit finally putters, smokes and dies while Sara, defeated, collapses onto the floor holding the knob.

JOHN

If anyone is keeping score, we no longer have A.C. Why are you on the floor? I thought you had to take a...

SARA

Shhhh. Do you hear that?

JOHN

What? *(deciding to open the window again now that the AC is broken)*

SARA

I think I hear voices. Do you hear voices?

JOHN

No, but I smell clams again.

SARA

(crawling SR and putting her ear to the door) John, I'm serious. I think I hear voices coming from the bathroom.

Suddenly the bathroom door opens inward toward Sara who gets knocked behind the door. In storms Denise.

DENISE

Knock knock neighbors. Somebody in here must really have to go.

JOHN

Who the hell are you?

DENISE

I'm Denise. Room 5C. Who the hell are you?

SARA

(popping out from behind the door rubbing her head) What are you doing in our bathroom?

DENISE

Jesus! You scared the crap outta me. You know it's rude to burst in on people like that.

Tina, the other half of the lesbian couple comes through the bathroom door.

TINA

Denise!

SARA

Ahh!

Sara runs SL and hides behind John.

TINA

I told you to wait for me before you meet the newlyweds. Hi!

SARA

How did you know we were...

TINA

Newlyweds? These walls are paper thin.

DENISE

We heard everything until that jet engine turned on.

SARA

That was the A.C. unit. Does yours work?

TINA

Don't know. We prefer to have the windows open and get the ocean breeze.

DENISE

Living in Queens you don't get much fresh air if ya know what I mean.

JOHN

You don't get it now.

SARA

How can you stand that awful clam smell?

TINA

(laughing) I guess we're used to it.

DENISE

That's what she said.

TINA

Denise. Don't be gross. We just met them. (*approaching John for a handshake*) Hi, I'm Tina. It's a pleasure...oh dear! (*referring to his crotch*) Your jack seems to be out of his...box.

DENISE

Yah buddy, and we ain't buying what you happen to be selling.

SARA

For the love of God John, put on some pants.

Sara shoves his pants into his crotch.

JOHN

Okay, fine. But...just one small question? What are you doing in *our* bathroom?!

DENISE

You mean "our" bathroom.

TINA

It's a jack and jill situation. We share. But don't worry. We will give you two newlyweds all the privacy you need. Come on Denise. Let's let them get dressed.

DENISE

You mean undressed. They didn't even have time to bone before Captain Cheapskate barged in.

John and Sara exchange looks realizing they heard "everything."

TINA

We're really sorry. We tried not to listen, but the walls really are paper.

DENISE

You should hear the couple on the other side of us in 5B. She never climaxes and he cries the entire time. Hilarious.

TINA

Just wait till after dark around here. There's so many moans and groans it sounds like a Discovery special on humpback whales.

JOHN

Great. More good news. We've got no food, no view and we have inadvertently joined a live sex show. Just perfect.

DENISE

Ahh, lighten up. It could be worse.

JOHN

How's that?

DENISE

Don't know. But I can ask the crier in 5B. *(laughing and punches John in the arm)* Okay Tina. Let's hit the bricks. *(heading for the door)*

TINA

It really was a pleasure meeting you both. Now, not that you need to plan around us, but I always take a shower at 10 p.m. sharp.

DENISE

Yah, and I always hop in with her by 10:15. *(slaps Tina on the butt)*

TINA

Denise!

DENISE

What? When you're married you gotta keep it kinky. Remember that. *(exiting)* So if the tub is a rockin' ...you better just hold it if you know what's good for ya.

TINA

(exiting) Try and have a wonderful time and make the most of it. Bye now. *(she shuts the bathroom door and then quickly reopens it with a bottle of Nair Hair Removal)* Oh and I thought you may need this. *(she tosses it over to John and shuts the door.)* Bye.

JOHN

(reading the bottle) Nair Hair Removal. We gotta get the hell out of here.

SCENE 2: THE STORM - 3:08 P.M.

Scene opens with mariachi music and a maintenance worker facing upstage bent over the air conditioning unit. He wears a tool belt, and a maintenance worker outfit with the name tag, "GREG" and pants that are a little too small revealing his butt crack. As the music fades we hear him singing, "Hero" by Enrique Iglesias.

After a few moments he stands, wipes his brow and reveals to the audience how similar he looks to Mr. Gonzalez. This is the same actor except he wears a terrible wig and utility goggles. He tries to turn the air conditioner back on to no avail. He gives it a kick which appears to start the unit again. To his surprise the unit plays voices from a local airport. As he turns the AC knob, the radio stations change before letting out a terrible banging noise. The unit starts smoking again and dies. Unphased, Greg opens the window to let out the smoke. John enters through the front door on his cell phone.

JOHN

Yes sir, I understand. Yes...well no, I didn't know that was policy or I wouldn't have...yes. No. Please. I know you told me your decision was final, but if there's anything at all I can say to change...? Okay, yes. I understand. *(John hangs up the phone)*

Greg has had a seat on the bed and is listening to the phone conversation. John turns around and is startled by his presence.

Jesus! You scared...oh. You must be the maintenance worker I called down about?

GREG

(speaking in a muffled grunt to mask his voice) Yer.

JOHN

So you tried to fix the AC?

GREG

(grunt) Yer.

JOHN

And is it working now?

GREG

(in a defeated grunt) Ner.

JOHN

Terrific. Just...terrific!

John slams the table top. The table breaks and leans to the side sending its contents falling onto the floor.

John collapses into the table's chair with his head in hands. Greg approaches him and puts his hand on his shoulder looking extremely empathetic.

Can I help you with something?

GREG

(grunt) Ner.

JOHN

Then why are you still HER?! *(Greg looks hurt)* I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I'm having a...rough day. I didn't mean to take it out on you...ah, what's your name?

GREG

(grunting) Grug

JOHN

What?

GREG

(pointing at his name tag) Grug.

JOHN

Oh, Greg. Got it. That's a very American name. Are you from the states? *(Greg looks confused)* From America? A-MER-I-CA? Forget it.

Sara enters from the bathroom and goes into the closet. She is dressed in more beach attire.

SARA

John sweetie, have you seen my sun wrap? (*digging in the closet*) I know I packed it. Oh I can't wait to get out there in the sun and tan up these pale looking legs. Worst thing about Chicago was the winter. By February the only color you can see on my body is the blue in my veins. I look like some kind of beached jellyfish. Oh! Here it is! (*coming out of the closet with the wrap*) John, are you ready to... Oh, Greg! I forgot you were here. (*to John*) This is Greg. He's here to fix the AC.

JOHN

We've met.

SARA

(*to Greg*) So you worked on it?

GREG

(*grunting*) Yer.

SARA

And you're finished?

GREG

Yer.

SARA

And it works now?!

GREG

Ner.

JOHN

Sara, let's just get down to the beach. Listen, "Grug." We no longer need your services so why don't you...(*refers to the front door*)

Greg begins for the front door, but stops looking for a tip. John pulls out his wallet. Sara places her sun wrap skirt on the bed and quickly returns to the closet to get her beach bag.

You didn't even get it working, so unless you've got change for a twenty, I'm afraid you're out of luck.

SARA

Wait. Greg, would you mind looking at the drain in the sink before you go? The water won't go down and what's in there looks less like liquid and more like stew.

GREG

Si..ummm. (*grunting*) Uh. Eh. Yer.

Greg snatches the twenty from John and quickly heads for the bathroom. John grabs the door knob and crosses to the bathroom door and throws it inside.

JOHN

For twenty bucks you better fix this too!

GREG

(*offstage*) OW!

JOHN

Let's go, Sara. I need to get out of this place for a while.

SARA

Aren't you gonna change?

JOHN

Whocares. Let's just go. I'll swim in my boxers if I have to. (*opening the door*)

SARA

(*exiting*) That's fair. Half this place has gotten a peek anyway.

Both laugh and close the door behind them. Greg comes out of the bathroom rubbing the back of his head and holding the door knob. He decides to get comfortable and takes off his tool belt and goggles and throws them on the bed where he sees the sun wrap. He holds it up admiring the beautiful colors. He decides to put it on to see how he might look as a woman on the beach. You then hear the sound of Sara as she kicks open the door. In a panic, Greg runs for the closet still in the wrap and shuts the door.

SARA

(*entering*) Just a second John! I left it on the...bed. (*only seeing the tool belt*) Oh, maybe it's in the bathroom.

Sara exits into the bathroom. Greg tries to slowly put the wrap back on the bed, but Sara reenters too soon, sending Greg retreating back into the closet.

Where the heck did I put that?

She crosses to the front door and yells down to John.

John can you see if my wrap is inside my beach bag?!

JOHN

(offstage) You're what is in your where?!

SARA

My wrap...oh forget it. I'll come down.

Sara exits through the front door. Greg quickly puts the wrap on the bed. He hears a voice in the hallway and ducks behind the SR side of the bed before he is seen.

JOHN

(entering, calling off to Sara) I'm not saying you're blind, but you always say you can't find things and...*(seeing the wrap)* they suddenly appear. *(calling off)* Found it! *(noticing the toolbelt, goggles and door knob just sitting there)* What is he doing now? Off buying a big lunch with my money, Greg.

John quickly crosses to the bathroom not noticing Greg tucked beside the bed in a frozen ball.

Greg, are you in there?!

John exits into the bathroom and Greg grabs his goggles and toolbelt and tries to make an escape SL, but doesn't have time and ducks behind the SL side of the bed.

The nerve of that guy! The sink looks worse than the toilet. He better get... *(noticing the missing tool belt and goggles from the bed)* Wait. Wasn't...

John looks toward the front door and then the bathroom trying to determine what might have happened. Greg tries to quietly fit under the bed, but he gets stuck halfway.

I'm almost certain...

SARA

(offstage) John! What's taking so long?!

JOHN

(calling off) Ahhh, nothing babe! *(to himself)* I think nothing. Coming!

John exits out of the front door. Greg wriggles his way out from under the bed and just as he approaches the front door to listen for voices, it gets kicked open leaving him frozen behind it.

JOHN

(calling off) I'm just getting the key! *(to himself)* I am not leaving this door open.

The key is not on the broken table. So John crosses SR and looks for it on the bed. You see Gregs arms reach out from behind the door and place it on the broken table. John takes the key from the table...and he slowly closes the door as he watches inside the room. The unseen Greg is revealed standing frozen behind the door as it closes.

I'm onto you Mr. Gonzalez. You and your entire staff.

We hear the sound of the lock in the door. Greg waits for the sound to stop. Tina and Denise enter through the open bathroom door and watch Greg slowly back into the room toward them. He watches the front door waiting for John or Sara to possibly burst in again. Greg backs into Tina, freezes and slowly turns around to see who it is.

TINA

Afternoon Greg. Looks like someone's doing something he shouldn't be doing.

GREG

(grunting) Ner

DENISE

Ner, huh? What the hell are you doin' in here?

GREG

(picks up the door knob from the bed and grunts) Fer dar narb.

TINA

And are we doing something else here we are not supposed to be? Cause you have the same looks as Denise when I catch her on her laptop at 3:00 in the morning.

Greg pantomimes and grunts fixing the door knob and plunging the sink drain.

GREG

(grunts) Ner ner. Mer fer dar narb...and er...pler pler, plob der perp.

DENISE

Hand over the knob, champ. You go “plob der perp” and I’ll handle the door.

GREG

Rear? Her. *(hands Denise the knob and grunts)* Berp. Da perp nerp poop da berp. Plerp plup!

Greg exits into the bathroom

DENISE

I don’t know whether I should laugh at that guy or check for his picture at the post office.

Denise gets to work on the door knob.

TINA

Oh, I think he’s harmless. Honestly, I don’t think he’s smart enough to do any real damage.

DENISE

Famous last words.

TINA

That was nice of you to offer to help him out sweetie. *(sits on the bed)* I love when you get all, “Stand back. Denise is on the job.” My strong little firefighter. My strong...sexy...little...you didn’t pack your uniform by chance?

DENISE

Stop being cute cause I will jump your bones whether Dahmer is in the bathroom or not.

TINA

Okay. I’ll let you focus. So what’s your take on our recent newlyweds?

DENISE

She’s a fox and he’s a dud.

TINA

Denise! Don’t call him that. *(laughs)* But there is a word for that relationship.

TINA/DENISE

Mismatch! (*both laugh*)

TINA

We really shouldn't laugh. People probably say that about us too you know.

DENISE

What are you talking about? You're a bombshell and I'm a babe. Anyone who sees different needs to get their head out of their ass.

TINA

I actually think they are kinda cute together. You can tell they love each other. They have that dazed look newlyweds have. What do they call it? Love goggles.

DENISE

Ugh. Worse than beer goggles. At least with beer goggles you eventually sober up in the morning, grab your clothes and get the hell out of there.

TINA

Well *some* of us have more experience with that than others.

DENISE

Don't pretend to be all innocent. It wasn't me who had to army crawl her way out of Debra's apartment at four in the morning.

TINA

D'? Is that, "never talking about it again?" Cause if you get to talk about Debra, I get to talk about Trish and the time...

DENISE

Nope! Got it. Lips are sealed.

TINA

(*laughs*) That's what I thought. Anyway, I think they'll be fine. He seemed really nice and she...well, she's...

TINA/DENISE

HOT.

Both sigh, laugh and Denise finishes the door.

DENISE

Okay, knobs done.

TINA

So you still think I'm a bombshell huh?

DENISE

Damn right.

Denise puts on her "firefighter voice" and begins to roleplay with Tina as she slowly approaches her. The two get lost in it as it builds sexually.

Miss? Did you call 911? Are you in need of some...assistance?

TINA

(a damsel in distress) Yes I did and yes I...do.

DENISE

What seems to be the problem...miss?

TINA

It's my...cat...It seems to be caught in that tree. My...cat.

*Denise puts her arms around Tina
Greg is listening, holding a plunger. He approaches.*

DENISE

Oh your...cat...huh? *(Denise gives Tina a kiss)* I happen to specialize in all things....cat. Just let me grab my gear and I'll...

GREG

(grunting "aww, nice" with a thumbs up) Errrr, nar!

DENISE

Do you mind?!

TINA

We didn't like it yesterday and we don't like it today!

DENISE

Look, did you get the drain clear?

GREG

Yar

DENISE

Then get the hell out of here!

Denise chases him toward the front door and locks it behind him. We hear the sound of a rain storm starting outside.

Now, where were we?

TINA

(in a quiet seductive stage whisper) Help. Help. I need you to help me find...*(Tina opens the closet door)* my cat.

Denise pretends to talk on a walkie-talkie.

DENISE

Captain, I got a 10-69 and I'm going in hot.

Denise chases Tina into the closet and they close the door. Their voices are soon muffled by the growing sound of thunder and lightning and rain. A storm intensifies. We then hear John and Sara's voices in the hallway.

SARA

(offstage) Will you get the door open already? I'm drenched.

JOHN

(offstage) I'm trying, but the stupid key...just broke off in the lock.

SARA

(offstage) Let me try.

JOHN

(offstage) I told you the key broke, so unless you have burglar skills I don't know about, what are you gonna do?

SARA

(offstage) This!

Sara kicks the door and it flies open. Sara and John enter dripping wet.

I may not have burglar skills, but I do take kickboxing twice a week.

*Sara drops the bag at the table and crosses SR.
Tina and Denise peek out of the closet.*

Let me get some towels from the bathroom.

JOHN

This may not be the time or the place, but that was very arousing.

SARA

(from the bathroom) Ahhhhhh!

*Sara runs into the room and stands on the unmade bed.
Denise and Tina slam the closet shut.*

Oh, it's definitely not the place.

JOHN

What's the matter?

SARA

Let's just say, *(in Miguel's Mexican accent)* "We didn't leave de lights on." Please go in there and kill that thing.

JOHN

Me? Why do I have to do it? You're the karate kid. Okay, fine. Fine. I'll be the man. *(slowly edging for the door)* The brave...man who definitely does not have a fear of bugs or things that can crawl on him. I'm brave. Very brave. Here little, little rat-roach.

*Tina and Denise peek out of the closet again.
John exits into the bathroom then immediately returns and
shuts the bathroom door.*

Jesus!

Tina and Denise slam the closet door as John reenters.

Did you see the size of that thing?! I think it was using my toothbrush.

SARA

I take it the roach won.

JOHN

This round. Let me get a shoe...or a microwave to drop on it.

SARA

(getting down off the bed) Sweetie, in all honesty, what are we gonna do? We can't even enjoy the beach anymore? Now we're stuck inside this room all afternoon. Let's just cut our losses and go to another hotel. I'm wet and tired and...

JOHN

Horny?

SARA

You wish. *(grabbing her luggage to pack up)* We can still salvage this weekend if we get the hell out of here.

Sara begins to pack, but notices John just standing there.

What is it?

JOHN

There is a small problem. Well, a big problem. I sorta don't have any money left...

SARA

What are you talking about? Stop messing around.

JOHN

Oh, I'm not. I spent it all on this vacation...

SARA

Honeymoon.

JOHN

...Honeymoon. Yes. It wasn't cheap. Why do you think I'm so pissed we got scr...

SARA

You got...

JOHN

...I got screwed.

SARA

What happened to the rest of your money? You told me work was going great.

JOHN

Well, there was the ring, and the first-class flights, and this lovely lovely resort. It kinda wiped me out.

SARA

So we're broke? What a fun wedding present.

JOHN

(trying to make light of it) This is what happens when you don't register for gifts. *(awkwardly laughs then sees Sara's face)* Nope.

SARA

Do I look like I find this funny? Wait. You told me a few days ago you landed a big client with a huge commission. What happened to that, or do you also have a gambling problem that you want to spring on me?

JOHN

No, no. That was true. I landed it. I definitely landed it. But then I unlanded it when I got... fired.

SARA

What?

Denise and Tina peek out of the closet in shock.

The firm fired you and you thought this was information you needed to keep to yourself?

JOHN

I didn't want to...

SARA

What? Spoil the wedding? This magical honeymoon? The life we are starting together? I can't believe you.

JOHN

I'm sorry. It just happened...and I was gonna tell you, but then you started talking about eloping and I got caught up in the moment.

SARA

I just left my job in Chicago to move in with you cause, "I have the better job." "I'm the man." "Let me take care of things for a while." And now you're telling me that you're unemployed and broke. This is just perfect. What are we gonna do John?

JOHN

Well, now we can move to Chicago. I'll look for a job there.

SARA

I was already replaced. Did you think they were just gonna wait around for me in case I decided to change my mind? Jesus. What a perfect ending to this shitty day.

Sara digs in the beach bag and pulls out a flip-flop

JOHN

What are you gonna do with that?

SARA

We already have to share the bathroom with two lesbians. I'll be damned if we have to make room for a cockroach on steroids.

Sara enters the bathroom and we here the sounds of of a warrior killing the roach over and over and over. Sara emerges from the bathroom with her hair a mess and breathing heavily. She tosses the shoe on the floor.

He didn't win round two.

Sara throws the flip-flop down and notices the closet door open and slams it shut.

JOHN

That was...terrifying. Okay Sara. Listen. I'm sorry. I was just embarrassed and also excited that someone like you would want to marry someone like me. Being unemployed didn't seem to help my cause.

SARA

So you lied to me? Do you think that's the type of man I want to marry?

JOHN

No, but...

SARA

And what does that mean anyway? "Someone like me?"

JOHN

It means that you're way outta my league. Everybody knows it. Look at you and look at me? We can't even go to the grocery store without the checkout guy slipping his number into our groceries.

SARA

That's ridiculous. You're just being jealous again.

JOHN

Even the minister asked if you were *sure* when you said "I do."

SARA

But I said yes. I married *you* John. This is all in your stupid head. Stop being so insecure all the time. It's always someone. The Uber driver. The guy checking our airline tickets. Our 65 year old landlord for Christsakes. Stop being so jealous! I'm the one who asked *you* to elope. I'm the one who abandoned my life and moved in with *you*. I love *you*. This marriage is never gonna work if you don't start trusting me and cut it with all this jealousy crap. What other people think shouldn't matter.

JOHN

Well it does matter. I'm sorry. For better or for worse and this is my "worse." I'm an insecure man who gets jealous and wants you to be proud to be his wife. Not ashamed to be attached to some unemployed dumbass, with a receding hairline and the inability to book a vacation.

SARA

It's our honeymoon!

JOHN

What's the difference?! I still screwed it up.

SARA

What's the difference? (*She crosses and sits in the chair*) You don't get it do you? All that shit is in your head. We can't keep fighting about this every single day. I am proud to be your wife. At least I was until you started lying to me. How could you do this to me? To us?

JOHN

I mean, I didn't technically lie. I just chose to omit some important information.

SARA

(*Sara slowly stands and approaches John*) You think you're gonna get out of this on a technicality? You're a real piece of work, you know that. If you haven't noticed, I'm pissed. I'm pissed you lied. I'm pissed you don't trust me. I'm pissed we have to sleep with cockroaches as roommates, and I'm pissed that the overwhelming clam smell in here is actually making me hungry. Do you even have money for food?

JOHN

Yes, of course. Well, a little. I mean it was supposed to be all you can eat. I thought we were covered.

Sara grabs her beach bag and starts for the front door.

JOHN

Where are you going?

SARA

I'm going to give that manager a piece of my mind, and if he's not there maybe I'll ask Miguel out on a date! Would that make you happy?!

*Sara storms out leaving John alone who sits on the bed.
There is a light knock on the closet door and in walks
Denise and Tina from the closet, not the bathroom. John
is slightly confused.*

TINA

Knock knock neighbor. How ya doin buddy?

DENISE

Nice work taking out Godzilla in the bathroom.

JOHN

Look, I'm sorry you had to hear all that, but it really isn't a good time.

TINA

(sitting on the bed) Do you want some marriage advice?

DENISE

Cause you're gonna get it whether you want it or not.

TINA

Denise, go make yourself useful and scrape that thing off the floor and flush it down the toilet.

DENISE

Yup, I'm on it. The hard part is taken care of. Let's just hope it doesn't clog the pipes like the one yesterday. I think that was this one's mamma. *(she exits back into the bathroom)*

JOHN

Look...

TINA

Tina

JOHN

Tina. I appreciate you wanting to help, but there's not much you can do for me. I lied to my fiance.

TINA

Wife

JOHN

Right, wife. I screwed up this entire vacation, and...

TINA

...honeymoon.

JOHN

Honeymoon. This is not how I wanted to start our marriage.

TINA

Is that why you think she left? Men. You really are clueless aren't you?

We hear the sound of flushing coming from the bathroom

DENISE

(offstage) Good news. Loch Ness has returned to the sea.

TINA

Look, from what I could hear, which was everything, she just sacrificed a lot to be with you. Her job, her home and you crapped all over that. She wouldn't go through all of that unless she loves you.

Denise reenters the room

DENISE

Yah, take Tina and me. I hate cats. Dogs all the way for me. Plus I'm allergic as hell. I break out into hives and my eyes swell shut. I look like one of those trolls from Lord of the Rings. But, she asked me to move in with her so what did I do? I get a shot in my ass once a week to help with my allergies. You see what we mean?

JOHN

No.

TINA

I knew she made that sacrifice because she loves me. Do you think I care what other people think and that our UPS lady wants to jump Denise's bones and not mine? No. Because I know D' loves me and I don't crap all over that by doubting her commitment.

DENISE

Yah and that UPS chick is hot too. I mean, who doesn't love a chick in boots who carts around a dolly. But I told her, "Sorry Celia. This package is already signed for." (*Denise hits an awkward, butch sexy pose*)

TINA

(*to John*) I mean, look at her. Who can resist that?

DENISE

(*crossing to sit on the other side of John on the bed*) Look close Johnboy. This is love. Warts and all.

TINA

Sacrifice, commitment. Actions speak louder than words hun. You got someone there that clearly loves you so you gotta drop all this insecure garbage and trust the girl.

DENISE

It's not her fault she's smokin' hot.

Tina and Denise look out picturing Sara and take a unified deep sigh.

JOHN

Okay, I understand. Thank you...I think. But how do I fix things today? I can't magically change our situation without a job or money or working air conditioning.

*Tina stands and starts heading for the door.
Denise picks up the hotel phone.*

TINA

Oh we got that covered. You don't need much to throw your new bride a romantic evening. You leave it to us. (*Tina exits*)

JOHN

Where are you going?

DENISE

Oh she's gonna take Sara to our couples massage to give us some time.

JOHN

Time to do what?

DENISE

Time to clean up this place and give that girl a night she won't forget. (*someone answers the phone*)
Yo Miguel...yah it's Denise. Get your butt up to the honeymoon suite and bring that cook that's just sitting around... Yes, the cook! What's his name? Gordo?...Yah sure. Chef Gordon...Oh don't gimme that crap or I'll come down there...I said I'll come down there and go Queens on your ass! (*listens*)
That's what I thought. (*she slams down the phone*) Okay Johnboy. We got a lot of work to do.

SCENE 3: THE HONEYMOON - 8:07p.m.

The scene opens on Denise and John moving the table in the corner to downstage center. Miguel throws the luggage off of the bed and over by the closet. He then takes a pink sheet off the bed and creates a table cloth which he places onto the newly positioned table. John and Denise set the two chairs and then clean up the luggage by throwing them into the closet UR. Miguel has exited into the hallway and wheels in a cart with table dressings and cleans them. Denise fights with John in the background to touch the bedspread and make up the bed. He refuses till it gets tossed in his face sending him falling backwards over the bed. John tentatively makes up the bed while Miguel and Denise sets and balances the broken table. The room has transformed into a small cozy restaurant for two.

DENISE

Okay. Okay. Now we are getting somewhere. You see Johnboy, all we need is a little creativity and..well...definitely better lighting.

Denise runs to the wall and lowers the lights.

You see. You can hardly see the paint falling off the walls.

JOHN

Yes, sure the place looks...better. But aren't we forgetting one important detail of a romantic dinner?

MIGUEL

The lotion?

JOHN

Seriously man. Let it go. We're forgetting the food. The dinner.

DENISE

Yah, I wonder what's keeping Gordo. Miguel, go grab him. We need to know what was still edible in that kitchen of yours.

MIGUEL

You want me, Miguel, to go get him, Chef Gordon? Oh si, yes. I can do that. Miguel is always here to help. *(he seems inspired by this challenge)*

DENISE

Then GO!

Miguel grabs the cart and awkwardly leaves the room running into things as he exits.

No wonder this place is going down the crapper.

JOHN

Did you happen to notice how much Miguel and Mr. Gonzalez and that weirdo Greg look alike?

DENISE

How do you mean?

JOHN

Mr. Gonzalez and the other two. Don't you see an uncanny resemblance between them all? And have you even heard of anyone else besides Chef Gordon? I mean, where are the rest of the employees?

DENISE

(opening the curtains to help set the "sunset" mood) Well, having spent three nights here, they probably had a mutiny and jumped overboard a long time ago. *(looking out the window)* Oh, the sunset class. *(screaming out the window)* Namaste! Gotta love them hippies.

JOHN

You don't think there's something funny going on here?

DENISE

Look around tiger. There's a lot going on and very little of it is funny. But yah, he's all the same guy.

JOHN

Wait, what? You know it's the same guy? How do you know?

DENISE

It takes more than a terrible mustache and a pair of glasses to pull a fast one on ol' Denise. Plus Tina and I binge watch all those CSI shows. We're kinda experts in figuring out the crimes before the first commercial break. This joker needs a lot of work on his backstory.

JOHN

Seriously. How can you watch those things? They're all the same.

DENISE

Expand your horizons Johnboy. And besides, it makes Tina horny. What? It's true. That's why I love her. Show her a butch cop solving a mystery and she can't get into my Carharts fast enough. I caught me a good one. You did too. The challenge is keeping it fresh, and I ain't talking toys and costumes. Although those can help. Spontaneity chief. Never let it get stale. You feel what I'm saying?

JOHN

Yah, that actually makes sense. Thanks Denise. I appreciate the advice.

DENISE

Now if you're gonna use toys...

Chef Gordon busts through the stuck door. He is lacking Miguel's mustache and Mr. Gonzalez' glasses but he has a bright chef's hat and matching apron.

JOHN

Oh Chef! Chef Gordon is here! Oh thank God. Please come in, come in. Chef, what did you have left in the kitchen to eat?

"Chef Gordon," who just came up with this role, speaks in a terrible Swedish accent that should surprise even himself.

CHEF

Oh ja. We have plenty of food to prepare for yoo. To drink we have Glogg. And den a smorgasbord of fish. We have gravlax, surstromming, and torsk with rutabaga. Ahh, and green salad. Mostly green salad. Ja? Va? Do you like what I prepare for yoo? Truth be told it's all we have so you must say ja. Ja? Okay. Chef Gordon goes now to prepare delicious smorgasbord that will of course be edible to you (*underbreath*) he hopes.

DENISE

Interesting choice going with Swedish Mr. G.

CHEF

(laughs uncomfortably) What? Who? What do you mean? I go now. *(he begins to exit)*

JOHN

Wait. I don't even know what any of that food is. What the heck is...surstromming?

CHEF

A treat for the mouth and the nose. A Swedish delicacy. It is roughly translated to "rotten herring" Ja? It is good? *(exiting)* Okay I will begin to cook the smorg...

DENISE

Smorgyborgy. Yah we get it. Look. What do you ya got for dessert down there Gonzo?

Chef begins to nervously exit the room with his accent going between Mexican, American and Swedish.

CHEF

Que? Ugh va? Who dis Gonzo you speak of. Very funny. Chef Gonzo, ugh Gordo. Chef Gordon is not a Gonzo. *(laughs awkwardly)* Ugh anyway, dessert? Dessert we have um? We have? Ja? Da? Va? Ah...waffles. *(he slams the door)*

JOHN

Great. Nothing says romance like spoiled herring with a side of waffles.

DENISE

Oh lighten up. It's not what's on the menu. It's the gesture of going out of your way with all this to show her you care. Comprende? Now, they'll be back any minute so we gotta move into phase two of the plan.

JOHN

What's phase two?

DENISE

For you, it's to take a shower. We're gonna have enough stink in this room without you adding into the mix. Scrub the disappointment off yourself and put on something nice.

JOHN

What are you gonna do?

DENISE

Me? I'm gonna go and give the "uno amigos" a hand in the kitchen.

John exits into the bathroom. Denise does a final check of the room and starts to head out when Mr. Gonzalez enters with a bottle of wine and two glasses.

Gonzo. What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be smorgy-borgying in the kitchen?

GONZALEZ

What? No, that's Chef Gordon's domain and not to fear. Dinner is underway. You know, I hope these newlyweds appreciate us opening our kitchen just for them tonight. If the health department gets wind of this I'll never be able to reopen the cafe again.

DENISE

You're serving spoiled fish. Everyone's gotten wind of it. What's with the wine? You feeling guilty for not coughing up their refund?

GONZALEZ

Not exactly. Think of it as...a bribe so to speak. Something to keep your silence, if you know what I mean?

DENISE

If you wanted quiet around here you shouldn't have made the walls out of toilet paper.

GONZALEZ

About the way we run things around here...

DENISE

I'm not following.

GONZALEZ

Perhaps about the similarity of me and my staff.

DENISE

You're gonna have to be more specific.

GONZALEZ

(breaking down) The fact that everyone is me! I am them and they are me! We are me, and me is trying to save this sinking hotel without the other them in the other rooms finding out. Cause if the other them find out, then those them might tell all the other them and soon I'll have no them left in the hotel to charge.

DENISE

Well, speaking on behalf of the "them", we already know. Except maybe the couple in 5B. They've got bigger issues.

GONZALEZ

Please, I'm begging you. The patrons can't know that I run this place all by myself. It's too humiliating and they will leave. A peace offering to keep my secret. *(he hands her the wine and glasses)* Please.

DENISE

Okay Gonzo. *(taking the wine and putting it on the table with the glasses)* Relax. I'll keep your secret... as long as this dinner is good. We need a romantic evening and not one ending in a couple fighting for the shitter. You get me? The night has to be perfect. We've got a marriage on life support so dinner has to be on time and taste good. You keep your end of the deal and I'll keep mine.

GONZALEZ

Yes, of course. I am actually a pretty good chef, you know. I studied for three semesters at Le Cordon Bleu before coming here to Cancun.

DENISE

No shit.

GONZALEZ

Yes shit. We have a deal? *(offer a handshake)*

DENISE

Your secret is safe. *(she shakes his hand then pulls him close)* I'm like Fort Knox. You can torture me for days and you'll never get a secret outta me. *(laughs)* But you might get a second date. Eh Gonzo. *(she punches him in the arm)*

We hear Tina and Sara's voices in the hallway.

Crap. You distracted me with all your me, myself and I bullshit. "Places" dumbass.

GONZALEZ

Places? What do you want me to do?

DENISE

I don't know. For now be the friggin' Maitre D. Then get your ass to the kitchen.

GONZALEZ

Maitre D? Maitre D...

*Denise runs and knocks on the bathroom door.
Gonzalez runs around in a panic.*

DENISE

It's showtime Johnboy! The eagle has landed.

Tina and Sara slam into the room laughing and come face to face with Mr. Gonzalez.

SARA

Oh, Mr. Gonzalez. What are you doing here?

Denise gives Gonzalez a kick in the back of the leg.

GONZALEZ

Ow! Oh ah, welcome. Welcome to Paradise Cafe's sunset dinner for two. (*winks at Denise and lays it on thick for Sara*) Prepare yourself for one of the most perfect and magical evenings of your entire life.

Sara now notices the transformation of the room. Tina gives Denise a thumbs up.

SARA

Oh wow. When did you do all this? Why? Tina, were you in on this?

TINA

No, no. I had no idea. Denise?

DENISE

Oh yah, it was actually your husband's idea to do something really special for you tonight to show you how much he cares. I just did as I was told.

SARA

John did this? Where is he?

DENISE

He's finishing up in the bathroom. (*pushing Sara toward the UR closet*) Why don't you pick out something nice to change into and you let us take care of everything.

SARA

Okay...

TINA

(*whispering*) Babe, you did great. It looks really cute in here. Where are we at in the food department?

DENISE

(*whispering*) Unless Clark Kent here "Supermans" his way back to the kitchen, we'll have a lovely meal of raw sardines and cake batter.

GONZALEZ

(*whispering*) Aren't we having fun? I like friendship. I'll go make sure Chef Gordon prepares a smorg...

DENISE

One more word about a friggin' smorgasbord and I'll break your arm. Just go.

Gonzalez scurries out of the room.

Sara crossed downstage holding a beautiful sundress.

SARA

Is everything alright? Where is Mr. Gonzalez running off to?

TINA

He's heading to check on dinner. *(Tina gives Denise a look like she needs to go supervise)*

DENISE

Yah, we got Gordo, ugh Chef Gordon to open the cafe just for you tonight. You know what, let me go downstairs and make sure everything is on schedule.

SARA

Oh Denise. Would you mind sending up Miguel? I asked him to find me some Advil or something.

DENISE

Oh, you want Miguel? To come up here...? Oh yah, sure. No problem. I'm on it. I'll send him right up.

Denise runs out the front door laughing.

TINA

So...aren't you glad you joined me for that couple's massage? Feeling relaxed? Rejuvenated?

SARA

Yes. I feel so much better. Thank you again for giving me your reservation.

TINA

Don't even mention it. We both could see...and hear that you needed to get away for a bit. I'm so happy you had a good time.

SARA

I did...Although I swear I saw our masseuse...Pedro, flash a couple of pictures of me when I wasn't looking.

TINA

Oh no. That was me.

SARA

What?

TINA

Oh, don't worry. They were only of myself. A little thing I like to do to light a fire under Denise. There's something about me slathered in oil that really cranks her gears. (*bites lip*) Anyway. Just look at this place. A nice dinner for two. Let me tell you: Men are like crockpots. Sometimes you gotta leave them alone to stew awhile, but if they love you, they will always turn out delicious.

SARA

Huh?

TINA

Exactly.

SARA

Okay... Tina. No offense, but how is it you know so much about men?

TINA

I was married to man once. A big strong black man for twelve miserable years.

SARA

Twelve years? Did you two have any children?

TINA

Ha! It's hard to create children when you're married to one. That man had one redeeming quality and unlucky for him, I could have cared less.

SARA

What was it?

Denise whistles and opens her hands demonstrating a large penis.

Got it.

Both women laugh as John enters from the bathroom all clean and handsome.

JOHN

Sara, hi. Did you have a good time this afternoon?

SARA

I did. Very relaxing. You look nice John. This is all very nice. Look, let me freshen up in the bathroom and we can talk over dinner.

Miguel bursts into the room.

MIGUEL

Miss Sara? Miss Sara, I come with you request for me.

SARA

Bring them to me Miguel.

Miguel has clearly taken a liking to Sara and kisses her hand and arm.

MIGUEL

Now you be careful Miss Sara. Medicine in Cancun can be, how do you say? "Potento." Very strong.

SARA

I'm sure I'll be fine. Thank you Miguel

Sara retreats back into the bathroom. John is displeased by the affection Miguel has shown to Sara.

TINA

How are things coming in the kitchen?

MIGUEL

Kitch...I do not know. Mr. Gonzalez has me working the front desk while Mr. Gonzalez is in the kitchen with Chef Gordon and Miss Denise. But I hear pots and pans go bing bang bong so things must be moving. A delicious meal for you both, no? Okay, I go now.

TINA

Miguel, can you come up when the food is ready? We really could use a waiter to make this evening special.

MIGUEL

You want me to...waiter...for the dinner? Me, Miguel? *(he laughs nervously)* Oh si, yes! No problemo. Miguel is always here to help.

\

Miguel exits the room in a hurry.

JOHN

You know that the Chef and Miguel...

TINA

Are the same guy? Yah. *(laughs)* This should be fun to watch.

JOHN

Okay, but I don't think Sara knows yet and for tonight I'd like to keep it that way. She seems a lot less angry and she hates this place enough already.

TINA

She doesn't hate this place as much as she hates you for leaving her stuck here.

JOHN

I appreciate that.

TINA

Oh, would you relax? She's just angry that you didn't trust her enough to tell her the truth. Just be honest, listen to what she has to say and speak from your heart. You can do this. *(noticing John's face)* What? You okay?

JOHN

I'm really nervous. I feel like I could throw up.

TINA

Save that for after dinner. What's on the menu anyway?

JOHN

Don't ask.

Denise runs in the room, grabs the fire extinguisher from the wall next to the door and runs out again.

I see dinner is going as planned.

Sara emerges from the bathroom in a sundress with her hair and makeup done. She looks beautiful.

TINA

Damn sweetie. You look hot... Oh, sorry. *(to John)* You go.

JOHN

Wow, Sara. You look gorgeous. I'm so happy that you're back and I'm so sorry...

Both look toward Tina who is listening and beaming with pride that her plan is working.

TINA

Oh! Third wheel. Gotcha. Why don't you two come sit over here. I'll pour you both a glass of wine and give you some privacy.

John helps Sara into her chair and he takes a seat.

I really do hope you two can enjoy your evening and celebrate. I mean, who even remembers why you fought in the first place, right?

SARA

I do. He's a liar who doesn't trust me.

TINA

Oh that's right. *(nervously laughs)* Well wine is poured so I guess I'll retreat to my boudoir. *(whispers to John)* Good luck

Tina begins to walk to the bathroom, but instead she ducks inside the closet to keep any eye on things. She secretly films some of the action on her phone. Sara downs her first glass of wine and begins to pour another.

JOHN

Sara sweetie, do you think that's a good idea? Didn't you just pop a Mexican jumping bean in the bathroom?

SARA

Well "someone" gave me a headache, and don't start monitoring my drugs and alcohol. If I want to snort a pound of cocaine and down a bottle of tequila on my honeymoon, I'm gonna do it.

JOHN

Okay, okay. What you put in your nose is your business. Even if it is enough narcotics to kill a small village. *(he laughs and it is not reciprocated)* I'm sorry. I'm not trying to control you. I just care about you. Why don't you tell me about your massage? Did she do it hard enough for you? I know you hate it when the masseuse has flimsy fingers.

SARA

It was great. Pedro really dug into those knots I get under my shoulder blades.

JOHN

Pedro?

TINA

(peeks from the closet) Uh oh.

JOHN

That's funny. Pedro sounds like a man's name.

SARA

(Sara is baiting John) Yah, that's right. Pedro. He was big and strong and really knew how to dig into my oily, greasy knots. Especially the ones in my glutes.

JOHN

In your glutes? You mean your ass?! You let a man pound on your oily naked ass?! Are you serious?!...

Tina coughs "TRUST" from the closet.

...sly...feeling better babe? That's...so great. Good for Pedro. Maybe tomorrow he can pound my ass too. *(he downs the glass of wine)*

Tina now crawls from the closet to behind the curtain to keep a better eye on things.

SARA

John, why don't you trust me? Have I ever done anything to warrant this insane jealousy? Ever?

JOHN

No, no you haven't done anything. It's a me problem not a you problem.

SARA

We are married now. So a "you" problem became a "we" problem. Are you gonna get past this John? Cause I don't care how insecure you are, it doesn't justify lying. We've got real money problems to solve and we can do it as a couple or we do it apart.

JOHN

Apart? Sara, I know I screwed up, but if you would just listen, I'm trying to make it right.

SARA

Okay, talk. I'm listening.

John crosses to Sara fighting for the right words to say when Mr. Gonzalez enters, concealing an old child's recorder he has forgotten how to play.

GONZALEZ

I thought you two love birds could use a little pre-dinner music to set the mood. Sit down, sit down.

JOHN

Mr. Gonzalez, now is really...

GONZALEZ

I said, sit!

Gonzalez forces John into his chair.

They say, "food is the way to a man's stomach. But..the way to a woman's heart is (*whispers*) music."

Gonzalez begins to play but struggles to find the right note. Any note. This painful display of music goes on. Eventually he manages a version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and he makes his way over to play directly to Sara and it awkwardly becomes only for her.

JOHN

Alright! That's enough. Would you please take that piece of junk and get out of here. We are trying to have a private conversation.

SARA

No.

JOHN

No?

SARA

That's right, no. I happen to enjoy it. Keep playing Mr. Gonzalez.

Mr. Gonzalez begins to play again, but John can't take it. He crosses over to Sara and pulls her down left. Throughout the next dialogue, Tina emerges from the curtain and fights to get the recorder away from Gonzalez who never stops trying to play. The fight goes unnoticed.

SARA

John, you're being rude.

JOHN

Me? I'm being rude. What about Kenny G over there?

SARA

He's just doing his job.

JOHN

Really? If he was doing his job then we wouldn't be stuck in what feels like an episode of the Golden Girls!

SARA

Why did you go to all this trouble if you're gonna continue being a complete...*(she holds back)*

JOHN

A complete? Go ahead. A complete what?

SARA

Ass! A complete ass!

*Sara storms into the bathroom.
Tina approaches in awkward silence.*

TINA

(soothing) Perhaps I wasn't being clear before. I said speak from...the heart! What the heck is wrong with you?

GONZALEZ

Not cool man. Not cool.

John looks like he is going to rip off Gonzalez' head so Tina gets in between them and snatches the recorder once and for all and throws it on the bed

TINA

Okay, Mr G. Time to go. *(pushes him to the exit)* Go and get the dinner. Now.

GONZALEZ

Dinner? Gotcha. Ooooh...dinner. *(exits)*

TINA

(to John) You, try to relax and come up with an actual apology. I'll go and get Sara from the bathroom.

JOHN

It's no use. She's pissed.

TINA

(mocking John) “It’s no use. She’s pissed” Listen to yourself. Look. This girl loves you for reasons that, at the moment, are beyond me. But she does. Sometimes relationships are easy and sometimes you gotta fight a little. Haven’t you ever fought for anything before?

JOHN

Yes! Sure. I got punched in the nose once in the sixth grade.

TINA

Wow. Okay, I’m gonna say something to you and I don’t want you to take it the wrong way.

JOHN

It’s okay. I can take it. Just be gentle. I’m a little fragile right now.

Tina crosses to John and puts her arm around him.

TINA

Grow a pair of balls.

Tina crosses for the bathroom.

JOHN

That was gentle?

TINA

There’s no time for gentle. Stop being a girl...first time I’ve ever said that. Stop being a girl and fight for this relationship. Get back in the ring champ. You can do this.

Tina exits into the bathroom while John paces rehearsing an apology.

JOHN

Sara, I’m sorry I... I’m sorry I... Sara, sweetie...I’m sorry, I...am... I am a man...with a vagina apparently.

Tina emerges from the bathroom with Sara.

TINA

Look who’s back and ready to hear what you have to say? Let’s just sit down again. Come on you two crazy kids. Sit down.

John nervously sits first and Sara stands staring at him waiting for him to pull out her chair.

JOHN

Crap. Sorry.

He stands and pulls out the chair.

TINA

You see that? He's apologizing already. *(Tina awkwardly laughs and whispers to John)* You got about two minutes before this girl is outta here. Okay! I will leave you two...

Denise and Chef Gordon enter the room. Gordon wheels the cart with entrees. Denise holds her nose.

CHEF

Va? Who ees hungry? Chef Gordon has got some yum yum for your tum tums? Va?

DENISE

He wasn't kidding when he said it was a treat for the mouth and the nose.

Sara suddenly bursts into laughter.

JOHN

What's so funny?

DENISE

Yah, I really wasn't kidding.

Sara bursts into laughter again.

SARA

I'm sorry, I don't know what came over *(laughing again)* me? Oh my God, does that smell awful! *(she laughs so hard she can barely breathe)* I think I need some air.

Sara runs and sticks her head out the UL window. She notices the nudist sunset Yoga class.

CHEF

You know, I smorgy and I borgy and dis ees da thanks I get.

SARA

Hey! You call that an ass? This is an ass! *(laughter continues)*

*Sara moons the window.
Chef Gordon places the meals on the table.*

CHEF

Chef Gordon has feelings too you know.

DENISE

Oh, put a sock in it Gordo.

TINA

What the hell did you give that girl? She's stoned out of her mind.

CHEF

Va? Not Chef Gordon. I only slave in da kitchoon. I will find Miguel and send him to da room. Va? Miguel will answer questions for you.

Chef quickly exits with the cart. Sara continues mooning the upstage window.

SARA

That's right! You showed me mine so I show you yours!

TINA

Denise, go cover up Sara's ass and get her to sit down.

DENISE

Done.

TINA

John, try and calm her down and talk to her.

JOHN

What's the point? There's no talking to her now. She's high as a kite.

TINA

We'll get her some coffee and everything will be fine. Just keep her calm and don't let on you know how toasted she is.

JOHN

And how do you suggest I do that? I needed this evening to go well and it's turning into a disaster.

Sara is placed back in her chair and answers her shoe like she is getting a phone call and laughs hysterically.

TINA

Well, she clearly wants to laugh, so I suggest you find the same things funny. You owe her.

Tina pushes John into his chair. Miguel bursts into the door. His mustache falls off, but he quickly recovers. Tina and Denise meet him by the door.

MIGUEL

Ahhh, I see the romantic dinner for two is underway. Very nice. *(to Tina and Denise)* So what are you two still doing here?

DENISE

What are we doing here?! Listen to me, you talking armadillo. What the hell did you give her in the bathroom? She's stoned off her ass.

Sara is singing and making her herring dance around the table to "The Lonely Goatherd" from Sound of Music. John doesn't know what to do.

SARA

"High on a hill sits a lonely goatherd"

Tina slaps John on the back of the head causing him to sing along and add a herring into the chorus.

SARA/JOHN

"Yo do lady, yo do lady, yo do lay-dee-who"

John's forced laugh turns into a cry.

MIGUEL

Oh my. That's embarroosing.

Tina and Denise back Miguel SR

TINA

Answer the question Miguel.

MIGUEL

Just a little pain pill. As long as she doesn't drink she should be good to go. No problemo.

DENISE

Then why did you bring them wine you idiot?!

MIGUEL

(backpedaling) That was not Miguel. That was Mr. Gonzalez. I go and fetch him to explain. Okay?

Miguel, in a panic, exits into the closet, not the front door.

DENISE

Gonzo? I mean Miguel? Whatever your name is! Get back here! That's the...

TINA

Look, he is not gonna be any help. You go downstairs and get a pot of coffee. I will make sure things don't get any worse.

Sara is now standing doing a kickline with a participating herring in each hand.

SARA

"One, singular sensation. Every little step she takes...budda ba budda ba ba" *(she continues)*

DENISE

Yah, good luck with that.

Denise exits out the front. John runs over to Tina.

JOHN

Any bright ideas?

TINA

I told you. You owe her. Grab a fish and start kicking.

*John grabs a fish and crosses to join Sara
Tina knocks on the closet door.*

SARA/JOHN

(singing) "One. Poopy doopy doopy. That morning we'll bake" *(laughter)*

TINA

Miguel, we need you down in the kitchen so come out of the closet already. *(crossing downstage)*
Divorce flashbacks...

*John and Sara are now using the fish like maracas
and she is leading John in a conga-line singing
"Conga" from The Miami Sound Machine.
John is trying to keep up with her lyrics.*

SARA/JOHN

“Come on, come on baby let me see your papa.
Dooba rubba dubba and I’ll never stoppa.”

Miguel who realizes he should not be himself, emerges from the closet leaving his hat and coat behind. He is wrapped in the sun wrap pretending to be a woman. A woman in a mustache. He tries to go unnoticed and joins the end of the conga line.

SARA/JOHN/MIGUEL

“Finger lickin’ gooda and I’ll eat a moppa.
Yummy rummy tummy and I betcha your momma
REEP. Reeba! Reeba! (*continue scattin*)”

Sara starts to break loose and shimmy. Tina rips the sun wrap off of Miguel as she shoves him out the front door. John runs over to Tina in an awkward shimmy.

JOHN

Tina. What the hell do we do now?

TINA

Just take a seat champ. You’re gonna hurt yourself. It’s time to bring in the prize fighter.

Tina shoves John into his chair and rolls up her sleeves.

JOHN

But...

TINA

But nothing. If I got out of having sex with my husband on *my* wedding night, I can handle a drunk dancing queen on *yours*.

Tina starts dancing next to Sara who has transitioned into her own rendition of Lady Marmalade

SARA

“He met Mommy-loud down on top, Moulon rude. Struttin’ herself with her feet.”

TINA

Oh, I love this song. Very romantic.

SARA

Yah, it's one of John's favorites. He always sings it in the shower when he thinks no one is listening.

JOHN

I was hoping that would become public information.

SARA

"Gitchee, gitchee, wa-wa, papa. (Hey, Hey, Hey!)"

Tina starts to sing along and attempts to follow Sara's incorrect lyrics.

SARA/TINA

"Oochie-coochie ya-ya- teeth. (My teeth)"

Tina snaps at John who stands up again and reluctantly joins in. Tina continues dancing with Sara using her hips to edge her closer to the chair.

SARA/TINA/JOHN

"Smoke a joker - in his yacht-ah"

Mr. Gonzalez bursts into the door with eye glasses but forgetting to remove the mustache.

GONZALEZ

"Creole Lady Marmalade!" Oh, I see we have transitioned into a little party!

Tina hip checks Sara back into her chair and crosses to Mr. Gonzalez.

TINA

John, get her to eat some food. (to Gonzalez) You! Just go downstairs and bring up the dessert.

GONZALEZ

But they've barely touched their dinners.

TINA

Because she thinks the fish are her friends!

Sara covers a fish in a piece of lettuce like a blanket.

SARA

(singing) “Rock a bye baby, on the tree top...”

DENISE

Look, she needs something in her stomach. Go get the waffles.

GONZALEZ

Oh you want me, Mr. Gonzalez to see if him, Chef Gordon is ready with the waffles and then have Chef Gordon bring them upstairs? Right away.

TINA

Some advice Mr. G. If you’re gonna play more than one part in this charade, you might want to take off THE MUSTACHE! *(She rips it off and sticks it to his forehead)* Just go get them!

Denise passes Gonzalez on the way out with two mugs and a carafe of coffee. Sara and John sit at the table laughing and dancing at whatever Sara is doing.

DENISE

I see things are still moving swimmingly in the honeymoon suite.

TINA

Got the coffee?

DENISE

Yah, one pot of coffee coming up. Hey there Johnboy. Hey there Sara. I brought you guys some delicious coffee. Nice and strong and black.

JOHN

She only drinks coffee with milk.

SARA

(laughing) Strong and black? Just like your ex-husband, eh Tina?

Sara whistles and does the same penis hands from before and explodes into laughter.

DENISE

(to Tina) Something you want to elaborate on?

TINA

Not now. Look, I’ll go get some milk for her highness and you try and get them to talk.

Tina exits to get the milk. Sara is still laughing, while John is faking it. Denise crosses and sits on the foot of the bed joining the table.

JOHN

(through fake laughter) Was this part of your brilliant plan?

DENISE

Say Sara? Yah, hi. Over here. Hi. How was your, ah, surstrom...sur stromboni that John had prepared for you? Isn't he a gem?

Greg enters the room with his wig on backwards.

What the hell do you want?

*Greg lets out a series of grunts and a pantomime that he has to go to the closet for some reason. *Miguel's costume is still in the closet. He looks flustered and doesn't know what to do.*

GREG

Lar mer ker. *(lost my keys)* Ker er were. *(looked everywhere)* Her ser there *(have you seen them?)*

DENISE

No, I haven't seen your keys?

GREG

Ner? Were ler mer ker. *(No, Well let me look)*

Greg is "looking" for his keys edging his way to the closet.

JOHN

You understood that?

DENISE

I can understand people whose mouths are being muffled. Leave it at that.

Sara emerges from the closet wearing Miguel's coat and hat.

SARA

Hey Johnny! Look at me. *(laughing)* Who am I? Who am I?

She is using what she thinks is Miguel's accent, but is actually Scottish.

Whatever you need. Do not worry. Miguel is here to help you. *(laughs)*

She approaches John for a tip.

Before I go. How about a little tip. Oh I forgot... *(no accent)* You're broke.

The room pauses, but she soon breaks into uncontrollable laughter. As she laughs, Denise takes off the hat and and tries to remove the jacket. Sara thinks Denise is doing a strip tease with her and she starts to underscore.

SARA

"Ba bum bum, Ba Bum Bum..."

Sara's jacket is stuck and Sara is moving in her dance.

DENISE

You know Sara, you really aren't helping.

SARA

I'm not?...*(Sara starts to cry)* I'm so sorry Tina.

DENISE

Actually, it's Den...nope. Nevermind. I'm fine. It's all fine Sara. Just stand still so ol' Tina can get this damn jacket off.

GREG

(crossing toward Sara and grunting, but you can understand every word) Let me help.

JOHN

Take one step and it'll be your last thing you ever do.

Denise finally gets the jacket off and throws it and the hat to Greg.

DENISE

Take a hike Grug.

Greg runs out of the front door.

JOHN

I think it's time to admit defeat. *(to the sky)* You win! I'll die alone!

DENISE

Men. First sign of engine failure and they hit the eject button.

JOHN

First sign? Are we at the same dinner party?

Sara has decided to play hide-and-go-seek and has hidden herself behind one of the UR curtains.

DENISE

Take it from someone who popped a few pills of her own back in the day, all Sara needs...where the hell is she?

JOHN

She was just here.

DENISE

Jesus. We need a leash on that girl. Find her!

Denise heads for the UL curtains and John checks in the closet.

JOHN

Sara sweetie? Now is not the time for games.

DENISE

Come out, come out, wherever you are.

John heads for the bathroom and Denise exits out the front door to check the hallway.

JOHN

Sara?

DENISE

(offstage) I've got a surprise for you...

*Sara runs from the UR curtains and hides in the closet.
Denise and John reenter.*

JOHN

No luck?

DENISE

Check behind the curtains.

*Denise checks under the SL bed and John looks behind
the UR curtains.*

JOHN/DENISE

Sara...?

*John and Denise cross DL and Sara army crawls under
the bed.*

JOHN

Oh my God! Where the hell is she? What if she left the hotel?

DENISE

It's Cancun. She'll fit right in.

JOHN

This isn't funny Denise. I've never seen her like this. We've got to go look for her.

DENISE

Okay. Calm down. I'll go grab our search party of...two from downstairs and check the street. You check the hotel. Go start with my room.

*John begins to cross to the bathroom and Denise starts to
head for the front door, but they are stopped in their
tracks by the sound of giggling coming from under the
bed. Denise and John slowly turn around and pantomime
that Sara is under there. Denise mouths to John to "play
along"*

(bad acting) Okay there John. Let's go find her now. Good luck.

*John and Denise stomp their feet and open and close each
door, but quickly run behind the UL and UR curtains.
Sara crawls out from under the bed and decides to hide*

underneath the bedspread. John and Denise are peeking out from behind the curtain. Denise and John pantomime on who should be the one to uncover the giggling Sara. They decide to remove it together revealing Sara sitting talking to one of the herring she concealed in her pocket during dinner. She is unaware she is exposed.

SARA

(whispering) You have to be quiet or they will find us. What? What did you say? *(listens to fish and laughs)* That's hilarious!

DENISE

This was definitely not part of the plan.

JOHN

What do you think he said?

DENISE

Nevermind that! Sara...we found you!

Sara looks at Denise.

JOHN

We found you sweetheart.

Sara looks to John. She then speaks to the fish.

SARA

(whispers) The jig is up.

JOHN

Okay sweetheart. Let's get you back in your chair.

SARA

(calling John over in a whisper) Psssst. Johnny. John. Come here. I got something I need you to know.

John crosses closer to Sara and sits next to her.

(whispers) I threw up in the closet...*(laughs)* twice.

DENISE

Okay. We'll deal with that later. John, get Princess Diana here back in her chair.

Denise begins to exit into the bathroom.

JOHN

Where are you going?

DENISE

To get the leash.

Miguel enters back in the room. He realizes he forgot the mustache so uses his finger instead.

MIGUEL

Okay. Miguel is back. Miss Tina tell Miguel in a very hurtful tone to, “hurry upstairs and clear out the revolting fish smell now.”

Sara still thinks she is wearing the bellhop outfit.

SARA

Oh hey Miguel! Look. I’m wearing you on my head too. (*Scottish accent as Miguel*) I am here to help you. (*laughs*)

MIGUEL

She’s very good.

DENISE

Get lost Miguel.

SARA

Wait. Why are you running-go-away my friends?

MIGUEL

Not to worry Miss Sara. It is in preparation for a most delectable dessert.

SARA

Oh, there’s dessert? What is it?

MIGUEL

A most exquisite Swedish dish that will awaken your palate with a blend...

JOHN

Enough! It’s waffles. Plain, ordinary, run of the mill, Aunt Jemima, Eggo waffles!

The three sit in silence for a moment thinking this may finally break Sara's evening.

SARA

I love waffles!

DENISE

You see, she loves waffles. Okay, Sara sweetheart, John said he'd really like to show you something in the bathroom.

SARA

Really? Is that true Johnny? Aww that's so sweet. Yoo-who. John! Here comes mommy!

Sara quickly runs into the bathroom.

JOHN

(to Denise) What are you doing?

DENISE

Splash some cold water on her face will ya? Throw her in the damn shower for all I care. I'll get rid of the booze and the fish, and when you come back you can pump her full of caffeine, shove a waffle down her throat and hopefully salvage this Titanic of a dinner.

John exits into the bathroom after Sara while Denise "clears" the booze by chugging the rest of the bottle. Miguel has been clearing the plates off the table.

MIGUEL

You know what this moment needs?

Miguel has found the recorder and before he can let out one note...

DENISE

If you value your nuts, you'll put that down and go get the dessert!

MIGUEL

Ouchy.

Miguel drops the recorder on the table and runs out the door with the cart as Tina runs in with a small carton of milk you find in an elementary school lunchroom.

DENISE

What little girl's lunchbox did you swipe that from?

TINA

The only milk in the kitchen was, well, on its way to becoming a really good cheese so I had to bribe a street vendor. So don't be mad, but we have to have sex by the window tonight and leave the curtains open.

DENISE

We should have run out of milk three days ago.

TINA

Where are the love birds at?

JOHN

(in a high pitch scream) Ahhhhhhh!

Both come screaming into the room and stand on the chairs.

SARA

Rat-roach! Rat-roach!

JOHN

It's huge!

SARA

It touched my foot!

JOHN

I think it's the daddy and he's pissed!

Chef Gordon enters with two large plates of waffles.

CHEF

Dessert is here!

SARA

Well don't just stand there John! Go get that thing!

JOHN

I don't think this is a one-man job!

TINA

(in a loud booming voice that is out of character) ENOOOOOUGH!

Everyone freezes in place and we finally hear silence.

Don't make me use this voice. I do not like this voice.

DENISE

That makes one of us.

TINA

Babe, not the time. Now you two, sit down. Denise, pour the coffee and Chef Miguel Gordon, serve the damn dessert.

Like children being reprimanded, they all comply.

Okay. There we go. You see, all is well. Now everyone take a deep breath and enjoy dessert over the relaxing sounds of silence.

The group sits and stands in complete silence. Sara is finally drinking her coffee. We suddenly hear the faint sound of a woman moaning which gets louder and louder. It seems the couple from 5B are giving it another go. The scream "almost" builds to a climax, followed by a moment of silence, and then the sound of a man sobbing, "I'm sorry."

Wow, he almost had it that time.

DENISE

(screaming in the direction of the bathroom) Yo! Either draw him a map or Google it already! *(she shuts the bathroom door)* 5B...and you thought you had problems.

SARA

I don't feel so good. What the hell was in that Advil?

JOHN

I think it was the mix of the wine and the mystery pill. Here. Have some more coffee.

TINA

If it's any consolation. You've been having the best time.

DENISE

Yah. We all have? Haven't we Johnboy?

Really?

SARA
John looks to Tina who mouths "You owe her"

JOHN
Oh yah. Having the best dang...look no. Thank you both for your help, but no more of this. No more lies. No, I did not have fun. It was actually kind of a nightmare.

SARA
Oh...

JOHN
Don't be upset. I was just worried about you. It's hard to enjoy yourself when your fiance...

TINA
Wife

JOHN
Damn it. Wife..is not...herself. It's rather scary actually.

SARA
I can barely remember...well, anything.

TINA
That may be for the best sweetheart.

DENISE
Shove some of that waffle down your throat and you'll be right as rain.

SARA
Why do my hands smell like fish? Wait...were we dancing?

DENISE
(laughing) Oh yah.

SARA
...and singing?

TINA
If you want to call it that.

SARA

Oh my God! Did I show my ass to the yoga studio?

DENISE

(laughing) You sure did. You went total Ozzy Osbourne up in here.

SARA

I'm so embarrassed.

JOHN

It's okay Sara. You're among friends...and Gordo.

DENISE

Think of tonight like Vegas. It stays here.

SARA

John, I'm so sorry. You went to all this trouble to create a romantic evening and I ruined it. I'm sorry. I was just so...

JOHN

Angry at me? Pissed? I get it. Listen Sara. I want you to know I hear you and I know why you left. It's more than just the job and the money. You sacrificed everything to start a life with me and I crapped all over it by not trusting you and telling you the truth.

TINA

(to Denise) I couldn't have said it better myself.

JOHN

I really am sorry. I do trust you Sara and I'm gonna do everything I can to make sure the rest of the weekend...the rest of our marriage is special.

TINA

That husband of yours really stepped it up tonight. He took good care of you.

DENISE

Any guy willing to cut a rug with smelly-ass sardines to make sure you're having a good time is a real keeper.

SARA

You danced..with fish...for me?

JOHN

And I sang. Don't forget the singing.

TINA

Couldn't if I wanted to.

SARA

Thank you John. That means a lot. The dinner. The apology. It all means a lot. *(she gives John a kiss)*
Thank you for a wonderfully weird evening...that I'm happy I won't ever remember. *(they kiss again)*

TINA/DENISE/CHEF

Awwwww.

SARA

Oh God. There aren't any pictures, are there?

TINA

No hunny. The paparazzi made no appearances.

Tina hands her phone to Denise revealing she does in fact have many photos and videos. Denise takes the phone.

CHEF

What happened in Vegas is happening now! Right? Did I say it right?

Denise finally gives him a punch to the nuts she promised from earlier.

SARA

Oh, thank God. I do not need that getting out.

DENISE

(as she scrolls through the phone) Fort Knox.

JOHN

And a big hand to these lovely ladies. It took quite a team to make all this happen. I couldn't have done it without our new friends from 5C.

Tina and Denise exchange hugs and handshakes with the couple.

DENISE

Booze. Drugs. Showtunes. I felt like I was in college again.

TINA

It was our pleasure. We're so happy you two kids made up.

SARA

I don't know what we would have done without you.

TINA

Look, relationships are hard. Denise and I don't always see eye to eye. But we never go to bed angry and we're always honest about the way we feel.

Chef Gordon bursts out in tears and removes his Swedish accent, talking in his normal Gonzalez voice.

GONZALEZ

You're right! *(sobs)* Honesty is always the best policy. *(he removes his Chef's hat)* It is me. Mr. Gonzalez.

SARA

Get out.

The group exchange a look of disbelief to Sara

GONZALEZ

Don't be scared. I have played a terrible trick on you all. I am so ashamed.

TINA

Go easy Mr. G. No one is mad at...

GONZALEZ

(overdramatic and pushing Tina to the side) You see it all began over twenty years ago. I came here to Cancun to be a world famous chef. I got my first job here at Paradise Cove, one of the premiere luxury resorts of the time. No vacancies every night and a full cafe from breakfast to dinner.

SARA

What happened?

DENISE

Hepatitis outbreak.

GONZALEZ

(to Denise) Ha ha, no. *(to group melodrama)* About ten years ago the owner of the resort wanted to sell. It didn't make sense to me because the resort was still so busy.

Tina picks up the recorder from the table and begins to play the theme from the movie "Titanic" and she is good.

(to Tina) Thank you. (back to melodrama) But the manager made me an offer so good, I simply could not refuse. And just like that, Chef Reynolds from Minnesota, became Mr. Gonzalez, the bigshot hotel manager. Women...they adored me.

DENISE

(to Tina) I am so turned on by you right now.

GONZALEZ

But sadly I was swindled. Taken advantage of. Made a fool. (referring out the window) In a matter of weeks they started construction of a new state-of-the-art retirement resort with luxury views of the ocean...right in front of Paradise Cove. Without our ocean view, customers stopped coming.

JOHN

Wrap it up Reynolds.

GONZALEZ

This once thriving resort went from a staff of forty down to twenty. Then to ten, to five and then it's just me. I had to close the kitchen and most of the rooms. I have always been an honest man, but I'm desperate. I've tried to sell, but no one wants to buy.

Gonzalez sobs in a chair and Tina finishes playing.

DENISE

(to Tina) That flute comes home with us.

JOHN

Wait a minute. I think you made a huge mistake.

SARA

"A" mistake?

JOHN

The food, though somewhat questionable in the expiration department, was actually delicious. Don't you think so Sara?

SARA

I don't really remember, but it was very entertaining.

JOHN

I think you approached your hotel problems all wrong. Why don't you close up the hotel and keep the cafe open, focusing on what you're good at? Start cooking again. (*referring out window*) Look, you've got hundreds of retired residents right next door who are dying to dine somewhere else.

TINA

And from the look of that Yoga class, most of them really like to eat.

DENISE

It's a good plan, Gordo. Take their money before they have a chance to leave it to their children.

CHEF

Oh, I don't know. It sounds like a lot of work. I'm not sure I would even know where to start.

JOHN

Well, here's an idea. I'm in marketing and in need of a job, and you could use some help opening the cafe. Why don't you hire me for a few months to give you a hand?

SARA

That's a great idea. Mr. Gonzalez, John is one of the best Marketing strategists in the midwest. He will pack the place and get it feeling like the old days in no time.

GONZALEZ

Ooh I don't know? Okay I'll do it! Mr. John. You're hired!

SARA

How exciting!

JOHN

And Sara will stay and help too.

SARA

(*to John*) Does Sara get a say in this? (*noticing Mr. Gonzalez listening*) I'm kidding. It would be my pleasure.

JOHN

And once you have a steady stream of income from the cafe, you can slowly re-open the hotel again.

DENISE

I say sell the dump. I'd bet my left tit that there's someone out there just dying to build a parking garage and Gordo, that garage could have your name on it.

GONZALEZ

Do you really think so? Oh thank you Mr. John. Thank you Ms. Denise. Thank you everybody. Yes, it's time for a new chapter. "Paradise Cafe and Parking Extravaganza." I don't know how to thank you all. *(putting his hand on Sara)* The next massage is on me.

SARA

(horrified) Pedro...

Mr Gonzalez crosses for the front door.

GONZALEZ

...I will leave you all now and start planning! Enjoy the rest of your evening. Thank you all so much. *(he shuts the door then reopens it)* I feel like a new man *(shuts it again)*

SARA

Which one?

DENISE

Okay, Tina. Tick-tock. According to my watch it's 10 p.m., so you know what that means? We've got a street vendor who made a deal and I intend to honor it.

Denise heads for the bathroom door.

JOHN

We seriously can't thank you enough.

SARA

Who knows? Maybe one day we'll be the ones helping a newlywed couple in need with our...years of wisdom.

TINA

(heading for the bathroom door) Years? We just met a month ago.

DENISE

We were both shopping for plants at Home Depot.

TINA

Why, we just flew in three days ago to get married on the beach.

Tina crosses to pick up the forgotten recorder from the table.

DENISE

What can I say? The heart wants what it wants. *(she takes the recorder)*

TINA

And that Mr. Gonzalez. He also makes one heck of a minister.

*Denise slaps Tina on the butt and chases her off
blowing on the recorder.*

Night now.

*They shut the bathroom door behind them.
The sound of Mariachi music begins to grow.
John and Sara look at each other in disbelief and
begin to laugh. They walk to each other and embrace.*

JOHN

So...you think you're ready for this "Mrs. Davidson?"

SARA

After tonight, I'm ready for anything.

*The two kiss as the lights fade to black and the music
builds.*

- THE END -